

AWC PROGRAM RESEARCH PROJECT

**DEVELOPING PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAMS IN IRAQ:  
CASE STUDY IN (DELAYED) INTERAGENCY COORDINATION**

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## Developing Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Iraq: Case Study in (Delayed) Interagency Coordination

*"Talk is cheap."*

Idiomatic saying apparently derived from  
the Scottish proverb

*"Seying goes good cheap."*

R. B., *Adagia Scotica* (1668), 47

There can be no doubt that all United States government agencies need to learn to work well and seamlessly together to maximize increasingly scarce resources, to fill the gaps in capacity each has in attempting to deal with particular contingencies, and to maximize on-the-ground effectiveness in those contingencies. This is particularly true in conflict situations. Indeed, the *U.S. Government Draft Planning Framework for Reconstruction, Stabilization, and Conflict Transformation*, Version 1.0, issued by the U.S. Joint Forces Command J-7 and the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, Department of State, in December 2005, emphasizes this urgent need.<sup>1</sup> Likewise, the Guidance for the Development of the Force (GDF) calls for "interdependent joint force/interagency packages proficient in performing large-scale, civil-military operations needed to defeat irregular threats including capabilities needed for stability operations and enabling/transitioning to civil authorities."<sup>2</sup> Similarly, the Secretary of Defense, in Department of Defense (DoD) Directive 3000.05, states, that

[t]he Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, in coordination with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, shall ... [d]evelop a joint and combined stability operation training policy that promotes interoperability with relevant U.S. Departments and Agencies, foreign governments and security forces, International Organizations, NGOs, and members of the Private Sector, in coordination with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.<sup>3</sup>

Notwithstanding this apparently universal recognition, the old idiomatic expression "talk is cheap" aptly describes the extent to which the recognition goes beyond words and enters the realm of action. Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Iraq prove a case in point.

### What Are PRTs?

#### *Mission*

According to the Center for Army Lessons Learned, a PRT

is an interim civil-military organization designed to operate in semi-permissive environments usually following open hostilities. The PRT is intended to improve stability in a given area by helping build the host nation's legitimacy and effectiveness in providing security to its citizens and delivering essential government services. ... The focus of these combined military and civil efforts is to diminish the means and motivations for conflict, while developing local institutions so they can take the lead role in national governance (provide basic services, foster economic development, and enforce the rule of law).<sup>4</sup>

In a similar vein, the State Department defines PRTs as

a civilian-military inter-agency effort that provides the primary connection between U.S. and coalition partners and provincial and local governments in all of Iraq's 18 provinces. The core PRT mission is helping provincial governments with: developing a transparent and sustained capability to govern, promoting increased security and rule of law, promoting political and economic development and providing provincial administration necessary to meet the basic needs of the population. The PRT focus is on five thematic areas including governance, economics, infrastructure, rule of law and public diplomacy. The teams work to assist provincial and local governments with a range of engagement, training, jobs and small grant programs.<sup>5</sup>

The joint State and Defense Departments' definition, contained in the memorandum of agreement between the two agencies detailing their roles in the PRTs in Iraq, defines a PRT as

a priority joint Department of State (DOS)-Department of Defense (DOD) initiative to bolster moderates, support U.S. counterinsurgency strategy,

promote reconciliation and shape the political environment, support economic development, and build the capacity of Iraqi provincial governments to hasten the transition to Iraqi self-sufficiency. ... [T] they operate under joint policy guidance from the COM and Commander, MNF-I, harnessing both civilian and military resources against a common strategic plan.<sup>6</sup>

Finally, while it is good to know what the strategic documents say, it probably is even more important to know what those on the ground have to say. The actual mission of the PRTs, as stated in the training given to future PRT members, is:

“To assist Iraq’s provincial governments with developing a *transparent and sustained capability to govern*, promoting increased security and rule of law, promoting political and economic development, and providing provincial administration necessary to *meet the basic needs of the population*.” (Baghdad 4045)<sup>7</sup>

While the first three definitions (one military, one civilian and one joint), do not necessarily agree just what the role of a PRT is, they all agree that it is an interagency creature.

#### *PRT Structure and Coordination*

*Policy.* Policy for PRTs is an interagency development. That is the good news. The bad news is that the interagency coordination procedure for PRTs is cumbersome and leads to too many engineers trying to drive the train. Figure 1<sup>8</sup>, below, shows the interagency coordination path for PRTs from the strategic to the operational levels. The number of layers, the level of their involvement, and the time required for each level to receive information, assess it, make a decision and communicate the decision to the PRT through the chain all but guarantees that timely, effective direction most often will not materialize.

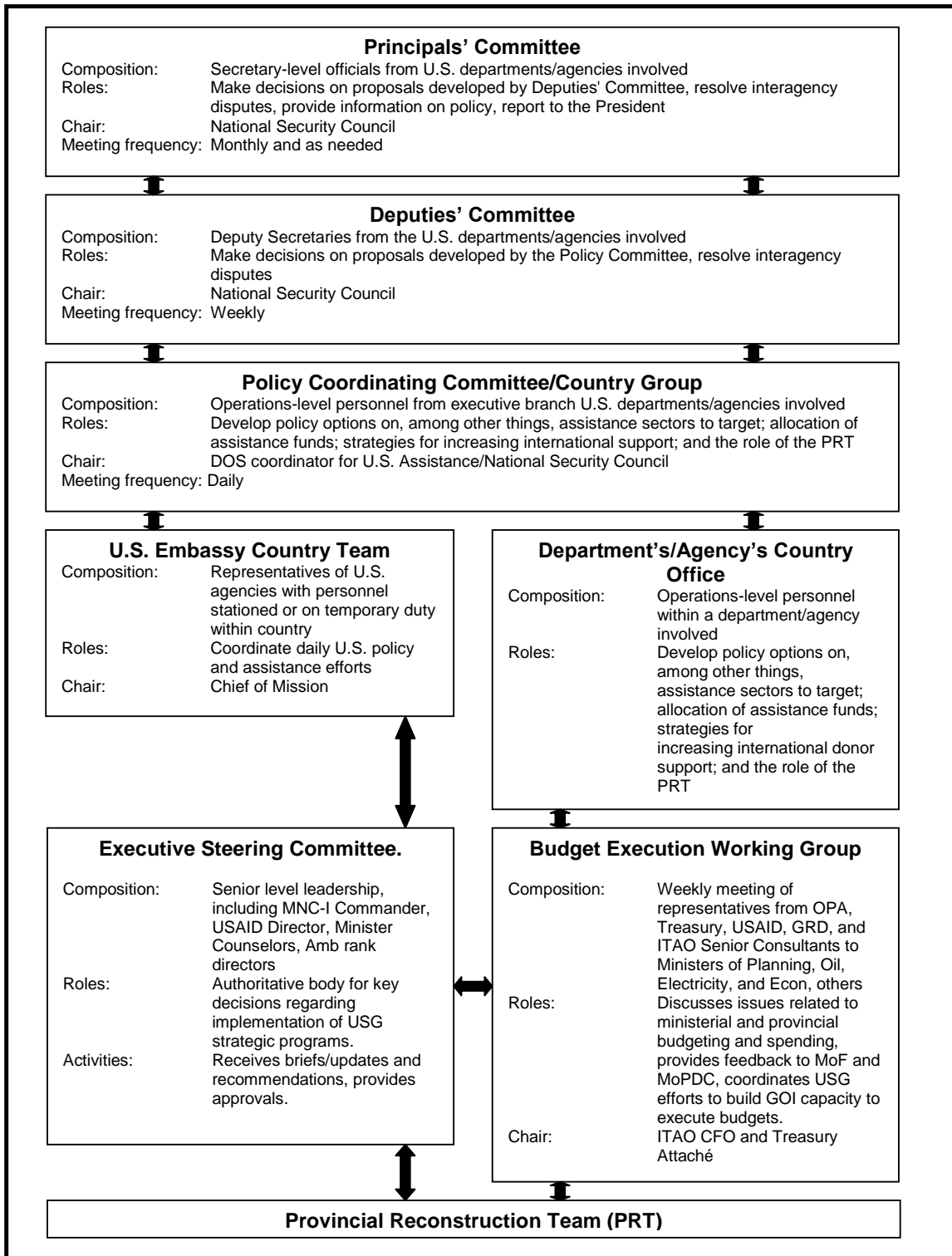


Figure 1: Interagency coordination mechanism

*Operations.* At the operational level, the interagency structure continues, though modified from its original structure. As initially implemented in 2005, the PRTs were

