



# Provincial Reconstruction Teams

*Comparing the American, British and Canadian Models*

Frederic Labarre  
*Royal Military College of Canada*

The scientific or technical validity of this Contract Report is entirely the responsibility of the Contractor and the contents do not necessarily have the approval or endorsement of Defence R&D Canada.

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**Defence R&D Canada**  
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Strategic Analysis Section



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## **Defence R&D Canada – CORA**

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## **Abstract**

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This study is a descriptive analysis of the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) concept as applied by Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States in Afghanistan and in Iraq. The aim of this study is to identify the commonalities across respective experiences so as to inform doctrine revision and force development. The study begins with a comparison of the three countries' experiences in Afghanistan and establishes preliminary conclusions based on these experiences. It then examines the American and British application of the concept in Iraq, and establishes corresponding conclusions. Finally the paper discusses the most frequently mentioned challenges of PRT operations in Afghanistan and in Iraq. A bibliography of the works consulted follows this study.

## **Résumé**

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L'étude ici présentée consiste en une analyse descriptive du concept d'équipe provinciale de reconstruction (EPR) qu'ont mis en application le Canada, le Royaume-Uni et les États-Unis en Afghanistan et en Irak. L'étude vise à trouver les similitudes entre les expériences de chacun de manière à faciliter la révision de la doctrine et le développement des forces. Nous commençons en comparant les expériences des trois pays en Afghanistan à partir desquelles nous formulons ensuite des conclusions préliminaires. Nous examinons ensuite la manière dont les Américains et les Britanniques ont appliqué le concept en Irak et nous présentons les conclusions que nous en tirons. Enfin, nous exposons les problèmes les plus fréquemment rencontrés par les EPR lors d'opérations en Afghanistan et en Irak. La bibliographie des ouvrages consultés est présentée à la fin du document.

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## Executive summary

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### Provincial Reconstruction Teams: Comparing the American, British and Canadian Models

Frederic Labarre; DRDC CORA CR 2011-082; Defence R&D Canada – CORA; June 2011.

**Introduction:** This is a descriptive analysis of the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) concept as applied by Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States in Afghanistan and in Iraq. The aim of this study is to identify the commonalities between the respective experiences so as to inform doctrine and force development. The conclusion includes a discussion of the most frequently mentioned challenges of PRT operations. A bibliography of the works consulted follows this study.

**Results:** On the whole the PRT seems to be a successful attempt at formalizing civil-military relations and activities in the field. This conclusion is valid despite the lack of universal levels of operational success. PRTs have helped formalise CIMIC in the field, and are confronted with the need to produce results that are measurable. Performance and effectiveness evaluation remains a crucial element of PRT validity as a concept, but this remains true for all military operations conducted under the counter-insurgency campaign theme.

Key points drawn from the analysis:

- PRT organization and composition tends towards a 1:3 civilian-to-military ratio, with total personnel numbers averaging around 300. US PRTs are military dominated in Afghanistan, and more and more so in Iraq. Canadian and UK PRTs have stronger civilian representation, with the majority of project funding coming from aid agencies.
- There is a broad acknowledgement that mission statements have to be clear and unambiguous, and must frame the PRT precisely within a COIN strategy. To achieve this, the countries reviewed have each developed coordination and policy-making methods that are now in varying stages of institutionalization. So far the US trails this initiative, with different departments struggling to find the mechanisms that will achieve commonality of purpose and unity of command. Canada has adopted a middle approach with '1Canada' as a model of interaction which finds some departmental institutionalization. The United Kingdom, meanwhile, has created a new agency to harmonize the diplomatic, defence and development components of security and stabilization operations.
- Project management focuses on short term projects, especially in Afghanistan. Project management is dependent upon the security situation and development needs. Not surprisingly, the evidence suggests a correlation between lesser security and greater emphasis on short-term projects. Typically short civilian rotations also affect this trend. The UK has experimented with a mix of short term and long term projects in Iraq. In all cases, the intent has been to relinquish the humanitarian space to locals and to NGOs to continue development and reconstruction work. One can say that this objective has been

implemented in Iraq, and is incomplete in Afghanistan, although the status of rebuilding of the Afghanistan National Forces (ANF) is proceeding apace, which would ultimately lead to local ownership of security.

- Harmonious intra-PRT civil-military relations seem to depend on a common understanding of the role of the PRT in theatre, about the manner of integrating security, governance and development activities, and clear lines of national authority. Unsurprisingly, the most frequent suggestion to achieve commonality of thought, purpose, and action is to have a civilian-military team undergo pre-deployment training together, stay in theatre for the same amount of time, and develop plans of operations that reconciles funding and authority lines.
- While all PRTs can be considered multinational by the nature of their operations in the host country, two have been identified as purely multinational: the Canadian Kandahar PRT and the British Basra PRT in Iraq. The multiplicity of chains of commands that result does not necessarily result in disunity of command, as there is evidence that mechanisms were put in place to enable multinational PRTs to share funding sources.
- While the literature calls for more civilian input, civilian leadership of the PRTs has not automatically or always met with operational success. It must be said that the leadership by civilians is more prominent in Iraq than in Afghanistan, but the establishment of civilian leadership in Iraq also coincided with the rise of the counterinsurgency campaign in that theatre. It is therefore unfair to qualify PRT performance based on its association with civilian leadership.
- In nearly all cases, PRTs are associated with a parent manoeuvre unit. The military component of a PRT exists primarily for force protection and host nation security force training. However, it is clear that only military components of PRTs can do stabilization, development or reconstruction work in hostile 'denied area' conditions. In addition, serious deterioration of the security environment normally requires the manoeuvre unit to restore conditions to the point where civilian activities can be resumed.
- The fear expressed by NGOs and International Organizations (IO) involved in humanitarian and development activities that the PRTs will crowd out the humanitarian space and militarize aid is a concern that is voiced throughout the literature. Although it should be the occasion for another research, insurgency literature suggests that terrorists would target NGO workers anyway, regardless of the existence or the civil-military nature of a PRT.

# Sommaire

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## Provincial Reconstruction Teams: Comparing the American, British and Canadian Models

Frederic Labarre; DRDC CORA CR 2011-082; R & D pour la défense Canada – CORA; Juin 2011.

**Introduction:** L'étude ici présentée consiste en une analyse descriptive du concept d'équipe provinciale de reconstruction (EPR) qu'ont mis en application le Canada, le Royaume-Uni et les États-Unis en Afghanistan et en Irak. L'étude vise à trouver les similitudes entre les expériences de chacun de manière à faciliter la révision de la doctrine et le développement des forces. En conclusion, nous exposons les problèmes les plus fréquemment rencontrés par les EPR lors d'opérations en Afghanistan et en Irak. La bibliographie des ouvrages consultés est présentée à la fin du document.

**Résultats:** Dans l'ensemble, le concept d'EPR semble avoir porté ses fruits en ce qui a trait à l'officialisation des relations et des activités civilo-militaires sur le terrain. Malgré l'absence d'un système universel pour mesurer le succès d'une opération, cette conclusion n'en demeure pas moins valide. Les EPR ont contribué à l'officialisation de la coopération civilo-militaire (COCIM) sur le terrain et devaient produire des résultats mesurables. L'évaluation du rendement et de l'efficacité est un outil essentiel pour vérifier la validité de l'EPR en tant que concept; cela est aussi vrai pour toutes les opérations militaires menées dans le cadre d'une campagne anti-insurrectionnelle.

Voici les principaux points qui se dégagent de l'analyse :

- On observe généralement dans la composition des EPR un ratio civil-militaire de 1:3 et un effectif moyen d'environ 300 personnes. En Afghanistan, les EPR des États-Unis sont surtout composées de militaires, une prédominance encore plus marquée en Irak. Les EPR canadiennes et britanniques, quant à elles, sont plus fortement composées de civils et la majorité des fonds qu'elles reçoivent proviennent d'organismes d'aide.
- Il est largement reconnu que les énoncés de mission doivent être formulés clairement, sans ambiguïtés, et qu'ils doivent indiquer précisément quel sera le rôle de l'EPR dans le cadre d'une stratégie anti-insurrectionnelle. Pour ce faire, chacun des pays a élaboré des méthodes de coordination et de formulation de politiques qui en sont maintenant à différentes phases de leur processus d'institutionnalisation. À l'heure actuelle, les É.-U. accusent du retard concernant cette initiative, puisque certains ministères éprouvent de la difficulté à déterminer les mécanismes appropriés pour harmoniser leurs objectifs et leurs méthodes de commandement. De son côté, le Canada a adopté une démarche modérée en prenant le « 1Canada » comme modèle d'interaction, ce qui lui a permis d'atteindre un certain degré d'institutionnalisation ministérielle. Entre-temps, le Royaume-Uni a mis sur pied un nouvel organisme qu'il a chargé d'harmoniser les composantes liées à la diplomatie, à la défense et au développement des opérations de sécurité et de stabilisation.

- En ce qui concerne la gestion de projets, on mise davantage sur le court terme, plus particulièrement en Afghanistan. La façon dont sont gérés les projets dépend de la situation sur le plan de la sécurité et des besoins en matière de développement. Sans surprise, on note que, plus les efforts sont mis dans les projets à court terme, moins le niveau de sécurité est élevé. D'ordinaire, cette tendance est aussi influencée par les rotations de courte durée du personnel civil. En Irak, le Royaume-Uni a mené des projets tant de courte que de longue durée. Dans tous les cas, son intention était de laisser la composante humanitaire aux autorités locales et aux ONG afin de concentrer ses efforts sur les travaux de développement et de reconstruction. Contrairement à l'Irak, cet objectif n'a été que partiellement atteint en Afghanistan, quoique la reconstruction des Forces de sécurité nationale afghanes allant bon train, on se dirige inévitablement vers une prise de contrôle de la sécurité par les autorités locales.
- Le développement de relations civilo-militaires harmonieuses au sein d'une EPR semble dépendre du niveau de compréhension commune de ses membres par rapport au rôle de de l'équipe dans le théâtre, de la manière dont sont menées les activités de sécurité, de gouvernance et de développement, et de l'établissement de voies hiérarchiques nationales claires. Sans surprise, la solution la plus fréquemment suggérée pour que tous soient sur la même longueur d'onde, tant sur le plan théorique que pratique, est de faire en sorte que les membres des équipes civilo-militaires participent ensemble à un entraînement prédéploiement, qu'ils demeurent dans le théâtre pendant la même période de temps, et qu'ils élaborent des plans d'opération qui font cadrer le financement avec les liens hiérarchiques.
- Bien que, par la nature de leurs opérations, les EPR peuvent toutes être considérées comme des équipes multinationales dans le pays hôte, deux seulement d'entre elles le sont véritablement : l'EPR canadienne à Kandahar et l'EPR britannique à Basra, en Irak. La pluralité des chaînes de commandement de ces équipes ne signifie pas nécessairement qu'il règne une division entre les diverses autorités. On note, en effet, que certains mécanismes ont été mis en place pour aider les EPR multinationales à partager leurs ressources financières.
- Bien que les ouvrages consultés plaident en faveur d'un plus grand apport de la part de la composante civile, les dirigeants civils des EPR ne parviennent pas toujours à obtenir le succès escompté sur le plan opérationnel. Il est important de souligner que la direction assumée par des civils est chose plus fréquente en Irak qu'en Afghanistan; toutefois, rappelons que l'établissement d'un leadership civil en Irak a coïncidé avec la montée du mouvement anti-insurrectionnel dans ce pays. Par conséquent, il est injuste de juger le rendement d'une EPR en fonction de son association avec des dirigeants civils.
- Dans presque tous les cas, les EPR sont associées à une unité de manœuvre particulière. La composante militaire d'une EPR remplit principalement des fonctions de protection en plus de former les forces de sécurité nationale du pays hôte. Cependant, il est clair que, dans une EPR, seule la composante militaire peut exécuter des opérations de stabilisation, de développement et de reconstruction en milieu hostile. En outre, lorsque la sécurité du milieu se détériore, l'unité de manœuvre est habituellement appelée à le remettre en bon état avant que les activités civiles puissent reprendre.

Les ouvrages consultés font état du fait que les ONG et les organisations internationales participant aux activités d'aide humanitaire et de développement craignent que les EPR envahissent le domaine de l'action humanitaire et le militarisent. Bien que cela devrait faire l'objet d'une autre recherche, les ouvrages portant sur la sédition avancent que, peu importe l'existence des EPR ou leur nature civilo-militaire, les terroristes cibleraient quand même les travailleurs des ONG.

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# 1 Introduction

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This is a descriptive analysis of the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) concept as applied by Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States in Afghanistan and in Iraq. The study begins with comparing the three countries' experiences in Afghanistan and establishes preliminary conclusions based on these experiences. It then examines the American and British application of the concept in Iraq, and establishes corresponding conclusions. Finally the paper discusses the most frequently mentioned challenges of PRT operations in Afghanistan and in Iraq. A bibliography of the works consulted follows this study.

The method is descriptive and focuses on sources which have been openly in print since the establishment of PRTs in both Afghanistan and in Iraq, in early 2005. The reader should note that there is an overabundance of sources from the earlier and middle years, but fewer sources as to the very latest experiences, and almost no information on the British PRT experience in Basra, Iraq.

The aim of this study is to identify the commonalities between the respective experiences so as to inform future mission deployments. The reader is cautioned as to the vast differences between applications by the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada either in Afghanistan or Iraq. This variety is the consequence of the specific attributes of the lead nations, the articulation (or lack thereof) of their interests, the operational conditions and the purposes of PRTs as defined by these factors. Whether there should be a standard (basic) model developed for future contingencies is a question that cannot be answered here. Where this question was considered, the answers took the shape of broad recommendations based on lessons identified, less than on concrete proposals.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ian Westerman, "Pacifying Afghanistan: Enduring Lessons from CORDS in Vietnam", Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), 153:5, October 2008, 14, and Col. John D. Drolet, USA, "Provincial Reconstruction Teams: Afghanistan vs Iraq: Should we have a Standard Model?", US Army War College (USAWC) Strategy Research Project, (Carlisle, PA: Carlisle Barracks, 15 March 2006), 14-15.

## 2 PRTs in Afghanistan

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PRTs are a construct primarily derived from the American and British experiences in counterinsurgency warfare in Vietnam and Malaya, which have been applied within NATO's mission in Afghanistan.<sup>2</sup> When NATO assumed control of International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission in August 2003, it did so within the parameters issued in the Bonn Agreement (2001) in the wake of UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1386.

One duty of the UN Secretary General is to report to the UNSC as to the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan which had been severely curtailed before Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) because of sanctions against the Taliban. While humanitarian workers had been present in Afghanistan before the terrorist attacks in September 2001, the relationship between the Taliban and the NGOs was one of relatively peaceful coexistence. According to the UN Secretary General's reports to the UNSC, the sanctions voted against the Taliban in 1999 affected this relationship.<sup>3</sup> In particular, the Taliban deliberately misrepresented the intentions of the UNSC sanctions, and communicated this to the Afghan population, planting the seed of mistrust of foreign intervention even deeper.

