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Review of Security Cooperation Mechanisms Combatant Commands Utilize to Build Partner Capacity

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Summary

Security cooperation (SC) has long been an important instrument of the U.S. government and the Department of Defense (DoD) for advancing national security objectives vis-à-vis allies and partner countries, including building critical relationships, securing peacetime and contingency access, and building partner capacity (BPC), the focus of this report. One of the key challenges for policymakers and combatant commands (CCMDs) is gaining a more complete understanding of the real value of BPC activities. Assessments of prior and ongoing BPC activities, in particular, have become increasingly important given the current fiscal climate and budgetary limitations and the need for decisionmakers to know precisely where to continue, cut, or change the allocation of security cooperation resources, and *why*. Moreover, the strategic "rebalance" to the Asia-Pacific region contained in the 2012 strategic guidance underlines the need to identify areas of greatest BPC opportunity in the region in ways that best serve U.S. interests,[1] and this requires an assessment of BPC utility for particular Asian partners. This is easier said than done. Assessing the value of what are essentially qualitative activities, and where the correlation among activities is not always apparent, is difficult. Data limitations, for example, severely hinder assessments. And it is not a straightforward endeavor to link BPC-related upgrades for indigenous forces to a reduced likelihood that U.S. combat forces would have to intervene in a conflict, a key goal of building those indigenous forces. Further, the CCMDs do

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[1] U.S. Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense*, Washington, D.C., January 2012, p. 2.

not always know the results of their BPC activities in detail. As a long-term endeavor, results of BPC efforts often emerge over a relatively long period of time. Following up after the fact to gather the necessary data requires dedicated time and effort.

The tools available to the CCMDs—such as resources, authorities, programs, processes, and organizational relationships—may or may not be the optimal ones for the delivery of BPC activities to partner countries. An important starting point is to understand the strengths and limitations of these tools in greater detail, and to be fully clear on what is available. Do the CCMDs have the right mechanisms to achieve their theater campaign objectives? Are they in any way limited to the point of precluding the advancement of key objectives? If so, how? What changes need to occur to enable greater success, both in terms of effectiveness and efficiency?

This report begins to address this gap by first characterizing SC mechanisms, specifically by baselining and categorizing them. The report produces a detailed database of the SC mechanism elements, which is fundamental to understanding the relationship among SC programs, purposes, and activities. Second, the report develops and applies a preliminary means of evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of select SC mechanisms. This includes identifying case studies from among relevant mechanisms CCMDs use for BPC and identifying lessons and best practices from those case studies. Finally, the report draws on the analysis from the case studies to recommend ways to improve effectiveness and efficiency of those mechanisms in the future, from the CCMD's perspective, specifically in terms of existing authorities, resources, programs, and coordination processes.

Security Cooperation Mechanisms: A "Patchwork"

This report refers to a concept that we are calling "SC mechanism," the collection of key elements that together are able to deliver security cooperation to partner countries. Our focus in this study is on SC mechanisms the CCMDs use to build partner capacity. SC mechanisms are composed of five elements: programs, resources, authorities,

processes, and organizational relationships. They can be categorized according to the capability or purpose against which they are utilized and the activity they help execute. CCMDs typically employ multiple mechanisms to achieve a single objective or even to engage in a single activity. Thus, security cooperation professionals in DoD commonly refer to the need to assemble multiple mechanisms in a "patchwork" to deliver security cooperation and build partner capacity.

Planners and resource managers work together to figure out creative ways, within the bounds of the law, to execute their BPC plans, which looks rather like a patchwork. Whereas some might see a patchwork as a work of art that everyone is fond of, is carefully constructed, and lacks holes, the term in our context has negative connotations. This patchwork is more like a tangled web, with holes, overlaps, and confusions. Often, several funding sources are used to support single events, and several programs are used to support broader initiatives. The challenges to planning, resourcing, executing, and assessing BPC activities are considerable. First, authorities for BPC vary considerably. Some authorities attached to programs are single-year, and some are multiyear. Some limit DoD to engaging only with a partner country's military forces, while others allow DoD to engage other armed forces under the authority of ministries other than the Ministry of Defense (MoD). Some allow for training; others do not. Second, resources are unpredictable from year to year, and are managed by different agencies working under different priorities. Third, processes can be slow and cumbersome. Planning for exercises, for example, is completed at least a year before the event occurs to ensure forces are available. Fourth, organizations that have a role in executing BPC activities, even within DoD, play by different rules and priorities. Some coordinate well with the CCMDs, and some are less than collaborative. Success in executing BPC activities often lies with the knowledge and creativity of the country directors and resource managers at the CCMDs.

