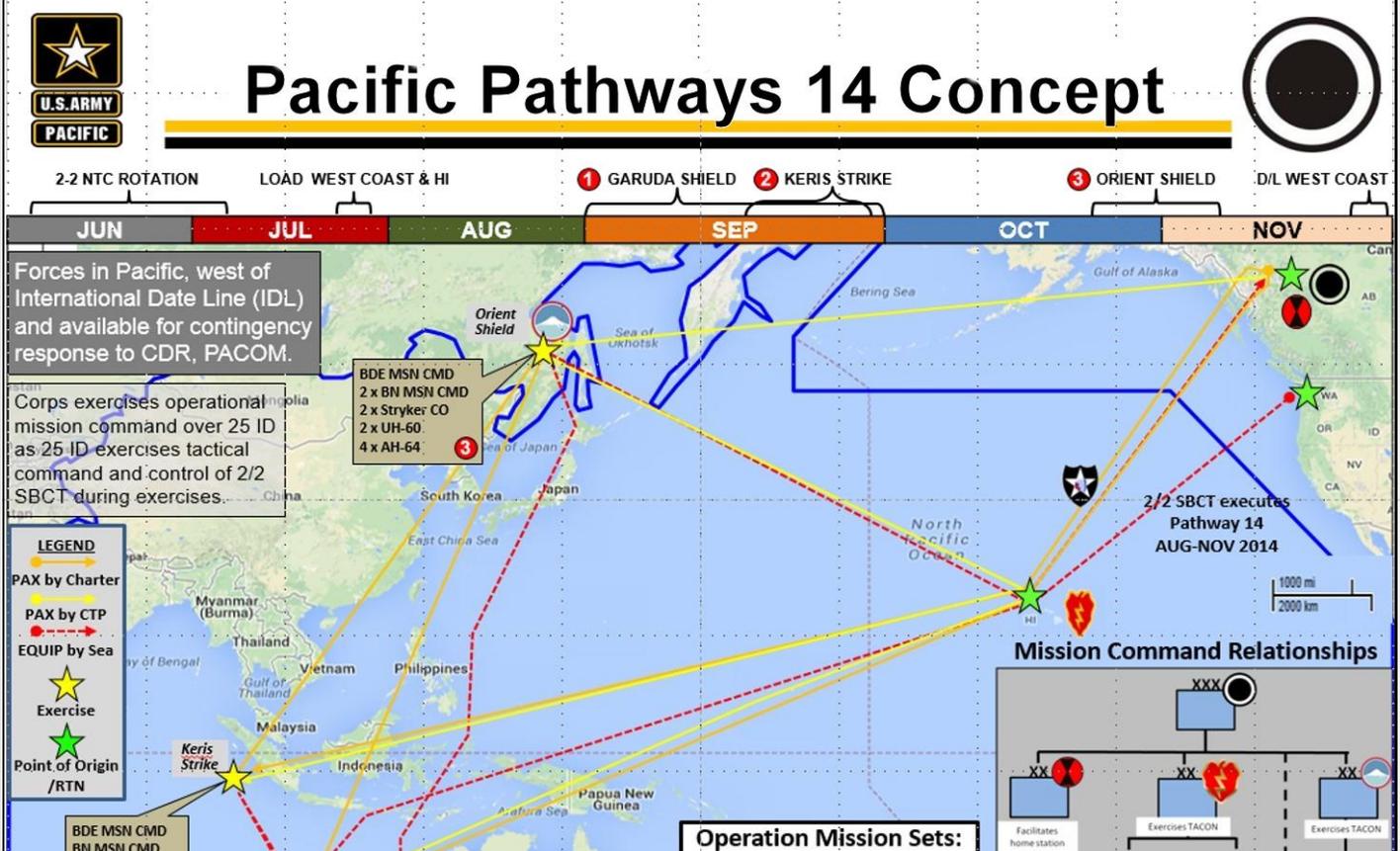


Carlisle Compendia of Collaborative Research

United States Army War College Student Publications

Pacific Pathways 2014: Assessment and Recommendations



April



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United States Army War College Student Publications

Carlisle Compendia of Collaborative Research, an electronic publication of student-faculty work, is produced under the purview of the Strategic Studies Institute and the United States Army War College. Each compendium reports the findings of a major student-faculty research initiative on a topic of strategic importance to the Army, the Department of Defense, and the larger community of strategic leaders.

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Graphic: *I Corps, "Pacific Pathways Overview," Fort Lewis, Washington, April 21, 2015.*

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Carlisle Compendia of Collaborative Research

United States Army War College Student Publications

Pacific Pathways 2014: Assessment and Recommendations

Colonel James C. Sharkey

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Colonel James Frick

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Colonel Timothy C. Frantz

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Lieutenant Colonel Dennis R. Hawthorne and Colonel James Frick

In December 2013, the commander of the U.S. Army Pacific unveiled the Pacific Pathways initiative, an effort to make the Army more flexible and expeditionary in responding to the needs of U.S. Pacific Command. Among other things, this concept envisions assigning key elements of the U.S.-based infantry brigades to Asia and keeping them there for several months as they rotate from country to country, conducting training exercises and other security force assistance activities. These forces would also be available to respond to humanitarian crises or security threats in the region.

—*House Report 114-102- National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016*¹

¹ National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016, Report of the Committee on Armed Services House of Representatives on H.R. 1735, May 5, 2015: 116.

Executive Summary

In the fall of 2014, the I Corps commander requested the U.S. Army War College (USAWC) provide an outside assessment of U.S. Army Pacific Command's (USARPAC) initial iteration of the "Pacific Pathways" concept as an "application of regionally engaged Landpower during Phase 0 operations."¹ In response, the USAWC Pacific Pathways 2014 Study Group was established.² Consisting of student volunteers and faculty advisors, the Study Group examined the Pathways concept, explored its planning and execution, and considered its implications for the Army, the Joint Force, and the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. The results of that inquiry are presented in this compendium.

In May 2015, The House of Representatives Committee on Armed Services directed the Comptroller General of the United States to "provide a report . . . on the Pacific Pathways Initiative."³ With Pathways 2014 and 2015 concluded and Pathways 2016 underway, the Pathways concept continues to evolve. Assessment of the initial demonstration suggests that development and pursuit of Pathways is an important component of the U.S. rebalance to the Pacific. Pacific Pathways 2014 (Pathways 14) was a USARPAC security cooperation initiative. Designed to reinforce engagement and partnership efforts while setting the theater, Pathways 14 successfully tested feasibility of the larger Regionally Aligned Force (RAF) concept in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. Through Pathways:

We're able to understand a lot about the human domain out there that our people, our soldiers, our leaders are going to have to understand if they're asked to operate in those countries in support of those nations . . . When you have real people, with real materiel, real training, and they're out doing real operations, you just can't replicate that.⁴

As an innovative, efficient deployment of elements of an I Corps Regionally Aligned Force Brigade Combat Team, Pathways 14 demonstrated U.S. commitment and capability in response to strategic guidance. By leveraging the RAF unit, partnerships, and existing exercises, USARPAC and I Corps accessed foreign training environments, conducted military-to-military exchanges, familiarized USARPAC and I Corps units with the operational environment, and positioned a forward-deployed U.S. force west of the International Date Line. Major General Charles Flynn explains: "What we get is readiness . . . We get relationships, we get a form of reconnaissance, and we get a form of rehearsal." By increasing interoperability with Joint and Host Nation partners and improving relationships, Pathways builds an environment of mutual confidence, trust, and good will. Pathways' efficient innovation stemmed primarily from a change in the USARPAC Theater Security Cooperation Plan (TSCP) Exercise paradigm. Rather than deploying and redeploying *ad hoc* units and individual augmentees to support separate exercises, USARPAC deployed a single RAF Brigade Combat Team (BCT) along a "pathway" of three sequential, yet overlapping, exercises over a four-month period from August to November 2014. Pathways 14 effectively transformed these three TSCP exercises into

one unified operation starting with *Garuda Shield* in Indonesia, transitioning to *Keris Strike* in Malaysia,⁵ and culminating with *Orient Shield* in Japan. This compendium provides an overview of Study Group conclusions regarding the Pathways initiative and presents detailed analysis of (a) the evolution and communication of the concept from inception to execution, (b) partner nation cultures, priorities, and objectives, and (c) alignment of Pathways with Army Operating Concept (AOC) core competencies in ways that can assist USARPAC to overcome future challenges.

Several themes emerge: First, Pacific Pathways operationalizes U.S. strategic guidance towards the Indo-Asia-Pacific region found in the National Security Strategy, Defense Strategic Guidance and Quadrennial Defense Review. These areas include building partner capacity, enhancing interoperability, demonstrating commitment to the region through presence, and developing personal relationships. Pathways also employs core competencies of the Army Operating Concept, supports the USPACOM Theater Security Cooperation Plan, and enhances the Joint Force's capability to Prevent, Shape and Win in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. Suggestions for future refinement focus on the design of the force packages, specific areas of engagement, capabilities-based training, the use of pre-positioned stocks, and utilization of the Total Force.

Second, although many countries in the region highly value their ground forces, they also desire a force with joint capabilities that can provide maritime security in defense of their sovereign territory. Because the U.S. also seeks to enhance its joint capabilities, Pacific Pathways offers a tremendous opportunity to train and develop such capacity by integrating Joint Force scenarios. As Major General Edward Dorman III notes: "Our Army mariners are here to stay and Pacific Pathways is here to stay because we see the tremendous benefit, not just for the Army, but for the Joint Force."⁶ Providing the opportunity for Joint Force enablers to participate in Pacific Pathways may expand opportunities for Army enablers to also participate more frequently in other service-led Pacific exercises, thus further enhancing readiness and creating a more adaptive force.

Third, USARPAC's operational design of Pacific Pathways must consider all aspects of the Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multi-national (JIIM) environment, with coordination beginning well in advance of execution. Building specific types of partner capacity requires years of advanced planning and proper identification/collaboration of key stakeholders to coordinate meaningful training objectives and scenarios. In terms of acquiring resources in the out years, aligning Pathways planning to a construct similar to the budgeting process that considers the current year, the budget year, and the out years may prove beneficial. Detailed up front coordination will ultimately improve interoperability during execution, resulting in a more meaningful and beneficial exercise. A longer planning horizon would also allow time to develop a strategic communication plan for the entire Pacific Pathways concept—an improvement over simply developing a commander's communication strategy for each iteration.