By late 2002, ISAF, under British, and then German and Turkish control, had dramatic success in improving the security situation in Kabul. Nevertheless, the insurgency, factional clashes and banditry remained the principal source of insecurity in the regions.<sup>4</sup> The UN began to express desires for an expansion of ISAF beyond Kabul and made this point repeatedly.<sup>5</sup> In particular, the UN urged a rapid effort to train and equip individuals to create a force loyal to the Afghan Interim (or Transitional) Authority, and an international effort to bridge the gap between ISAF and the eventual deployment of Afghan security elements (the future Afghan Security Forces).

The UN Secretary General's reporting also stressed that ISAF is a "temporary measure to provide the confidence, time and breathing room required for the creation of an indigenous security sector."<sup>6</sup> The reform of the security sector became the predominant preoccupation, on par with humanitarian relief. Yet, the UN's humanitarian work within ISAF was being often (and increasingly) interrupted and impeded by the UN's limited logistical capability, and the surrounding violence.<sup>7</sup> As the UN was powerless to prevent the deterioration of security in Afghanistan, it became evident to the UN Secretary General that "reform of the security sector [would] provide Afghans with the tools to assure their own security and [might] also facilitate national reconciliation through the creation of a trusted national police and a national army."<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Chief Review Services (CRS), *Evaluation of CF/DND Participation in the Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team (KPRT)*, 1258-156, (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, December 2007), 4. See also Scott Sigmund Gartner, *Strategic Assessment in War*, (London, CT: Yale Univ. Press, 1997), 147-155. Paul Dixon, " 'Hearts and Minds'? British Counterinsurgency from Malaya to Iraq", *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 32:3, 2009, 353-381.

<sup>3</sup> UN Secretary General's Report to the Security Council as to the Situation in Afghanistan S/2001/1215, para. 6.

<sup>4</sup> UN Secretary General's Report to the Security Council as to the Situation in Afghanistan S/2002/278, para. 46 and 53.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 57.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 60.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 90.

<sup>8</sup> UN Secretary General's Report to the Security Council as to the Situation in Afghanistan S/2002/1173, para. 11.

By 2003, security sector reform (SSR) had become the dominant requirement, and the enabler of humanitarian relief, development and opium eradication, as well as the expression of Kabul's authority in the region.<sup>9</sup> In July 2003, a UN Secretary General report mentioned that PRTs, "may make a positive contribution to improving security by providing good offices, confidence-building, assisting in the extension of government authority and providing a platform for the training and deployment of new national security institutions."<sup>10</sup> According to this Report, NATO took over ISAF at the request of ISAF participating nations, and one senses the unease of the UN which only a year before was calling for mission expansion as the "best available instrument to improve security across Afghanistan," but now that NATO would take over "such an extension would not need to be on a scale required for countrywide peace enforcement."<sup>11</sup> NATO would furthermore take command of ISAF under the mission statement decided in the Bonn Agreement and would be provided with overall operational guidance from Brunssum and SHAPE.<sup>12</sup>

Such a preamble was necessary to highlight how NATO came to conceive its mission as it took command of ISAF, to underscore the operational objectives and themes for the mission (for they are confused from one PRT to another) and to explain the perpetually difficult relationship between military and civilian actors in a theatre of conflict. As the UN mission in Afghanistan became rolled into the UN Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA), to support humanitarian and development goals, ISAF would appear to be another UN failure if it were not taken up with a more precise mandate. As evidenced by the series of UN Reports, this mandate grew by iteration, first with the British command of the mission to reform the security forces in and around Kabul, as a means to secure the capital, and then as information as to the situation in theatre and challenges to central authority became clearer over the months following the establishment of the Afghan Interim Authority, as the necessity to secure Kabul's writ over the regions, the warlords, favour humanitarian relief and development as a means to defeat "spoilers." This change resulted in NATO issuing the order that PRTs were to assist the Government of Afghanistan to "extend its authority in order to facilitate the development of a stable and secure environment in the identified area of operations, and enable SSR and reconstruction efforts."<sup>13</sup>

The ISAF (NATO) PRT Handbook emphasises stability and security as an enabler of SSR, but this is possible only if the central government has legitimacy and controls the means of coercion (the operative clause *in order to* establish this causal link). The PRT experience in Afghanistan suffers from semantic confusion, and PRT lead nations sometimes support reconstruction, at other times SSR, and still others focus on governance (legitimacy and democracy) issues. The literature sometimes suggests that there is a continuum, a causal relationship between each activity, and that they fit within a COIN approach.

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<sup>9</sup> UN Secretary General's Report to the Security Council as to the Situation in Afghanistan S/2003/333, para. 26, and UN Secretary General's Report to the Security Council as to the Situation in Afghanistan S/2003/754, para. 21, 22, and 25.

<sup>10</sup> UN Secretary General's Report to the Security Council as to the Situation in Afghanistan S/2003/754, para. 35.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., para. 37. See also Oskari Eronen, "PRTs in Afghanistan: Approaches to Civil-Military Relations", *Crisis Management Centre Finland Civilian Crisis Management Studies*, 1: 5, 2008, 7.

<sup>12</sup> NATO, *ISAF PRT Handbook*, Ed. 3, ISAF, 3 February 2007, 2.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 2.

## 2.1 The American Experience

All the Afghan PRTs are under the operational control of ISAF since October 2006, when the pan-Afghan expansion of the ISAF mission and PRTs was completed. As of February 2011, the United States leads 11 PRTs.<sup>14</sup> The provinces are listed here, with the PRT HQ location in parentheses;

PRT Kapisa	(Bagram)	PRT Paktika	(Sharana)
PRT Khost	(Khost)	PRT Paktya	(Gardez)
PRT Kunar	(Asadabad)	PRT Panjshir	(Panjshir)
PRT Laghman	(Mether Lam)	PRT Zabul	(Qalat)
PRT Nangarhar	(Jalalabad)	PRT Farah	(Farah)
PRT Nuristan	(Nuristan)		

Marcus Gauster suggested that the PRT mandates were not initially clear, insofar as the concept emerged out of a need to address the humanitarian problem in the wake of the Taliban demise, the worsening reputation of the US-led OEF troops, and a strategic flip-flop from the Bush Administration.<sup>15</sup> Gauster concluded that US PRTs existed to provide logistic support to the conduct of the war on terror, and as permanent base in key regions to deal with the sources of instability identified by Robert Perito as unemployment, poverty, terrorism and local power brokers.<sup>16</sup> Interestingly, however, the United States gave certain priorities to PRT activities which seem only indirectly related; good governance, force protection and reconstruction.<sup>17</sup> Here, force protection is intended to mean the situation whereby the military component of the PRT will have freedom of action because it is accepted by the local populace. It is meant here as a result, not always as a military activity.

According to a Report to the US Congress released in January 2009, the US PRT approach starts from the NATO mission statement, whereby the intention is to extend the authority of the central Afghan government (a point that had been reiterated ever since the UN Secretary General reports highlighted this problem), in order to facilitate stabilisation and enable SSR and reconstruction.<sup>18</sup> Extending the authority of the central government is understood here as the ability of Kabul to

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<sup>14</sup> Kevin Makel, *Afghanistan PRT Handbook*, (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Center for Army Lessons Learned – CALL, February 2011), 37-39.

<sup>15</sup> Marcus Gauster, “Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan”, Occasional Paper Series #16, (Garmisch-Partenkirchen: George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies, January 2008), 18. Col. (UK) Russell Wardle, OBE, quotes former US Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld and former President George W. Bush’s change of heart as having taken place within a week. See “The Search for Stability: Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan”, USAWC Strategy Research Project, (Carlisle, PA: USAWC, 3 May 2004), 1-2.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 20, and quoting Robert Perito, “The US Experience with Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan”, (Washington, DC: USIP Press, 2005). Note that Gauster’s use of the word “permanent” implies a *consistent* rather than a periodical presence, and does not imply that the PRT is there *ad infinitum*. Indeed, the US military policy envisions a transfer to Afghan authorities at the earliest moment. See Makel, *Afghanistan PRT Handbook*, 1.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 21, also Makel, *Afghanistan PRT Handbook*, 5.

<sup>18</sup> DOD, *Progress toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, (Washington, DC: January 2009), 74.

control and monopolize the means of coercion. Evidently, SSR and legitimate authority go hand in hand, but, owing as it does to the UN's understanding of the situation, and NATO having inherited this understanding through its taking over of the PRTs in 2003, the nations are forced to reconcile ends and means the best way they know how. This ambiguity is compounded by the fact that the PRTs' terms of reference conveyed no executive capacity to their mission, and PRTs could only operate following vigorous kinetic operations.<sup>19</sup> In figure 1, below, taken from the US Afghanistan PRT Handbook, we see that the initial focus is on security and stability, followed (apparently) by SSR and disarmament.

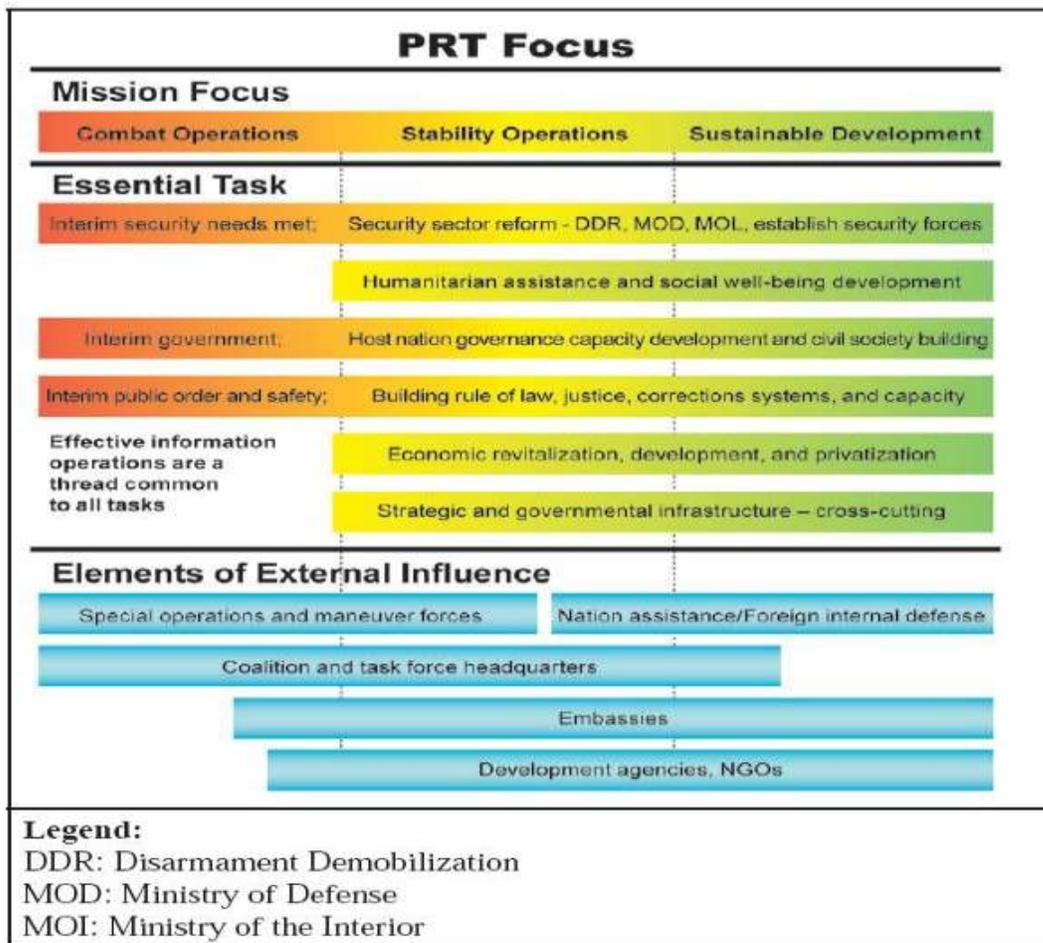


Figure 1: Spectrum of Conflict and PRT Essential Tasks

This order of activity is more reminiscent of the British objectives and priorities than American ones. In fact, the CALL document explains that the PRT functions are to “engage key government, military, tribal, village, and religious leaders in provinces... Work with Afghan authorities to provide security... Assist in the deployment and mentoring of Afghan police units... Partner with the Afghan government, the UN, other governments...”<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Drolet, “PRTs: Afghanistan vs Iraq...”, 1, 5.

<sup>20</sup> Makel, *Afghanistan PRT Handbook*, 47.

Figures 2 and Figure 3 (below) provide examples of what the Center for Army Lessons Learned documents purport that the unit should focus on. It should be noted that the functions in Figure 2 do not correspond to the reality of Figure 3. Yet, CALL is categorical; a PRT's activities should focus on reporting, representing American interests (although other sources say that its functions and activities should now mirror the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS)), assist in political development and governance, rule of law and business development.<sup>21</sup>

It should be noted that the United States has integrated the PRT approach within its COIN doctrine.<sup>22</sup> This means that although the PRT is a civil-military organization that integrates members of other government agencies (such as the State Department, USAID, Agriculture, etc.), its mission is heavily influenced by DOD despite being nominally multilateral.<sup>23</sup> For this reason, the PRT is attached to a Brigade HQ, and gets most of its O&M and project funding from Defense. This gives unparalleled power to the PRT Commander, although the leadership is consultative with Department of State officials. In the American case, the unity of command is somewhat diluted by the fact that PRT activities now have to fit in with the ANDS, as well as be answerable to more than one chain of command: the national chain going to DOD, the international chain going to NATO/SHAPE, and a third chain running parallel to the State Department via the US Embassy.<sup>24</sup>

The notional structure provided by the CALL in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, is illustrated in figure 2, below.

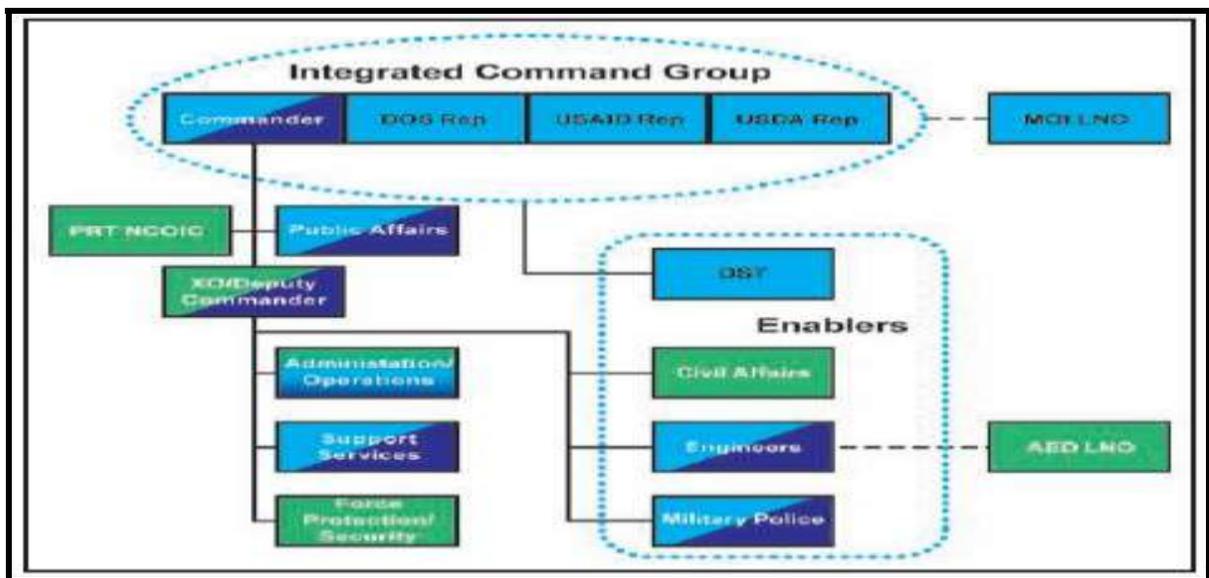


Figure 2: Notional PRT Structure (CALL)

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 48-49.

