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NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL STRATEGY: GUIDANCE DETERMINES THE  
LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

by

E. Mark Chicoine

LCDR, USN

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

Signature: *E. M. Chicoine*

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Abstract of

NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL STRATEGY: GUIDANCE DETERMINES THE LEVEL OF  
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The Department of Defense in addition to supporting U.S. military goals and objectives around the globe is also expected to play a major role in the U.S. Counterdrug effort. The current roles and missions of the U.S. military are the result of the guidance received from the National Drug Control Strategy. This guidance regulate's the U.S. military to a support role primarily focused on the interdiction side of the Counterdrug effort. The military's roles and missions determine its level of involvement. This level of involvement satisfies the envisioned role delineated in the National Drug Control Strategy. An increase in the level of involvement by the U.S. military should not be undertaken until the National Drug Control Strategy clearly defines its desired end state.

## Introduction

The Department of Defense (DOD) in addition to supporting U.S. military goals and objectives around the globe is also playing "a crucial role in defending the United States from the threat of illegal drugs".<sup>1</sup> At this moment, there is a Navy E-2C Hawkeye, Airborne Early Warning aircraft flying in direct support of the United States National Drug Control Strategy (NDCS).<sup>2</sup> In order to support this single E-2C Hawkeye, an entire Carrier Airborne Early Warning (VAW) Squadron is deployed to a remote location in the Caribbean. This VAW squadron has just recently returned from a six month Carrier deployment and is now away from its homeport again.

This paper will examine the link between the NDCS and current U.S. military Counterdrug (CD) roles and missions. The guidance DOD receives from the NDCS will serve as the link. For our purposes guidance includes an understanding of aims, resources, restraints and constraints given to DOD.<sup>3</sup> Focusing on guidance, the following question will be addressed: Does the National Drug Control Strategy give the DOD sufficient guidance to determine the level of military involvement? The DOD must continually evaluate national guidance for relevancy and in turn establish clear military CD goals and objectives to ensure the NDCS is being properly served.

A historical look at United States policies and strategies in the CD effort is presented to establish an understanding of their direct influence on DOD's level of involvement. Next, the

guidance the DOD currently receives from NDCS will be reviewed. This review will show that the level of DOD involvement in current CD operations fulfills the requirements specified in the NDCS. However, the flaw for the DOD is that the NDCS does not have a clearly stated definition of victory. The DOD must have a firm grasp of the desired end-state prior to developing an effective CD campaign plan. Finally, recommendations are offered to further clarify DOD guidance to ensure that the Operational Commander's in the field have the necessary tools to develop operational plans to support the NDCS.

#### **Historical Perspective**

The U.S. military has been committed to the nation's fight against international narcotics trafficking for many years. The level of commitment has ranged from an information sharing role to a more direct role such as U.S. military troops eradicating crops in host countries. The level of DOD commitment has been influenced by the policy's and strategies adopted at the national level.

In 1982 the DOD Authorization for Appropriations Act (PL 97-86), Congress clarified the Posse Comitatus statute.<sup>4</sup> This clarification allowed for a more expansive role in domestic law enforcement for the U.S. military. The statute authorized cooperation between the military and civilian Law Enforcement Agencies (LEA) for the enforcement of the Controlled Substance Act.<sup>5</sup> In 1985 the Supplemental Appropriations for 1985

(P.L.99-88) required the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) to submit directly to Congress a written report outlining DOD specific roles in drug interdiction.<sup>6</sup> These early DOD roles focused on intelligence and information sharing. For example, U.S. Navy ships and aircraft would notify local civilian law enforcement authorities of suspicious vessels or aircraft encountered while conducting routine operations. DOD involvement increased throughout 1985-1986 evolving into coordinated detection and monitoring operations targeted towards specific geographic areas.<sup>7</sup>

The U.S. Congress passed the 1986 Anti-Drug Abuse Act (P.L.99-570). This statute was far reaching in scope, most importantly, the statute required the executive branch to make recommendations to congress for the reorganization of the nations CD effort.<sup>8</sup> Then President Reagan, declared a national "War on Drugs". The statement "War on Drugs" in itself implies a hard line military approach. In fact, "War on Drugs" was a result of the Reagan administration declaring the narcotics trafficking problem a threat to national security. Included in the 1986 DOD Authorization Act (P.L. 99-145) was additional clarification of military roles. This clarification provided for the embarkation of United States Coast Guard personnel on Navy ships and also directed DOD to convene a study to look into the utilization of Navy E-2C aircraft in the CD effort.<sup>9</sup> The

Further Continuing Appropriations Act of 1986 (P.L.99-190) specifically earmarked \$300 million for the DOD's use in CD operations.10.