Fourth, Pathways offers a way to build and sustain training readiness within Army formations. Maintaining long-term benefits within USARPAC, however, may require habitual alignment of units with specific countries to retain knowledge within organizations as opposed to within individuals who will rotate out of the region. Integration of the Total Force and established State Partnership Programs in the region also contribute to maintaining this consistent relationship. Additionally, tailoring the

force to train a variety of mission sets integrates support forces outside the Brigade Combat Team construct based on host nation needs for the identified operation.

Finally, the Pathways force helps to build partner capacity in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief—a priority for nearly every country in the region. This type of training may be outside the currently established USPACOM exercise structure, but nonetheless provides an excellent opportunity to involve partners with whom a mature security cooperation arrangement does not exist. Pathways also builds upon common interests, opens communication, and develops trust among the U.S., its regional partners, and other nations that may find themselves working together to promote regional support. The design of the force for each particular Pathways operation may not, however, be suitable for immediate redirection to crises areas.

Pacific Pathways, as with all new initiatives, provides both opportunities and challenges. As future iterations operationalize both the Regionally Aligned Force and Army Operating Concepts, the Pathways design must continually evolve to meet the changing demands in the strategic environment. Pathways is an innovative approach to meet the Geographic Combatant Commander's (GCC) steady state and Phase Zero requirements as ends remain fixed and means are reduced. As such, planners must continually assess Pathways to ensure it nests with the GCC Theater Campaign Plan and supports U.S. interests in the region as outlined in the National Security Strategy. As Lieutenant General Stephen Lanza notes: "Any time you have something that's good like this, you want to see how you can enable it."⁷ By establishing a more efficient, effective means of helping to deter aggression and maintain regional stability, the U.S. Army Pacific Pathways program is fast becoming an integral and essential component of the U.S. rebalance to the Pacific.

USAWC Study Group Leads

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Notes

¹ Stephen R. Lanza, I Corps Commander, email to William E. Rapp, Commandant, U.S. Army War College, October 1, 2014.

² Consisting of 9 integral members: six USAWC students—Colonel Jerry A. Hall, Lieutenant Colonel Dennis R. Hawthorne, Lieutenant Colonel Joseph E. Hilbert, Jr., Lieutenant Colonel Edward A. Kovaleski, Colonel Lori L. Robinson, Lieutenant Colonel Mitchell O. Watkins—and three faculty—Colonel Timothy C. Frantz, Colonel James Frick, and Colonel James C. Sharkey.

³ National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016, Report of the Committee on Armed Services House of Representatives on H.R. 1735, 116, May 5, 2015.

⁴ As quoted in Michelle Tan, "Soldiers on New Pacific Pathway to Visit Mongolia, Japan," *Army Times*, June 4, 2015, <http://www.armytimes.com/story/military/2015/06/04/army-confirms-third-pacific-pathways/28418765/>.

⁵ For a discussion of Pathways logistics, see Michael McMillan and Brian W. Tuttle, "Logistics for Pacific Pathways: Malaysia," *Army Sustainment* 47, no. 2 (March-April 2015) 42-45.

⁶ As quoted in Nicole Howell, "Army Mariners Complete Trans-Pacific Voyage Supporting Pacific Pathways," U.S. Pacific Command, October 26, 2015, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/tabid/5693/Article/625938/army-mariners-complete-trans-pacific-voyage-supporting-pacific-pathways.aspx>.

⁷ As quoted in Michelle Tan, "3-Star: Army Grows Pacific Pathways, Ties with Asian Armies," *Army Times*, October 24, 2015, <http://www.armytimes.com/story/military/careers/army/2015/10/24/3-star-army-grows-pacific-pathways-ties-asian-armies/74230144>.

Successes & Recommendations

Pathways Successes

Pacific Pathways 14:

- Improved JIIM interoperability.
- Transcended national boundaries.
- Successfully built baseline capabilities with Joint Force application.
- Underscored U.S. military commitment and ability to support during a crisis.
- Trained warfighters who now better understand the Indo-Asia-Pacific Region.
- Supported the USPACOM Commander's theater engagement strategy by building allied and partner capacity.
- Employed a single operation which lead to increased operational opportunities.
- Leveraged reach-back capability to meet operational requirements and reduced deployment costs.
- Tested established systems/procedures while operating within the RAF concept.

Pathways Recommendations

- Improve stakeholder understanding and involvement throughout Pathways development and execution.
- Tailor talking points, themes, and messages to the appropriate target audiences to maximize effect while preempting potential counter-arguments.
- Require and resource assessments of Pathways communication efforts.
- Integrate Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational (JIIM) organizations during Pathways planning.
- Seek and gain diplomatic input toward a whole-of-government approach.
- Focus on critical regional partners—not necessarily more partners—to protect capacity and enable interoperable security partners.
- Design security cooperation programs to support the strategic political position of each country individually and to ensure programs complement and are nested with each country's interests and objectives in the region.
- Consider subordinating some U.S. training objectives to those of the host nation while remaining focused on long term mutual benefits for both.
- Leverage strong and existing diplomatic ties between nations, ASEAN-focused security meetings, and common interests (e.g., Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief—HA/DR) for multi-lateral exercises.
- Build the capacity of niche capabilities across the region (e.g., peacekeeping in Indonesia).
- Clarify the extent of U.S. commitments in potential regional disputes to avoid confusion and prevent getting drawn into exercises too closely related to these disputes.

- Tailor Pacific Pathways force packages to focus on developing partner capabilities with Joint Force application above the brigade level to enable multinational interoperability.
- Capitalize on rotational Joint Forces across the region to support Pacific Pathways.
- Increase joint integration of Pathways to prepare for future scenarios and to highlight unique Army Landpower capabilities.
- Increase the level of joint integration in preparation for future scenarios by placing a Pathways force under the operation control of the Joint Force Maritime Component Commander for a portion of an exercise or for the duration.
- Integrate maritime security (a priority mission for many countries) into Pathways exercises to build the joint capabilities of both the U.S. and host nations.
- Explore concurrent use of Pacific Pathways brigade combat teams as part of the Contingency Response Force.
- Tailor the Pathways task organization to support better HA/DR operations.
- Utilize a Pathways exercise to serve as the foundation for rehearsing a land centric contingency.
- Plan for early and efficient use of key enablers across the Total Force.
- Coordinate for full use of Army Pre-positioned Stocks (APS) through iterative requests.
- Integrate the Joint Pacific Multinational Readiness Capability (JPMRC) with Pathways Partners.
- Fully integrate Cyber and SOF into Pathways planning and execution.
- Integrate the State Partnership Program (SPP) into Pathways.
- Formalize the Commander, USARPAC's role as the Theater Joint Force Land Component Commander with the responsibilities and directive authorities to synchronize multi-Service land force steady state and Phase Zero activities across the region.

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Communicating Pacific Pathways

Colonel Jerry A. Hall and Colonel James C. Sharkey

We have to have more faces, in more places, without more bases.

—General Vincent K. Brooks¹

The 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance (DSG) directed the U.S. rebalance to the Asia-Pacific and required the Department of Defense to “whenever possible . . . develop innovative, low-cost, and small-footprint approaches to achieve our security objectives, relying on exercises, rotational presence, and advisory capabilities.”² Pacific Pathways 2014 provided an innovative and efficient Army response to the DSG requirement. Because the Army was then struggling to define its post-Iraq and Afghanistan roles, its Pacific Pathways proposal was not well received in the 2013 strategic information environment. The weak economy, record national debt, and public weariness from the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts exacerbated the Army’s attempts to affirm its relevance.³ According to a Department of the Army (DA) narrative study, the Army has historically struggled to justify its relevance during peacetime.⁴ Effectively communicating the Pathways concept within the Army, to the joint and interagency communities, political leaders, and the public proved so difficult that the concept almost failed before it began.⁵ Despite challenges, however, United States Army Pacific (USARPAC) was eventually able to effectively communicate the Pathways concept. This essay overviews the 2013 Pacific Pathways strategic information environment, analyzes implementation of the Pathways communication strategy, and offers recommendations for more effective communication of future iterations of Pathways.

Strategic Information Environment

The Army’s Pathways proposal was stymied by its inability to convey a clear narrative explaining its role as the primary element of U.S. Landpower. Historically, the Army has “adopted multiple mottos and slogans for different audiences and purposes,” resulting in inconsistent messaging and muddled brand recognition.⁶ This became especially apparent after the DOD published the 2012 Air-Sea Battle (ASB) concept which emphasized Air Force and Navy weapons capabilities with little mention of an Army role in countering emerging Anti-Access / Area Denial capabilities in the Asia-Pacific.⁷ As one blogger noted, “there is growing concern inside the Army that the narrative in Washington already is being seized by advocates of naval and air warfare, and that the Army has yet to put forth a coherent vision of how land warfare fits in the picture.”⁸

In 2013, the Army developed the Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) concept of which Pathways is “an expression.”⁹ Under this concept, continental U.S. forces align with overseas Geographic Combatant Commands to support their training, exercises, and deployments. According to the 2013 Army Posture Statement, RAF:

will provide Geographic Combatant Commands with mission-trained and regionally focused forces that are responsive to all requirements, including operational missions, bilateral and multilateral military exercises and theater security cooperation activities.¹⁰

The U.S. Marine Corps, unlike the Army, has engaged in more successful “branding and marketing”¹¹ to build a “strong, positive” narrative. The contrasting images of the Army and Marine Corps contributed to a situation in which many objected to the Army’s proposed role in Pathways: “The Army is encroaching on the traditional Marine Corps mission by operating from ships and rebalancing to the Pacific (Pacific Pathways).”¹² In 2014, Retired Army Lieutenant General Guy Swan lamented the issues surrounding the Army narrative, stating: “It’s such a difficult story to tell . . . it does not resonate like airplanes and battleships and aircraft carriers,” to which the reporter added, “. . . or ‘A Few Good Men.’”¹³

Communicating Pathways

USARPAC experienced major changes in 2013 that affected its ability to plan, prepare, and execute Pathways effectively. General Vincent K. Brooks assumed command of USARPAC on 2 July, 2013 as its first four-star commander since 1974.¹⁴ General Brooks’ assumption of command symbolized “the continued rebalance for the United States in the Asia Pacific region.”¹⁵ With General Brooks came significant headquarters reorganization designed to increase the operational focus of the staff. General Brooks created a new Strategic Effects Directorate (FXD) by consolidating all of the “soft power” staff sections into one Directorate.¹⁶ Additionally, the USARPAC Public Affairs Officer (PAO) approached retirement, effectively leaving the command without a senior Public Affairs (PA) advisor until June 2014.¹⁷