<sup>22</sup> DOD, Progress toward Security..., 74, and, in detail, Austin Long, *On 'Other War': Lessons from Five Decades of RAND Counterinsurgency Research*, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND National Defense Research Institute, 2006), 57-69.

<sup>23</sup> Makel, *Afghanistan PRT Handbook*, 42. Note that the literature does not bear out this integrated command group (ICG) for the United States' experience in Afghanistan or Iraq.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 32.

This structure must be compared with the design found in the DOD Report to Congress (and other documents) which is far more detailed and realistic. Figure 3, below, taken from John Drolet’s paper, is identical to that found in many other publications, and perhaps is more trustworthy. On the other hand, figure 2 above is the most recent design, and may be an evolution over earlier structures, although the latest literature does not suggest that anywhere. The structure depicted below stems from a Danish Institute of International Studies report by P.V. Jakobsen, *PRTs in Afghanistan: Successful but not Sufficient*, written in 2005. Drolet does not credit Jakobsen for the figure, but the Chief Review Services report does.<sup>25</sup>

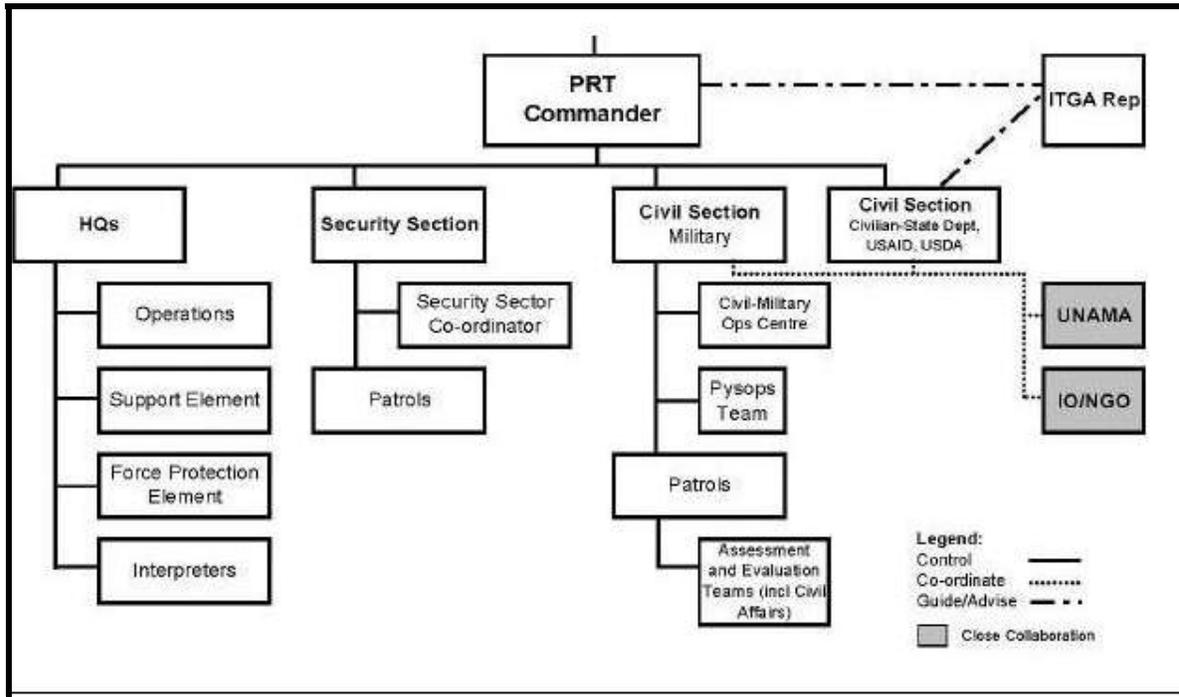


Figure 3: Actual US PRT Structure<sup>26</sup>

Note that as opposed to figure 2, the State Department, USAID, and US Department of Agriculture actors are clearly subordinate to the PRT Commander, who holds the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel or Commander.<sup>27</sup> Note also in Figure Three, the coordinating relationship between UNAMA, IOs and NGOs. This testifies that the PRT itself has no executive capability. The “engineering” function found in Figure Two, which can be credited for some infrastructure reconstruction accounted for in the DOD Report to Congress is more likely the engineering section which is integral to the Brigade that the PRT unit belongs to. This PRT-UN/IO/NGO coordination also betrays that other organizations are already in theatre doing work. This is

<sup>25</sup> CRS, *Evaluation of CF/DND*... 8.

<sup>26</sup> Col. John D. Drolet, USA, “Provincial Reconstruction Teams: Afghanistan vs Iraq: Should we have a Standard Model?” US Army War College (USAWC) Strategy Research Project, (Carlisle, PA: Carlisle Barracks, 15 March 2006).

<sup>27</sup> Although this is the most frequently PRT structure encountered in the literature, McLay’s research shows an even looser relationship between the military PRT commander and the subordinate civilian actors, as he borrows Robert Perito’s model (USIP). See Sean C. McLay, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) – A Panacea for What Ails Iraq?*, Research Report, Air Command and Staff College of the Air University, Maxwell AFB, Alabama, April 2007, 6, and Robert Perito, *The US Experience with PRTs in Afghanistan*, (Washington DC: USIP, 2005).

important because it suggests that a PRT's effectiveness is not in its execution of projects, but in managing coordination between actors in theatre. The task of the PRT is then to articulate the work according to some higher purpose which may or may not be reconcilable with the goals of the other organizations.

PRTs are not manoeuvre units, but the State Department's description of them adds to the general confusion. According to Chris Sidell, who quotes the US State Department, "[PRTs] ...were established for the international community to *provide both improved security* and to facilitate reconstruction and economic development throughout the country."<sup>28</sup> But they do not in fact impose or create stability by themselves.<sup>29</sup> According to McLay and Eronen, PRTs can only provide modest force protection, and seek to build local police capacity. Typically, a PRT's security contingent does not protect the population or local NGO workers; this is left to recently-trained Afghans, as part of the plan to extend the central government's reach in the region. This is why SSR becomes instrumental to the rest of the activities. In the face of local troubles, an American PRT will withdraw into the compound; surrendering the humanitarian space to local warlords, bandits or radicals, until Afghan or coalition manoeuvre forces reclaim it.<sup>30</sup> The size of the PRT prevents it from having a more imposing character, and this is deliberate. The focus of American PRTs can best be understood along the themes of security, governance and reconstruction.<sup>31</sup> The articulation of all these themes in support of the overall goal of extending the central government's reach into the regions and their reconciliation either with COIN doctrine or Afghan National Development Strategy is left to intuition however, and the literature suggests there is little coherence of action, which is not the same as saying that action is not necessary or effective.

The United States development and reconstruction goals are fully reconciled with the goals of the ANDS. Furthermore, the US strategy of "clear, hold, build", which is the expression of US COIN doctrine, which also align closely with the goals and priorities of the ANDS.<sup>32</sup> The strategic objectives of the US for Afghanistan are to deny the country to terrorist networks, develop governance and rule of law, and ensure that the Afghans can control their own territory. The denial phase is of course performed by the OEF troops of the US and the coalition. Non-kinetic tasks are performed by contractors, humanitarian and development workers.<sup>33</sup>

The PRTs' strength lies in its funding celerity, combined with its civilian-military coordination function. A host of funding schemes enable NGOs and civilian representatives to identify projects relatively quickly, seek funding locally (from the PRT directly) and set to work, usually using local labour and material. The flexibility and latitude in funding (through the Commanders' Emergency Response Program (CERP)), or the DOD's Overseas Humanitarian Disaster and Civic Aid is detrimental to the civilian components from USAID, who have to have project funds earmarked or approved well in advance. Either way, the DOD has disproportionate control over the schedule of achievements, and with it control over the whole PRT, because the rotation

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<sup>28</sup> Chris Sidell, "The Origins of Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan", Essay submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Masters degree in Development and Emergency Practice, (Oxford Brookes University, 2008), 9. Italics by the author.

<sup>29</sup> Carter Malkasyan and Gerard Meyerle, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams: How Do We Know They Work?*, LeTort Papers, (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, March 2009), 11, 24.

<sup>30</sup> McLay, *...A Panacea for Iraq?*, 8.

<sup>31</sup> Eronen, *PRTs in Afghanistan*, 45.

<sup>32</sup> DOD, *Progress toward Security...*, 12-16.

<sup>33</sup> Malkasyan and Meyerle, *...How Do We Know They Work?*, 26.

schedules for military and civilians are asynchronous, and so are funding schedules and project timelines. Since the timelines rarely coincided with the rotations, and because the civilian side has trouble finding people willing to operate in Afghanistan's forbidding environment, there was significant discontinuity in project performance. Primarily this was due to new teams not benefiting from a proper handover. The solution to overcome these issues was to focus on "Quick Impact Projects" (QIP).<sup>34</sup> QIPs have the advantage of mitigating the problem of work discontinuity that occurs due to asynchronous military and civilian rotation schedules, although Malkasyan and Meyerle have argued that long-term projects have a significant degree of impact as well.

The civilian-military coordination function of a PRT is another factor of relative effectiveness. The civilian component provides a readily recognizable (and acceptable) interlocutor between the NGOs and humanitarian and development IOs already in theatre, and provide critical project objective and assessment skills between these actors and the military. The military component of the PRT, while working with the civilians, assist in planning so that the stabilisation work undertaken under the PRT's aegis (or with its funding, as many initiatives are CERP-funded QIPs) conforms to DOD planning guidelines and performance evaluation metrics. In other words, a PRT is the expression of the whole-of-government approach, but it is also the expression of all the disciplinary friction between the civilian and military actors, between the government agency and the NGOs. In certain cases, the US military performs reconstruction work using CERP funds as part of or on behalf of the PRT, which contributes to the confusion of civilian and military roles.<sup>35</sup> As many of these challenges are common to all PRTs, they will be addressed in the conclusion.

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<sup>34</sup> US Government Accountability Office (GAO), "Military Operations: Actions needed to improve Oversight and Interagency Coordination for the Commander's Emergency Response Program in Afghanistan", GAO-09-615, Washington, DC, 2009.

<sup>35</sup> Gauster, "Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan", 34, 37. The militarization of aid projects is all the more evident when road construction ends up contributing to troop and military equipment movement. Malkasyan and Meyerle, *...How Do We Know They Work?*, 36.

## 2.2 The British Experience

The first British PRT was established in Mazar-e-Sharif in mid-2003. Like the other PRTs in Afghanistan, it was transferred to ISAF command a year later. That year, the UK inaugurated another PRT in Maymaneh, and since then, both have been transferred to the leadership of Nordic countries. The UK now handles one PRT in Lashkar Gah, Helmand Province since May 2006.<sup>36</sup>

The quality of the UK activities in PRTs is heavily dependent on the harmony of the interagency relations, and the security situation on the ground. When the UK created the Mazar and Maymaneh PRTs, the security situation was fairly stable given that the demographics in that area of the country are more homogeneous than elsewhere in Afghanistan. As a result, the UK effort could directly concentrate on the principal goal of a PRT's mission; to extend the reach of the central government in the regions. To do this, the UK chose to concentrate on SSR immediately. The United Kingdom's activities in the two initial PRTs were informed by the British Army's experience in support of the Royal Ulster Constabulary in Northern Ireland, and by the substantial success of the British in pacifying Kabul, at the very beginning of the COIN campaign in Afghanistan.<sup>37</sup>

By insisting on SSR, the British approach reflects better the guidance provided by the NATO PRT Handbook.<sup>38</sup> There is much less emphasis on reconstruction work, and "minimal outside involvement" in projects run by civilians.<sup>39</sup> In essence, there is functional complementarity. According to the latest British COIN field manual, counterinsurgency activities performed by a military stabilisation team, which are mainly kinetic in nature, precede the transition to a PRT.<sup>40</sup> Stabilisation work is being done to enable NGO operations, so that there is no substitution of NGO work by the PRT. SSR is contingent on a comprehensive disarmament programme. In Mazar and Maymaneh, the relative calm atmosphere there is credited by many sources on disarmament, which effectively transfers the means of coercion from the individual warlord over to the trained Afghan police - or militiaman on behalf of central authorities. Comprehensive disarmament and SSR enables NGO workers to fill the humanitarian and development space, while Afghan nationals trained and mentored by the military component of the PRT deny the political and security space to the Taliban. British PRTs conduct regular patrols to establish presence, liaise with elders and local stakeholders, and preserve the humanitarian space. Small and lightly armed Mobile Observation Teams, leave the compound of the PRT several days at a time, sometimes using "safe-houses", enabling the PRT to operate in all corners of the province.<sup>41</sup> Note the linkage to US State Department and USAID, as well as the significant police presence in the UK PRT depicted in figure 4, below.

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<sup>36</sup> Eronen, *PRTs in Afghanistan*, 20, and Abbaszadeh et al, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams: Lessons and Recommendations*, 42.

<sup>37</sup> Wardle, *The Search for Stability...* 6-7.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., para. 39, 12. See also figure 1 in this study.

<sup>39</sup> Abbaszadeh et al, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams: Lessons and Recommendations*, 43-44.

<sup>40</sup> Ministry of Defence, *British Army Field Manual: Countering Insurgency*, Vol. 1, part 10, 71876, October 2009, chapter 6, section 4, 6-13, also chapter 10, Section 2, 10-6, fn6, Stabilisation Unit, *The UK Approach to Stabilisation...*, 14. Peter Dahl Thruelsen, "Counterinsurgency and Comprehensive Approach", *Small Wars Journal* (online), 25 September 2008, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2008/09/counterinsurgency-and-a-compre/>

<sup>41</sup> Eronen, *PRTs in Afghanistan*, 21, quoting Abbaszadeh et al.