President Reagan established the National Drug Policy Board (NDPB) in 1987 under the direction of the Attorney General. This was the executive branch's first attempt to unify the nations CD resources and effort. The NDPB proved to be inefficient in its efforts to coordinate the nations CD resources. As a result of this inefficiency, Congress in the 1988 Anti-Drug Abuse Act (P.L.100-690), created the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP). Under the Act, the ONDCP was directed to remain within the executive branch where it resides currently. In addition to the creation of the ONDCP, the law required the Executive Branch to develop an annual National Drug Control Strategy.11.

In 1989 President Bush's CD strategy encompassed a broad range of initiatives primarily focused in the international environment.12. The initiatives were structured around the concept of cooperation between the U.S. government and governments of nations which had elements within their borders involved in international drug trafficking. This cooperation included a commitment by the United States to share in CD related intelligence and to develop a command control and communications network throughout the Caribbean. These new commitments between the U.S. and host nations greatly influenced a more prominent role for DOD.13. Many of the assets required

to provide shared intelligence and to develop a strong command, control and communications network resided in the DOD.

The level of cooperation between the United States and host nations was further demonstrated by the attendance of President Bush to the Andean Drug summit in Cartagena, Colombia in February of 1990. In addition to President Bush, the presidents of Bolivia, Colombia and Peru were present. They agreed, "to cooperate and exchange information in a variety of areas, including data on the precursor chemical flows and money laundering activities, and to attack the drug trade from every angle: production, distribution, finance and use."14. President Bush proposed to Congress a series of aid packages known as the "Andean Initiative estimated to cost the U.S. about 2.2 billion over the next five years."15. This initiative, is still in effect.

In 1993, the Clinton administration concluded that the previous administrations national and international CD policies and strategies needed to be refocused and revised. The new policy shifted emphasis from a national "War on Drugs" focused on the international environment to a policy focused on the domestic environment. The policy shift focuses on the demand or user side of the CD issue vice the supply side. In addition, the administration concluded that the CD issue would not be the primary concern in U.S. foreign policy. The CD issue would become one of many issues the United States would incorporate in its negotiations with host nations. This shift in emphasis is

depicted in the following statement "downplay the drug issue as a single policy driving priority." 16.

The current CD policy is one of many international policies and initiatives designed to pursue the cultivation of democracy's, stimulate economic growth and promote human rights. The shift in the national policy's focus from the international environment to the domestic environment is further illustrated by an increase in funding earmarked for domestic prevention, treatment and rehabilitation programs. The revision and refocusing effort of 1993 serves as the foundation for the current NDCS.

The precedent to incorporate the DOD in the CD effort began in 1982. However, the level of the DOD's involvement has increased substantially since 1988. The past three administrations through legislation and rhetoric have conveyed to the American public and to the world the requirement for both a domestic and international CD policy and strategy. The DOD's basic missions and roles within these two policies have generally stayed constant since 1989. An examination of the shift in political rhetoric between the administrations has had little impact on Congressional funding. Congressional funding continues to emphasize spending in the supply side of the CD equation vice the demand side. Projected funding for FY-96 CD efforts are roughly 64% for supply and 36% for demand a slight increase from FY-95 funding.17. The DOD gains much of its

guidance for its roles and missions within the supply side of the NDCS.