Shortly after arriving, General Brooks saw an opportunity to use exercises more efficiently. He believed properly synchronized exercises could support the USPACOM and USARPAC Theater Security Cooperation Programs in accord with the Army’s RAF concept.¹⁸ Further, synchronized exercises would operationalize mission command from USARPAC through I Corps and the 25th Infantry Division to engage units across the Pacific.¹⁹ General Brooks, initiated the external coordination process by discussing the nascent “Exercise Pathways”²⁰ concept, as it was originally called, with the U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM) Commander, Admiral Locklear, and with the Army Chief of Staff, General Odierno.²¹

The USARPAC staff’s small initial Pathways planning team then began to outline the formal coordination requirements in a draft Warning Order.²² The finished order would direct the USARPAC staff to coordinate the Pathways concept with Hawaii-based Army and joint organizations for comment and refinement.²³ Notably, the draft order did not require coordination with any interagency organizations, specifically the Department of State (DOS), its Ambassadors, or the embassy country teams in the countries identified to host Pathways exercises.²⁴ It also did not address coordination with the political and military leaders of the countries identified to host Pathways exercises. Because the Pathways concept envisioned modifications to how USARPAC participated in existing exercises, and because each exercise already had its own planning cycle involving the host nations, the staff did not identify an early need for formal external coordination.²⁵ The prevailing thought was that Pathways was simply a “different way of doing what they were already doing.”²⁶

As USARPAC refined the Pathways concept and coordinated it within select elements of the joint community, its leaders attended the 2013 AUSA Convention in Washington, DC. During the convention, General Brooks referred obliquely to Pathways, announcing that “We intend to put into motion a pathway of activity (for the Army) into multiple countries for extended periods of time, linking a series of events and exercises on a variety of topics.”²⁷ His comments did not attract mainstream media coverage; only a small number of DOD and defense-related websites covered the story.²⁸ Two reporters requested interviews with

USARPAC after the convention: an *Army Times* reporter and a *Washington Post* reporter. The USARPAC PA staff was still coordinating these potential interviews when initial Pathways planning culminated with a decision brief to General Brooks on 1 November, 2013.

Leading up to the decision brief, General Brooks provided additional guidance that clarified the Pacific Pathways concept. Subsequent planning documents and media articles repeated several of his statements.²⁹ This decision brief marked the point at which USARPAC considered Pathways “approved,” although USARPAC had not briefed the concept to all joint and interagency stakeholders—most notably the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Policy (OSD-P) and the DOS. In addition, because only a portion of the USARPAC staff conducted the early planning,³⁰ a fully developed and approved communication strategy to support Pathways did not exist, nor had the newly assigned USARPAC Foreign Policy Advisor (FPA) yet seen the entire Pathways concept.³¹ To understand Pathways more fully, the FPA asked for an update, after which she realized there was “going to be a problem in the region because of the host nation notification and coordination requirements.”³²

The first of a series of Pathways public relations problems occurred in early November 2013, marking the point where communication, in the words of one PA officer, “went sideways.”³³ USARPAC briefed the Sergeant Major of the Army on Pathways during a visit to Hawaii. In a subsequent meeting with soldiers at Schofield Barracks, he responded to a question on the Asia-Pacific rebalance.³⁴ Beginning with, “I just came out of a great brief on Pacific Pathways,”³⁵ he then expounded on the Pathways concept. The *Honolulu Star-Advertiser* reported his comments in a 7 November, 2013 article entitled “Army Weighs New Pacific Deployment Strategy.” *Stars and Stripes* repeated the story on 8 November.³⁶ The articles publicized Pathways before USARPAC had fully coordinated it with the joint, interagency, and multinational communities.

Shortly after the articles were published, the USARPAC staff met with the *Army Times* reporter for a Pathways interview. During the interview, the USARPAC Exercises Director presented the Pathways concept using approved themes, messages, and content.³⁷ As the interview continued and the discussion included specific countries, exercises, and timelines, the PA representative felt that the details were not appropriate for release because Public Affairs guidance on Pathways had yet to be approved.³⁸ Consequently, the interim USARPAC PAO requested that the *Army Times* delay publication of the article so that USARPAC could fully coordinate the concept and provide updated information.³⁹ The interview raised awareness of Pathways across the USARPAC staff, and highlighted the challenge of developing a new concept like Pathways: determining the best time to transition from a small planning team to the entire staff.

The USARPAC staff then informed leadership of a potential Pathways communication crisis due to the pending *Army Times* article, prompting the command group and communication staff to develop and implement a strategy to mitigate potential fallout. The strategy centered on accelerating Pathways coordination to ensure that USARPAC informed all stakeholders before publication of the article.⁴⁰ The Security Cooperation Program (SCP) Director socialized the Pathways concept paper with affected country Defense Attachés, Marine Forces Pacific (MARFORPAC), USPACOM, OSD-P, and DOS for official review, comment, and feedback.⁴¹ The USARPAC command group personally briefed key joint and interagency leaders and sent briefing teams to local commands to get ahead of the expected 16 December, 2013 *Army Times* article.⁴² Late November also marked the point when the entire PA Staff began to work on proposed Pathways Public Affairs Guidance (PAG) and to expand the existing Pathways communication strategy. The PA staff had no awareness, however, of the OSD-P and DOS implications in the Pathways communication strategy.⁴³

By early December OSD-P expressed support for the Pathways concept, but had concerns about its policy implications, budgetary impacts, and sensitivities in the region. OSD-P wanted to see the USARPAC Pathways PAG, and DOS and White House leaders wanted USARPAC to provide briefings before the *Army*

Times published its article.⁴⁴ On 9 December, 2013 the USARPAC communication team completed its communication strategy. Draft objectives, messages, and themes were specified which, if approved, the USARPAC PA staff would use to develop the requested PAG (see Figure 1). OSD Public Affairs (OSD-PA) and USPACOM PA officers disagreed with the need for a USARPAC Pathways PAG because Pathways was still a concept. They specifically feared that approval of a PAG could be misconstrued as *de facto* OSD approval of the overall USARPAC Pathways concept. Both offices recommended that USARPAC proceed instead with a “Respond to Query” (RTQ)-only PAG. The RTQ-only PAG would consist only of a holding statement, questions and answers, and points of contact.⁴⁵

 <h2 style="text-align: center;">USARPAC Pacific Pathways Communication Strategy</h2> <p>Strategic Intent: Increase awareness of Pacific Cooperation and generate support for an enduring commitment.</p> 	
<p>Communication Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop widespread understanding, appreciation of, and support for Pathways among all audiences, creating a permissive environment for execution. • Increase Ally & partner awareness and understanding of Pacific Pathways and its advantages. • Influence Ally & partner armies to commit to participating in Pacific Cooperation. • Inform U.S. and regional audiences of specific USARPAC force posture and OAA that credibly demonstrate a Rebalance to the Asia-Pacific region. • Inform US and regional audiences that Pacific Pathways is a cost-effective model for the employment of Army forces in the Indo-Asia Pacific. <p>Primary Audiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Allies and Partners • HQ USPACOM, DA Staff, FORSCOM, USAR, and OCPA • US Congress • U.S. Public / Media • Regional Publics / Media <p>Themes to Avoid:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pacific Pathways is a substitute for permanent force stationing • Pacific Pathways is a deterrent to PRC/DPRK. <p>Key Themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. USARPAC is an Army in motion in the Indo-Asian Pacific Region. 2. Pacific Pathways is a new model for the employment of trained and ready Army forces across the Indo-Asia Pacific. 3. USARPAC peacetime engagements deepen and broaden our relationships with all nations in the Asia-Pacific region. 4. Pacific Pathways demonstrates our commitment to our Indo-Asian Pacific Partners. 5. Pacific Pathways leverages unit readiness within an austere fiscal climate in a way that maintains a high level of engagement by USARPAC with its allies and partner nations in the Indo-Asia Pacific. <p style="text-align: center;">PAO POSTURE: Active</p>	<p>Proposed Messages:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pacific Pathways links together previously planned bi-lateral exercises and engagements under a new unit deployment concept. 2. Pacific Pathways allows the US Joint Land Force to exercise and engage throughout the Indo-Asia Pacific in a series of linked cooperative events and exercises on a variety of topics/scenarios. 3. Pacific Pathways provides the CDR, USPACOM with an agile mission command node along with trained and ready forces to respond to potential crises in the Pacific region. 4. Pacific Pathways employs our best trained units in engagements and exercises with Allies and partners to improve the quality of those exchanges, build capacity, and achieve interoperability. 5. Pacific Pathways is a fiscally responsible approach to employing our highly trained and ready forces alongside Allies and partners, which will remain within USARPAC'S annual fiscal resource allocations. 6. Pacific Pathways will involve multiple countries in sequence and allows US Army units to work along side host nations for an extended period of time. 7. Pacific Pathways achieves persistent engagement with Allies and partners, while providing a robust crisis response capability to CDR USPACOM. 8. In partnership with our Ally and partner Armies, US Army forces will operate near the points of potential contingencies. 9. The capstone element for units on each pathway is the collective training event, which will integrate all of the supporting activities on the pathway in a collective training environment. 10. As the Army implements its Regionally Aligned Forces initiative, Pacific Pathways is another venue for their employment in the region. 11. Implementation and growth of these cooperation pathways will provide a greater degree of both mission and fiscal predictability for the Army's trained and ready forces. 12. Pacific Pathways is the deployment of trained and ready assigned forces in the Indo-Asia Pacific Theater. 13. Pacific Pathways complements the existing activities of the other service component commands. 14. Pacific Pathways deepens Army-to-Army relationships as units are able to carry out in depth cooperative activities and cultural immersion. <p style="text-align: right;">As Of: 91200WDEC2013 1</p>

Figure 1. USARPAC Pacific Pathways Communication Strategy.⁴⁶

In the interim, a *Washington Post* reporter interviewed General Brooks in Hawaii and at Exercise YAMA SAKURA in Japan. Additionally, the *Army Times* did not publish its Pathways article on 16 December as expected. The delay, whether due to USARPAC's request or internal turnover on the *Army Times* staff,⁴⁷ actually hurt, rather than helped, Pathways. The *Washington Post* published its article on 29 December, 2013, and effectively “scooped” the *Army Times* article. *The Post* spun Pathways in a “sensational direction,” reaching a much wider audience than the more factual *Army Times* article would have.⁴⁸