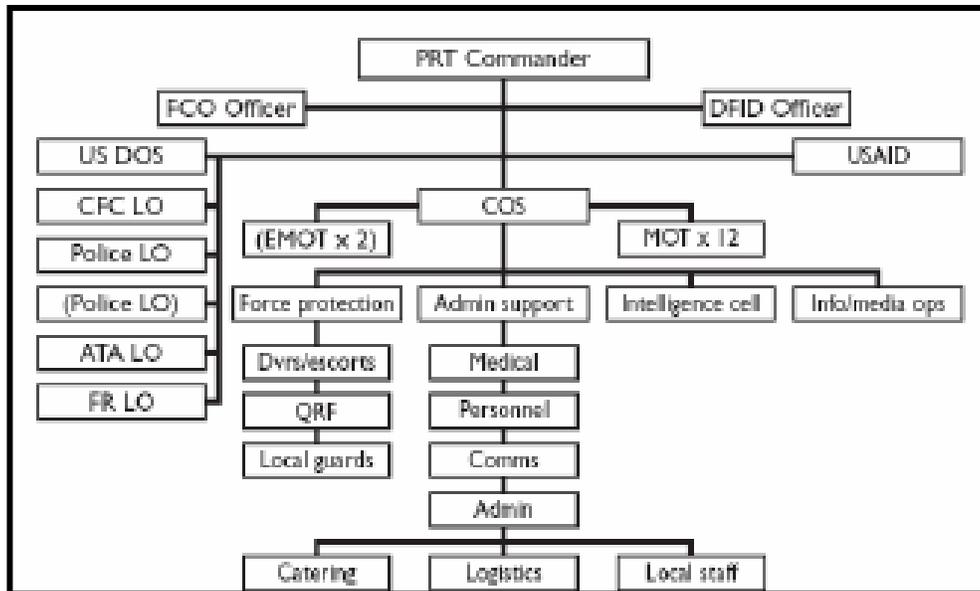


Figure 4: Mazar-e-Sharif PRT (UK)

The British approach implicates military and civilian actors as an interagency command group (ICG) to lead the PRT in its activities. What is referred to as the “triumvirate” is composed of a military commander, a Foreign and Commonwealth Office civilian, and a representative from the Department for International Development (DfID). Although priorities are set and management operates through this tri-partite arrangement, each ministerial representative is responsible for the implementation of projects that naturally reflect their departmental mission. Hence, the military performs SSR, while DfID provides long-term funding for long-term reconstruction and development projects. The MOD therefore has no project management function in the reconstruction phase. For a time, this meant that each PRT actor would inevitably account for results through the tri-partite management arrangement at the theatre level, and on to their respective chains of command at home. However in 2004, the ICG found its strategic counterpart in the creation of the Post-Conflict Reconstruction Unit, now dubbed the “Stabilisation Unit” or SU.<sup>42</sup>

Upon visiting the SU website, one senses that PRTs are *methods* and not structures. They are the expression of interagency and civil-military cooperation. British PRTs count some 150 members, with some 15% (20-30) of that membership being civilian.<sup>43</sup> It is tempting to say that DfID is the lead agency, but that is only true insofar as project and funding management goes. DfID’s project obviated the problem of work continuity by focusing on long-term project management, generously funded, and integrated into the overall British reconstruction strategy. However, it has become apparent that the timeliness of execution, and the distance between outputs and results is too diffuse for the beneficiaries to perceive, and so to make a strategic impact. The alternative became British QIPs, which provide celeritous, flexible and adaptable deliveries of stabilisation projects.<sup>44</sup> The PRT’s strength, which is credited often in the literature, is the efficacy of its

<sup>42</sup> Matthews and Lucas, “Stabilisation and Reconstruction”, 90, also [www.stabilisationunit.gov.uk](http://www.stabilisationunit.gov.uk)

<sup>43</sup> Eronen, *PRTs in Afghanistan*, 45.

<sup>44</sup> Matthews and Lucas, “Stabilisation and Reconstruction”, 90, Gauster, “Provincial Reconstruction Teams...”, 53, Stabilisation Unit, *Responding to Stabilisation Challenges in Hostile and Insecure Environments: Lessons Identified by*

interagency leadership and processes. So much so that the US Afghanistan PRT Handbook is openly advocating a similar model based on the ICG (depicted in figure 2, above). The British recognize that interagency cooperation is a work always in progress, and that there is always a need to cultivate this habit. This does not mean, however, that interagency should necessarily be a *goal*.<sup>45</sup> It is in studying the UK case in Afghanistan that one finds the least civil-military friction internally to the PRT, either due to personalities or conflicting departmental objectives. The relationship of the PRT with the outside actors (NGOs, humanitarian and development IOs, as well as locals) sometimes suffers, however. For example, it has been assessed that the PRT activities are not welcome because they are more and more associated with sustaining corrupt practices by Kabul-supported officers.<sup>46</sup> This said, it should be acknowledged that:

The British government engaged in extensive pre-deployment consultation with NGOs, the UN, and the local community both during the planning stages and after the initiation of activities. The PRT took steps to avoid work that could be done by NGOs, such as health care, and other work that were beyond the scope of dealing with realistically, such as drug control.<sup>47</sup>

In Lashkar Gah, where 42% of the world's opium is produced, the UK chose the role of lead nation on counter-narcotics.<sup>48</sup> It is the only PRT assigned to counter-narcotics activities<sup>49</sup>, which are, in the British view, part and parcel of SSR. There is substantial controversy as to the counter-narcotics aspect of the ISAF mission, as the evident consequence is to set warlords and opium farmer against Kabul's authority, therefore delaying the moment when the central government will be able to impose its writ on the regions. On the other hand, counter-narcotic operations correspond to COIN since proceeds from the opium trade go to financing "spoilers."<sup>50</sup>

The security situation in Helmand informs the order of priorities, as well as those of the Provincial Development Council. Although the types of activities between Mazar and Lashkar Gah are common, their order of implementation is different. COIN operations continue apace as the PRT is attempting to pursue its activities. Although the Lashkar Gah PRT is the most "civilian" of all PRTs, commanded by a Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Official,<sup>51</sup> it nevertheless is attached to a Brigade HQ, described in figure 5. Implicit in this arrangement is the understanding that governance, SSR, or reconstruction work by itself does not bring stability. Stability emerges after significant kinetic operations are conducted to open up the humanitarian space. Because of the local stakes involved (analysed by Thruelsen), and the appeal of the opium trade in Helmand, there is a lesser likelihood that the insurgency will recede (mainly because spoilers are not ideologically but economically motivated). The PRT, as a result, makes stronger

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*the UK's Stabilisation Unit*, November 2010, 11. A Wilton Park conference confirms that QIPs are particularly effective; Report on Wilton Park Conference 1022 (henceforth WP 1022), *Winning 'Hearts and Minds' in Afghanistan: Assessing the Effectiveness of Aid in COIN Operations*, 11-14 March 2010, para. 38-39, 13-14.

<sup>45</sup> Stabilisation Unit, ... *Lessons Identified...*, 9-10.

<sup>46</sup> WP 1022, 3-4.

<sup>47</sup> Abbaszadeh *et al*, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams: Lessons and Recommendations*, 44. This contrasts with the same reports' acknowledgement that in Helmand, the British PRT is much more security-oriented.

<sup>48</sup> Abbaszadeh *et al*, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams: Lessons and Recommendations*, 42.

<sup>49</sup> Gauster, "Provincial Reconstruction Teams...", 29.

<sup>50</sup> ISAF PRT Handbook, para. 33, 10. Gauster, "Provincial Reconstruction Teams...", 39-40, 48. Lately, the UK Stabilisation Unit has issued guidance encouraging stabilisation actors (including PRT members) to be ready to "deal" with spoilers in order to achieve coherent objectives; Stabilisation Unit, *The UK Approach to Stabilisation: SU Guidance Notes*, November 2008, 17.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

efforts to establish security, combat the narcotics trade (mostly by promoting alternative cultivation and providing disincentives to poppy farming), instead of focusing on SSR itself, which seems to have met with some measure of success in Mazar.<sup>52</sup>

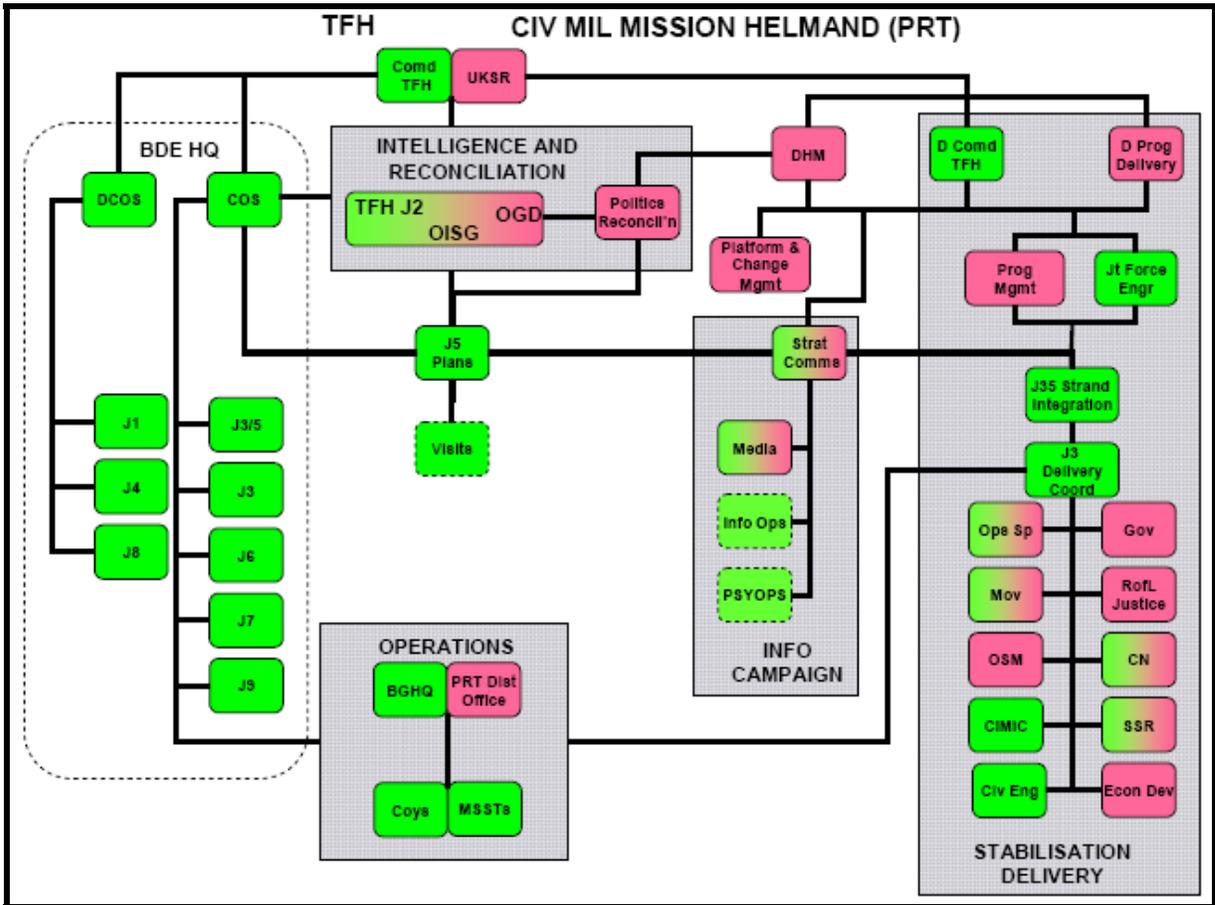


Figure 5: UK PRT and Task Force Helmand Structure

Task Force Helmand on the left of the chart, is the military component, attached to ISAF and OEF, whereas the right side, headed by the UK Senior Representative an Foreign and Commonwealth Officer equivalent to a Major-General, represents the PRT itself. Green cells are staffed by military personnel, and double-shaded cells are civil-military cells. This organizational chart is the expression of the “Helmand Road Map”, unveiled by the UK Government in 2007, and which was supposed to be implemented by 2009. Compared to the Mazar PRT, the intelligence and information component is enormous. The intent of the Helmand Road Map is to know as much as possible to produce a “good enough” result<sup>53</sup>, echoing T.E. Lawrence’s maxim that it is better for them (the Afghans) to do things “tolerably well” than for ISAF or the PRT to do “perfectly for them.”

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 46. WP 1022, *Winning ‘Hearts and Minds’...* 14.

<sup>53</sup> Peter Dahl Thruelsen, “Counterinsurgency and Comprehensive Approach”, 7. See also SU, *Responding to Stabilisation Challenges...*, 24.

The structure of this PRT also reveals an overall purpose to keep kinetic and coercive action separate from the development, humanitarian and reconstruction activities. Not only is this reflected in the PRT leadership, but also in the composition of the PRT, which comprises nearly 50 civilians.<sup>54</sup> This applies the lessons identified which stressed the need for greater civilian involvement, and the non-militarization of aid.<sup>55</sup> It heeds DfID's suggestion that the mission pay more attention to the conflict dynamics in Afghanistan.<sup>56</sup> Although this arrangement (in addition to UK COIN doctrine) keeps civil-military friction within the structure to a minimum, it seeks to ameliorate the relationship of the PRT with the other NGOs and humanitarian and development IOs who had been complaining about the militarization of the humanitarian space. Although the British approach had always been careful of avoiding this confusion, the British predilection for patrolling may have contributed to a false association in the minds of NGO and IO workers even when civilian workers demonstrably required military involvement to get their projects going.<sup>57</sup> It is not only civil-military relations that forever require care and attention, but the relationship between civilian and military *roles*, both of which are respectively affected by the need to perform duties that are not always natural. The civilian requires the skills and the willingness to operate within a military and coercive context, whereas the military component must accept that progress comes through the implementation of social projects.<sup>58</sup> The nexus of the two disciplines simultaneously informs interagency performance and calls for common pre-deployment training.<sup>59</sup>

## 2.3 The Canadian Experience

By assuming control of the Kandahar PRT (KPRT) from the US in 2005, Canada embarked on its first attempt at formalising interdepartmental cooperation in the field – the Diplomacy, Defence

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<sup>54</sup> Edward Burke, "Leaving the Civilians Behind: The 'Soldier-Diplomat in Afghanistan and Iraq'", *Prism*, 1:2, 2010, 40.

<sup>55</sup> Matthews and Lucas, "Stabilisation and Reconstruction", 88. Sultan Barakat *et al*, *A Strategic Conflict Assessment of Afghanistan*, University of York, Post-War Reconstruction and Development Unit (PRDU), November 2008, 62.

<sup>56</sup> Sultan Barakat *et al*, *A Strategic Conflict Assessment of Afghanistan*, 53.

<sup>57</sup> Edward Burke, "...The 'Soldier-Diplomat' in Afghanistan and Iraq", 34.

<sup>58</sup> Wardle, "The Search for Stability...", 12.

<sup>59</sup> Christoph Luehrs, "Provincial Reconstruction Teams: A Literature Review", *Prism*, 1:1, 2010, 97.

and Development or “3D” approach, now called “1Canada.”<sup>60</sup> As noted in the Chief of Review Services Report for 2007, there is no description as to how the KPRT fits in COIN, because of the then lack of CF COIN doctrine.<sup>61</sup> However, Canada was not operating in a doctrinal vacuum anymore than the United States or the United Kingdom, whose PRT activities were initially difficult to associate with their COIN doctrine.<sup>62</sup>

There are a number of theories offered for how and why Canada came to accept the Kandahar PRT (KPRT) mission. Holland claims that there was design in the choice of KPRT as a locale to deliver Canada’s contribution to George W. Bush’s Global War on Terror. In particular, he argues Kandahar offered “maximum visibility” for the mission, the opportunity for Canada to make a significant contribution to “ISAF’s success” in Taliban heartland, cost-sharing with other nations engaged in the area; appease American anger at Canada’s non-participation in the ill-advised Iraq quagmire, and opportunities for force modernization.<sup>63</sup> However, he offers no sources to support his claim. The more plausible explanation is given by the Chief of Review Services who laments the absence of strategic thinking in the decision to take over the KPRT, receiving nothing more than verbal direction from the Chief of Defence Staff.<sup>64</sup> Sean Maloney provides another possible explanation: “[shamed] into taking PRT leads, most European countries scrambled to accept “safe” PRTs outside of volatile southern and eastern Afghanistan. During the scramble, indecisiveness within the Canadian policy establishment prevented a timely decision and [...] the only PRT that was left was in Kandahar province.”<sup>65</sup> The lack of consensus on the issue suggests that there was little in-depth strategic thinking underpinning the acceptance of the KPRT. Further evidence of this is the IRPP report on Canada in Afghanistan, which states that “Canada has considerable interests at stake in Afghanistan...”<sup>66</sup> and yet promptly neglects to say what those are, and how they will be met or protected. Such lack of clarity spanning multiple parliaments has eroded any consistent basis for strategic communication regarding the mission specifically and Canada’s goals on the international stage in general.