controlled at the operational level by the National Coordination Team (NCT). The NCT, like the PRTs themselves, was an interagency organization with a State Department civilian as Director and a senior military officer as Deputy Director.<sup>9</sup> With the change in circumstances since 2005, the Office of Provincial Affairs (OPA) replaced the NCT in May 2007 by.<sup>10</sup> The OPA has a civilian Director and Deputy Director, with the military assuming advisory and liaison roles and filling the occasional operational billet. With respect to PRT operations, the outlined portion of figure 2<sup>11</sup>, below, shows the current reporting and supervision for Iraqi PRTs.

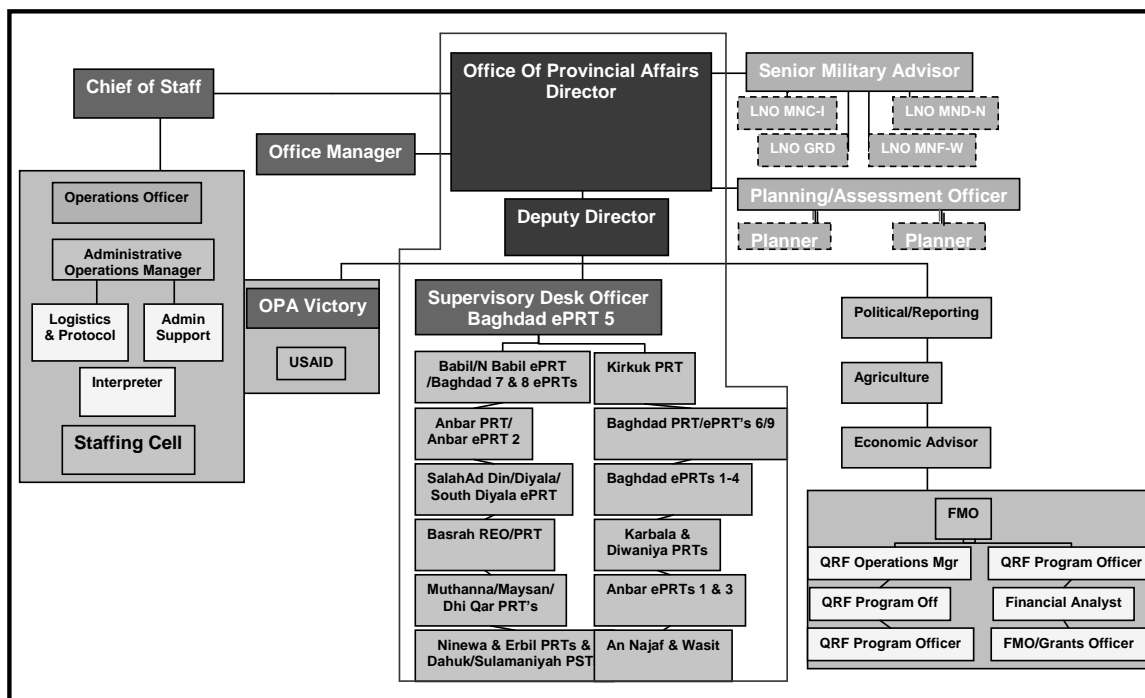


Figure 2: Theater/operational level organization above PRTs

Another development since the PRTs initially were implemented is the embedded PRT, or ePRT. As initially conceptualized, the relationship between PRTs and military units operating in the same areas was primarily one of coordination, with the military also often providing security. Since then, the concept of embedded PRTs developed. ePRTs are embedded with brigade or regimental combat teams (BCT or RCT), are

smaller, but remain largely independent, with a strong coordinating relationship with the BCT/RCT. Whereas the PRTs were, and are, focused primarily upon provincial level governance, the ePRTs are focused more upon the district and municipal level and upon supporting moderates, assisting in the military's counterinsurgency efforts and local governance issues.<sup>12</sup>

In each case, the PRT and the ePRT, the interagency approach to setting policy also is reflected in the structure of the PRTs. Each PRT and ePRT has a civilian team leader from the State Department. The PRTs also have a military deputy team leader.

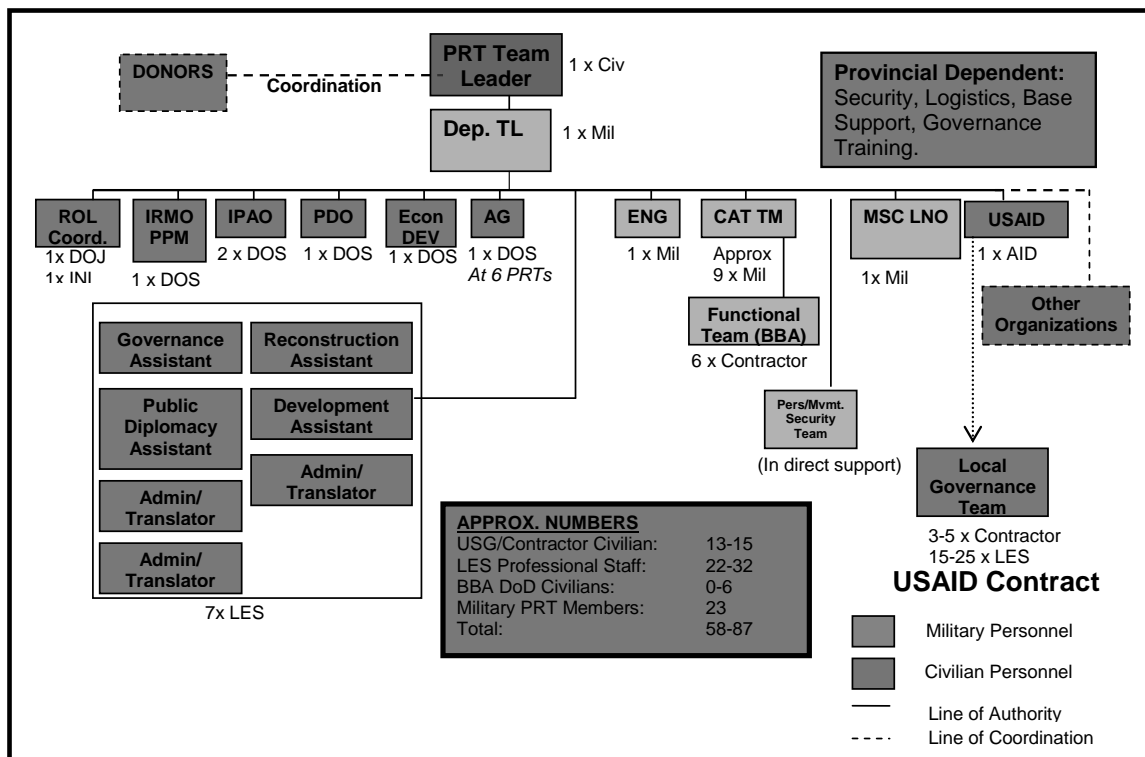


Figure 3: Generic PRT Organization

As is shown in figure 3, above, and figure 4<sup>13</sup>, below, the teams themselves also are combined civilian and military entities, with the military coming from all branches, though predominantly Army, and the civilians being a combination of employees and

contractors from the State Department, United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and other agencies. The bulk of the PRTs' capacity building function is performed by locally employed staff (LES), contractors with USAID.

