

CIVIL AFFAIRS SUPPORT TO DOMESTIC DISASTER RELIEF OPERATIONS

A new concept is being introduced into military doctrine that has been termed by the 1993 version of FM 100-5, OPERATIONS, as Operations Other Than War (OOTW). This element, within the "Range of Military Operations," provides for the use of military forces in some nontraditional roles; such as peacekeeping, nation assistance, and support to domestic authorities. Some of the types of OOTW missions that have seen a great deal of emphasis are Humanitarian Assistance (HA) and Disaster Relief Operations (DRO). The important aspect of training for and preparing to do these missions is that the tasks of providing the assistance to people in need is the same in an overseas theater as it is in a domestic scenario.

Disasters are suddenly occurring events which produce mass casualties and cause extensive damage to personal property and the public infrastructure. These include events such as; Hurricane Andrew, Mt Pinatubo volcano, the Northridge earthquake, and the mid-west floods. Disasters may be natural or man-made, and do not have to be connected to any military operation.(1) Domestic disaster relief operations use Department of Defense (DOD) personnel, equipment, and supplies to promote human welfare, reduce pain and suffering, and prevent loss of life or destruction of property from the aftermath of natural or man-made disasters. In domestic disaster situations, the coordination of the response is through the direction of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) under the FEDERAL RESPONSE PLAN for Public Law 92-228. As a supporting agency to the plan, the US Army is the DOD executive agent. The Army's ability to rapidly deploy, and its capability to operate in the most austere environments make it ideally suitable for this mission.(2)

The statutory authority for federal domestic disaster relief operations is the ROBERT T. STAFFORD DISASTER RELIEF ACT, 42 USC 5121. It provides for the declaration of an emergency or disaster by the President as well as describes the amount and type of federal assistance available. The STAFFORD ACT authorizes the President to use DOD assets for the disaster relief operation once a formal declaration is made. The DOD Policy for implementing the domestic disaster assistance, as outlined in the STAFFORD ACT, is DOD Directive 3025.1, MILITARY SUPPORT TO CIVIL AUTHORITY and Department of the Army Regulation 500-60, DISASTER RELIEF.(3)

The fundamental principle for employing military resources is recognizing that the civil government has the primary authority and responsibility for disaster assistance within its respective jurisdictions. The National Guard has the primary responsibility for providing military domestic disaster assistance within its respective State and is employed under the auspices of a State Disaster Declaration issued by the Governor. A FEDERAL disaster is any event whose severity or magnitude overwhelms the capability of the local and state authorities to respond to the situation or where the disaster area covers multiple state boundaries. (4)

In a disaster situation, the military role is well defined and by law is limited in scope and duration. Military resources temporarily support and augment, but do not replace, the local, state, and federal civilian agencies that have primary authority and responsibility for domestic disaster assistance. Domestic disaster relief operations are normally conducted in stages; response, recovery, and restoration. The role of

the military is most intense in the response stage and steadily decreases as the operation moves into recovery and restoration. The military withdraws when the civilian authorities have regained the ability to provide basic services and security to the affected community.(5)

When a disaster has occurred, assessing the potential or real damage, and the anticipated military support requirements must precede the commitment of military resources. This assessment is usually shared by federal, state, local, and military agencies. This insures the commitment of resources and forces will be appropriate for the mission and that they will be used efficiently.(6) The US Army Civil Affairs units are mission tasked to prepare for and conduct disaster relief operations and assistance to civil authorities in both domestic and foreign situations. As a US Army Reserve (USAR) element of the United States Special Operations Command, Civil Affairs units offer unique skills and abilities to the overall aspect of disaster relief operations. As a Reserve Component element, it relies on its Citizen-Soldier status to better understand and empathize with the political, economic, and social aspects of an affected community which may not be as well appreciated by an Active Component element. A Civil Affairs unit is designed to be the interface between the military and civilian agencies in the disaster area. The military assists the civilian community to help itself recover from the disaster and reestablish basic services to its citizens. Civil Affairs units advise the military commander on the impact of military activities on the civilian sector by translating civilian needs and requests into the necessary military terminology and planning processes. They assess damage to the civilian infrastructure, assist in the operation of temporary shelters, manage a Civil-Military Operations Center (CMOC) , and provide a liaison among the military and the various civilian governmental, non-governmental, and private relief organizations. Also, as a USAR unit, it is not bound by individual state statutes or regulations which would limit the scope of a non-federalized National Guard unit in a multi-state disaster situation. (7)