The KPRT was to provide some modicum of security for the 2005 elections in Afghanistan.<sup>67</sup> Thus, in its early months, it utilized the same support to governance mandate as US-run PRTs. “Once the elections were completed successfully,” however, “there was little coordinated direction provided to direct the PRT’s actions.”<sup>68</sup> This didn’t impede a Canadian Strategic Advisory Team (SAT-A) from sharing its wisdom to the central government in Kabul so that it could more easily produce the ANDS.<sup>69</sup> The IRPP Conference report proposed, a few months before the KPRT was stood up, to cater to a long list of objectives, undertaken by different actors;

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<sup>60</sup> Julian Wright, “Canada in Afghanistan: Assessing the 3D Approach”, Conference Report 12-14 May 2005, Institute for Research on Public Policy (henceforth IRPP), 2.

<sup>61</sup> CRS, *Evaluation of CF/DND...*, 14.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>63</sup> Kenneth Holland, “The Canadian Provincial Reconstruction Team: The Arm of Development in Kandahar Province”, *American Review of Canadian Studies*, 40:2, 2010, 279-280. Also Christopher Kirkey and Nicholas Ostroy, “Why is Canada in Afghanistan? Explaining Canada’s Military Commitment”, *American Review of Canadian Studies*, 40:2, 2010, 203.

<sup>64</sup> CRS, *Evaluation of CF/DND...*, 15.

<sup>65</sup> Sean Maloney, “Blood on the Ground: Canada and the Southern Campaign in Afghanistan”, *Defense and Security Analysis*, 23:4, 2007, 406-407.

<sup>66</sup> IRPP, “...Assessing the 3D Approach”, 1.

<sup>67</sup> CRS, *Evaluation of CF/DND...*, 15.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>69</sup> Maloney, “Blood on the Ground...”, 407. International Council on Security (formerly SENLIS Council), *Canada in Kandahar: No Peace to Keep*, (London : June 2006), 8.

security force training, improving the economy and defeating corruption, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, SSR, and overall development.<sup>70</sup>

The literature betrays a singular problem of mission and force correspondence, which General Rick Hillier, then Chief of Defence Staff, and Defence Ministers Graham and O'Connor successfully corrected during the ramping-up of KPRT. Together, they sought to prepare the media for the change of role of the CF in Afghanistan. This required altering the image of the CF as something other than a traditional peacekeeping force, and Canada as something other than a benevolent aid-dispensing country.<sup>71</sup> The success of this effort did not convince every expert, pundit or think tank analyst. Because of this, many were unable to reconcile the humanitarian features of Canada's international presence with its more coercive activities in Afghanistan. The lack of COIN doctrine in Canada at that time was a symptom of this, the civil-military relations difficulty in applying the 3D policy was another.<sup>72</sup> But far more damaging is the inability of some think tanks to loosen their hold on the cherished thought of the CF as a peacekeeping army, and that peacekeeping benevolence creates an international reputation that brings policy advantages to the country.<sup>73</sup> The myth of the CF as a peacekeeping force has led some analysts to also neglect the changing nature of conflict in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Lastly, some of these groups produce factually inaccurate information in prodigious amount, and may be intuitively hostile to the idea of the CF taking over the humanitarian space.<sup>74</sup> These features of the Canadian public policy lobbying landscape, added to other pressures discussed above, have conspired to make the KPRT mission rather incoherent, reflexive, and *ad hoc*.

It is only through the lengthy process of lessons learned that correctives would be put in place. In December 2007, the CF released doctrinal note LFDN 4-07, *Civil-Military Transition Teams/Provincial Reconstruction Teams* to reflect the interagency and transitory nature of the PRT mission. It says the general purpose of the PRT is to build "capacity in a [Host Nation – HN] where no capacity exists or was lost to conflict."<sup>75</sup> In this context, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) has the lead on governance, DND the lead on security, and CIDA the lead on development and humanitarian work.<sup>76</sup> Therefore, all three streams are taking place concurrently.

By 2008, DFAIT had set up the Stability and Reconstruction Team (START) from its Humanitarian Affairs Division.<sup>77</sup> START was the lead interlocutor for the Government of Canada in developing a strategic framework for the application of the whole-of-government approach in

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<sup>70</sup> IRPP, "...Assessing the 3D Approach", 3-8.

<sup>71</sup> Frederic Labarre, "Continuity and Change in Canadian Defence Policy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century", paper presented at the Nordic Security Seminar, (Helsinki, 11-14 November 2008). The author maintains that CF transformation between 2003 and 2005 owed much to media perception alteration of the CF, piloted by Gen. Hillier and Minister O'Connor in particular.

<sup>72</sup> Maj. Luc St-Jean, *Briefing Note for IATF: History and Lessons Learned on PRT Operations from ROTO 0-9*, 2 June 2010, point 6, 2-3.

<sup>73</sup> SENLIS Council, *Canada in Kandahar: No Peace to Keep*, 8, 9, 12.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 15, the OEF does not lead PRTs, contrary to what this report says, and 20, Minister of Defence Mackay is not Right Honourable, among other glaring factual mistakes. According to the SENLIS Council, the CF and other Armed Forces can hardly do anything right in Afghanistan.

<sup>75</sup> Department of National Defence, *Land Forces Doctrine Note 4-07: Civil-Military Transition Teams/Provincial Reconstruction Teams*, December 2007, 3. This LFDN does not represent a CIMITT doctrine, and creating a CIMITT doctrine is counter-indicated by Maj. Luc St-Jean, *BN for IATF: Best Practice for the PRT*, 2.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>77</sup> Meeting attended by the author at DFAIT with Don Sinclair, International Security director, 14 March 2011.

high-intensity conflict situations. In many ways it reconciles the goals of the Government at the highest levels, much in the same way as the British SU does. At the beginning of 2009, DND published its first COIN doctrine, emphasising many of the classical tenets of counterinsurgency fighting, including light footprints, civilian input, and legitimization of the host nation. In July 2009, the Government of Canada published *Sustaining Canada's Engagement in Acutely Fragile States and Conflict-Affected Situations*. It is a statement of practice about the interrelationship of the diplomatic, defence and development tools of Government, and a guidance document on inter-agency preparation for action, in other words, strategic formulation.<sup>78</sup> But inter-departmental friction and unfamiliarity with strategic thought remain. For example, *Sustaining Canada's Engagement* gives a précis of working papers, listing two from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and one from START/DND. One of the CIDA papers recommends “further work to address the strategic framework”, while the second reflects mainstream goals in Afghanistan, such as “democratic governance, security and stability, and livelihoods”, but does not recognize that there is an order of priority in making each dimension happen so that the next can flourish. The START/DND paper, seeking to highlight “gaps in capabilities and capacities” was “put on hold.”<sup>79</sup> This is symptomatic of a bureaucracy intent on measuring progress by the activity it produces rather than by the outcomes that policy and strategy demand.

As a result, the purpose and the mission of the KPRT became dependent on the quality of the civil-military (CIMIC) relationships between PRT members, and its work defined by development and humanitarian actors undertaking Canadian projects under CIDA's guidance, reflecting Canadian interests and values. The 330-strong KPRT has got its mandate through several years of experience, and combines diplomats, humanitarian workers, and police with the military.<sup>80</sup> According to figure 7, where some 111 military members are represented, there are significant functions (classified) which are not identified. These functions are mostly military, and the amount of DFAIT, CIDA and RCMP personnel is not revealed. Therefore it is difficult to estimate the number of civilians working in the PRT. The PRT's leadership appears co-equal, judging by figure 7, below. Holland's piece lists the accomplishments of the KPRT and reflects some indicators of success, such as the fact that locals are more likely to help the security component of the PRT to locate improvised explosive devices (IEDs). The need to close the distance between project execution and benefits to the local population has meant that the Canadian PRT in Kandahar has initiated Local Initiative Programs (KLIP), to bolster the capacity of local government institutions, implement selected local reconstruction projects. In addition, the KPRT is authorised to spend Canadian as well as US monies. The Commander's Contingency Fund helps get local projects rapidly on the road, such as cash-for-work programs designed to employ those who have lost their livelihood.<sup>81</sup> In other words, the work being performed in the development field reflects CIDA's priorities<sup>82</sup> much more than an overall Government of Canada integrated strategy.

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<sup>78</sup> Government of Canada, *Sustaining Canada's Engagement in Acutely Fragile State and Conflict-Affected Situations*, (Ottawa: Queen's Printing Services, July 2009), 30-31.

<sup>79</sup> Government of Canada, *Sustaining Canada's Engagement...*, 40-41.

<sup>80</sup> Holland, “...The Arm of Development ...”, 283.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 283-285.

<sup>82</sup> See CIDA, *On the Road to Recovery: Breaking the Cycle of Poverty and Fragility: An Internal Guide for Effective Development Cooperation in Fragile States*, December 2008.

The KPRT's military activities have focused on training of local forces, IED detection and disposal, force protection and escort. Nevertheless, the lack of security significantly hampers the development and reconstruction work being undertaken, and patrols aimed at generating good will has proven insufficient in ensuring an adequate level of security prior to the US surge in Afghanistan. In addition, there has been a recent trend toward the civilianization of the development and reconstruction work, and decreasing military input.<sup>83</sup>

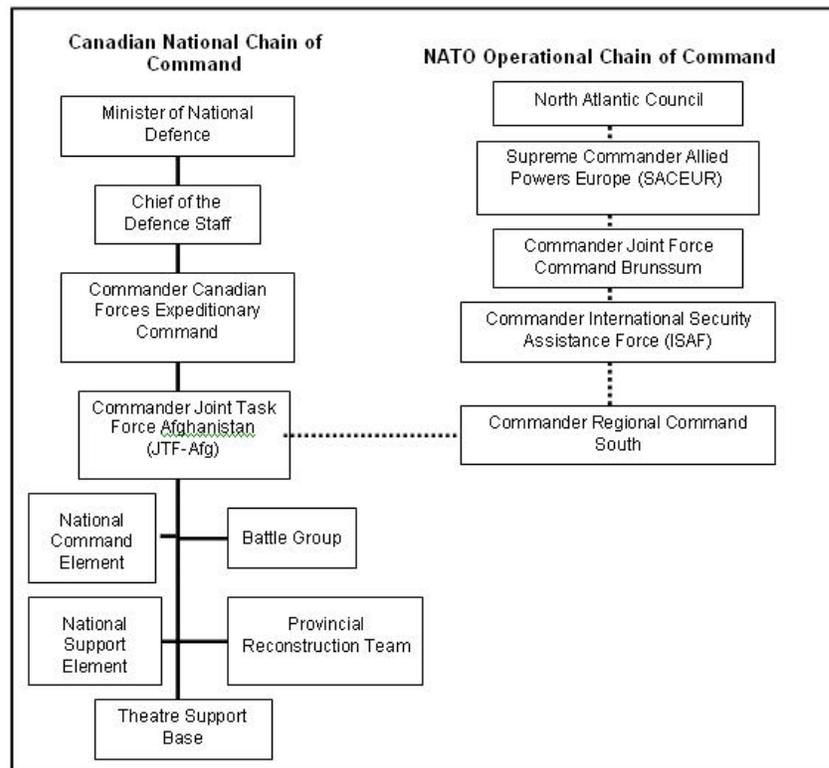
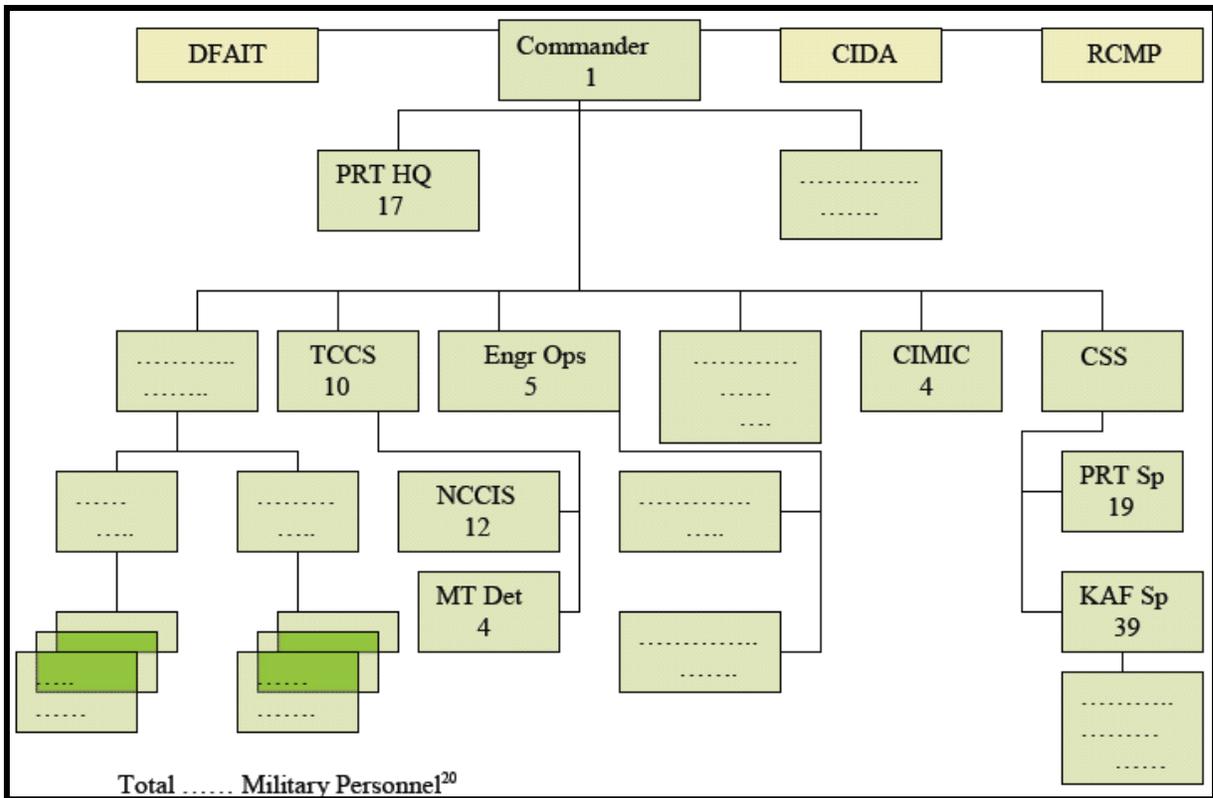


Figure 6: CF Command Structure

The PRT's strength is its ability to integrate (bolt on) members of OGDs and even foreign assets. (Figure 7) In fact, the KPRT is particular for the size of its foreign presence.<sup>84</sup> A briefing note for IATF reveals that KPRT integrated agents from the US State Department, USAID and the UK's DfID in addition to Canada's own non-military partners. Although this has undoubtedly created friction between Canadian civilian agents and foreign military and civilian agents due to the former's inexperience of working in non-permissive environments, internal briefing notes suggest that the flexibility of the PRT allowed certain organizational impediments to be resolved.