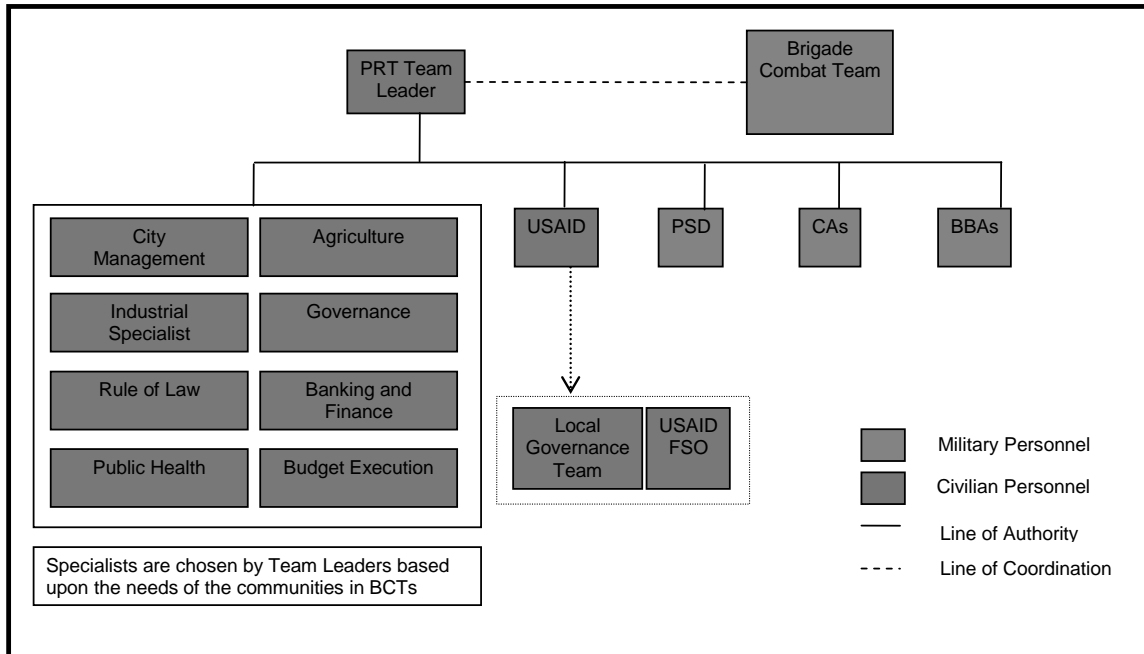


Figure 4: Generic ePRT Organization

### *Funding*

*Operational.* PRTs are expensive. Because the record keeping is at best imprecise, it is difficult to say just how much they cost. However, the range of figures available, from low to high, is significant. According to the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR), from their inception in October 2005 to “June 2007, the United States has provided \$1.934 billion to support the Iraq PRT Program, and DoD has requested \$937 million in additional funding for FY 2008.”<sup>14</sup> In its 2007 supplemental budget request, the State Department sought \$414 million for PRT operations.<sup>15</sup> In its 2008 budget request, the State Department requested \$679.2 million for PRT operations, including surge funding of \$449 million.<sup>16</sup> This is in marked



contrast with the figure reported by the Government Accounting Office in October 2008. In its report *Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan and Iraq*, the GAO reported that the State Department and Defense Department estimated it would cost \$21.1 million for PRT operating costs for fiscal year 2008.<sup>17</sup>

As with anything that is expensive, the question comes up, “who will pay for what?” This was a particularly vexing problem early in the life of PRTs. “In fact, during the first year of PRT operations in Iraq, the Departments of State and Defense could not agree on who would support them or how.”<sup>18</sup> Subsequently, this issue was largely resolved when DoD and DoS entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) in February 2007<sup>19</sup> providing, broadly, for DoS to provide, or to reimburse DoD for providing, “for all operational support and life support for PRTs.” According to the GAO, under the MOA

State reimburses DOD for some operating costs of 13 ePRTs and 12 of the 18 PRTs that are collocated with U.S. military units. According to DOD, the reimbursement amount is based on a quarterly estimate for each PRT member. State’s reimbursements cover DOD support for such items as facilities, logistics, basic utilities, lodging, food, water, and sanitation; however, they do not cover the costs of PRT security and transportation provided by the U.S. military. According to DOD, as of April 2008, State had reimbursed DOD \$11 million for operating costs—\$5.9 million for fiscal year 2007 and \$5.1 million for the first quarter of fiscal year 2008. State and DOD estimate a cost of \$21.1 million for PRT operating costs for fiscal year 2008. According to State, in addition to relying on the military, PRTs may rely on personal security contractors or a combination of the two to ensure the safety of their movement. According to the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, State obligated about \$125 million for PRT movement security between September 2005 and May 2008.<sup>20</sup>

*Programs/Projects.* Of course, the reason the operational costs are incurred in the first place is so PRTs can perform their mission of governance capacity building and reconstruction. The money for those projects comes from a myriad of sources, each

with their own special requirements for access, accounting and reporting. In Iraq, there are no fewer than nine separate sources for project funding, controlled by various agencies.

The foremost source of project funds has come from the Commanders' Emergency Response Program (CERP).<sup>21</sup> While there are limits to the purposes for which CERP funds can be used<sup>22</sup>, access to CERP funds is relatively easy, at least in terms of the administrative burden. Although its use requires quarterly reporting, it is DoD money and otherwise is accounted for much the same as Operating and Maintenance funds, a process with which most commanders are familiar.

However, there are other funding sources also. Figure 5<sup>23</sup>, below, sets forth the