The current doctrine is in place to use US Army Civil Affairs units to assist in the preparation and conduct of disaster relief operations. In most cases, however, Civil Affairs units are not effectively utilized to conduct their assigned mission because they are located in the Reserve Components. Civil Affairs units have been an underutilized or not even non-utilized in the past for missions which are directly related to Civil Affairs operations. Many after-action reports have stated the need for Civil Affairs units to be in the initial employment of forces. Historically though, Civil Affairs units have been brought into the operation in the later part of the cycle. Many of the missions within the realm of Civil Affairs seem to be tasked to Active Component Infantry units out of convenience. Today, with the downsizing of the US military forces, there is a greater need for more effective utilization of Reserve Component units for viable missions instead of just tasking the Active Component. There is a need to better utilize Civil Affairs, specifically, to perform roles that clearly fall within their assigned mission and scope. Humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and support to domestic authorities are ways to accomplish these goals. The long term survivability of Civil Affairs as a functional segment of the overall Reserve Component force is directly related to the better utilization of these unique citizen-soldier assets to meet both the foreign and domestic disaster relief needs of the United States.

The biggest hurdle to USAR Civil Affairs units being employed in

response to domestic or foreign disasters is the National Command Authority's reluctance to mobilize Reserve Component units except in a major crisis situation such as Operation Desert Shield/Storm. Under current law, Federal Reserve Component personnel can be mobilized for domestic disaster relief operations under two statutes; 10 USC 672(b) which cover 15 days of Annual Training (AT) and 10 USC 672(d) which covers volunteers. (8) In a disaster relief operation, these statutes have proved to be both inadequate and unresponsive. The United States can not continue to rely on "volunteer" support for these emergencies. Volunteers, in the past, have provided the greatest level of support when called upon, but the continued reliance on the volunteer system violates our doctrine of employing trained units to meet mission requirements. Relying strictly on volunteers does not insure that the best and most trained or prepared soldiers are utilized--only those who may be available at any given time. Gathering numbers of volunteers together into a provisional unit requires an amount of stand-up time for the personnel to learn their jobs and to work together as a functioning team. This is not the most efficient or effective manner in employing these assets, especially in time-sensitive, emergency or disaster relief operations.

If Title 10 USC is amended to allow for the mobilization of up to 25,000 Reserve Component soldiers, "a 25K Call-Up," for humanitarian assistance missions and/or domestic disaster relief operations, Civil Affairs Detachments, Battalions, or Brigades could deploy from home station via military airlift or self-deploy using organic transportation to the disaster area. As units, they already have an existing chain-of-command, a communications-coordination network, equipment with trained and assigned operators, standing operating procedures (SOPs), and experience, based on their training program, to function as an effective unit in the disaster relief or humanitarian assistance situation. Since their mobilization and employment would be for the stated purpose of providing humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, in most cases, the immediate response periods will usually not exceed 30 days, therefore, individual Reservists probably would not be in jeopardy with their civilian employer as previously feared. During the response to the Hurricanes Hugo, Andrew, and Iniki, as well as the major winter storms, and floods in the past few years, the outpouring of support from within the local communities to support those in need has been overwhelming. This popular support should translate to political support to allow the President or Secretary of Defense to mobilize USAR soldiers for large scale disasters while their use in some low intensity conflict situation such as Somalia and Bosnia may not be as palatable. By using the mobilization authority instead of relying on volunteers, the "25K Call-Up" would protect the Reservist or Guardsman just as any other mobilization statute. How better to demonstrate the importance of the Reserve Components than to employ them to support people in need, especially for domestic emergencies!

Several training and operational recommendations need to be addressed to better utilize Civil Affairs in meeting humanitarian assistance and disaster relief training and mission oriented operations within the United States as well as overseas. Civil Affairs soldiers must be able to effectively coordinate their efforts with those of the American Red Cross and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which are the primary civilian agencies tasked to provide humanitarian assistance and domestic relief in the United States. Three recommendations to better prepare for actual emergency or crisis operations are: standardized disaster or emergency management training programs through resident and

nonresident instruction; a training, coordination, and operations association between the military and civilian agencies; and a way to quickly deploy and employ Reserve Component Civil Affairs elements to provide foreign and domestic humanitarian assistance or disaster relief support.