The Security Cooperation Database: Specifics and Nuances

The RAND team has built and modified a Security Cooperation Database, which consists of programs, authorities, associated purposes, and organizations from across the U.S. government. The RAND Security Cooperation Database contains data on 165 security cooperation programs. Most of the programs are managed by DoD offices, sometimes jointly with other departments or agencies. Some are managed outside of DoD by the departments of State (DoS), Homeland Security, Energy, Justice, and others. The decision to include such programs was based on relevance to stated DoD objectives and mission areas.

Legislative authorities are the centerpiece of the database. The authorities contained in the database are linked to specific security cooperation programs, with the programs then serving as the organizing hub for all of the other information. The database references 184 separate authorities, many of which are broad and serve as the basis for many security cooperation programs, although some are very specific, limiting the nature of activities and the partners with which the activities may be conducted. Moreover, most security cooperation programs rely on more than one authority, creating an overlapping web of connected programs and authorities for security cooperation.

The database's focus is on DoD programs, and is largely the product of a review of Title 10 U.S. Code and relevant public laws.[2] But while the database is rooted in a review of legislative authorities, it also incorporates information from DoD and Service strategies, policies, directives, instructions, and other guidance documents related to security cooperation efforts. The database not only associates programs with their legislative authorities, it also describes program objectives, regulations, key processes, funding sources and other resources, and program manager contact information. The database provided a foundation that informed our discussions with CCMD stakeholders. Together with those conversations, it enabled us to identify some nuances.

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[2]   U.S. Government Printing Office, U.S. Code, Title 10, *Armed Forces*, January 3, 2012.

There Are Regional and Contingency-Specific Limitations. In some cases, while an authority may exist, it may not be usable by the BPC program manager. Authorities often are the result of legislative action taken by Congress for a specific purpose; for example, a contingency operation. Likewise, a congressional authority may have a regional focus, often driven by a particular threat or other problem that is being addressed. Cooperative Threat Reduction authorities, for example, are focused on the former Soviet Union, and many counternarcotics authorities are focused on named countries or regions within Latin America or Africa. Operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan comprise nearly 20 percent of the authorities contained in the database.

Not All Authorities Are Equal. While some broad authorities under the control of DoD program managers can support many initiatives without geographic or contingency-related restrictions, there are other aspects that create limitations. Most authorities that can provide training, education, supplies, or equipment are in fact contained in Title 22, and are part of the jointly managed DoS-DoD security assistance process.[3]

Complicated Processes Create Additional Challenges. Other, broader programs, such as Section 1206 Global Train and Equip, require substantial coordination with the State Department, and are encumbered by a complex approval process and limited funding authority.[4] Section 1206 authority requires the involvement of both DoD and DoS, including high-level approvals before funds are spent.

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[3] U.S. Government Printing Office, U.S. Code, Title 22, Section 2304, *Human Rights and Security Assistance*, January 3, 2012.

[4] Section 1206 arises from U.S. Congress, *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006*, Public Law 109-163, 119 STAT. 3436-3437, January 6, 2006.

Assessing Effectiveness and Efficiency of SC Mechanisms Used by the Combatant Commands to Build Partner Capacity

The fundamental challenge in assessing security cooperation mechanisms is that quantitative indicators of effectiveness and efficiency of these mechanisms are neither developed nor tracked in a systematic fashion, and even qualitative indicators are based more on narrative and anecdotal experience than structured assessment. RAND developed an approach to assist in the assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of SC mechanisms used by the CCMDs for BPC. Effectiveness is defined as the extent to which a mechanism advances a CCMD BPC-related objective or set of objectives. Efficiency is the overall level of effort required to secure and employ a mechanism to execute CCMD BPC activities, rather than efficiency of the actual resources expended. RAND rated each of a mechanism's elements and then rolled those ratings up to qualitatively assess overall mechanism effectiveness and efficiency. These assessments were based on RAND analysis and interpretation of comments of CCMD SC professionals obtained during focused discussions.