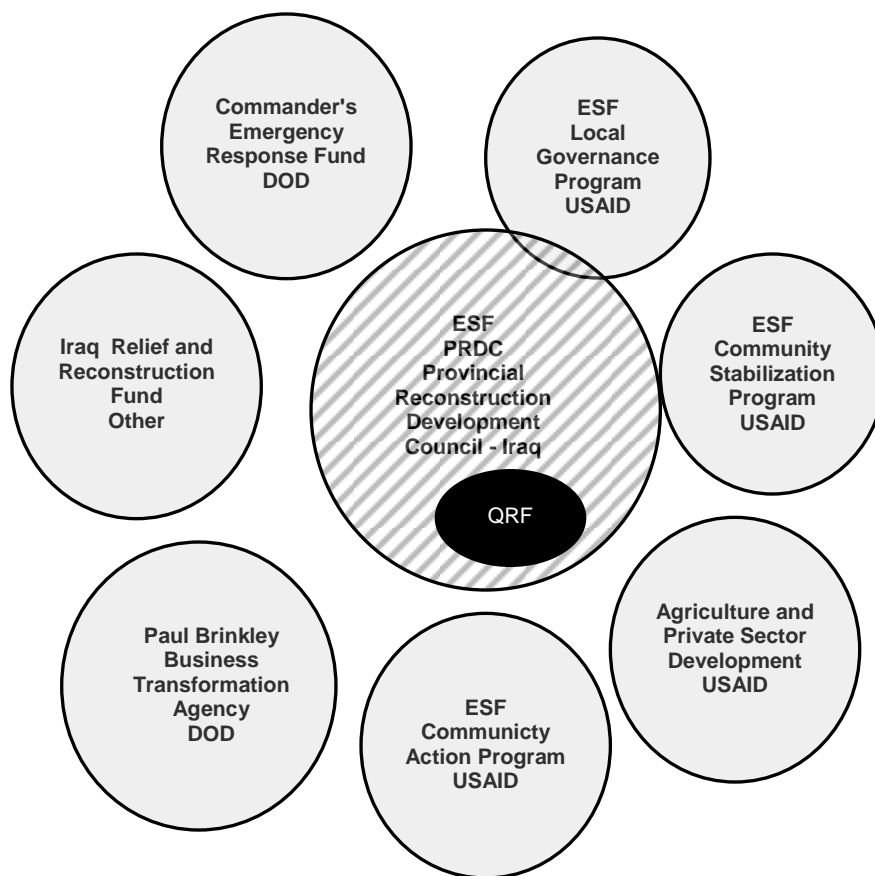


Figure 5: PRT project funding sources

additional sources of project funding, the controlling agency, and the PRTs' access to the funding. On the chart, PRTs have the greatest access to funding where the circles overlap, the degree of overlap showing the relative ease of access. They have some, but not direct, access where the circles touch. Such access is a matter of coordination and agreement between the PRT and the controlling agency. They have no access where the circles neither touch nor overlap.<sup>24</sup>

In each case of funding, the particular agency controlling the funds has its own agenda, both for use of the funds and politically, and each has its peculiar administrative requirements for accessing and accounting for the funds. The PRT is left in the middle, both trying to access project funds and attempting to coordinate with the various agencies to ensure the best use of funds in the PRTs' areas of responsibility.

*Staffing*

Staffing PRTs was, from the beginning, an issue. As originally conceived in

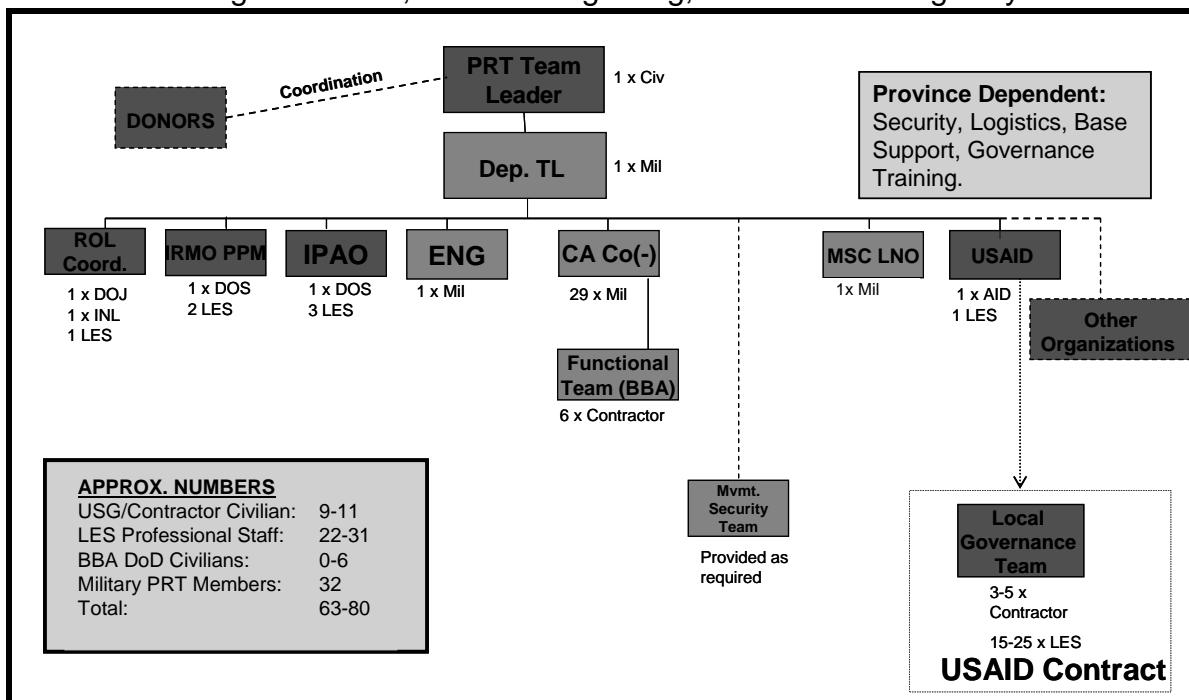


Figure 6: Nominal PRT as originally conceived

October 2005, the PRTs would be comprised of between 63 and 80 individuals, including a U.S. Army Civil Affairs Company minus consisting of about 29 soldiers, and a personnel movement security team as required consisting of up to 40 soldiers.<sup>25</sup>

Figure 6, above, shows the configuration of the PRTs as they were initially conceived. They were fairly robust, particularly on the military side, because of the need for Civil Affairs soldiers and the need for movement security, without which the PRT could not perform its mission. Figure 6 turned out largely to be a wish list.

Rule of Law was a critical role for the PRTs early in their existence. However, the PRTs had at most one Rule of Law Coordinator, some had none. This was due both to a lack of funding and to interagency competition. As it turned out, the Department of Justice could provide people, but had no money to support it. International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL), a State Department bureau, had the money, but could not provide people. The two did not work well together. The State Department bureaucracy proved particularly frustrating in trying to break the logjam. Army Judge Advocates General largely were unavailable both because MNC-I was unwilling to give up its JAGs, and because there was institutional reluctance from the JAG Corps to allow JAGs to become involved in "non-JAG roles."

The IPAO was an information officer. Most PRTs did not have one, having instead to rely upon State's public information officer and his staff at the Embassy. This was a slow and inefficient process.

No PRT had either the Civil Affairs assets envisioned or dedicated movement security that was anticipated. As to the Civil Affairs assets, maneuver commanders simply were unwilling to give up their Civil Affairs soldiers for the PRTs. Instead, a

variety of fixes were implemented, with no one PRT being quite like another. For example, in Kirkuk the CA Company was "on call." In Hilla, the CA Company devoted a Civil Affairs Planning Team - A (CAT-A) to the PRT. In Mosul, most of the CA Company was available to the PRT, but the PRT mission was simply one of several they had to perform.

Movement security was one of the biggest issues. There was no way for a PRT to succeed if it could not get out into the community. Each movement "outside the wire" required at least three vehicles, at least two with gunners. The PRT had to be able to conduct as many as three convoys at a time. The manpower requirement was significant, as can be seen in Figure 6. Maneuver commanders were understandably reluctant to give up that much fire power and mobility. In the end, a compromise was reached by giving the PRTs priority access to movement security, but not dedicating the assets to the PRTs.

There was a great deal of mistrust between the military and the State Department in terms of both the willingness and the ability of each to carry out its obligations. The concerns were well founded, but also exaggerated. The State Department saw the military trying to usurp the PRT role, and the military saw itself as having no choice because it was convinced State would not be able to produce either the numbers or caliber of participants required.

Figures 4 and 5 show the staffing as the PRTs eventually developed with, most notably, the much reduced CA and movement security presence.