<sup>83</sup> Holland, "...The Arm of Development...", 287-288.

<sup>84</sup> Sean Maloney, "Afghanistan: Not the War It Was", *Policy Options*, November 2010, 42-48.



*Figure 7: CF Kandahar PRT Structure<sup>85</sup>*

Canada's COIN doctrine calls for "a wide variety of agencies" to prosecute the campaign.<sup>86</sup> This has created special challenges which require rapid adaptation on the part of all the players. In particular, civilian agents are unfamiliar with the military planning process, and are unaccustomed to translating abstract concepts into concrete actions, and still less at evaluating performance for effects. This need for reconciliation of practices has been acknowledged in Canadian lessons learned where challenges of civil-military cooperation and relationships occupy centre stage.<sup>87</sup> It is significant to notice that the military has not shunned civilian presence in a military environment, insisting that DFAIT and CIDA send more personnel in theatre.<sup>88</sup> This is consistent with basic COIN practice, where the military element should be as light as possible, and force used in last resort only.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>85</sup> Source: Chief Review Services, 1258-156, December 2007.

<sup>86</sup> Chief of the Land Force, *Counter-Insurgency Operations*, B-GL-323-004/FP-003, 13 December 2008, Ch. 5, point 504, 5-4.

<sup>87</sup> See BN for IATF: *Best Practice for PRT*.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>89</sup> Capt. Christian Breede, "Intelligence Lessons and the Emerging Canadian Counter-Insurgency Doctrine", *Canadian Army Journal*, 9:3, Winter 2006, 27, see also C. A. Horeczy, *Briefing Note for COMD IA TF: IA TF Governance and Terms of Reference*, date unknown, 3.

## 2.4 Preliminary Conclusions - Afghanistan

Several converging trends define the evolution of PRTs in Afghanistan over time. In the case of the American PRTs, they have been predominately staffed by the military. Although this provides unity of command, the influence of the PRT is mostly felt through the achievement of QIPs. It is the DOD's control over much of the funding (and consequently the PRT Commander's wishes) which dictates the order of priorities in terms of project management. To some degree QIPs may be more likely to generate goodwill from the populace than long-term projects with faraway completion dates. With shorter projects, the PRT retains control over asynchronous rotation schedules, and therefore avoids continuity of effort problems. However, the significant downside is the risk that the positive effects will not be sustained over the long-term. The military nature of American PRTs means that military actors sometimes delve into works that are traditionally undertaken by civilians, affecting the humanitarian space.

The UK PRTs have implemented the comprehensive approach in a much deeper fashion, creating structures at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels that reflect the requirement for synchronised civil-military action. With the development component controlling project funding and implementation there is a risk of discontinuity with short-term requirements that might be identified as necessary to improve the immediate tactical situation. However, the integrated command group tends to mitigate this risk. More heavily staffed with civilians, the UK PRT model offers a system where each actor is responsible for project implementation within its own area of expertise. Because most of the work is done by DFiD, the timeline for projects affected the potential for influence of the PRT, and recently, the British experience has sought to integrate QIPs within the work schedule. The British approach is also more multinational, integrating US Department of State and USAID representatives. However, success of the UK PRT scheme in Afghanistan may owe more to its geographical location and permissive security environment than on the quality of its structure, composition or even activities.

The Canadian PRT experience borrows more heavily from the British experience, while integrating some American input. The KPRT leadership is shared among three agencies, each performing tasks connected with its mandated responsibilities. This is not dissimilar to the British model, except that a similar structure does not exist at the strategic level, the need for which has been expressed in internal memoranda. It is significant therefore that governance work, security force training, development and reconstruction projects undertaken respectively by DFAIT, DND and CIDA, take place concurrently and not sequentially. Like the US and the UK, there is a predominance of short-term projects providing immediate impact. Another particularity of KPRT is that, like the British example, the Canadian approach integrates foreign elements into its structure to a great extent. Lately, the civilian component has increased dramatically, not only in response to Canada's experience, but as part of an on-going trend. Finally, the Canadian experience has been brought into sharper focus thanks to the elaboration of a COIN doctrine and the fact that the PRT represents a useful tactical expression of CIMIC doctrine. In that sense, Canada mirrors the experience of both the United States and the United Kingdom.

The convergence therefore takes place on three axes in Afghanistan. First, there is convergence as to the type of work undertaken under the PRT's coordination function. The work concerns governance, SSR, and reconstruction, but this has to be understood as factors that lead to a transition moment where the Afghans will take over the effort. While the US focuses on governance and the British on SSR, Canada tends to do governance, SSR and reconstruction

simultaneously; KPRT does not have a particular focus. On the whole, however, the three themes are consistent with sound COIN application in all three cases. The second trend that is detectable is that of shorter term as opposed to longer term projects. Third is the increase in civilianisation of the PRT, in order to implement a real comprehensive approach. The literature also reveals that the presence of PRTs is not as keenly felt as it could be in the districts and in remote areas. Correspondingly, there has been ever greater emphasis in bringing benefits to sub-regions, with “District Development Teams” (US), autonomous patrols for the UK, and the “Key Villages” approach of the Canadians.

### 3 PRTs in Iraq

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The security and political vacuum that developed after the conclusion of conventional operations in Iraq led to a scramble for solutions to the problem of Iraqi reconstruction.<sup>90</sup> The transfer of the PRT concept from Afghanistan became that solution. Aided by the posting of former US Ambassador to Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad to Iraq, the Afghan PRT experience could be more easily transferred to the Iraqi context, as Khalilzad brought with him his extensive experience which contrasted strikingly with the Bremer era.<sup>91</sup> The establishment of PRTs in Iraq also coincided with the creation of the Office of the Coordinator for Stability and Reconstruction within the State Department (S/CRS). The S/CRS produced an “Essential Tasks” matrix in April 2005. The move towards emphasis on stability operations continued with the release of US Department of Defense directive, DODD 3000.05, which unequivocally set stability operations as a core military activity.<sup>92</sup>

DODD 3000.05 reflected basic COIN doctrine and established the required emphasis on governance and economic development, in the context of civil-military and interagency cooperation, within the scope of stability operations.<sup>93</sup> Furthermore, DODD 3000.05 instructed the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (USD(P)), to represent DOD with the S/CRS<sup>94</sup>, bringing added legitimacy to the State Department at a moment when the Bush Administration seemed keener to apply brute force rather than soft power. There is evidence however that fractious interaction at the strategic level prevented the PRTs from generating the progressive successes witnessed in Afghanistan. This is well recorded in the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction’s *Hard Lessons*, a book-size report which gives a detailed historical, political, administrative and operational account of how and why the PRT concept was applied in Iraq, and the consequences of its application. Ambassador Khalilzad is duly credited for importing the PRT concept into Afghanistan, but a normal tendency to civilianize the concept was accelerated past the point of harmonious civil-military balance, putting in doubt the application of the comprehensive approach. In effect, the PRT structure became mostly civilian, and attached to a manoeuvre unit for force protection. Recruitment for PRT staffing was, according to some reports, far from optimal. In the case of both Afghanistan and Iraq, it is difficult to avoid making the conclusion that most of the successes in stabilisation and security were achieved after each host nation received its respective surge of American troops.

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<sup>90</sup> Richard Andres, “The Afghan Model in Iraq”, *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 29:3, June 2006, 417.

<sup>91</sup> Drolet, “PRTs: Afghanistan vs Iraq”..., 9. SIGIR, *Hard Lessons: The Iraq Reconstruction Experience*, (Arlington, VA, February 2009), 229.

<sup>92</sup> James A. Walker, “A Comparison of the Democratic Security Policy in Colombia and Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Iraq”, (Monterey, CA: Naval Post-Graduate School (NPS), Masters Thesis, September 2009), 37.

<sup>93</sup> Department of Defense Directive (DODD) #3000.05, *Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition and Reconstruction (SSTR)*, 28 November 2005, para. 4.3-4.5.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, section 5.1.3.

### 3.1 The American Experience

There were, as of November 2010, 26 PRTs in Iraq, including 15 embedded PRTs (ePRTs), the latter working at sub-provincial level.<sup>95</sup> Below are the PRTs with their closest large city in parentheses.

PRT Anbar	(Ramadi)	PRT Babil	(Hillah)
PRT Baghdad	(Baghdad)	PRT Basra	(Basra) Since 2009
PRT Diyala	(Baqubah)	PRT Ninewa	(Mosul)
PRT Salah ad Din	(Tikrit)	PRT Ta'mim	(Kirkuk)

Only the PRTs handled by the United States are represented here, and are listed according to information provided by SIGIR and CALL. The ePRTs are not represented here, as their comparison is outside the scope of this work, and too little information was available to make an effective comparison. Embedded PRTs are so lightly staffed and so dependent on the manoeuvre brigade in which they are embedded that it is difficult to speak of them as a comparable organization. Lightly staffed (10-30 according to SIGIR reports), they are provided with force protection independent of the PRT, while aiming to establish legitimate governance and stimulate economic development to render extremism unattractive.

PRT personnel deployed to Iraq to establish PRTs numbered no more than 35-40 mostly civilian people.<sup>96</sup> The PRTs' aim was to improve stability, generate local capacity, and facilitate reconstruction.<sup>97</sup> They are also operating under the command of a Foreign Service – not a military – officer.<sup>98</sup> By 2009, American PRTs were staffed with as many as 450-610 people for all PRTs.<sup>99</sup>

There is evidence that DoDD 3000.05 was poorly received by the US military which at the time seemed intellectually inadequately prepared to undertake SSTR activities, and that, as a result, PRT operations were left wholly to the State Department's care. According to SIGIR reports, increasing the reach of the PRTs and the question of the PRTs' civilian composition created certain problems of a legislative and programmatic nature. For instance, American statutes make it practically impossible to have a military structure headed by a civilian officer in theatre. Elsewhere, the State Department's standards for personnel security made it impossible for civilian members of the PRT to conduct business and establish rapport with local stakeholders.<sup>100</sup> Automatically, the tense security situation in the early days of the concept's application in Iraq meant that the PRT members could not venture outside the Green Zone, unless it was under significant military escort and protection, which not only drew resources away from purely military operations, but also defeated the purpose of having a light presence on the ground conducive to trust-building.

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<sup>95</sup> Kevin Makel, *Iraq PRT Handbook*, (Fort Leavenworth, KS: CALL, November 2010), 52. Abbaszadeh *et al*, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams: Lessons and Recommendations*, 51.

<sup>96</sup> Walker, "A Comparison...", 40, citing SIGIR, *Status of the PRT in Iraq*, 06-034, (Arlington, VA: 30 April 2008).

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 12-13, Drolet, "PRTs: Afghanistan vs Iraq...", 8. Abbaszadeh *et al*, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams: Lessons and Recommendations*, 50, mentions 30-80, quoting a Congressional Research Study (CRS).

<sup>98</sup> Drolet, "PRTs: Afghanistan vs Iraq...", 10, McLay, "...A Panacea for what ails Iraq?" 11.

<sup>99</sup> General Accounting Office (GAO), *Note to Congressional Committees: Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan and in Iraq*, 09-86R, Washington, DC, 1 October 2008, 12-14.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 241-242.

While the abundance of funding and latent capability were a luxury that was not available in Afghanistan, this meant that the disjointed status of civil-military and interagency relations within the PRT would make project coordination between stakeholders and strategy reconciliation all the more difficult. In particular, one key impediment in developing local ownership and legitimacy was the sacrosanct obedience to Federal Acquisition Regulations which applied in Iraq, and which were detrimental to Iraqi bidders. Once this hurdle was overcome however, the PRTs were faced with the mafia-like attitude of Iraqi bidders who would dictate to PRT project coordinators who would be employed for local reconstruction and infrastructure projects.<sup>101</sup> Whether in civilian or military form, therefore, the effects of aid or SSTR programming have generated unwanted consequences. Unethical business practices are not unknown even in the West, but they never translate into a challenge for the central authorities' legitimacy. In the case of a situation such as Iraq such practices threaten the fundamental objective of national reconciliation.

The PRT chain of command reaching back towards Washington was confused and ambiguous, and this is well reflected in the literature. Khalilzad's first order of business was to set up civil-military consultation mechanisms such as the Joint Strategic Planning and Assessment office, whereby information and planning activities could be shared between military and civilian members. General William Casey, commanding Multinational Force Iraq (MNF-1) did the same on the military side, with a Strategic Operations Center. There is a sense that the multiplicity of control committees established both in Washington and at operational level in theatre is a reflection of bureaucratic infighting, rather than an honest search for control and efficacy of the SSTR effort.

The nature of US post conflict stabilization efforts changed once the PRTs were established because PRTs owed much to the context of DODD 3000.05, a potent COIN doctrine and the arrival of a seasoned diplomat. Until then post-conflict efforts focused on reconstruction projects disconnected not wholly consistent with COIN doctrine principles and reconciled with American contracting regulations, standards and manners. The PRTs' focus had now shifted from reconstruction and development projects (implemented from national funding and using American labour) to building indigenous capacity, using local labour and running projects with the express intention of a speedy handover to the Iraqis. The mission became clearer and focused on five priorities to evaluate progress; public infrastructure, QIPs, high-visibility projects, transitional stabilization, and democracy building. Simultaneously, the top level bureaucracy in Washington began engaging in an attempt at interagency cooperation which has yet to find a formal expression.

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<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 302.