#### Current Guidance

The DOD's primary CD roles and missions take place in the international environment. Consequently, the international portion of the NDCS is where the DOD receives much of its guidance. "The new international portion of the strategy calls for a controlled shift in emphasis from the transit zones to the source countries."<sup>18</sup> The Transit Zone is defined as that area between the source countries and the United States contiguous zone. The NDCS establishes three objectives for source countries they are: "One, strengthen host nation counterdrug institutions so that they can conduct more effective drug control efforts on their own. Two, intensify international efforts to arrest and imprison international drug kingpins and destroy their organizations. Three, aggressively support crop control programs for poppy and coca in countries where there is a strong prospect for, or record of success".<sup>19</sup>

SECDEF through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) has established CD Guidance for the four Combatant Commanders.<sup>20</sup> The following is a five step overview of SECDEF's guidance to DOD: (1) DOD will focus its source nation support efforts primarily in Peru, Bolivia and Columbia. (2) DOD will step up its effort to support Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) charge of dismantling the drug cartels.

(3) DOD will increase its efforts within host countries to detect and monitor the transportation of illegal drugs. This effort will continue to provide DOD assets to detect and monitor the transportation of illegal drugs in the transit zone. (4) DOD will offer direct support to Domestic Law Enforcement Agency's (LEA) in the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTAs).<sup>21</sup>. (5) continued emphasis on a consolidated drug testing effort within DOD.<sup>22</sup>. SECDEF guidance to DOD clearly states that our level of involvement is regulated to support roles. In addition, the guidance is heavily focused on the supply side of the CD effort.

The guidance SECDEF has given to the four Combatant Commanders is the basis for their formulation of current military CD roles and missions. The military's current roles and missions are the end result of the guidance as interpreted down the chain of command from the NDCS. These roles and missions further translate into the DOD level of involvement. A critical analyses of current roles and missions is necessary to understand the relationship between guidance and the DOD's level of involvement. The instrument of this analyses will be an evaluation of long and short term goals, aims, restraints and constraints. These four principle elements of guidance must be continually reviewed by the Combatant Commander's for relevancy.

The military continues to play a support role in CD operations. This support role is reflected in the following traditional and current mission areas:<sup>23</sup>.

- (1) Detection and Monitoring
- (2) Host Nation Support
- (3) Command Control Communications and Computers
- (4) Intelligence Support
- (5) Logistic Support
- (6) Training Support
- (7) Manpower Support
- (8) Research and Development
- (9) Demand Reduction
- (10) Land Reconnaissance.

The above mission areas have remained fairly constant since the beginning of the DOD's involvement in CD operations. However, the level of involvement has fluctuated based on specific operational requirements. A brief explanation of the major mission areas shows how they equate to the level of involvement.

The Detection and Monitoring mission area primarily targets the transit zone. This mission includes both air and surface (land and sea) surveillance operations. In addition to the surveillance operations real time air intercepts are conducted to positively identify potential drug traffickers. The U.S. Navy (USN) contributes a myriad of ships, submarines and aircraft in direct support of this mission area. The U.S. Air Force (USAF) contributes interceptor aircraft and both land based radar and Airborne Warning and Control Systems (AWACS).<sup>24</sup>. This mission's area objectives are achieved by the military rotating assets in and out of the existing surveillance

architecture. The surveillance architecture revolves around three geographically located Joint Interagency Task Forces (JIATF).<sup>25</sup> This architecture is intended to provide the JIATF real-time information concerning drug trafficker movement. This real-time information can be used by LEA for intercept and interdiction operations.

The Department of State (DOS) through the local Ambassadors is responsible for the level of support offered to a host nation. The military works closely with the DOS and provides support in Security Assistance, Military Training, Civil Military Operations Intelligence Sharing, Command and Control. These operations contribute to the level of success a host nation will have in its fight against illegal drug trafficking. Military host nation support will fluctuate depending on the DOS initiatives for a specific country. This fluctuation has a direct impact on the level of military involvement.

The last mission area to be addressed is land reconnaissance. A distinct difference between land reconnaissance and the other mission areas is that these missions are conducted within U.S. borders. The land reconnaissance mission is achieved by a variety of means including establishing listening posts, foot or mounted patrols and airborne platforms equipped with sensors.<sup>26</sup> Land reconnaissance missions contribute significantly to the military's level of involvement.