## *Culture*

*"Why can't a woman be more like a man?"*

"A Hymn to Him," sung by Professor  
Henry Higgins in "My Fair Lady"

The culture clash between Iraqis and the coalition often seemed easier to deal with than the culture clash between the State and Defense Departments. This was true in 2005, and appears to remain true in 2008.<sup>26</sup> This is understandable. Each has a markedly different mission.

These two cultures are as alien as life forms from two competing planets, the warriors from Mars and the diplomats from Venus. Similar in many respects -professionalism, dedication and competence - Martians and Venutians often have an antagonistic relationship. They are generally polar opposites in character, in approach to problem solving, and in worldview. Recognizing and exploring these differences is the first step towards accepting them. Post-Cold War circumstances have pushed the two cultures together in an uncomfortable marriage of necessity.<sup>27</sup>

It is not the purpose of this paper to delve any deeper into the cultural differences between Defense and State. It is important, however, not simply to recognize it, but to address it. The differences, engendering mistrust, are a substantial roadblock to effective interagency action. It is not enough to wish that Martians were more like Venusians or vice versa, and it would be a phenomenal failure it were to happen. However, Martians and Venusians must learn to understand, if not speak, each other's language, to understand, as much as possible, the other's culture, and be able to adapt.

## Some Proposals to Overcome Road Blocks

### *Unity of Command and Planning*

Unity of command is a well-established concept, entrenched in American military practice since at least the Civil War.<sup>28</sup> It has been in American military doctrine since at least 1914, when it was noted as "a 'Combat Principle,' articulated in *Field Service Regulations* as such: 'Unity of command is essential to success. ... All troops assigned to the execution of a distinct tactical task must be placed under one command.'<sup>29</sup> By 1954 it had evolved into the doctrine we recognize today:

Unity of Command. The decisive application of full combat power requires unity of command. Unity of command results in unity of effort by coordinated action of all forces toward a common goal. Coordination may be achieved by direction or by cooperation. *It is best achieved by vesting a single commander with requisite authority.*<sup>30</sup>

Of course, unity of command is most admired by those in whom the command is vested. And, at least for Iraq PRTs, therein lies the rub. National Security Presidential Directive-44 (NSPD-44) vests primary authority for PRTs in the Secretary of State: "The Secretary of State shall coordinate *and lead* integrated United States Government efforts, involving all U.S. Departments and Agencies with relevant capabilities, to prepare, plan for, and conduct stabilization and reconstruction activities."<sup>31</sup> On the other hand, Department of Defense Directive 3000.05 also asserts primacy over such efforts. While recognizing the importance of combined and coordinated civil-military efforts, Defense states that it will take the lead: "The Department of Defense shall continue to *lead* and support the development of military-civilian teams."<sup>32</sup>

So, who has the lead? The House Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, suggests that "[t]he Departments of

Defense and State should unify leadership and command of Provincial Reconstruction Teams to match accountability with authority and to ensure unity of effort."<sup>33</sup> This is no answer, though. It is precisely the sort of vague, "they should play nice together" sort of recommendation that leads to no solution at all, fostering continuing lack of unity. The primary document is direction from the President. It states clearly that State is in the lead. It is time for State to do just that - lead.

Of course, to lead requires a plan. State, unfortunately, is not adept at planning.<sup>34</sup> Nonetheless, it is State's obligation to the nation and to the men and women serving on PRTs to develop a comprehensive and comprehensible national plan for PRTs, in cooperation and coordination with Defense and other relevant players, which also will allow for provincial idiosyncrasies. That plan should be developed by those with the best and most current knowledge of what is going on in Iraq - the people there, though, of course, with broad overarching guidance from State and *appropriate* review. If for some reason State is unwilling to allow those in Iraq to develop the plan, the only legitimate reason, it seems, would be lack of faith in their competence. If that is the case, they should not be there and should be replaced by people in whom such faith resides. The planning team must include capable military planners, Civil Affairs soldiers, and civilians from other relevant agencies, such as Justice, Agriculture and USAID. The plan must be put in place in short order, not subject to the endless second-guessing, hand-wringing and territorial markups that emanate ceaselessly from the bureaucrats in all agencies in Washington. Those developing the plan should have it as their main priority, not as a time filler, as seems so often the case.



### *Culture and Training*

Presently, State Department and some other agency participants in PRTs receive training at the State Department's Foreign Service Institute in Washington, D.C. This is a vast improvement over the beginning of the PRTs, when they received no training. The same is true of military participants. The problem, however, is that the two do not link up. If, as they are, the civilian and military members of PRTs are to work and live together, then they should train together. Civilian participants should participate in the military training at Fort Bragg, N.C., including the field exercise. There is no better way for civilians to obtain a quick acquaintance, if not familiarity, with the military mind-set. After the military training for deployment, military members of PRTs should be assigned for joint training at the Foreign Service Institute. Such joint training would ensure not only that the mission and roles communicated to all are the same, but both the military and the civilian participants will be exposed to the culture of the other in an environment that is not under stress. It also would help to have the training specifically include not just the different roles State (and other civilian agencies) and Defense play, but how they conduct their business and make decisions. It is taken for granted that such cross-cultural awareness is something that needs to be trained when dealing with the Iraqi and western cultures, but is entirely ignored when dealing with agency cultures.

Some progress has been made. There is now a five-day Iraq Familiarization Course and an follow-on five-day Iraq PRT Orientation Course conducted by the Foreign Service Institute, both of which are preceded by a five-day counter-threat course. The Iraq familiarization course is mandatory for all civilians assigned to Iraq

under Chief of Mission authority, and as of May 2008 the PRT course is mandatory for all civilians under Chief of Mission authority that are assigned to PRTs. However, at present there is little military attendance at the familiarization course, though military participation in the PRT course is significantly better.<sup>35</sup> That is due in large part to LTG William Caldwell, Commander of the Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth, emailing Division and Corps commanders regarding the importance of attending the training.<sup>36</sup> At least at the PRT training, military personnel assigned as Deputy PRT Leaders, Civil Affairs PRT leads, BCT Deputy Commanding Officers and Brigade Combat Team S-9s attend.<sup>37</sup>

All that said, the training should not take on a life of its own, as so often seems to be the case. What can be accomplished in a two or four weeks should not take six or eight weeks to complete. It should be concise and effective.

### *Funding*

The most brilliantly conceived plan to be carried out by the best trained individuals will come to naught if the money is not readily available to pay for it. There is no way around it, money talks. For PRTs to be effective, they require adequate and predictable funding for both sustainment and projects.

Nine separate sources of funding, each with its own bureaucratic requirements to access it and to account for it, and each coming from a different agency with its own agenda, is absurd. Whether it is a PRT or some other interagency effort, such a Byzantine process to fund the effort defies logic. Whether legislatively through Congress, or administratively through the executive branch, there needs to be developed a single source of funding which passes down through State, which has the

lead, to the PRTs. That funding should be tied to, and in an amount sufficient to execute, a well-conceived national plan, and to sustain the PRTs. However, it also must be flexible enough to permit the PRTs to respond to exigent circumstances. Of course, such flexibility also is an invitation to abuse, of which there has been far too much in Iraq already. Therefore, the funds must be regularly audited, likely not less than quarterly, to ensure they are being used wisely and for their intended purpose within the flexibility allowed.