The *Washington Post* headline read: “Army’s ‘Pacific Pathways’ Initiative sets up Turf Battle with Marines.”⁴⁹ USARPAC expected a general article about the Army and the Pacific rebalance, but the resulting “turf war” theme twisted the Pathways narrative. The ensuing controversy added friction to the ongoing coordination challenges, especially with the DOS. While the article conveyed some facts, it emphasized an

assumed Army conflict with the Marines over missions and roles.⁵⁰ Shortly after the *Washington Post* article, “a” Marine’s position became “the” Marines’ position⁵¹ when the Brookings Institution online blog *Up Front* published a follow-on article entitled “The Wrong Path in the Pacific.”⁵² This article reinforced the turf war theme, implying that the Army was seeking to establish an amphibious capability in competition with the Marines. The Army does have an amphibious mission,⁵³ the Pathways concept, however, envisioned sealift only to move Army units and equipment from exercise to exercise, not to conduct expeditionary amphibious operations. The Brookings author argued that it was “troubling” that the Army advocated that Asia-Pacific challenges had “to be met with an Army solution.”⁵⁴ Misconstruing the efficient movement of Army exercise forces across the Pacific as a replication of a Marine Expeditionary Unit mission, the blog proved more sensational than the *Washington Post* article.⁵⁵

The following day, the *Marine Times* and *Defense News* both carried an interview with Marine General John Paxton, the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps. Entitled “Marine Corps not Threatened by Army’s Pacific Strategy,” General Paxton’s remarks demonstrated USARPAC’s prior engagement with MARFORPAC.⁵⁶ Although the article again mischaracterized Pathways as amphibious, General Paxton remarked “there is plenty of turf for the Marine Corps and the Army to cover.”⁵⁷ In regard to Pathways, he stated “So do I feel threatened? Absolutely not. Is there a place for all of us? Absolutely.”⁵⁸ On 27 January, 2014, the *Army Times* finally published the article, titling it: “Three-month Pacific Deployments.”⁵⁹ Publication was anticlimactic.⁶⁰

USARPAC leaders and the communication team spent November and December 2013 and January 2014 making up for the lack of prior formal coordination with OSD-P and DOS. In Washington, USARPAC leaders countered the “turf war” narrative by asserting that “the press loves good inter-service rivalry stories, and that is what they sensed with Pathways.”⁶¹ Nonetheless, the episode generated friction between USARPAC and the joint and interagency communities. Because of the perception that USARPAC was “out there doing things on its own,” tense emails, phone calls, and VTCs were exchanged between USARPAC, OSD-P and DOS.⁶² While USARPAC leaders focused on joint and interagency coordination, the USARPAC communication team needed a strategy to mitigate the impact of the negative press. According to one OSD-PA officer, “I spent hundreds of hours making phone calls and sending emails in response. We were trying to get a counter-story released to reporters to help recover.”⁶³

USARPAC had three options: (1) it could implement the December “active” communication strategy, although its approach relied on generic messaging to multiple audiences, rather than tailored messages to designated audiences; (2) USARPAC could refine the December strategy and focus on the media and public in an attempt to counter negative press; (3) USARPAC could remain silent and let the negative press subside on its own, risking that it might continue indefinitely. As the former Chief of Army Public Affairs, General Brooks was experienced in dealing with the press.⁶⁴ He chose option three: deciding to “fight the urge to write articles countering the *Washington Post* article . . . answering the noise with more noise would be counter-productive.”⁶⁵ His decision to pursue the recommended “RTQ-only” strategy succeeded. By the end of February 2014, the echoes of the *Washington Post* and Brookings articles had ceased reverberating.

By April 2014, USARPAC felt comfortable enough with the communication situation for General Brooks to respond to questions during the AUSA LANPAC (Landpower in the Pacific) Symposium in Honolulu, Hawaii.⁶⁶ When asked about Pathways, General Brooks replied, “Instead of a series of Army units traveling to an exercise for 10 to 30 days and returning home, the new Pathways model would deploy a smaller unit whose ‘nucleus’ will move from one exercise to the next.”⁶⁷ As Pathways operationally transitioned from planning to preparation, the USARPAC communication team and PA staff refined the communication strategy and PAG. USARPAC did not complete its “Communication Campaign” until 24 July, 2014 (see Figures 2-5,

below).⁶⁸ The campaign briefing notes remarked, “up to this point, we’ve worked at setting the conditions with partners/Allies, PACOM and Army stakeholders. We believe there is no impediment to moving forward . . . to institutionalize the concept and expand it.”⁶⁹

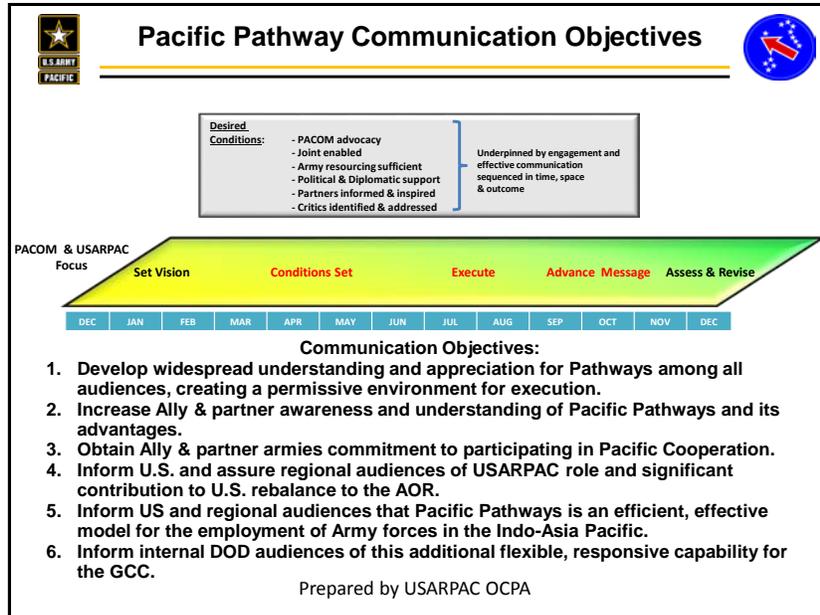


Figure 2. Pacific Pathways Communication Campaign, Objectives.⁷⁰

Compared with the previous communication strategy, the communication campaign framework added desired conditions, phases, and a new objective (#6, in Figure 2). The communication strategy focused on a campaign to bridge between Pathways 14 and Pathways 15, before Pathways 14 ever started (see Figure 3). The engagement and media plans for the expanded campaign incorporated lessons from the preceding Pathways communication efforts (see Figures 4 and 5).

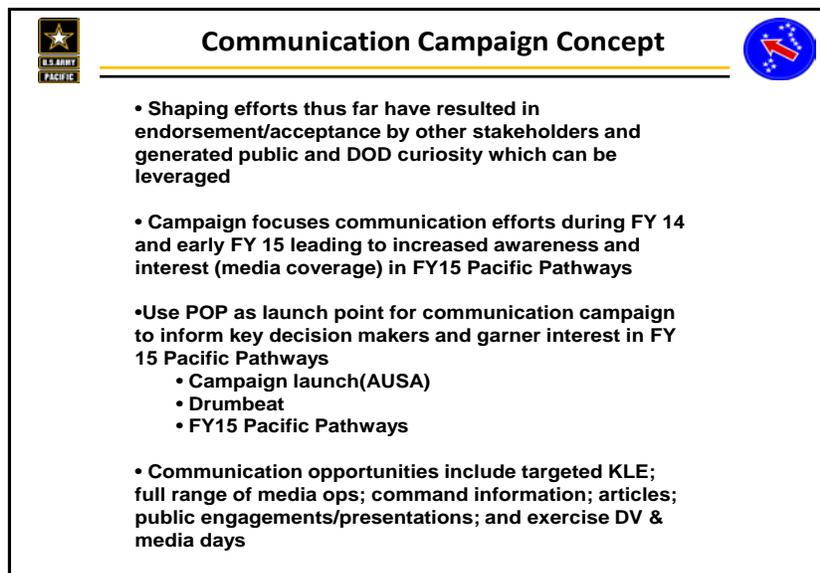


Figure 3. Pacific Pathways Communication Campaign, Concept.⁷¹

 Engagement Plan 			
Time-frame	Objective	Audience	Means
Sep-Oct 14	Base-line understanding of concept	CODELs & Other KL	Theater visits
	Assure; demonstrate value	Allies/partner KL	Exercises & KLE
	Increase understanding & demonstrate joint value	PACOM & sister services	Exercises; KLE; inclusion of Pathways data in leader/staff updates
	Assurance of U.S. commitment	Host nation/ Regional publics	Joint Info Bureau activities; Embassies promulgate
Oct (AUSA)	Transparency; base-line understanding of concept; necessity of land forces in Pacific	U.S. public	Embed coverage (anticipate low); select press interviews
	De-mystify Pacific Pathways; generate more understanding and interest	Beltway; security focused Think Tanks; Army (writ large)	Leverage AUSA venue and GO travel to D.C.: Press Conf; ILW panel; Select Interviews; Congressional Breakfast; Select Engagements Green Book
Feb 15	Peak interest for increased coverage/visit to Pathways	KL; media	Extend invitations; leverage visits

Figure 4. Pacific Pathways Communication Campaign, Engagement Plan.⁷²

 Media Plan 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corps and below concentrate on tactical/operational angle and media in their AO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary domestic audiences are internal and local area public • Tell the Soldiers' story • Lay foundation for strategic message • Embed • Exercises via JIB and Embassies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full spectrum of media and CI ops • Primary audiences are host nation and regional publics • Work for AP local coverage to support a larger strategic article • USARPAC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press Conf at AUSA • Media coverage of panel at AUSA • Selected one-on-one interviews: AP (D.C. bureau); Army Times (both print and Defense News) • Center for Strategic Studies "Military Forum" • During FY 15, leverage CG AO circulation for one major U.S. broadcast and print as traveling media 	

Figure 5. Pacific Pathways Communication Campaign, Media Plan.⁷³

The Pathways communication campaign provided a functional model for bridging from Pathways 14 to Pathways 15. The intent was to focus communication efforts during Pathways 14, leading to increased interest in Pathways 15. USARPAC characterized Pathways 14 as a “proof of principle” from which to build.⁷⁴ The “RTQ-only” policy was still in effect, however, which authorized only USARPAC to communicate Pathways. With the Pathways 14 unit preparing to deploy from Fort Lewis, Washington, to Indonesia in less than 30 days, I Corps and its subordinate unit PA teams needed to know what to communicate along with delegated authority to do so.