This brief explanation of current roles and missions provides a basic background to better understand the relationship between mission areas and level of involvement. These mission areas were developed by the DOD as a result of the guidance received from the NDCS. The DOD CD roles and missions define the level of involvement. The current level of the DOD involvement satisfies the military objectives established in the NDCS. Further analyses is required in order to identify flaws in the guidance the DOD receives from the NDCS.

#### **Flaws in the Guidance**

Guidance encompasses a broad range of concepts to include both intermediate and long range goals. The four principle elements found within the framework of guidance are aims, resources, restraints and constraints. By applying these principle elements to the NDCS, flaws can be easily identified.

The first principle element of guidance to be applied to the NDCS is long and short term goals. There are five applicable goals established in the NDCS that the DOD is required to support. The over-arching goal of these five goals is to "Reduce the Number of Drug Users in America".<sup>27</sup> The word "reduce" is soft and is difficult to put into an operational goal. The remaining four goals also contain soft words such as improve, strengthen, assist and support.<sup>28</sup> Without a quantitative goal in the guidance, the DOD can not effectively develop the key to every operation, the Aim. Aim is defined as

the definition of victory. The DOD has neither a long term or short term definition of winning. This lack of the Aim, is the fatal flaw for the DOD in the guidance it receives from the NDCS.

The second principle of guidance to be applied is resources. Resources include forces available, time required to accomplish the goals and space. The current trend in CD operations is to deploy units on a rotating basis. In many instances this trend proves to be ineffective as the cycle of unit proficiency rises and falls with each rotation. United States Southern Command illustrates this point with the following, " In Vietnam, we learned that you couldn't be effective fighting the war a year at a time. And we can't tackle this scourge which is killing 10,000 Americans a year with troop deployments of 3 months duration".<sup>29</sup> Time required to accomplish the mission is tied to long term goals and missions. Applying a time limit to an operation is becoming more and more in vogue. Recent U.S. military deployments to Haiti and Bosnia have each had a time limit associated with the deployment. Associating a time element to the CD operation is impossible due to the flaw in the NDCS definition of victory. The final resource is space. Drug trafficking takes place in every corner of the world. The DOD understands this fact and has made CD operations a priority responsibility of the four Combatant Commanders.<sup>30</sup> The NDCS and the DOD fully comprehend

the enormity of the space in which the military must become involved.

Within the element of resources, forces, time and space have each been identified as shortfalls. The NDCS and the DOD have a good understanding of space. This is conveyed eloquently in the following: "We must develop an over-arching operational construct that links country-by-country efforts and that supports an effective regional strategy".<sup>31</sup>.

The next two principle elements of guidance to be applied to the NDCS are restraints and constraints. The DOD's restraints in CD operations are many. The NDCS and subsequent guidance restricts the military to a support role. Consequently, there are many examples of restraints including, not attacking known targets, restrictive use of military assets domestically, the DOS's restraints on the DOD in host countries. The NDCS is clear in its guidance regulating the DOD to a support role. Constraints or obligations required of the DOD are just as clear as restraints in the guidance. The DOD in its support role is obligated to provide assets to CD operations. The previous discussion of military roles and missions gives clear examples of the scope of this support. The NDCS is clear in its guidance regarding restraints and constraints and their subsequent bearing on the support role the DOD plays in CD operations.

This application of the principle elements of guidance to the NDCS has exposed many flaws in the DOD's guidance. However,

the DOD recognized these flaws and developed the current roles and missions. This has resulted in the correct level of involvement to adequately support these roles and missions.

### Conclusions and Recommendations

The primary objective of this research was to determine whether the guidance the DOD currently receives from the NDCS was sufficient to appropriately shape the level of the U.S. military involvement in CD operations. This effort focuses on the guidance derived from the NDCS and the link with current DOD roles and missions. By applying the principle elements of guidance to the roles and missions many weaknesses in the guidance derived from the NDCS are identified. The DOD does in fact, receive sufficient guidance to determine its level of involvement in CD operations. In addition, the DOD appropriately developed its current roles and missions in direct response to this guidance.

The secondary objective of this research was to identify weaknesses in the guidance and provide recommendations. These recommendations are offered to assist the operational planner in developing effective operational CD plans. Applying the principles of guidance to the current military roles and missions points to shortfalls in the NDCS.