Further, the use of other available funds, such as the Commanders Emergency Relief Program (CERP), or USAID money, should be coordinated with the PRTs to ensure there is not duplication of effort or conflicting priorities. The use of CERP funds can be coordinated directly with the PRTs since the PRTs will be privy to the national plan and their part in it and, therefore, can avoid duplication and conflict. Commanders are generally concerned with their own areas of operation, so coordinating the use of their funds with the PRTs' use of dedicated funds, will greatly increase the likelihood of synergies.

USAID, on the other hand, should concentrate on national level efforts, with any provincial and lower efforts, again, being coordinated through the PRTs.

One of the largest cost items for PRTs is payroll. In most cases, this should not be an issue. Defense will pay the soldiers (and perhaps the odd Defense contractor), and State will pay its civilian participants. A problem can arise with agencies that have much smaller numbers of participants. Harkening back to the situation referred to above where Justice had the people, but not the money, for Rule of Law Coordinators, and INL had the money, but not the people, the best remedy is, through the well-

developed plan, to anticipate the need for civilians from other agencies and to program them into those agencies budgets. Absent that, the flexibility referred to above will permit State to cover the occasional such cost, likely with the ability to recoup through inter-agency charges.

### *Staffing*

One of the primary roles of PRTs in Iraq is governance capacity building. In large measure, this role is executed by USAID contractors through its Local Governance Program. However, whether it is governance capacity, rule of law, or agricultural markets, it is critical that the right people be in place.

There is a common, and probably at least partly accurate, perception that part of the problem in staffing PRTs is that civilian agencies, and particularly the State Department, do not have sufficient expeditionary capacity.<sup>38</sup> Secretary of Defense Robert Gates has expressed concern about this lack of expeditionary capacity:

What is clear to me is that there is a need for a dramatic increase in spending on the civilian instruments of national security – diplomacy, strategic communications, foreign assistance, civic action, and economic reconstruction and development. Secretary Rice addressed this need in a speech at Georgetown University nearly two years ago. We must focus our energies beyond the guns and steel of the military, beyond just our brave soldiers, sailors, Marines, and airmen. We must also focus our energies on the other elements of national power that will be so crucial in the coming years.<sup>39</sup>

While that lack of capacity certainly is viewed by many as a serious issue, and rightly so, there is a more fundamental question. Should the State Department be the agency providing the bulk of the civilian members of PRTs? In the opinion of at least one experienced Iraq hand, the answer is a resounding no. Manuel Miranda was the Director of the Office of Legislative Statecraft at the

U.S. Embassy in Baghdad from 2007 to 2008. In a memorandum to

Ambassador Ryan Crocker upon Miranda's departure from Iraq, he wrote:

After a year at the Embassy, it is my general assessment that the State Department and the Foreign Service is not competent to do the job that they have undertaken in Iraq. It is not that the men and women of the Foreign Service and other State Department bureaus are not intelligent and hard-working, it is simply that they are not equipped to handle the job that the State Department has undertaken.

...

Foreign Service officers, with ludicrously little management experience by any standard other than your own, are not equipped to manage programs, hundreds of millions in funds, and expert human capital assets needed to assist the Government of Iraq to stand up. It is apparent that, other than diplomacy, your only expertise is your own bureaucracy, which inherently makes State Department personnel unable to think outside the box or beyond the paths they have previously taken.

...

Most notable, there is a near complete lack of strategic forethought or synchronization between Embassy staffing and program initiatives and funding. This is also true of PRTs. Only the military takes seriously the Joint Campaign and its metrics of achievement, while State Department leaders use it only when advantageous.

Overall, the lack of coordination and leadership in key areas (including Rule of Law activity, PRT's, and others), upon which the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction has repeatedly commented, is real and pervasive.<sup>40</sup>

Given this assessment, it might be that the capacity building role should not be led by State to begin with. This is an assumption that should be reexamined. However, at this point the controlling direction comes from NSPD-44, and the lead clearly belongs to State.

It is important that PRTs be staffed with the right people. It might be that in most cases those people will not come from the State Department. Regardless of the agency from which the civilian participants come, however, Secretary Gates' concern is well founded. The problem is threefold: first, getting the right people there, second, getting

them there in the right numbers, and third, getting them there on time, wherever “there” might be.

*Military.* For the military, only the first of these is a real issue. Because it has the ability to order military members to active duty involuntarily and it owns the means to get those members where it wants them, getting the right numbers where they need to be on time is not a significant issue. However, in terms of PRTs, the requirements are relatively specific and specialized. The military, particularly in the reserves and national guard, has an impressive variety and level of expertise in what otherwise would be viewed as civilian specialties. The problem is finding them and accessing them in a timely manner.

In 2002, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, through the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, published a report outlining the need for the Department of Defense to track civilian skills in the reserves, and providing a number of recommendations.<sup>41</sup> Unfortunately, since 2002, Defense has done little to follow the recommendations in the report. In early 2008, the Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, issued yet another directive to the Defense Department and its agencies entitled “Building Increased Civilian Deployment Capacity.”<sup>42</sup> However, it (1) applies only the Defense Department civilian employees,<sup>43</sup> and (2) even within its limited scope says nothing about developing an accessible data base of civilian skills and experience. Such a data base needs to be mandated, it needs to be consistent across the services, and it needs to be enforced.

*Civilian.* As for the civilian agencies, they are unable to address any of the issues involved. As to the first issue, getting the right people, the problem is the same

as for the military. There is no database in any of the agencies that will allow them to access a comprehensive listing of civilian skills and experiences. Even the Department of Defense has no such data base. Certainly it and the State Department, at the very least, should have them.

For civilian agencies, the second and third issues are related. Even if individuals with the requisite skills can be found, they can only be sent into areas such as Iraq and Afghanistan if they volunteer. That, in the past, has defeated being able to staff PRTs with the right skills in the right numbers and in a timely manner. There were a number of occasions in 200-2006 when the State Department personnel rotated off a PRT and there was no one to replace them because the State Department did not allow for overlapping tours, what the military calls a relief in place, or RIP. The result was an inability to conduct an effective transition and, of course, understaffing.

In addition to a readily accessible database of civilian skills and experience, then, civilian agencies need, as a minimal second step, to include a database of every employee willing to deploy voluntarily to foreign trouble spots in which the United States is engaged in capacity building. To encourage such volunteerism, the civilian agencies should at the least make such service a positive discriminator in selection for promotion and assignment.

More to the point, though, the State Department in particular should not be relying exclusively upon volunteers to staff such critical position. Again, assuming State is the proper agency from which to draw such civilian PRT members to begin with, State should have the ability to assign the best people available, even involuntarily, to such positions. State's and USAID's mission is:

Advance freedom for the benefit of the American people and the international community by helping to build and sustain a more democratic, secure, and prosperous world composed of well-governed states that respond to the needs of their people, reduce widespread poverty, and act responsibly within the international system.<sup>44</sup>

The mission requires foreign *service*. Service may require serving in locations that are unattractive or even dangerous. It is, after all, the *foreign* service. If an American corporation decides it has a need for an employee's skills in Denver, but the employee lives in Baltimore, that corporation is free to transfer the employee and, if the employee declines, to wish that employee well in his or her next employment. If some civilian agencies have similar requirements, they may take similar action, for example transferring an FBI agent from Los Angeles to New York if that is where the need is.

However, for some reason, the State Department either does not have the ability to effect such involuntary service, or is simply disinclined to. The result is a consistent inability to meet staffing needs in a timely manner. Where qualified volunteers exist in sufficient numbers, as seems to be the case now,<sup>45</sup> the need to involuntarily assign is less of an issue. But early in developing such interagency organizations in hazardous areas, there is not the same wealth of available volunteers.