The USARPAC PAG provided the themes, messages, guidance, and authority for units to communicate Pathways once approved. USARPAC submitted the PAG to OSD-PA for approval after the 24 July 2014 Pathways Communication Plan brief. OSD-PA approved the PAG on 20 August 2014, while I Corps units were deploying to Indonesia for the first Pathways exercise. The PAG contained extensive Pathways background information, statements for public release, themes and messages, an extensive set of questions and answers, and guidance to subordinate PA staffs. In accord with OSD-PA recommendations to garner positive media coverage, public statements focused on Pathways’ reliance on planned exercises as an efficient way to train Army units, rather than using Pathways to posture Army forces in the region for “crisis response.”⁷⁵ Nonetheless, the crisis response theme remained embedded in some of the suggested questions and answers, although the public release portions of the PAG did not emphasize it.

I Corps developed and released its own PAG on 26 August 2014. It largely mirrored the USARPAC PAG, although it added links to Facebook sites for the individual Pathways exercises.⁷⁶ Both PAGs emphasized to subordinate PAOs and units that all products had to be cleared through the U.S. Embassy PAO in each country prior to release.⁷⁷ The late publication of the USARPAC PAG prevented USARPAC and subordinate unit leaders and staffs from conducting timely communication on Pathways and contributed to the potential release of information that did not support the USARPAC communication strategy. USARPAC reserved release authority of the public statement in the PAG. Although it intended to initiate a fully active PA campaign with its release on 1 August 2014, release did not occur until 29 August 2014. Entitled “U.S. Army’s Pacific Pathways Begins,” the release offered an improved version of the public statement from the USARPAC PAG, emphasizing the least controversial aspects of Pathways.⁷⁸

While no reporters volunteered to embed with the Pathways unit, the media, (including local Hawaii and Washington state news organizations), published a series of positive articles and videos from September through November 2014. DOD websites carried stories that closely followed, often verbatim, the USARPAC and I Corps PAGs’ themes and messages. Furthermore, the I Corps and 2/2 Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT) PAOs addressed an additional domestic audience: the soldiers participating in the exercise and their families. More than half of the 700 soldiers participating in the exercises had never been deployed. According to the Brigade Commander, “hundreds of these kids were in high school last year.”⁷⁹ Unit representatives and exercise planners updated Facebook and exercise websites with stories, pictures, and videos from the Pathways exercises—all of which reinforced a positive Pathways narrative.⁸⁰

The USARPAC Pathways communication campaign launch event occurred on 14 October 2014. General Brooks hosted a panel discussion on the “Asia Pacific Rebalance and Pacific Pathways.”⁸¹ The panel included Ambassador Scott Marciel, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for East Asia and the Pacific who characterized Pathways as a “Great example of DOD and DOS partnership.”⁸² General Brooks acknowledged, however, that “We did find that we had gotten out in front of our headlights, communication-wise.” For future Pathways, he continued “We have to be very mindful about not identifying the countries of the Pathway too

quickly, not until we finish the coordination. Even though the exercises did exist, the approach is different.”⁸³ In addition, General Brooks participated in the RAF panel and authored an AUSA *Greenbook* chapter, “USARPAC, Rebalanced and Beyond,” in which he highlighted USARPAC contributions to the Pacific rebalance, including Pathways.⁸⁴

Pacific Pathways 14 concluded in November and December 2014 with the close of Exercise Orient Shield in Japan, with redeployment of 2/2 SBCT, and with completion of After Action Reviews (AARs). Of the unclassified AAR comments currently available, only two were related to communication. During the I Corps AAR, USARPAC noted “Messaging needs to be developed earlier and better synchronized...at the theater level, we need to be prepared to deal with...and get ahead of counter-narratives.”⁸⁵ Also, the 25th Infantry Division recommended “We need more assets to tell the Army story. There were a lot of missed opportunities with the numerous ceremonies through radio, television, publications, etc.”⁸⁶

Communication Strategy Assessment

Although the term “strategic communication” is commonly used in the military to refer to all communication efforts at the strategic, operational, and even tactical levels,⁸⁷ joint and Army doctrine specifies that strategic communication is a national-level effort “focused upon effectively communicating national strategy.”⁸⁸ Consistent with this doctrine, the USARPAC Pathways communication team⁸⁹ developed a commander’s communication strategy for Pathways—not a strategic communication plan.⁹⁰ The Pathways communication strategy had two major parts: the coordination phase and the communication phase.

The Pathways Coordination Phase

During the coordination phase, USARPAC used focused communication within the joint and interagency communities using personal communications, proceeded with no doctrinal method of assessment. Informally, USARPAC assessed the coordination phase effectiveness using the concept of “resistance.”⁹¹ Resistance, or the absence of resistance, attempts to measure the effectiveness of engagements. It does not, however, address the issue of initiating the *right* engagements. In the case of Pathways, USARPAC failed to initiate the right engagements because the early coordination efforts did not include DOS or host nation leaders.

Initially, USARPAC encountered more resistance at the Action Officer (AO) level than at the General Officer (GO) level. This is not surprising. As the USARPAC Exercises Director explained, “There was AO-level resistance to Pathways because the Marines were afraid the Army was competing with their mission, USPACOM was suspicious of the Army’s motives, the Department of the Army Staff pushed back, and I Corps exercise planners resisted changing how exercises were planned.”⁹² Resistance subsided after Admiral Locklear, General Odierno, and other senior leaders acknowledged supporting the Pathways concept: “Once the bosses voiced their support everyone thought it was a marvelous idea.”⁹³

In contrast, Major General Pasquarette—the former USARPAC Chief of Staff—noted that he encountered little resistance because General Brooks talked to Admiral Locklear early. Early in the coordination phase, for example, the MARFORPAC Deputy Commander informed General Pasquarette “The Pacific AOR is a big place and there is plenty of work to go around.”⁹⁴ General Pasquarette also noted that when he coordinated with the DA staff on Pathways funding, he met no resistance.

The Pathways Communication Phase

During the subsequent communication phase, the PA Soldier Task “Conduct Media Content Analysis” is the standard used to measure the effectiveness of a communication strategy that uses the media. The standard analyzes media content in terms of frequency, context, and tone. Army doctrine defines these specifically as:

- Frequency: “How often was the key message or theme used?”⁹⁵
- Context: were messages or themes “...used as background information, supported the actual intentions or conditions, or directly quoted as the main subject of a media product?”⁹⁶
- Tone: was the media content positive, negative, or neutral?⁹⁷

The two types of context are referred to as “echoes” and “reflections” by most PAOs.⁹⁸

Because contractors have been hired to conduct media assessments over the past decade plus of conflict, few formal assessments have been conducted by military analysts. The Director of the Army Public Affairs Center, citing his own experience in Afghanistan, explained “We actually used contractors to conduct analysis because at the theater level it is quite work intensive.”⁹⁹ The Army’s Office of the Chief of Public Affairs likewise employs contractors to conduct assessments of the “media space.”¹⁰⁰ Because of the trend to use contractors for media analysis and the fact that PAO’s and staffs are constantly pro-active and communicating, neither USARPAC nor I Corps conducted formal assessments of their communication strategies. Both decided they had neither the time nor the resources.¹⁰¹

A cursory review of articles related to Pathways, suggests that the media repeated sensational headlines and senior leader statements much more frequently than they conveyed PAG themes and messages; in fact, the media never repeated most of the PAG themes and messages. The Brookings Institution headline, “Army on the Wrong Path in the Pacific” exemplifies a repeated sensational headline. Problematic messages such as this appeared frequently in other defense and security blogs after the Brookings publication. The media also repeated memorable statements about Pathways 14 by General Brooks (contextual “reflections”) more frequently than it repeated official themes and messages (contextual “echoes”). Frequently incorporating direct quotes by General Officers in a positive story appears to be the most effective way to promulgate themes and messages in support of a communication strategy. While DOD websites, media outlets, and publications tended to quote themes and messages directly from PAGs and press releases, civilian media more closely attended to General Officer statements.

Recommendations

Based on this research and analysis, six communication-related recommendations for future iterations of Pathways are offered: (1) perform early stakeholder coordination; (2) allow for sufficient overall and communication-specific planning timelines; (3) anticipate and preempt counter-arguments; (4) plan for and resource communication assessments; (5) focus on communicating the essential selling points to the appropriate target audiences; and, (6) coordinate integrated strategic communication instead of conducting only a more limited communication strategy.

Early Stakeholder Coordination

Pathways planners did not identify all key senior stakeholders early in the planning process. They also failed to determine when to engage senior stakeholders in the coordination process. Using John Kotter’s Eight-Stage Change Process model from *Leading Change*, stakeholder identification and coordination are his second stage task designed to “create the guiding coalition.” Kotter emphasizes that:

Major transformations are often associated with one highly visible individual. No one individual...is ever able to develop the right vision, communicate it to large numbers of people, eliminate all the key obstacles, generate short-term wins, lead and manage dozens of change projects, and anchor new approaches deep in an organization's culture.¹⁰²

USARPAC only partially identified and coordinated with the required Pathways guiding coalition: USPACOM commander Admiral Locklear and Army Chief of Staff General Odierno. Optimally, USARPAC should have included the appropriate senior level stakeholders at OSD-PA and DOS to gain what Kotter describes as position power, expertise, credibility, and leadership.¹⁰³ Creating this early guiding coalition of senior stakeholders would have facilitated subsequent coordination with additional stakeholders, including the affected U.S. embassy Country Teams, ambassadors, host nation leaders, and the OSD-P, DOS and DA staffs. For future Pathways activities, USARPAC should identify all joint and interagency stakeholders, especially those who should be part of the "guiding coalition." USARPAC should brief them early, obtain their buy-in, and involve them in the entire process from concept development through execution.