Of the shortfalls in guidance identified, the most flawed was short term and long term goals. The operational commander needs to have a firm grasp of the definition of victory to

develop an effective operational design. The DOD is presently focused on the supply side of the drug issue and will only be able to harass rather than stop the flow of drugs into the U.S. The demand side of the drug issue must continue to be addressed. When the demand for drugs is no longer there, the need to traffic drugs will go away. The current NDCS is correctly focused on the demand side of the drug issue. The NDCS vision of the DOD's level of involvement is also correct. The DOD must aggressively pursue its assigned support roles and missions. The DOD can be effective in its limited role by developing clear definition's of victory for each CD operation. The DOD can be a decisive winner in the short term but will never know when the war is over. In my opinion, an increased level of the DOD's involvement should only be undertaken when the nation can clearly state its long term definition of victory.

## End Notes

1. U.S. Dept. of Defense, Joint Counterdrug Operations, Joint Pub 3-07.4 (Washington: 1994), I-1.

2. The White House, Office of National Drug Control Policy, The National Drug Control Strategy February 1994, (Washington: 1994), 65.

3. Naval War College, Joint Military Operations Department, Operational Design Schematic, November 1996, Elements of Guidance definitions:

- a. Aims, the definition of victory.
- b. Resources, defined as forces available, time, space.
- c. Restraints, defined as prohibitions/restrictions.
- d. Constraints, defined as the obligations of certain actions.

4. Congressional Research Service, Report on Narcotics and Other Dangerous Drugs: Brief Summaries of Federal Laws to Control Supply, 1961-1991 (Washington: 1992), 18.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid., 25.

7. My involvement as a member of VAW 112 and 110, Home-ported at NAS Miramar, San Diego, CA.

8. Congressional Research Service, Report on Narcotics and Other Dangerous Drugs: Brief Summaries of Federal Laws to Control Supply, 1961-1991. (Washington: 1992), 26.

9. Ibid., 25.

10. Ibid., 26.

11. U.S. Dept. of Defense, Joint Counterdrug Operations. Joint Pub 3-07.4. (Washington: 1994), I-2.

12. Congressional Research Service, Issue Brief: Drug Control: International Policy and Options (Washington: 1994), 10.

13. Ibid., 10.

14. Congressional Research Service, Issue Brief: Drug Control: International Policy and Options (Washington: 1994), 10.

15. Ibid., 10.

16. Ibid., 11.

17. Congressional Research Service, Issue Brief: Drug Supply Control: 104th Congress (Washington: 1995), 9.

18. U.S. Dept. of Defense, Joint Counterdrug Operations Joint Pub 3-07.4. (Washington: 1994), I-3.

19. Ibid.

20. The military chain of command for CD operations includes the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) and the four designated CD combatant commanders. The four CD combatant commanders are Commander in Chief, US Southern Command (USCINCSO), Commander In Chief, US Atlantic Command (USCINCOM), Commander In Chief, US Pacific Command (USCINCPAC) and Commander In Chief, North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD).

21. An example of an HIDTA is the Southwest border of the United States.

22. U.S. Dept. of Defense, Joint Counterdrug Operations Joint Pub 3-07.4. (Washington: 1994), I-10.

23. Ibid., I-17-I-19.

24. Boeing 707 airframe, military name E-3 Sentry AWACS.

25. U.S. Dept. of Defense, Joint Counterdrug Operations Joint Pub 3-07.4 (Washington: 1994), III-7.

26. Ibid., I-17.

27. The White House, Office of National Drug Control Policy. The National Drug Control Strategy. (February 1994), 65.

28. Ibid., 69-72.

29. Barry R. McCaffrey, General USA, "Statement," U.S. Congress, House, Committee on National Security, United States Southern Command, (8 March 1995), 12.

30. U.S. Dept. of Defense, Joint Counterdrug Operations Joint Pub 3-07.4 (Washington: 1994), III-7.

31. Barry R. McCaffrey, General USA, "Statement," U.S. Congress, House, Committee on National Security, United States Southern Command, (8 March 1995), 13.

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