Finally, consistent with the interagency nature of PRTs, State, Defense and the other agencies need to be communicating with each other regularly about the staffing requirements of the PRTs, anticipated openings, and the availability of personnel to fill the openings to avoid gaps in filling positions.

### Conclusion

The PRTs in Iraq were, from the beginning, interagency creatures. Nonetheless, the interagency coordination and cooperation in the beginning were far from acceptable.



Though the interagency cooperation, from funding to staffing, has improved, it was much delayed. Even with the improvement, interagency cooperation needs to improve even more.

As long as lead agency responsibility resides in the State Department, State needs to exercise its leadership role and the Defense Department needs to recognize and perform its supporting role. Staffing from both Departments needs to be timely, with the right mix of skills and experience in the right numbers.

Training for PRTs needs to be a truly interagency effort, with State and other agencies participating in appropriate military training, and, in particular, military members participating in suitable State Department training. The training needs to develop technical competence and cultural interoperability in advance of employment.

Funding needs to be unitary, executed through the State Department, and to be coordinated in their areas of responsibility by PRTs. The funding needs to be tied flexibly to specific projects, with ample authority for adjusting to meet changing priorities, responsibility for affecting mission accomplishment, and accountability for proper stewardship of resources.

Staffing needs to be timely, with the right mix of skills and experience in the right numbers at the right time.

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<sup>1</sup> United States Joint Forces Command J7 Pamphlet, Version 1.0, *U.S. Government Draft Planning Framework for Reconstruction, Stabilization, and Conflict Transformation*, (Norfolk, VA: United States Joint Forces Command, 1 December 2005), 4, available at [http://www.js.pentagon.mil/doctrine/training/crs\\_pam051205.pdf](http://www.js.pentagon.mil/doctrine/training/crs_pam051205.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Guidance for the Development of the Force* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, May 2008).

<sup>3</sup> Office of the Secretary of Defense, *DoD Directive 3000.05, Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations*, para 5.3.2 (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, 28 November 2005), 5-6.

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<sup>4</sup> Center for Army Lessons Learned, *Provincial Reconstruction Team Playbook* (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: Department of Defense, September 2007) 1, available at <http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/call/docs/07-34/toc.asp>.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Embassy Baghdad Press Release, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) Fact Sheet* (Baghdad, Iraq: U.S. Department of State, March 20, 2008), available at [http://iraq.usembassy.gov/pr\\_01222008b.html](http://iraq.usembassy.gov/pr_01222008b.html).

<sup>6</sup> Memorandum of Understanding between Department of State and Department of Defense (February 22, 2007).

<sup>7</sup> Foreign Service Institute (FSI) PRT training power point, received from FSI trainer Gregory Bates, October 16, 2008. Mr. Bates was the original senior State Department designer and implementer of the Iraq PRTs, and Director of the National Coordination Team (NCT) and the author was the original senior military designer and implementer of the Iraq PRTs, and Deputy Director of the NCT.

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Government Accountability Office, *PRT Playbook* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Accountability Office, September 1991), note 4, supra, 23 (taken from U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Afghanistan Reconstruction: Despite Some Progress, Deteriorating Security and Other Obstacles Continue to Threaten Achievement of U.S. Goals, Report 05-742* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Accountability Office, July 2005)) available at <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d05742.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> The author was the senior military member of the MNF-I team that designed the Iraqi PRTs in August and September 2005, and was Deputy Director of the NCT from October 2005 to May 2006.

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan and Iraq*, Report to Congress, GAO-09-86R (Washington, D.C., October 1, 2008) 1, 2 (hereinafter "*PRTs in Afghanistan and Iraq*"), available at <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d0986r.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> Figure 2 is taken from the Office of Provincial Affairs, Provincial Reconstruction Team briefing of October 2008, obtained from the OPA through the Civil Military Operations Directorate of the Multi-National Force-Iraq in November 2008 (hereinafter "OPA PRT briefing").

<sup>12</sup> PRTs in Afghanistan and Iraq, 5; U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations, *Agency Stovepipes vs Strategic Agility: Lessons We need to Learn from Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Iraq and Afghanistan* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. House of Representatives, April 2008), 15 (hereinafter "*Agency Stovepipes*") available at [http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/Reports/PRT\\_Report.pdf](http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/Reports/PRT_Report.pdf).

<sup>13</sup> OPA PRT briefing.

<sup>14</sup> Before the United States House of Representatives, Committee on the Budget, *The Costs of Military Operations and Reconstruction in Iraq and Afghanistan* (Washington, D.C.: July 31, 2007) (Testimony of Stuart W. Bowen, Jr., Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction), 4, available at [http://www.sigir.mil/reports/pdf/testimony/SIGIR\\_Testimony\\_07-013T.pdf](http://www.sigir.mil/reports/pdf/testimony/SIGIR_Testimony_07-013T.pdf). (the report does not break down the appropriated and requested funds between operational funds and project funds)

<sup>15</sup> Bureau of Resource Management, United States Department of State, *FY 2008 Budget in Brief* (Washington, D.C.: February 5, 2007) available at <http://www.state.gov/s/d/rm/rls/bib/2008/html/79744.htm>. The budget summary states:

*Provincial Reconstruction Teams - \$414,089,000*

These supplemental funds will be used to stand up new PRTs and to support and augment existing PRTs through the remainder of FY 2007. Specifically, the funds will cover the costs of personnel and support to the extent not covered by other agencies. Funding will also cover security costs for the stand-alone PRTs that will not be co-located with a brigade combat team or on a forward operating base.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

*Provincial Reconstruction Teams - \$679,187,000*

The FY 2008 estimate for PRT costs is \$679.2 million, including surge funding of \$449 million. Funds will be used to stand up new PRTs and to support and augment existing PRTs. The funds requested will be used to cover the costs of salaries, life and other operational support, offices and housing (and furnishings for both), vehicles, communications, and leases not covered by other agencies. This funding also will cover security costs for the stand-alone PRTs that will not be co-located with a brigade combat team or on a forward operating base.

<sup>17</sup> *PRTs in Afghanistan and Iraq*, 14.

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<sup>18</sup> *Agency Stovepipes*, 15. The author experienced this first hand. In the process of attempting to relocate the Mosul PRT from FOB Courage to FOB Marez at the Mosul Regional Airport, the significant issue of workspace and living accommodations arose, including who/how to pay for it. Both MNF-I and State were tasked with participating in and making the PRTs work. Both, in that respect, had the same mission. The Defense Department had millions of dollars at its disposal, including money that could have been spent to provide facilities (either by constructing them or by bringing in trailers); the State department not so much. Nonetheless, in a meeting with MNC-I that included, as it should, representatives of the Judge Advocate General's (JAG) shop, in apparently insurmountable barrier was raised to spending DoD money that might be used by, among others, the DoS for capacity building because of concerns whether spending the money in that way would constitute a "purpose violation" of the Antideficiency Act. Purpose violations perhaps are the most common type of violation of the Act. 31 U.S.C. 1301(a), commonly known as the Purpose Statute, states: "Appropriations shall be applied only to the objects for which the appropriations were made except as otherwise provided by law." Obligating funds for a purpose other than that for which the funds were appropriated is a "purpose violation".

<sup>19</sup> The MOA supplemented an earlier, narrower MOA between the Commander, MNF-I and the Chief of Mission, Iraq, regarding PRT security. The full text of the MOA is at Appendix A to this article.

<sup>20</sup> *PRTs in Afghanistan and Iraq*, 15.