Planning Timelines

USARPAC conceived, planned, and executed Pathways within one year. USARPAC could have mitigated risk by opting for a longer planning process, delaying the first iteration until 2015. A longer planning process would have allowed full coordination and perhaps prevented media coverage from jeopardizing concept execution by getting ahead of the coordination process. Leaders must, however, balance deliberation with establishing a sense of urgency—the first stage task in Kotter's Eight-Stage Change Process model.¹⁰⁴ By setting a goal of executing Pathways in 2014, General Brooks created a sense of urgency and even crisis among USARPAC and its stakeholders¹⁰⁵ that may have been, to use Kotter's words, "enormously helpful in catching people's attention and pushing up urgency levels,"¹⁰⁶ which happened with Pathways.

Nevertheless, to ensure effective communication and unity of effort, future Pathways planning cycles, regardless of duration, should be more inclusive from the onset. Additionally, USARPAC should tightly control media contacts and advise recipients of pre-decisional briefings of their confidentiality so as to minimize and possibly avoid inappropriate early release of information. Bringing the entire PA staff into the process sooner would facilitate earlier publication of the USARPAC PAG. This, in turn, would allow USARPAC and subordinate units to communicate Pathways proactively and prevent release of information that could (at least partially) foil the communication strategy.

Counter-arguments

USARPAC should anticipate counter-arguments early and include them in the Pathways narrative to prevent confusion and diminish controversy. Wargaming the coordination and communication process from multiple perspectives and frames of reference can help identify counter-arguments. USARPAC, for example, could have identified the Marine Corps "turf war" counter-argument by viewing Pathways from the perspective of the Marines or anticipating the inclination for the media to look for and exploit potential inter-service rivalries. Further, USARPAC could have preempted the false narrative of the "turf war" by communicating that Pathways units were not conducting amphibious operations, but were simply using sealift assets to move Army units to various training locations. Additionally, critics should be clearly and repeatedly informed that DOD Instruction tasks the Army to "conduct airborne and air assault, and amphibious operations."¹⁰⁷

Assessments

USARPAC should require all PA staffs involved in Pathways to conduct assessments of their communication efforts and then to resource them accordingly (including its own PA staff). In accord with joint doctrine, PA assessment includes “identifying, measuring, and evaluating implications within the operational environment that the commander does not control, but can influence through a coherent, comprehensive communications strategy established by early integration in the planning process.”¹⁰⁸ As such, assessments of communication strategy require “monitoring, measuring and analyzing relevant information” such as media coverage and internet content.¹⁰⁹ The Media Content Analysis model provides a useful means for conducting PA assessment. If the USARPAC and subordinate PA staffs cannot internally assess the effectiveness of their Pathways communication strategies, they should contract for assessment support or request augmentation to do so.

Target Audiences

The various characteristics and “selling points” of Pathways confused the multiple audiences receiving the message. Was Pathways a more efficient way of executing exercises? Was it another crisis response force? Was it a budget-saving measure? Was it a humanitarian assistance or disaster relief force? As USARPAC explanations of Pathways’ missions multiplied, the more it appeared the Army was simply reaching for relevance. Using its own “proof of principle” concept, USARPAC should have described the first iteration of Pathways in its simplest and most important terms. Once the “proof of principle” was clearly and effectively communicated, USARPAC could expand future Pathways selling points. In the words of OSD-PA, “let’s just stick with one idea.”¹¹⁰ An unclassified I Corps briefing on the Pathways concept contained perhaps the best message on Pathways: “Pacific Pathways accomplishes, more efficiently, what we are already doing, within and in support of existing policy, and with prior agreement of our allies and partners.”¹¹¹ This effective one-sentence description, or something very similar, should have been the key Pathways message from the beginning. General Brooks encouraged the USARPAC staff to “tell the story in ‘plain speak’ and continue to sell the ‘brand’ of Pathways” during a November 2014 meeting.¹¹² He also reinforced this position to the USARPAC staff, stating:

Do not overamplify Pacific Pathways... stay on the key points of Pathways... it is an innovation to what we have been doing for years. We are conducting a routine exercise. This is a PACOM directed event that is sanctioned by the U.S. government. Fight inaccuracy with accuracy.¹¹³

With the basic theme established, USARPAC should specifically tailor themes and messages to each audience. Themes and messages, for example, that may resonate within the joint community—such as placing trained Army forces in theater for an extended period—may not resonate as well with Congress for whom a theme of budgetary savings may be more effective. General Brooks also stressed this to the USARPAC staff: “Tailor the message to the country teams and stakeholders. Where possible go direct to the country. Separate the exercise from the operation. Exercise discussions will go through the country teams, but the Pathways operation allows for direct discourse with the country.”¹¹⁴

Although Public Affairs Guidance is not a script, PAOs should be prepared to incorporate General Officer “quotable statements” into a “PAG by transcript” to “repeat and promulgate those things that have resonance”¹¹⁵ and increase the likelihood of positive media coverage. An *Army Times* reporter, for example, instantly tweeted General Brooks’ “We have to have more faces, in more places, without more bases” statement during the 2014 AUSA Convention. The reporter then recommended it as the “unofficial slogan for AUSA 2014.”¹¹⁶ Media sources subsequently used it in several articles.

Integration

USARPAC did not conduct early interagency coordination. This omission constrained USARPAC and its subordinate commands to use a communication strategy, rather than integrating PA activities as a component of a larger strategic communication effort in support of Pathways. USARPAC should use the interagency process to coordinate future Pathways and similar concepts to allow a unified and integrated communication effort using strategic communication (interagency), public diplomacy (DOS),¹¹⁷ and supporting communication strategies (USARPAC and subordinate commands). Raising communication efforts to the level of strategic communication would also make additional military and interagency communication assets (e.g., Combat Camera) available to support Pathways, along with the radio, television, and other outlets recommended in the I Corps AAR.¹¹⁸

Conclusion

USARPAC conceived Pacific Pathways as an innovative and efficient approach to exercise deployments in the Asia-Pacific region. USARPAC developed Pathways at a time when the Army as a whole struggled to tell its story, convey its relevance, and explain its importance—issues the Army continues to struggle with today. By building on the success of Pathways 2014 and incorporating these basic changes, USARPAC will be able to more effectively support the strategic rebalance to the Asia-Pacific. As part of the larger plan for Regionally Aligned Forces, Pacific Pathways can provide innovative, efficient, and regionally-focused training to rotating forward-deployed Army and joint forces while maintaining/building relationships with key partners across the region. In the words of Sydney Freedburg, USARPAC is “Reinventing the Army via ‘Pacific Pathways.’”¹¹⁹

Endnotes

¹ *Army Times*, Twitter post, October 12, 2014 (6:20 pm), <https://twitter.com/ArmyTimes/status/521470376690614272> (accessed January 28, 2015).

² Leon Panetta, *Sustaining U.S. Leadership: Priorities for the 21st Century Defense* (Washington, DC: The Office of the Secretary of Defense, January 2012), 2-3.

³ William G. Braun, III, “Op-Ed: Between Conflicts: An Army Role That Sticks,” January 17, 2014, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/index.cfm/articles/Between-Conflicts-An-Army-Role-That-Sticks/2014/01/17> (accessed January 18, 2015).

⁴ U.S. Department of the Army, Strategy, Concepts and Doctrine Division (DAMO-SSP), “Army Narrative Analysis,” briefing slides with scripted commentary, Washington, DC, July 31, 2014, slide 4.

⁵ Jeffrey Pool, Office of the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs (OSD-PA), telephone interview by author, December 5, 2014.

⁶ U.S. Department of the Army, “Army Narrative Analysis,” slide 7.

⁷ U.S. Department of Defense, *Air-Sea Battle: Service Collaboration to Address Anti-Access & Area Denial Challenges* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, May, 2013), <http://navylive.dodlive.mil/files/2013/06/ASB-ConceptImplementation-Summary-May-2013.pdf> (accessed December 12, 2014). Note that on January 22, 2015 DOD announced Air-Sea Battle would be incorporated into the broader “Joint Concept for Access and Maneuver in the Global Commons,” (JAM-GC). Paul McLeary, “New U.S. Concept Melds Air, Sea and Land,” *DefenseNews Online*, January 24, 2015, <http://www.defenseline.com/story/defense/policy-budget/warfare/2015/01/24/air-sea-battle-china-army-navy/22229023> (accessed January 29, 2015).

⁸ Sandra Erwin, “Army’s Next Fight Might Be for Relevance,” *National Defense*, blog entry posted December 10, 2011, <http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/blog/Lists/Posts/Post.aspx?ID=613> (accessed January 18, 2015).

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¹⁰ John M. McHugh and Raymond T. Odierno, *America's Army: Service to the Nation, Strength for the Future: A Statement on the Posture of the United States Army, Fiscal Year 2013*, Posture Statement presented to the 113th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, 2013), 5.

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¹² U.S. Department of the Army, "Army Narrative Analysis," slide 9.

¹³ Sydney J. Freedberg Jr., "Army's Message at AUSA: Don't Cut 'Foundational Force,'" *Breaking Defense*, October 13, 2014, <http://breakingdefense.com/2014/10/armys-message-at-ausa-dont-cut-foundational-force> (accessed January 18, 2015).

¹⁴ U.S. Army Pacific, "USARPAC Commanding Generals 1910 to Present," <http://www.usarpac.army.mil/cg.asp> (accessed March 5, 2015).

¹⁵ Amber Robinson, "USARPAC Becomes 4-Star Headquarters During Change of Command," July 3, 2013, http://www.army.mil/article/106821/USARPAC_becomes_4_star_headquarters_during_change_of_command (accessed January 21, 2015).

¹⁶ Rumi Nielsen-Green, USARPAC PAO, telephone interview by author, November 14, 2014; Joel Gray, Director, USARPAC Effects Directorate, telephone interview by author, November 20, 2014. FXD consolidated Information Operations (IO), Public Affairs (PA), Civil-Military Operations, Security Cooperation Program (SCP), Cyber, etc., into one Directorate.

¹⁷ Nielsen-Green, email to author, December 12, 2014.

¹⁸ Mathew F. Bunch, email to author, November 14, 2014; Samuel Membrere, USARPAC G7 Civilian, interview by author, Carlisle Barracks, PA, November 13, 2014.

¹⁹ Vincent Brooks, "U.S. Army Pacific: Rebalanced and Beyond," *Army*, September 31, 2014, 109, http://www.ausa.org/publications/armymagazine/archive/2014/Documents/11November14/Brooks_GRBook2014.pdf (accessed November 28, 2014).