STANDARDIZED TRAINING PROGRAM

The military element with the explicit mission of preparing and conducting humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations is Civil Affairs. One of the stated missions of Civil Affairs Commands, Brigades, and General Purpose Battalions is to plan and conduct humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, noncombatant evacuation, and displaced civilian operations in a theater of operations and to train other governments to be able to support their citizens' needs through the development of disaster response plans (9). Civil Affairs soldiers could have an additional skill identifier (ASI) awarded to designate those Civil Affairs soldiers trained or with specific experience in disaster or emergency services through working with FEMA, the Red Cross, or other similar relief agencies. Since Civil Affairs soldiers provide the link between the military and the civilian government or agency, the ASI would be used to validate the joint training and experiences necessary in disaster relief operations. FM 25-100, TRAINING THE FORCE, and the various training support literature stresses the importance of training on a task in the same manner as the task is to be executed--train as you will fight. In the humanitarian assistance/disaster relief arena, the best way to train to perform the task during an emergency situation is to train on the respective task or tasks during scheduled training periods. There is no standardized training on these subject areas in the military training system. Where does the military go to get training support packages--the American Red Cross and FEMA! Other relief agencies are also available, but the training support system of the Red Cross and FEMA can best meet the needs of the military which needs a standardized, distributable training package.

The Red Cross and FEMA provide several training programs in emergency management and disaster services to the civilian population. These are standardized, nationally approved training programs. These programs are targeted to those persons responsible for domestic emergency actions at the local, state, and national level. These same training programs parallel the Army Training and Evaluation Program (ARTEP) mission training plans for Civil Affairs units from the Command to the Detachment level. There is no need to "reinvent the wheel" in developing training programs for the military to perform humanitarian missions when the civilian "experts" already have a viable system in place. A two-phased training program can be established using the existing standardized programs. The FEMA Independent Study Program provides a no-cost method of gaining an overview of general emergency management processes and procedures. These correspondence courses provide a vehicle to provide training in a group or individual study manner and provides an excellent foundation for more "hands-on" instruction. The American Red Cross disaster services training program provides this support. These courses are taught in a resident or classroom setting by certified Red Cross instructors. This training is at no cost to the unit and it covers basic, intermediate, and advanced level instruction, to include staff exercises, based on the needs of the audience. Many of the instructional programs are either 4, 8, or 16 hours in length.

Since 97% of the Civil Affairs units are assigned to the Reserve

Components, this fits well into their weekend or Inactive Duty Training (IDT) mode or can be combined into a standardized two week Annual Training (AT) period. This training provides Mission Essential Task List (METL) training to the Civil Affairs units and it also provides a trained manpower pool from the "Citizen-Soldiers" in the various local communities for the local Red Cross Chapters to use as volunteers in case of emergencies in which Reserve Component units are not mobilized.

Many of the civilian oriented disaster services training fits into the types of military oriented activities Civil Affairs units do on a routine basis. Planning for all military operations always begins with an estimate of the situation. Training in damage assessment procedures teaches the soldiers how to conduct a standardized assessment of the disaster situation and to put this assessment into a series of reports that will help develop a plan or course of action to direct the relief effort. Mass care operations train the soldiers how to organize or set up emergency shelters and mass feedings for large numbers of displaced persons or evacuees. The military has always been proficient in sheltering and feeding large numbers of military personnel in both garrison or field conditions and providing for their basic comfort, health, and welfare needs. In emergency mass care situations, the only difference now is the military unit is sheltering, feeding, and providing for the needs of displaced civilians versus soldiers.

Training in assistance to families, teaches personnel how to interview people affected by a disaster and assisting them in meeting their immediate and long term needs. This is very similar to the interview processes that take place during a soldier's inprocessing into a unit, birthmonth personnel audits, and processing for overseas movement (POM) activities. Since the majority of the Civil Affairs soldiers are Reservists or Citizen-Soldiers, they are more familiar with the various civilian support agencies and their respective operations. Civil Affairs soldiers can better direct those in need to the places to get relief. Active Component soldiers can provide similar assistance in a disaster, but since most active duty family support in similar situations comes from installation or military oriented providers they may not be aware of the similar agencies in the civilian environment.

The training received through the Red Cross and FEMA opens the lines of communication between the military and the civilian agencies. FM 100-19, DOMESTIC SUPPORT OPERATIONS, emphasizes the importance of mutual understanding, communication, coordination, and liaison between the military and civilian agencies as a key to success in providing effective and efficient domestic emergency response or support. This understanding will allow for an easier transition into working together during actual emergency situations because all agencies in the disaster response have a level of appreciation for the other's goals, objectives, and methods. Therefore, the better each responding agency works with its counterparts, the quicker and more efficiently any disaster assistance will be provided to those in need.