<sup>21</sup> Initially, CERP was for the use of commanders to benefit the Iraqi people and encourage stabilization. Initial resources came from millions of dollars in Ba'athist Party cash discovered by U.S. forces. It's use by the Multi-National Force was authorized and regulated by CJTF-7 FRAGO 89 which, among other things, set forth broadly the purposes for which it could be used:

the building, repair, reconstitution, and reestablishment of the social and material infrastructure in Iraq. This includes but is not limited to: water and sanitation infrastructure, food production and distribution, healthcare, education, tele-communications, projects in furtherance of economic, financial, management improvements, transportation, and initiatives which further restore the rule of law and effective governance, irrigation systems installation or restoration, day laborers to perform civic cleaning, purchase or repair of civic support vehicles, and repairs to civic or cultural facilities;

and could not be used:

direct or indirect benefit of CJTF-7 forces, to include coalition forces; entertaining Iraqi population, weapons buy-back or rewards programs, buying firearms, ammunition, or removing unexploded ordnance, duplicating services available through municipal governments, supporting individuals or private businesses (exceptions possible, such as repairing damage caused by coalition forces), and salaries for the civil work force, pensions, or emergency civil service worker payments.

Beginning in FY2004, CERP was sourced from appropriated funds, originally in an amount not to exceed \$180,000,000. Martins, Mark S., "The Commander's Emergency Response Program," *Joint Forces Quarterly* 37 (2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2005): 47-48, 50.

<sup>22</sup> For example, CERP funds cannot be used for salaries of local government officials, or the training, equipping or operating costs of Iraqi security forces. *Agency Stovepipes*, 22.

<sup>23</sup> Chart prepared for U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations for joint DoD, DoS and USAID briefing, taken from *Agency Stovepipes*, 23.

<sup>24</sup> *Agency Stovepipes*, 22.

<sup>25</sup> The large number of personnel for movement security was the product of two things: the requirements of the Regional Security office of State's Bureau of Diplomatic Security, which were much more restrictive than military requirements, and the requirement that at least three missions "outside the wire" be able to be conducted simultaneously. Since convoys required at least three uparmored humvees, each requiring a crew of three (driver, vehicle commander and up gunner), each convoy would require at least nine soldiers. With twenty-seven soldiers pulling convoy duty at any time, and allowing for replacements for soldiers sick, on leave or otherwise unable to participate, the number reached forty. Planning considerations used by the author and his team in designing PRTs for Iraq.

<sup>26</sup> *Agency Stovepipes*, 25 (quotation from Sharon Williams, USDA, served in Iraq and Afghanistan 2006-2008). This was also the author's experience in 2005-2006.

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<sup>27</sup> Rosemary Hansen and Rickey L. Rife, *Defense is from Mars, State is from Venus, Improving Communications and Promoting National Security*, Strategy Research Project (Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College, 1 June 1998), 3 (hereinafter "*Defense is from Mars*").

<sup>28</sup> Ian Hope, *Unity of Command in Afghanistan: A Forsaken Principle of War*, Carlisle Papers in Security Strategy (Carlisle Barracks: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, November 2008), 1 and note 6.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, citing War Department, Office of the Chief of Staff, *Field Service Regulations*, U.S. Army, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1914, pp. 67-68, in Article V, Combat Principles.

<sup>30</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *Field Service Regulations—Operations, Field Manual 100-5* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, 1954), 25-27.

<sup>31</sup> NSPD-44 provides, in pertinent part:

Responsibilities of the Department of State

Need for Coordinated U.S. Efforts. To achieve maximum effect, a focal point is needed (i) to coordinate and strengthen efforts of the United States Government to prepare, plan for, and conduct reconstruction and stabilization assistance and related activities in a range of situations that require the response capabilities of multiple United States Government entities and (ii) to harmonize such efforts with U.S. military plans and operations. The relevant situations include complex emergencies and transitions, failing states, failed states, and environments across the spectrum of conflict, particularly those involving transitions from peacekeeping and other military interventions. The response to these crises will include among others, activities relating to internal security, governance and participation, social and economic well-being, and justice and reconciliation.

Coordination. The Secretary of State shall coordinate *and lead* integrated United States Government efforts, involving all U.S. Departments and Agencies with relevant capabilities, to prepare, plan for, and conduct stabilization and reconstruction activities. The Secretary of State *shall coordinate* such efforts with the Secretary of Defense to ensure harmonization with any planned or ongoing U.S. military operations across the spectrum of conflict. Support relationships among elements of the United States Government will depend on the particular situation being addressed.

(emphasis added) Available at <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nspd/nspd-44.html>.

<sup>32</sup> DOD Directive 3000.05 provides, in pertinent part:

4.4. Integrated civilian and military efforts are key to successful stability operations.

Whether conducting or supporting stability operations, the Department of Defense shall be prepared to work closely with relevant U.S. Departments and Agencies, foreign governments and security forces, global and regional international organizations (hereafter referred to as "International Organizations"), U.S. and foreign nongovernmental organizations (hereafter referred to as "NGOs"), and private sector individuals and for-profit companies (hereafter referred to as "Private Sector").

4.5. Military-civilian teams are a critical U.S. Government stability operations tool. The Department of Defense shall continue to *lead* and support the development of military-civilian teams.

(emphasis added) Available at <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/300005p.pdf>.

<sup>33</sup> *Agency Stovepipes*, 35.

<sup>34</sup> *Defense is from Mars*, 4, 7, 11. A particularly apt quote noted by the authors, from Robert Beecroft, former Charge in Bosnia, put it best. "The military wants a roadmap before they start the journey, the foreign service officer gets in the car, starts driving and then says, "OK—who has the compass?"

<sup>35</sup> Gregory Bates, Acting Director, Stability Operation Division, School of Professional and Area Studies, Foreign Service Institute, personal email to the author, December 31, 2008 (hereinafter "Bates email").

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> *Agency Stovepipes*, 33.

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<sup>39</sup> Secretary of State Robert M. Gates, Landon Lecture, Kansas State University, 26 November 2007. The lecture is published in full in *Military Review* (January-February 2008):2 (quoted portion at 8), available at <http://usacac.army.mil/CAC/milreview/English/JanFeb08/GatesEngJanFeb08.pdf>.

<sup>40</sup> Manuel Miranda, Director, Office of Legislative Statecraft, United States Embassy, Baghdad, Iraq, "Departure Assessment of Embassy Baghdad," memorandum for Ambassador Ryan Crocker, Baghdad, Iraq, 5 February 2008.

<sup>41</sup> U.S Department of the Army, *Reserve Component Civilian Occupation Information Final Report: DoD Actions Needed to Better Manage Reserve Component Civilian Occupation Information* (Washington, D.C.: U.S Department of the Army, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, December 2002), available at <http://www.defenselink.mil/ra/documents/rccoi.pdf>.

<sup>42</sup> David S.C. Chu, Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, "Building Increased Civilian Deployment Capacity," memorandum for Secretaries of the Military Departments and others, Washington, D.C., February 12, 2008, available at <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/pr080212capacity.pdf>.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid. The title of the policy attached to the memorandum is "Department of Defense Building Increased Civilian Deployment Capacity DoD Civilian Employees Who Volunteer for Deployment to Iraq or Afghanistan Policy Guidance."

<sup>44</sup> The United States Department of State Home Page, available at <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/86291.pdf>.

<sup>45</sup> Bates email. "[T]here were more bidders for the FSO [Foreign Service Officer] positions for next summer than there were positions open, and the 3161 positions have stayed pretty much filled."