²⁰ U.S. Army Pacific, *Draft Warning Order for USARPAC Exercise Pathways* (Fort Shafter, HI: U.S. Army Pacific, October 3, 2013), 1.

²¹ Lisa Carle, USARPAC Foreign Policy Advisor, telephone interview by author, December 11, 2014; James F. Pasquarette, USARPAC Deputy Commanding General – South, telephone interview by author, December 29, 2014.

²² The initial planning team consisted of the Exercises and SCP Directors and their support staffs, until it was later expanded to the "communication team" (see note 18). James Robinson, former USARPAC SCP Director, email to author, March 6, 2015.

²³ U.S. Army Pacific, *Draft Warning Order for USARPAC Exercise Pathways*, 1. Organizations identified for coordination: "DA, FORSCOM (U.S. Army Forces Command), PACOM (U.S. Pacific Command), MARFORPAC (Marine Forces Pacific), SOCPAC (Special Operations Command Pacific), MSCs (USARPAC Major Subordinate Commands) and TECs (USARPAC Theater Enabling Commands)."

²⁴ Despite the fact that, in the words of the SCP Director, "General Brooks clearly understood that patience and interagency coordination were the main requirements, and that anything outside of the process would distract from the real work at hand." Robinson, email to author, March 2, 2015.

²⁵ "General Brooks and USARPAC had unfettered access to decision makers...for these exercises in Indonesia, Malaysia and Japan. General Brooks, in the course of normal engagement in Jul and Aug of 2014, built relationships with the Defense Ministers from Japan and Malaysia. Concerning Indonesia, the TNI (Indonesia National Defense Force) agreed to move a major exercise, Garuda Shield, from June to October 2014 to facilitate the aviation engagement. In short, these countries were aware of this concept and signaled their support. . . . It was my assessment the State Department received different signals from their country contacts and that we needed time for a convergence of our perspectives to happen." Robinson, email to author, March 15, 2015.

²⁶ Carle, telephone interview by author, December 11, 2014.

²⁷ David Vergun, "Army Seeking In-Depth Engagements in Asia-Pacific Theater," October 21, 2013, http://www.army.mil/article/113539/Army_seeking_in_depth_engagements_in_asia_pacific_theater (accessed January 28, 2015).

²⁸ See, for example, same comments at <http://www.defencetalk.com/army-seeking-in-depth-engagements-in-asia-pacific-theater-49450/>; <http://www.arsouth.army.mil/news/usarmynews/6099-army-seeking-in-depth-engagements-in-asia-pacific-theater.html>; and <http://www.defencenetwork.com/army-seeking-in-depth-engagements-in-asia-pacific-theater> (accessed January 28, 2015).

²⁹ Samuel Membrere, USARPAC G7, "B4 Guidance," email message to author, November 23, 2014. Some of the most notable statements by General Brooks that he would repeat and that the media would cover: "We are working to change the way Army forces are employed in the Pacific; Pacific Pathways will visibly display the adaptive nature of the Army;" and, "We can no longer afford to build C-1 units and then put them on a shelf to be used only in the event of war."

³⁰ In the words of the former SCP Director, "We began staffing the Pacific Pathways draft concept as soon as we had something to offer (23 November 2013). There were known risks in moving before the concept and supporting requirements were fully developed but we knew the earlier discussion on Pathways began, the higher probability of success." Robinson, email to author, March 15, 2015.

³¹ The FPA reported to USARPAC in September 2013. Lisa Carle, email to author, March 9, 2015.

³² Ibid.

³³ Pool, telephone interview by author, December 5, 2014.

³⁴ Nielsen-Green, email message to author, December 12, 2014.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ William Cole, "Army Weighs New Pacific Deployment Strategy," *Stars and Stripes Online*, November 8, 2013, <http://korea.stripes.com/news/army-weighs-new-pacific-deployment-strategy> (accessed November 9, 2014).

³⁷ Matthew Kelley, former USARPAC G7, email to author, March 10, 2015.

³⁸ Nielsen-Green, email to author, December 12, 2014.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Pasquarette, telephone interview by author, December 29, 2014.

⁴¹ In the words of the SCP Director, "This task took more than email. We worked the phones, leveraged senior leader engagement and held multiple meetings." Robinson, email to author, January 7, 2015; Robinson, email to author, March 6, 2015.

⁴² Membrere, interview by author, November 13, 2014.

⁴³ Nielsen-Green, email to author, December 12, 2014.

⁴⁴ Jeffrey Pool, OSD-PA, "HOT: Draft PAG for USARPAC Pacific Pathways," email thread, December 11, 2013.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ U.S. Army Pacific, "USARPAC Pacific Pathways Communication Strategy," briefing slides, Fort Shafter, Hawaii, December 9, 2013. Originally produced by the USARPAC Security Cooperation Program Directorate; Robinson, email to author, March 2, 2015.

⁴⁷ Interview with confidential source, December 9, 2014.

⁴⁸ Nielsen-Green, email to author, December 12, 2014, Nielsen-Green, email message to author, November 20, 2014.

⁴⁹ Rajiv Chandrasekaran, "Army's 'Pacific Pathways' Initiative Sets Up Turf Battle with Marines," *Washington Post Online*, December 29, 2013, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/armys-pacific-pathways-initiative-sets-up-turf-battle-with-marines/2013/12/29/11c948c8-69b1-11e3-a0b9-249bbb34602c_story.html (accessed November 8, 2014).

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Nielsen-Green, email to author, November 20, 2014.

⁵² Aaron Marx, "The Wrong Path in the Pacific," *Up Front*, blog entry posted January 14, 2014, <http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/up-front/posts/2014/01/14-army-wrong-path-pacific-marx> (accessed November 8, 2014).

⁵³ U.S. Department of Defense, *Functions of the Department of Defense and Its Major Components*, Department of Defense Directive 5100.01 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, December 21, 2010), 30; U.S. Department of the Army, *The Army*, Army Doctrine Publication 1 (ADP-1) (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, September 2012), 1-8.

⁵⁴ Marx, "The Wrong Path in the Pacific."

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Pasquarette, telephone interview by author, December 29, 2014.

⁵⁷ Hope H. Seck, "4-Star: Marines not Threatened by Army's Pacific Strategy," *DefenseNews Online*, January 15, 2014, <http://archive.defensenews.com/article/20140115/DEFREG02/301150045/4-Star-Marine-Corps-Not-Threatened-By-Army-s-Pacific-Strategy> (accessed December 14, 2014).

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Antonietta Rico, "Three Month Pacific Deployments," *Army Times*, January 27, 2014, 10.

⁶⁰ Pasquarette, telephone interview by author, December 29, 2014.

⁶¹ Pool, telephone interview by author, December 5, 2014.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Nielsen-Green, email to author, February 23, 2015.

⁶⁵ Brooks also believed that "Airing out differences in the press would exacerbate institutional barriers to communications," and that "It was critical that those with equities had their say and that it was incumbent upon USARPAC to listen and fully consider their perspectives and concerns." Robinson, email to author, November 26, 2014; Robinson, email to author, March 2, 2015.

⁶⁶ Association of the United States Army, "LANPAC Symposium and Exposition," October 10, 2014, <http://ausameetings.org/lanpac/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2014/10/lanpac-brochure.pdf> (accessed March 10, 2015).

⁶⁷ Wyatt Olson, "Pacific Pathways: Army Prepares New Tack for Deploying Forces in Pacific," *Stars and Stripes Online*, May 1, 2014, <http://www.stripes.com/news/pacific/pacific-pathways-army-prepares-new-tack-for-deploying-forces-in-pacific-1.280623> (accessed November 8, 2014).

⁶⁸ U.S. Army Pacific, "Pacific Pathway Communication Campaign," briefing slides with speaker notes, Fort Shafter, HI, July 23, 2014, slide 2. (Slide 2 was originally produced by USARPAC Security Cooperation Program Directorate; Robinson, email to author, March 2, 2015.

⁶⁹ Ibid., slide 2 speaker notes.

⁷⁰ Ibid., slide 2.

⁷¹ Ibid., slide 3.

⁷² Ibid., slide 6.

⁷³ Ibid., slide 7.

⁷⁴ Ibid., slide 2.

⁷⁵ Pool, email to author, December 5, 2014.

⁷⁶ I Corps, *Pacific Pathways Public Affairs Guidance* (Fort Lewis, WA: U.S. Department of the Army, August 26, 2014), 1.

⁷⁷ U.S. Army Pacific, *Pacific Pathways Public Affairs Guidance* (Fort Shafter, HI: U.S. Army Pacific, August 20, 2014), 10; I Corps, *Pacific Pathways Public Affairs Guidance*, 1.

⁷⁸ U.S. Army Pacific, "U.S. Army's Pacific Pathways Begins," *Hawai'i Army Weekly*, August 29, 2014, <http://www.hawaiiarmyweekly.com/2014/09/05/u-s-armys-pacific-pathways-begins/> (accessed March 29, 2016).

⁷⁹ Anna Fifield, "With Exercises in Asia, U.S. Army Searches for Relevance," *Washington Post Online*, November 8, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/with-exercises-in-asia-us-army-searches-for-relevance/2014/11/08/e59db118-5ddd-11e4-827b-2d813561bdfd_story.html (accessed November 28, 2014).

⁸⁰ "Exercise Garuda Shield," www.facebook.com/exercisegarudashield (accessed January 6, 2015); "Keris Strike," www.facebook.com/kerisstrike (accessed January 6, 2015); "Orient Shield," <https://www.facebook.com/OrientShield> (accessed January 25, 2015).

⁸¹ Brooks, "Pacific Pathways."

⁸² Ambassador Scott Marciel, "Pacific Pathways," public panel presentation, AUSA Convention, Washington, DC, October 14, 2014, http://www.ausa.org/AM/Documents/2014/Videos/TueVideo7_ILW5.aspx (accessed November 29, 2014).

⁸³ Brooks, "Pacific Pathways."

⁸⁴ Brooks, "U.S. Army Pacific: Rebalanced and Beyond," 110.

⁸⁵ Kristofer Hopkins, *Executive Summary, Pacific Pathways 14 I Corps AAR* (Fort Lewis, WA: U.S. Department of the Army, December 1, 2014), 5.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ U.S. Army War College, *Information Operations Primer: Fundamentals of Information Operations* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, November 2011), 12.