TRAINING AND OPERATIONAL ASSOCIATION

One of the successes in preparing Reserve Component units to be combat ready is the Directed Training Association (DTA) program. The DTA program, outlined in FORSCOM Regulation 350-4, TRAINING UNDER CAPSTONE, links similar type Reserve and Active Component units in a training support association. The Active Component unit provides the trainers and their respective knowledge and experience to train their Reserve Component counterparts. This program is designed to raise the level of

training readiness of the Reserve Component unit and its soldiers in meeting their wartime mission. The DTA aligned units may not have been in the same wartime chain-of-command or "CAPSTONE trace" but the spirit of the program was to insure trained and ready forces, while at the same time showing the Active Component soldier the capabilities of their Reserve Component "brothers-in-arms."

A similar program can be established for Civil Affairs Brigades, Red Cross, and FEMA Regions. Currently there are nine Civil Affairs Brigade Headquarters, eight Red Cross Regions, and ten FEMA Regions which can be grouped into training and operational associations to provide disaster relief assistance within specified geographical areas. This association would be established so that the training assistance from either or both civilian agencies would be provided to the Civil Affairs partner. This training would include classroom instruction, drills, and training exercises at various levels. This includes the respective subordinate units or elements of these agencies. This program would support a Civil Affairs Battalion or Detachment training with their local Red Cross Chapter or Emergency Management Agency.

Since operational and contingency plans development and review are a mission requirement of all agencies, the Civil Affairs units and its soldiers could assist the local chapters and field offices in reviewing and developing emergency response plans to meet the needs of their respective communities or areas of responsibility. This fits well into the Civil Affairs mission task of assisting local, state, and national level governments in their respective operational theater. In this manner, Civil Affairs soldiers get the necessary training and experience, through supporting their local agencies, they will need to provide humanitarian assistance overseas, while at the same time, the Red Cross and FEMA get additional support in meeting their respective mandates. This allows the Civil Affairs unit to effectively train to meet its "wartime" or METL task under nation assistance overseas by providing domestic assistance at home.

When an actual emergency occurs, the Civil Affairs Brigade Headquarters would be alerted when their respective Red Cross and/or FEMA region is alerted. The Civil Affairs Brigade would coordinate the employment of its subordinate battalions to assist in the emergency response. The emphasis would be on employing at the lowest level of response needed, but with the capability of expanding as the need arises. If the situation elevates to the point of employing large military units to provide disaster response, such as after Hurricane Andrew, the Civil Affairs Brigade could provide the necessary liaison among the military commander and the various private volunteer organizations and non-governmental organizations. In this manner, all of the available assets for disaster response can be quickly brought together to alleviate the suffering of people in need.

CIVIL AFFAIRS QUICK-REACTION TEAM

A Civil Affairs Quick-Reaction Team should be established in Civil Affairs Battalions or Brigade Headquarters. This team would be trained and the necessary equipment on hand and prepared for deployment within 12-18 hours. The key to this concept is to identify, train, and prepare this Quick-Reaction Team just like an Active Component type unit. Many Civil Affairs Battalions and Brigade Headquarters have a majority of their unit members within one hour's commute of the Reserve Training Center or home station location. The individual soldier's equipment is usually stored at the Reserve Center as well as the bulk of the unit's

assigned or TO&E equipment. Once the personnel are identified as team members, they would receive an official letter of notification to give to their respective civilian employers in advance of an actual mobilization order. This advance alert notification insures that the employer understands the urgency of the Reservist leaving work with little or no-notice in the event of an emergency situation.

The Quick-Reaction team would have received the necessary training to perform disaster response or other related humanitarian missions. This training would include military related subjects, emergency medical or first aid training, disaster operations procedures from existing civilian or non-governmental agencies such as FEMA, the Red Cross, and the Salvation Army, and strategic communications procedures. They would have been processed in accordance with FORSCOM Regulation 500-3-3, with only the final personnel actions held in abeyance until actual mobilization. All other requisite preparation for deployment would have been accomplished in advance, such as weapons qualification, physical fitness tests (APFT), HIV screening, and general immunizations. The higher headquarters would periodically inspect or exercise the team to validate their readiness in advance of a mobilization order. The team's equipment could be prepackaged or prepared in such a manner to facilitate quick loading. This would include prepositioning air load items or other blocking, bracing, tie-down items as needed. Necessary supplies, such as food (Class I), fuel (Class III), medical supplies (Class VIII), and repair parts (Class IX), could be preloaded and secured in the battalion, separate from the remainder of the battalion's operational equipment and supplies. Periodic inspections of the individual and team equipment would be performed to rotate supplies and to validate the team's readiness for immediate deployment. Vehicle and personnel manifests for USAF or other carriers would be set up in advance and inspected or "quality checked" to save time. Upon notification, through command channels, the team members would be notified through the alert roster to assemble at the requisite time and place. The Full Time Unit Support (FTUS) personnel would begin the assembly and load out process while the Reservists begin to arrive at the Reserve Center. Transportation to the emergency site would be coordinated through the US Transportation Command and the team would be given the load and "wheels-up" times. The team members would finalize their mobilization or active duty call-up procedures and be ready to load the equipment on aircraft or road march to the disaster site if appropriate. The FTUS personnel would then access the mobilized Reservist into the active duty personnel system at the closest entry computer terminal while the team is heading to the disaster location. This allows the soldiers to quickly move to the disaster site without having to go from home station to a mobilization site enroute. The Civil Affairs team can be quickly employed in the disaster situation instead of the slow mobilization process currently in effect.