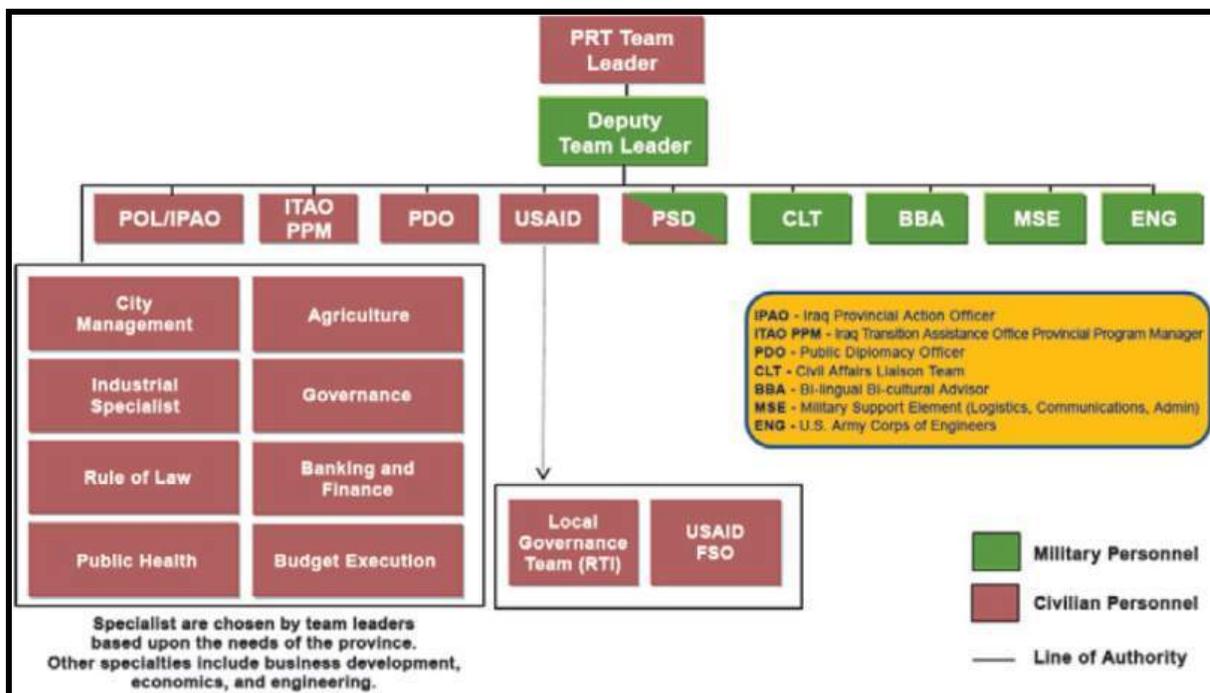


Figure 8: Notional PRT Structure (CALL) <sup>102</sup>

The order of project priorities owed much to the fact that Iraq had workable institutions and was a better-functioning society than Afghanistan. Still, the insurgency prevented PRTs from doing their work which forced PRTs onto a reactive footing demanding greater force protection which resulted in a “competition for security” among the PRTs in theatre.<sup>103</sup> This method of movement meant to comply with US internal policy and directives, but presented a militarized PRT which violated COIN tenets that urged intervention with a civilian face. This in turn led to the outcry of many NGOs and humanitarian and development IOs concerned that the humanitarian space and the provision of aid were becoming militarized.<sup>104</sup> There was also the sense that the PRTs did not have enough reach outside large urban centres, and so smaller teams, called Provincial Support Teams were established.

The PRT structure in Iraq, in addition to being led by a civilian, reveals a propensity for horizontal management (figure 9). Although security was provided by an attached kinetic unit, the US PRT in Iraq is mostly a civilian affair. In Washington, tensions between the State Department and DOD, and in particular between State Secretary Rice and Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, meant that the spirit of 3000.05 could not be applied in theatre. It also meant that in the higher echelons of power, there could not be symbiosis of thinking, strategic planning, and action.<sup>105</sup>

The strength of the US PRTs in Iraq is that they are civilian-led, and thus comply with a central tenet of COIN doctrine. But the quality of the relationship between the military and civilian often

<sup>102</sup> Makel, *Iraq PRT Handbook*, 40.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 144.

<sup>104</sup> Burke, “...The ‘Soldier-Diplomat’ in Afghanistan and Iraq”, 27.

<sup>105</sup> SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 120.

left much to be desired, principally due to the fact that civilians were ill-prepared to function in such demanding conditions, were unfamiliar with military processes, and were sometimes openly hostile to the military for parochial or professional reasons. This latter feature of inter-agency relations has generated calls for a civilian doctrine to post-conflict stabilization operations, one that would presumably complement the Army's COIN and stability operations doctrine. Common pre-deployment training is less compulsory for the US in Iraq because there is indication that PRTs will operate without military support past the American 31 December 2011 drawdown.<sup>106</sup>

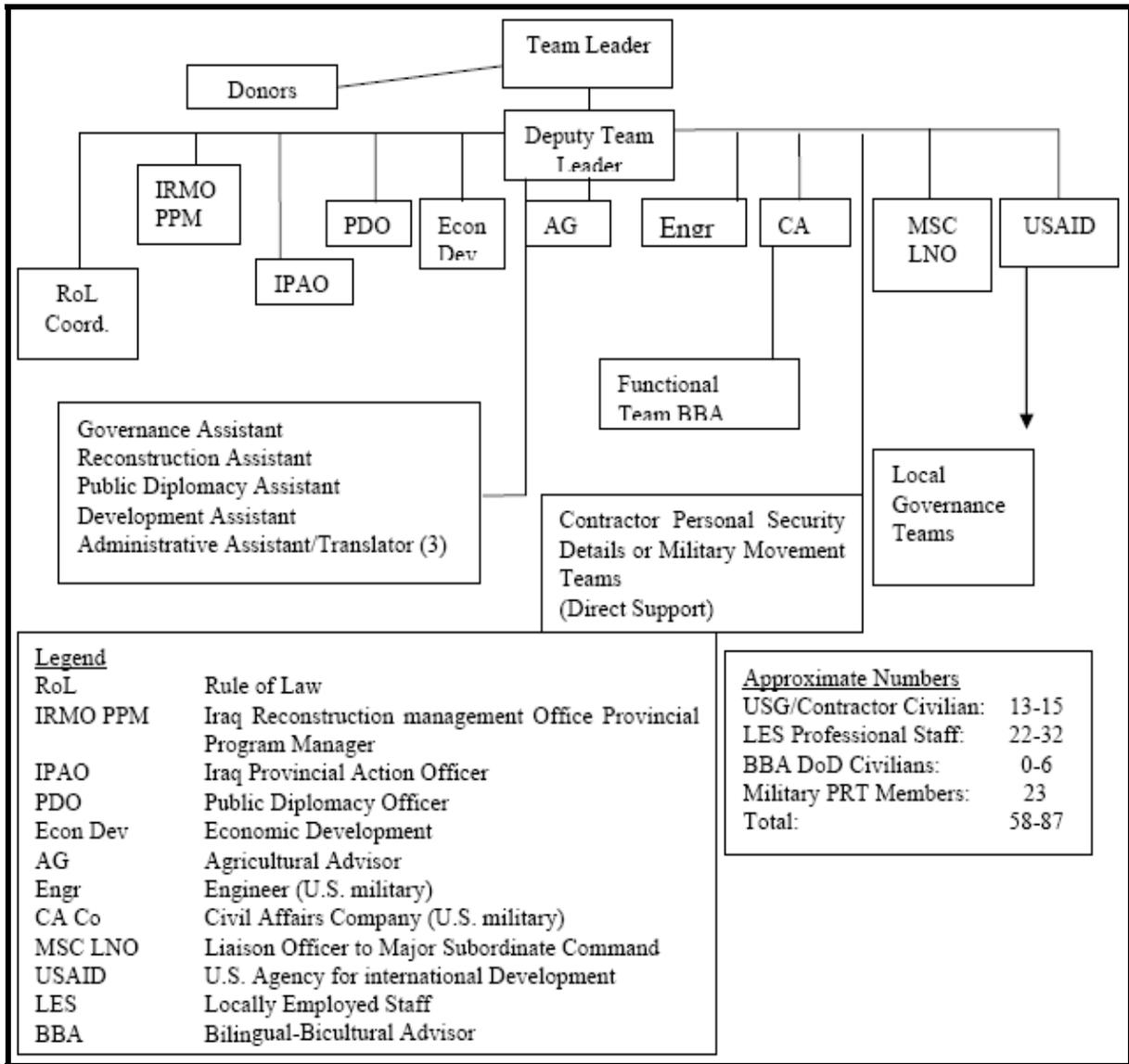


Figure 9: US Iraq PRT Structure<sup>107</sup>

<sup>106</sup> SIGIR, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams Measurement of Performance has Improved*, 09-13, (Arlington, VA: 28 January 2009), 11.

<sup>107</sup> Walker, "A Comparison...", 40.

The application of Afghan solutions to the Iraq problem led to the creation by the US Center for Army Lessons Learned in late 2010 and early 2011 of two PRT Handbooks, one each for Iraq and Afghanistan. The publication of these Handbooks comes some four years after the release of the ISAF PRT Handbook's third edition. A review of the CALL handbooks indicates that approximately 70% of the content is roughly identical and the structure is very similar to the ISAF handbook. This suggests that the PRT concept is meeting with broad, if varying levels of acceptance and success but also raises the concern that the requirement for PRT structures to be tailored to the specific tactical context might be overlooked. Furthermore, it may lead to the misplaced belief that the PRT concept is readily applicable to *any* COIN campaign.

Another issue, common to all military activities, is the desire for empirical evidence of cause and effect. In essence, the demand for useful Measures of Effectiveness (MoE) has led to the widespread use of task matrices. However, determining short- and long-term causal relationships between military activities and effects is notoriously difficult in conventional operations. For campaign themes such as COIN, determining and applying legitimate MoE is several times more difficult. The demand by military and political authorities for empirical evidence of improvements wrought by PRT activities is one of the greater challenges to be overcome in current and future operations. In the US experience, the necessity to provide clear indicators of success is less a question of accountability for funds (although this point is relevant) than knowing that the activities funded are having an effect consistent with COIN doctrine and specific campaign objectives. In that spirit, the US DOD has advocated for the creation of a National Strategic Planning System (a function that would resemble the UK's Stabilization Unit), the institutionalization of interagency processes and the training of adaptive leaders.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> US Secretary of Defense, *Report to Congress on the Implementation of DoD Directive 3000.05 Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations*, (Washington, DC: 1 April 2007), 30. This answers an observation made in Abbaszadeh *et al*, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams: Lessons and Recommendations*, 48.

## 3.2 The British Experience

The United Kingdom inaugurated its lone PRT in Basra, in South-Eastern Iraq, in April 2006. Building on the experience of Mazar-e-Sharif, the PRT became, according to Abbaszadeh *et al*, more civilian in character, integrating more DfID personnel than ever before.<sup>109</sup> This coincided with an increasingly insecure situation in that area, which meant that the PRT's activities were also curtailed. This was a contingency which the structure of the Mazar PRT was unable to address. Burke suggests that the civilian component was not prepared for the level of tension in that province, and the PRT failed to adapt its practices in consequence of the decreasing security situation.<sup>110</sup> The performance of the UK PRT became dependent on robust stabilisation operations from the military component, to re-open the humanitarian space to DFID personnel. In particular, COIN operations in Basra were complicated by the fact that the insurgency was fragmented. Insurgent groups, although hostile towards one another, were united in their desire to repel the British from Southern Iraq. This required the British application of COIN doctrine to be modified, and required the UK forces' rapprochement with certain groups.<sup>111</sup> On the whole, however, the UK credit the US *surge* in Iraq for enabling the British forces to enlist the assistance of Iraqi forces to pacify Basra.<sup>112</sup>

Yet, this manner of establishing security and stabilisation posed problems for the reconstruction and development that came later. Siding with one group will automatically create a situation where reconstruction and development will seem to favour the defeated and/or favouring the victorious faction. In other words, the impartiality of aid will not only be called into question by the NGOs and development IOs, it may further irritate factions. This problem has been identified and underscored in British stabilisation and reconstruction doctrine.<sup>113</sup> The Basra PRT programme was severely impeded by the security situation, which led its work to be overshadowed by the military activities designed to secure and stabilise. As a result, the visibility of the effects was less tangible, leading DFID to initiate a "Basra Support Office" (BSO) to "increase the visibility of the Basra PRT and Basra economic initiatives."<sup>114</sup> Iraq is not Afghanistan and this fact informs the types of activities which were undertaken by the PRT. As with other PRT case studies, it is virtually impossible to pin down a clear mission statement or objective for the Basra PRT. But because it is headed by a Foreign Service Officer, and has a six-fold increase in DFID staff, its objectives are likely set at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Projects listed at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's website put an emphasis on gender equality and policing reform, in other words, SSR.<sup>115</sup> On the other hand, DFID puts emphasis on business development. The SU, which is supposed to coordinate multi-agency effort now deals

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<sup>109</sup> Abbaszadeh *et al*, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams: Lessons and Recommendations*, 45.

<sup>110</sup> Burke, "...The 'Soldier-Diplomat' in Afghanistan and Iraq", 38.

<sup>111</sup> Glen Ranwala, "Counterinsurgency and Fragmentation: The British in Southern Iraq", *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 32:3, 2009, 495-513. See also Kasper Hoffman, *Civil-Military Relations in Iraq 2003-2007*, DISS Report 13, (Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies, 2009), 21-24.

<sup>112</sup> Ministry of Defence, *Security and Stabilisation: The Military Contribution*, Joint Doctrine Publication (JDP) 3-40, (Swindon, UK: Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre, November 2009), Part 3 – Influence: The Central Idea, 3-40.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, "Failing to implement the 'Do No Harm' Principle", Part 7, 7-14.

<sup>114</sup> DfID website: <http://projects.dfid.gov.uk/project.aspx?Project=114117> 31/03/2011.

<sup>115</sup> Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) website: <http://ukiniraq.fco.gov.uk/en/about-us/working-with-iraq/Projects/> 31/03/2011.

very little with Iraq, save for a major refurbishing project of the Basra International Airport, aimed at improving Basra's regional economic potential.<sup>116</sup>

Although this would lead one to believe that there has been no coordination in the UK's activities in Iraq, one cannot positively ascribe a distinct role to the Basra PRT, save for work on governance and business development.<sup>117</sup> There is nevertheless the sense that as a whole, the FCO, DFID and the MOD are undertaking, each under its own mandate, separate tasks defined in the JDP 3-40 MOD document. JDP 3-40 associates the security, economic development and governance pillars (undertaken by MOD, DFID and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office respectively) with an operational framework that corresponds to "clear, hold, build", "understand, shape, secure, hold, build" and "shape, secure, develop", which correspond to the activity framework and the respective specialties of each Ministry.<sup>118</sup> This approach is directly inspired by the US COIN doctrine.<sup>119</sup> There is a sense that Her Majesty's Government has become disillusioned with the PRT concept, and does not rely on it to effect major change in theatre. In fact,

The Stabilisation Unit were asked by FCO, DFID and MOD to conduct [a] review in order to draw on the Unit's experience of PRT best practice, following previous PRT reviews in both Iraq and Afghanistan. It was conducted against the backdrop of the Prime Minister's parliamentary statement on Iraq on 22 July, in which he stated that he expected a "*fundamental change of mission in the first months of 2009*". This raised questions over the primary focus of the PRT through 2008 and 2009, and stakeholders were keen that the PRT be enabled to perform as effectively as possible in that timeframe.<sup>120</sup>

This would certainly square with the paucity of information found on the concept as it applied to Basra between 2006 and 2010. It has been impossible to find authoritative sources on composition, structure and staffing of the British PRT. However, since it is heavily influenced by the Mazar-e-Sharif experience, and owing to its increased civilianization, one can presume an approximate size of 180, with 100 military at least<sup>121</sup> plus at least 10 civilians that can be accounted for (6 DFID staff<sup>122</sup>, 3 SU staff<sup>123</sup>, and at least 1 Foreign and Commonwealth Office (PRT leader) staff). Owing to the fact that Basra was also the only multinational PRT<sup>124</sup>, integrating American, Australian, Canadian and Danish components and its size is probably much larger. The American component was likely composed of US Army Corps of Engineers<sup>125</sup>, and the Canadian participation most probably focused on governance work.<sup>126</sup> The Danish component produced many lessons learned, notably on the need for harmonious and functional civil-military

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<sup>116</sup> SU's website: <http://www.stabilisationunit.gov.uk/about-us/where-we-work/iraq/141-basra-international-airport.html>, 31/03/2011.