RAND reviewed SC mechanisms that four CCMDs use to support four objectives:

- Africa Command (AFRICOM): counterterrorism (CT)
- Pacific Command (PACOM): CT
- Southern Command (SOUTHCOM): CT and countering transnational organized crime
- European Command (EUCOM): building coalitions and defending against ballistic missiles.

Assessing the utility of largely qualitative activities is a challenge, and the exact ratings of effectiveness and efficiency of the mechanisms can certainly be debated. But the evaluation of these mechanisms provided a foundation for development of options to improve the "patchwork" of authorities and programs available to SC planners in the CCMDs.

Key Findings

In assessing effectiveness and efficiency of SC mechanisms used by the CCMDs for BPC, RAND found areas of both convergence and divergence across the commands. Areas of convergence across CCMDs are as follows:

- Lack of flexible, multiyear authorities hinders effective planning and efficient execution.
- Foreign military financing (FMF) is slow, not prioritized against DoD objectives, inflexible, and difficult for DoD to control once disbursed.
- Constraints on Section 1206 funding availability, sustainment potential, and working with non-MoD partners limit its effectiveness, while associated equipping efforts can be onerous on staffs.
- Education programs like International Military Education and Training (IMET) and the Counterterrorism Fellowship Program (CTFP) generally score as highly effective; however, some processes are onerous on staffs.
- Military-to-military, or mil-mil, authorities are effective as foundations of BPC but cannot be used to support training and equipping; those controlled centrally are not efficient; some authorities are left to interpretation.
- Mechanisms for cooperation with regional organizations are limited.

Areas of divergence or issues that are specific to one CCMD are as follows:

- EUCOM has been able to effectively utilize Section 1206 and FMF with coalition partners.
- Lack of CT training/equipping authorities in SOUTHCOM and PACOM force reliance on indirect SC mechanisms for building partner CT capacity.
- Dedicated training/equipping mechanisms provide AFRICOM with flexible means of building partner CT capacity.

- EUCOM's experience with SC mechanisms for building ballistic missile defense (BMD) capacity is quite negative, but still forming.
- PACOM has concerns about the usage and responsiveness of the Global Security Contingency Fund (GSCF).

Recommendations

Based on these findings and the detailed analysis presented in this report, RAND recommends several near-term and farther-term actions by the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), with Joint Staff support, to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of SC mechanisms offered to the CCMDs for building partner capacity.

Improving Effectiveness of the SC Mechanisms for BPC

To improve SC mechanism effectiveness in the near term:

- *Establish a working group to explore existing authorities for CCMD-executed BMD activities with allies and partners to determine if additional, specific authorities are needed to accomplish CCMD objectives.* This recommendation links to the finding that there appear to be few mechanisms to support BMD with higher-end allies and partners. Such a group would ideally consist of officials from the Joint Staff, the relevant CCMDs (EUCOM and PACOM), and the Missile Defense Agency (MDA), and the purpose would be to explore existing authorities for CCMD-executed BMD activities with allies and partners. The Security Cooperation Policy Executive Council could serve this function as well.
- *Seek to establish a new global authority for rapid, inexpensive equipping to meet the demand, particularly to support current operations.* This recommendation links to the finding on the slowness of FMF and 1206 processes for meeting immediate, low-level equipment demands, particularly for partners involved in ongoing operations. EUCOM appears to have had greater success in making these linkages explicit, though this is not institutionalized. The idea would be for DoD to establish a mechanism to

quickly (within 90 days) obtain less expensive ($100,000 or less) general-purpose military equipment, such as uniforms and other personal gear, small arms, ammunition, and common supplies and replacement parts.