Once on the ground at the site of the emergency, the Quick-Reaction Team would coordinate its efforts with the civilian relief agencies or governmental officials, then provide an assessment to their chain-of-command which could identify the need for follow-on units, especially by type or function, that would best serve the needs of the specific situation. The Quick-Reaction team could also be the advanced party for the remainder of the Battalion or Brigade which could mobilize and deploy under the current FORMDEPS system.

CONCLUSION

Civil Affairs units have a great deal to offer to the National Command Authority in meeting both the domestic and foreign needs of the US.

Because of their unique Citizen-Soldier's knowledge, skills, and abilities, they can bring more civilian-related capabilities and experience to bear, than Active Component units, in certain circumstances. The Total Force Policy would be better served if Active Component units were used for missions for which they are trained, while using Reserve Component units where they are best suited, such as short-term humanitarian or disaster response missions. The Civil Affairs units' ability to provide humanitarian assistance is directly related to the training and operational experience gained through a working partnership with the Red Cross and FEMA. This partnership in domestic situations translates into related skills and abilities in working with similar local, regional, national, or even international relief agencies in foreign humanitarian assistance missions.

This paper has sought to offer several ways to better prepare Civil Affairs units in meeting their mission training requirements, to develop ways to better employ these trained units to alleviate human suffering, both for foreign and domestic emergency situations, and to better utilize Reserve Component forces during a period of the downsizing of the overall US military force and the shifting of missions within the Total Force. Civil Affairs can be an important "combat multiplier" as well as an economy-of-force element in many missions of the emerging "Operations Other Than War" situations the military is now facing. As the requirements and the missions within the spectrum of OOTW become more frequent, Civil Affairs should be integrated into these operations as early as possible and in a way to best utilize their skills and abilities. Through the linking of Civil Affairs and the civilian agencies charged with domestic humanitarian actions, the best interests of the United States can be achieved. The use of these unique capabilities of Civil Affairs supports the US national strategy and its supporting military strategy as the United States continues in its role as a world leader through its ability to quickly deploy and employ trained military forces anywhere in the world. Now, these forces are seen as a national capability in providing foreign and domestic humanitarian assistance and disaster relief roles as it was in purely military situations.

REFERENCES:

1. FM 41-10, CIVIL AFFAIRS OPERATIONS, p 8-4.
2. FM 100-5, OPERATIONS, P 13-5.
3. FM 100-19, DOMESTIC SUPPORT OPERATIONS, p 3-3.
4. FM 100-19, p 5-1.
5. FM 100-19, P 5-4.
6. FM 100-19, p 5-5.
7. FM 100-19, p 4-15.
8. FM 100-19, P 3-5.
9. Army Training and Evaluation Program (ARTEP) Mission Training Plans,

Additional References:

--FM 100-20, MILITARY OPERATIONS IN LOW INTENSITY CONFLICT, Chapter 5,

Peacetime Contingency Operations

--FR 500-3-3, FORCES COMMAND MOBILIZATION AND DEPLOYMENT PLANNING SYSTEM (FORMDEPS) Vol. III, Reserve Component Unit Commander's Handbook (RCUCH)

--Air, Land, Sea Application Center, "Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures on Foreign Humanitarian Assistance" Final Draft March 1994

--National Defense University, Institute for National Strategic Studies, 'CIVIL AFFAIRS: Perspectives and Prospects', June 1993--"The Federal Response Plan for Public Law 93-288, As Amended,,, April 1992

--"National Military Strategy of the United States", January 1992
Center for Army Lessons Learned, "Operations Other Than War, Volume I, Humanitarian Assistance", No 92-6, December 1992

--Center for Army Lessons Learned, "Operations Other Than War, Volume II, Disaster Assistance", No 93-6, October 1993

--American Red Cross, Disaster Services Program, "ARC 3000, Foundations of the Disaster Services Program, January 1994