<sup>117</sup> Abbaszdeh *et al*, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams: Lessons and Recommendations*, 45.

<sup>118</sup> JDP 3-40, Section 4, point 437-438, 4-18.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 4-19.

<sup>120</sup> SU's website: <http://www.stabilisationunit.gov.uk/about-us/where-we-work/iraq/106-su-staff-review-basra-reconstruction-team.html> 31 /03/2011

<sup>121</sup> Matthews and Lucas, "Stabilisation and Reconstruction...", 88.

<sup>122</sup> Abbaszadeh *et al*, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams...*, 45.

<sup>123</sup> [www.stabilisationunit.gov.uk](http://www.stabilisationunit.gov.uk)

<sup>124</sup> SIGIR, *Review of the Effectiveness of the Provincial Reconstruction Team Program in Iraq*, 07-015, (Arlington, VA: 18 October 2007), 29-30.

<sup>125</sup> Matthews and Lucas, "Stabilisation and Reconstruction...", 88.

<sup>126</sup> Hon. David Pratt, "Doing Governance Work in Iraq", *On Track*, 15:3, Autumn 2010, 14-16.

cooperation.<sup>127</sup> The Danish participation was substantial, but also created parallel lines of authority going to Copenhagen, despite nominally accepting British leadership and definition of goals.<sup>128</sup> Nevertheless the overriding theme was the quality of relationships between military and civilians within the PRT, which cannot have been helped by the variety of cultures and languages.

It seems that the Provincial Reconstruction Team's work was hampered by internal conflicts. It would appear that these internal discords were to a large extent created by the fact that it was a piecemeal institution with a lack of clear guidelines. The staff were contractually bound to various national institutions, which set the stage for the promotion of national interests, rather than following a clearly defined Basra Provincial Reconstruction Team policy. As a result, the different advisers acted rather autonomously.<sup>129</sup>

The Basra PRT was been over to the United States on 31 March 2009.<sup>130</sup> Burke's final comments on the Basra experience seem to echo the analysis made so far, that the internal workings of the PRT were dysfunctional, and that the external performance of the concept was hampered by security problems. On the whole, the impression that the British government is not banking on the PRT as a method of security and stabilisation remains ever more tangible. If this is so, then the evolution of PRTs as a concept is not only stopped, but post-conflict stabilisation is reverting back to its pre-PRT form, this time informed (if need be) by a relevant and tested COIN doctrine. Consulting the British government's sources on the performance of the Basra PRT only confirms the impression that each Ministry undertaking work in Basra is performing its activities nearly independently of one another, but in reference to UK policy on COIN. A definitive conclusion is therefore difficult to make, especially since the Basra province is much more peaceful now, but this may be due to the withdrawal of a drawing-down British PRT no longer pursuing activities as vigorously as it once had, or the influx of a more muscular American PRT model. Performance and effectiveness measurement of PRT activities has always been difficult and controversial but still an essential task. After reviewing the documentation there is a sense that conventional armies, even in defining tools to tackle a non-conventional foe, remain conventional in attempts to build effective structures and methods suitable to a favourable outcome for their strategy. It seems difficult to this author to believe that a 100-200 strong civil-military unit would be able to achieve the desired end-state better than the dozens of thousands of fighting troops that operate simultaneously in trying to quell rebellion. This is not a statement that maximum force wins the day; merely that it is not easy to determine which of the solutions achieves desired results the fastest.

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<sup>127</sup> Finn Stepputat, *Integrated National Approaches to International Operations: The Cases of UK, Denmark and the Netherlands*, DISS Report 14, 2009, 23.

<sup>128</sup> Kasper Hoffman, *Civil-Military Relations in Iraq...*, 22.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 58.

<sup>130</sup> Ed Burke, "Basra: A Better Model", *The Guardian*, online edition, 15 April 2009, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/apr/15/basra-handover-iraq>

### 3.3 Preliminary Conclusions

The trends witnessed in Afghanistan took a different tangent in Iraq under American management. The greater civilian input of the PRTs was a logical outcome of the convergence towards a better civil-military balance within the PRTs. This is possibly due to the fact that Iraq as a country did not start from the same point as Afghanistan, and seemed comparatively safer than Afghanistan, enabling more rapid progress. As soon as the security situation deteriorated, however, the PRTs were confined to their respective compounds. The problem of civil-military balance did not solve the question of adequate security, and so the advantage of the nimbleness of small teams also became a disadvantage.

The US solved this shortcoming by embedding PRTs within combat brigade structures. In Basra, the British had to re-establish security by adding physical military capabilities to their presence there. Both PRTs were civilian-led, which may have solved some problems, but created others, which were often administrative and legal in nature. Those impediments seem to have been decisive in the UK's Basra experiment. In this latter case, PRTs as laboratories for civil-military experimentation seem to have failed, although the sources to make that judgment, it must be said, are very scarce. Even if sources were more generous, it would be difficult to determine whether the performance was dependent upon the civilian leadership, or the multinational character of that particular PRT.

Project management seems to have entertained a mix of QIPs and high-visibility, longer-term projects. As discussed by Perito in his study of PRTs, establishing more than a correlation between an activity and a desired output – measuring effectiveness and performance empirically – remains difficult.<sup>131</sup> But there is one measure which seems incontrovertible; the PRTs, although vulnerable, remain the only ones doing anything non-military in a violent context.<sup>132</sup> Finding indicators of success in theatre had rapidly become a political necessity at home, which in turn has become an administrative obligation. This has stimulated thinking in the United States as to how to measure progress, but it has not triggered any thinking as to how to achieve it. In other words, the integration of civil-military planning and coordination at the strategic level remains in its infancy in the United States. In the United Kingdom, however, the Government has retained the SU structure, but seems to be abandoning the PRT concept in theatre. It is interesting to notice that much of the security and stabilisation thinking in the UK is influenced by American experience.

In analysing the literature, it has become apparent that in fumbling for a miracle solution to the twin problems of counterinsurgency and effective development, the Americans are in the process of proposing yet another panacea with the PRTs, by proposing a universal model which nevertheless has to adapt to local circumstances. Case in point, the Mazar-e-Sharif model applied by the UK, which enjoyed such a good reputation in the literature and official circles, seems to have been prematurely transplanted to Basra, Iraq. There is a risk that the PRT as a concept will be promoted aggressively in future stabilisation operations regardless of suitability for the specific socio-political or geographic context. For this reason, the conclusions to this paper will outline some of the common problems encountered by PRTs in addition to providing a comparative matrix for easy consultation of PRT features.

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<sup>131</sup> Makel, *Iraq PRT Handbook*, 30-31

<sup>132</sup> Malkasyan and Meyerle, *...How Do We Know They Work?*, 23-28.

## 4 Conclusion

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This conclusion considers challenges detected from the literature on all five of the cases examined in this study.

Although the PRT experience can be traced to a rich counterinsurgency warfare history, there is clear evidence that large organizations do a poor job at maintaining the memory of it. The conclusions in this study, particularly that regarding the imperative that political leaders establish clear strategic vision, are not historically unique. Indeed, the failure of strategy-making is common to all three countries studied in this paper.

Consequently, when PRTs were first established, there seems to have been little thought given to integration of the concept as a distinct tool of government (as opposed to a tool of defence, diplomacy or development) linked to a cogent strategy and concept of operations tailored to the unique context of the particular locale of operations. While the British have had only to modify their thinking regarding “security and stability operations,” the Americans had to work to modify attitudes throughout the armed forces, including at the Pentagon, to generate legitimacy for the idea that stability operations constituted a valid military activity. Meanwhile, Canada, which was more philosophically in tune with this idea, nevertheless had to convince the domestic population and that the KPRT was no peacekeeping mission, and also had to overcome the glaring doctrinal and training gap created by the absence of COIN doctrine. Furthermore, the composition and staffing of a PRT depends on broad understanding of the strategy leading to the deployment of national assets, the socio-political and geographic realities of the operational theatre, and an agreed upon concept of operations to be followed in the pursuit of national goals. Only by such integrated planning can any mission reasonably begin. The British SU is unparalleled in efficacy among the three cases studied, because at the higher echelons, the problem of civil-military relations is not readily apparent from the evidence available.

The case studies suggest that strong civil-military relationships are required at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels. This is not meant to say that civilian bureaucracies should wholesale adopt military structures but simply indicates that the largely proven effectiveness of the military command and control structures demand suitable civilian liaisons for effective integration. It is reasonable to assert that for large, long-term commitments, there should be a suitably focused political-strategic level interface (something akin to a task force or something similar) to help ensure the linkages between often changeable political intent down through the strategic, operational, and tactical levels. The case studies from Canada in Afghanistan reveal that in the field, there is comparatively good harmony between civilians and military PRT members, but between the UK military and other civilians in Basra, the picture is less bright. The quality of civil-military relations hinges on clarity of purpose, mission and objectives, even if those must be worded differently according to department.

The security situation may inform the balance between military and civilians in the field, but this balance must change with the change in security. This is a process that has been observed in the literature. Whenever a PRT was unable to perform because of security concerns, the military would augment its presence to re-establish security and stability, and re-open the humanitarian space. The civilian side must not feel it has failed if the security situation deteriorates, and the military side must not feel it is not needed anymore if the civilians are augmented in a PRT. Both

are operating in a COIN environment, which means that both the military and civilian actors must reinterpret their relationship with success and victory. For example, the civilian side must learn to be able to quantify the effects of their projects in ways other than those traditionally required to assure financial accountability to treasury authorities. For the military, such facts as the reality of a successful PRT acting as a lightning rod for the insurgency must be considered early on in the planning of operations.

Issues regarding the militarisation of aid and the maintenance of humanitarian space are highlighted throughout the literature. To address this, one needs a security-dependent mix of military and civilians, but the professional qualities of both civilians and military should be suitable to being able to working cooperatively with personnel possessing a range of educational and professional backgrounds. Various sources lament the inability of certain civilians to work in multi-disciplinary contexts, and the impatience of the military with civilians who do not understand military processes. Many sources point to the need for common pre-deployment training as an essential step in creating an effective deployable civil-military force.

Linked to this is the timely performance of projects. Most sources have come to realise that the longer a project takes to complete, the harder it is to secure goodwill. The task of the PRT then becomes one of managing expectations. The propensity towards short-term QIPs has been noted in four out of the five cases considered in this study. QIPs are possibly just as effective as long-term projects, provided that their benefits are communicated adequately to the beneficiary. But QIPs have been relied upon because of asynchronous rotation schedules between civilian and military components. The problem of project discontinuity came up when deadlines would fall through the cracks left by departing personnel, and the absence of a mechanism of handover of partially-completed projects. The solution to this is not necessarily QIPs, but synchronous ROTOs with common pre-deployment collective training, supported with sufficiently long relief-in-place procedures and processes. With regard to ROTO handover, an ideal situation would likely see key personnel begin familiarisation with day-to-day tactical realities sometime before physical deployment. This is a particular problem that our potential information technology advantages could be applied. Some sources have chosen to measure the success of the PRTs by how much they spent, which emphasised the multitude of projects and programmes available to either the Iraqis or the Afghans. It also illustrated that in many cases, the funds didn't necessarily follow the agency implementing the project, or the lines of command of the agency that did. This represents a source of executive confusion, because the funds may be associated with certain conditions which the implementing agency may be less comfortable in meeting. The conclusion must be that the funding enabling PRT activities must have clear lines of responsibility and authority for effectively integrated civil-military activities

As long as the limitations of the PRT concept are recognized it seems a reasonably adaptable structure that can be employed in a wide range of operational contexts. However, this cautiously positive conclusion must be tempered with the knowledge that any attempt to doctrinally formalise a PRT structure will likely prove detrimental to the very adaptability that has allowed the positive operational gains the concept has enabled. However, no such concept can succeed in over the long-term absent cogent national and coalition strategy drafted and articulated prior to the deployment of national assets.

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## Annex A PRT Comparative Matrix

PRT Country	Control and Support	Operating budget source	Staff size	Operational focus	Project funding source	Project type	Lead in theatre	Lead agency at home	Parent maneuver unit	HOST NATION
USA	DOD	DOD	88-100 mil, +3 civ (DOS, USAID, USDA)	Governance and rule of law	CERP	QIP	DOD	DOD	OEF Brigade	AFGHANISTAN
UK	N/A	SU	150-200 mil, +25-30 civ (FCO, DfID, SU)	SSR and Counternarcotics	DfID	Mix of long-term and short term projects, but later preference for QIPs	Joint	SU	N/A	
CANADA	Kandahar Air Field	CIDA	330, civ-mil proportions N/A	Governance SSR and reconstruction simultaneously	DFAIT CIDA	Long-term projects	Joint	DFAIT	Task Force Kandahar	
US	DOS and separate 1½ Inf. Battalion for security and logistics	Joint DOS-DOD based on MOU	10-45 civ 10-20 civ for ePRTs, up to 35-40 in last two years	Governance and business development	USAID and DOS Quick Response Fund, Local Governance Program, CERP	Mix of long-term and short term projects	DOS	DOS	Brigade Combat Team	IRAQ
UK	Basra Air Station	SU	N/A but probably similar to Afghanistan	SSR and business development	DfID	Mix of long-term and short term projects	FCO	SU	N/A	

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## List of symbols/abbreviations/acronyms/initialisms

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ANDS	Afghanistan National Development Strategy
ANF	Afghanistan National Forces
CALL	Centre For Army Lessons Learned
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIMIC	Civil Military Cooperation
COIN	Counterinsurgency
DFAIT	Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
DFID	Department for International Development
DND	Department of National Defence
DOD	Department of Defense
DRDC	Defence Research & Development Canada
EBAO	Effects Based Approach to Operations
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
ICG	Interagency Command Group
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IO	International Organizations
KPRT	Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team
MOD	Ministry of Defence
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OGD	Other Government Department
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
QIP	Quick Impact Project
SSR	Security Sector Reform
START	Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	United Nation Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNSC	UN Security Council

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This study is a descriptive analysis of the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) concept as applied by Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States in Afghanistan and in Iraq. The aim of this study is to identify the commonalities across respective experiences so as to inform doctrine revision and force development. The study begins with a comparison of the three countries' experiences in Afghanistan and establishes preliminary conclusions based on these experiences. It then examines the American and British application of the concept in Iraq, and establishes corresponding conclusions. Finally the paper discusses the most frequently mentioned challenges of PRT operations in Afghanistan and in Iraq. A bibliography of the works consulted follows this study.

L'étude ici présentée consiste en une analyse descriptive du concept d'équipe provinciale de reconstruction (EPR) qu'ont mis en application le Canada, le Royaume-Uni et les États-Unis en Afghanistan et en Irak. L'étude vise à trouver les similitudes entre les expériences de chacun de manière à faciliter la révision de la doctrine et le développement des forces. Nous commençons en comparant les expériences des trois pays en Afghanistan à partir desquelles nous formulons ensuite des conclusions préliminaires. Nous examinons ensuite la manière dont les Américains et les Britanniques ont appliqué le concept en Irak et nous présentons les conclusions que nous en tirons. Enfin, nous exposons les problèmes les plus fréquemment rencontrés par les EPR lors d'opérations en Afghanistan et en Irak. La bibliographie des ouvrages consultés est présentée à la fin du document.

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PRT; provincial reconstruction team; COIN; counterinsurgency; stabilisation





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