To improve SC mechanism effectiveness in the long term:

- *Take maximum advantage of GSCF pilot initiatives to demonstrate the need for expanding authorities to do BPC with armed forces under the authority of ministries other than ministries of defense.* This recommendation links to several findings, including limitations to do BPC activities with nonmilitary forces, the need for flexible, multiyear authorities, PACOM's concerns about the utility and responsiveness of GSCF, and using GSCF as a possible means for increasing cooperation with regional organizations. The authorities for DoD forces to engage highly relevant non-MoD security forces are limited, and by exception. The success of GSCF could demonstrate to Congress the ability of DoD and DoS to plan, execute, resource, and assess these activities in lockstep, which could lead to establishing broader, more-permanent authorities and appropriations for the future. This is especially important in countering the nexus between narcotrafficking and terrorism, which often requires working with the armed forces of ministries of interior and other non-MoD agencies.
- *Explore ways to formally link 1200-series to FMF to enable greater partner capability sustainment and institutional reform.* This recommendation links to the finding regarding the lack of sustainment provided by Section 1206 (and thus, the need to tie the 1200-series to other U.S. funding sources)—and, to a lesser degree, the need for multiyear, flexible authorities. Consider inviting DoS officials from the Political-Military Affairs and the Regional Bureaus (Africa and Asia-Pacific in particular) to form a task force, which could streamline 1206 and FMF funding to improve responsiveness, simplify processes, strengthen U.S. government spending control in some countries, and ultimately, better enable sustainment and institutional reforms in partner countries. This could be

combined with the following recommendation, forming a single task force, subdivided into two groups.

- *Seek additional, global authorities to broaden dedicated CT training.* This recommendation links to the lack of CT training authorities in PACOM and SOUTHCOM areas of responsibility (AORs) and the reliance on indirect mechanisms to accomplish this objective. It also builds on the dedicated training/equipping mechanisms in the AFRICOM AOR to build partner CT capacity. We found consensus in our CT case studies on the need to expand authorities for dedicated CT training for BPC. Consider working with DoS officials from the Political-Military Affairs and Regional Bureaus to form a task force to explore ways to better meet U.S. government–wide CT objectives.

Improving Efficiency of the SC Mechanisms for BPC

To improve SC mechanism efficiency in the near term, we recommend the following actions:

- *Provide the CCMDs with clear, up-to-date interpretation from OSD of all BPC authorities on an annual basis to enable all to effectively leverage available mechanisms.* This recommendation links to the finding on CT training authorities for SOUTHCOM, as well as to the finding on the need to provide clarity on mil-mil authorities, since they provide the foundation for training and equipping initiatives. Generally, we found limited numbers of experts at the CCMDs with deep knowledge on existing BPC authorities, and among those, different interpretations of those authorities in some instances. Annual updates to the CCMDs and component commands would help to deepen this knowledge, thus reducing confusion and instances of misinterpretation.
- *Consider simplifying requirements for annual justification of ongoing programs to improve efficiency.* This recommendation links to the finding regarding onerous annual processes for education programs like IMET and CTFP. Our case studies highlighted the cumbersome processes for collecting data to support annual congressional reporting requirements for BPC programs. Consider

streamlining these processes, where possible, including standardizing the schedule for collection and informing the CCMDs of the types of data required well in advance.

- *Explore options for developing and managing the growing number of pseudo cases associated with Section 1206 initiatives to improve efficiency.* This recommendation links to constraints on Section 1206 funding availability, the need to formally connect FMF with the 1200 series, and the lack of flexible, multiyear authorities, which hinders CCMD planning and execution. CCMD staffs have generally seen an increase in workload associated with pseudo cases, where the United States takes a more active role in identifying partner country needs. The CCMDs require additional support, perhaps one additional billet or contractor support, to handle these cases and ensure they move along correctly and timely through the process.

To improve SC mechanism efficiency in the long term, we recommend the following action:

- *Consider seeking approval to lengthen time for select Title 10 authorities and funding sources beyond two years (a minimum of three years) to enable effective institutionalization of capabilities.* This recommendation links to constraints on Section 1206 funding availability, the need to formally connect FMF with the 1200 series, and the lack of flexible, multiyear authorities, which hinders CCMD planning and execution. Our case studies indicate that the actual length of time of the existing authorities and funding sources hinders BPC efficiency and effectiveness. Two years is not enough time to build capacity in most countries. The examples of authorities and funding sources that should be lengthened include the Coalition Readiness Support Program, Section 1206 Global Train and Equip, and Partnership for Regional East Africa Counterterrorism. The experience of GSCF, as it is implemented and lessons become more apparent, should be helpful as a test case for the employment of multiyear, flexible authorities.