⁸⁸ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Information Operations*, Joint Publication 3-13 (Washington, DC: U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, November 20, 2014), II-5. "Strategic Communication: The Strategic Communication (SC) process consists of focused United States Government (USG) efforts to create, strengthen, or preserve conditions favorable for the advancement of national interests, policies, and objectives by understanding and engaging key audiences through the use of coordinated programs, plans, themes, messages, and products synchronized with the actions of all instruments of national power. SC is a whole-of-government approach, driven by interagency processes and integration that are focused upon effectively communicating national strategy."

⁸⁹ The "communication team" eventually consisted of the Foreign Policy Advisor (FPA), Security Cooperation Program (SCP) Director, Information Operations (IO) Director, Exercises Director, the interim Public Affairs Officer (PAO) and their support staffs. Robinson, email to author, March 6, 2015.

⁹⁰ Nielsen-Green, telephone interview by author, November 14, 2014. "Communication Strategy is a commander's strategy for coordinating and synchronizing themes, messages, images, and actions to support strategic communication-related objectives and ensure the integrity and consistency of themes and messages to the lowest tactical level through the integration and synchronization of all relevant communications activities." U.S. Department of the Army, *Inform and Influence Activities*, Field Manual 3-13 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, January 25, 2013), 2-4.

⁹¹ Nielsen-Green, telephone interview by author, November 20, 2014.

⁹² Kelley, email to author, January 7, 2015.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Pasquarette, telephone interview by author, December 29, 2014.

⁹⁵ U.S. Department of the Army, *Soldier's Manual and Trainers Guide: Public Affairs Specialist/Chief Public Affairs NCO*, STP 46-46QZ14-SM-TG (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, December 17, 2010), 3-117.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 3-118.

⁹⁷ U.S. Department of the Army, *Soldier's Manual and Trainers Guide: Public Affairs Specialist/Chief Public Affairs NCO*, 3-118.

⁹⁸ Nielsen-Green, telephone interview by author, November 20, 2014; David Johnson, I Corps PAO, telephone interview by author, November 17, 2014.

⁹⁹ Richard McNorton, Director Army Public Affairs Center, telephone interview by author, December 10, 2014.

¹⁰⁰ Alayne Conway, Office of the Chief of Public Affairs, email to author, February 24, 2015.

¹⁰¹ Johnson, telephone interview by author, November 17, 2014.

¹⁰² John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 1996), 51-52.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 57.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 35-6.

¹⁰⁵ “B4 (General Brooks) knew that if he allowed Pathways to run the normal gauntlet of interagency staffing and DOD budget processes it would never see the light of day. It is a fair criticism to say that there were mistakes, missteps and miscalculations but the bottom line is that when you do something as ‘radical’ as Pathways was at the time, you are going to break some China.” Kelley, email to author, March 9, 2015.

¹⁰⁶ Kotter, *Leading Change*, 45.

¹⁰⁷ U.S. Department of Defense, *Functions of the Department of Defense and Its Major Components*, 30; U.S. Department of the Army, *The Army*, 1-8.

¹⁰⁸ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Public Affairs*, Joint Publication 3-61 (Washington, DC: U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, August 25, 2010), III-28.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, III-29.

¹¹⁰ Pool, telephone interview by author, December 5, 2014.

¹¹¹ I Corps, *FY 14 Pathways White Paper Concept Slides* (Fort Lewis, WA: U.S. Department of the Army, July 30, 2014).

¹¹² Scott A. Peachey, *Memorandum for Record: USARPAC FXD Appreciation Session, 26 NOV 2014* (Fort Shafter, HI: U.S. Army Pacific, December 1, 2014), 3.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ Nielsen-Green, email to author, February 23, 2015.

¹¹⁶ *Army Times*, Twitter post, October 12, 2014 (6:20 pm).

¹¹⁷ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, Joint Publication 1-02 (Washington, DC: U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, December 15, 2014), 201. Public Diplomacy: “Those overt international public information activities of the United States Government designed to promote United States foreign policy objectives by seeking to understand, inform, and influence foreign audiences and opinion makers, and by broadening the dialogue between American citizens and institutions and their counterparts abroad.”

¹¹⁸ Kristopher Hopkins, *Executive Summary, Pacific Pathways 14 I Corps AAR*, 5.

¹¹⁹ Sydney J. Freedburg, Jr., “Reinventing The Army Via ‘Pacific Pathways’,” *Breaking Defense Online*, February 13, 2015, http://breakingdefense.com/2015/02/reinventing-the-army-via-pacific-pathways/?utm_source=Breaking+Defense&utm_campaign=314502a424-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_4368933672-314502a424-40791804 (accessed February 17, 2015).

Pathways Nations and Regional Considerations

Colonel Lori L. Robinson and Colonel James C. Sharkey

The U.S. policy of rebalancing to the Asia-Pacific is a “whole-of-government” approach that relies heavily on a concomitant military rebalance to the region. President Barack Obama:

made a deliberate and strategic decision-- as a Pacific nation, the United States will play a larger and long-term role in shaping this region and its future. . . . So let there be no doubt: In the Asia-Pacific in the 21st Century, the United States of America is all in.¹

To be “all in” requires recognition that the Asia-Pacific region is far from homogeneous.² Each nation represents a range of historical narratives, experiences, backgrounds, and traditions that directly impact on their policy and decision-making.³ Notably diverse political systems, internal domestic security situations, and international outlooks likewise underlie the foundation of each Asia-Pacific nation.⁴

One common consideration for nearly all Asian-Pacific countries is their relationship with China. Smaller powers in the region worry about a more confident and diplomatically assertive China. Although these smaller powers benefit from China’s economic growth, they are concerned with China’s growing military power.⁵ Despite the U.S. Rebalance to the Asia-Pacific, each country in the region is pursuing its own path to security and many, especially those outside the U.S. Mutual Defense Treaty System, want to retain some freedom of action in coping with the evolving U.S.-China relationship.⁶ Although interested in security cooperation with the United States, most are unwilling to jeopardize trade and investment links with China and seek to remain on good terms with Beijing.⁷

Many Asian-Pacific countries regard the U.S. as a vital guarantor of security in the global commons, but in terms of alliance and partnership management, no amount of reassurance is excessive.⁸ If nations lose confidence in the U.S. commitment and ability to serve as this guarantor, they could embark on potentially destabilizing security initiatives or become more accommodating to Chinese demands.⁹

U.S. Army Pacific Pathways offers one approach to providing essential reassurance to partners in the Asia Pacific region. In addition to building relationships and enhancing interoperability between military units at the operational level, Pathways is a strategic way to build and maintain confidence in U.S. security commitments to the region. Although there are no prohibitions on participation in Pacific Pathways vis-à-vis Chinese relations, security cooperation programs are designed to support the strategic political position of each country and to complement, each country’s interests and regional objectives.¹⁰

To enhance the concept, the Pathways design should incorporate, fuse, and balance host nation security cooperation priorities and evolving military roles and missions with U.S. strategic and military objectives in the region. This will help ensure that Pacific Pathways garners host nation domestic support and funding, compliments ongoing U.S. diplomatic and economic efforts, and avoids negatively influencing the strategic objectives of various participants. What follows is a brief examination of regional security concerns, security cooperation priorities, and evolving military roles/missions of eight Asia-Pacific countries—five that are

projected on a future Pathway (Japan, South Korea, The Philippines, Australia, Indonesia) and three (China, India, Vietnam) that currently are not. Combining this analysis with underlying regional concerns about the U.S. rebalance to the Pacific, this essay then identifies design considerations for Pacific Pathways: (1) advancing common security cooperation priorities, (2) nesting training with host nation evolving military capabilities, (3) integrating with other interagency partners, and (4) driving demand signals for future resource allocation.

Nations of Projected Pathways

Japan

Japan's consideration of constitutional changes and proposed revisions to the U.S.-Japan Defense Guidelines indicates a transformation in the country's security outlook as well as a fresh view of Japan's place in the international security arena. Facing serious security threats from China's recent expanded maritime/airspace claims (e.g., the Senkaku Islands) and North Korean aggression, the Japanese government perceives broad public support for strengthening its defense.¹¹ Japan's Dynamic Defense Force concept includes strengthening the defense of offshore islands, enhancing U.S.-Japan security cooperation, increasing engagement with South East Asian countries, and participation in global security objectives.¹² Incorporating the Japanese Self Defense Force's (SDF) variety of new roles and missions into the operational design of Pacific Pathways helps promote this transformation.

The Japanese 2005-2009 Mid-Term Defense Program established a Central Readiness Force comprised of mobile and special units underneath one command that oversees deployments and mobile operations focused on countering offensive operations on one or more of the small southwestern islands.¹³ Viewing a potential power vacuum created by the departure of 9000 U.S. Marines from Okinawa, Japan's Ministry of Defense accelerated efforts to enhance capabilities to respond swiftly and seamlessly to attacks on offshore islands. Initiatives included improving SDF rapid deployment ability, boosting exercises on offshore islands, and introducing and enhancing ground SDF amphibious operations capabilities.¹⁴ Japan appears to be moving away from heavy Cold War military platforms and toward more agile and flexible equipment adaptable for peacekeeping, disaster relief, and other rapid reaction requirements. The SDF focus on speed, strategic mobility, and strategic reach is tied directly to Japan's concern for security of outlying island territories.¹⁵ Force structure changes and the procurement of lighter equipment illustrate a new strategy to replace regional brigades and divisions with rapid deployment, airborne helicopter, and amphibious brigades. The SDF is also pursuing new nuclear, biological, and chemical reconnaissance vehicles, amphibious assault vehicles, lightweight self-propelled artillery and MV-22 Ospreys.¹⁶

In the event of external aggression, Japan expects robust defense support from the U.S.¹⁷ To support the dynamic defense concept, Japan's training priorities for security cooperation are: joint and amphibious operations, missile defense and chemical protection, joint Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) activities (including the use of Remotely Piloted Aircraft—RPA), cyber and space cooperation, improved interoperability, and joint military exercises defending offshore islands. Japan seeks to increase shared use of new training facilities on Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands with the United States.¹⁸ Either location may prove valuable as a Pathway for both the U.S. Marines and our Japanese allies. In planning any military exercises on or near disputed territory, the Army must exercise thoughtful caution so as not to initiate joint exercises that counter U.S. national interests. Planning and decision-making for combined military training exercises requires diplomatic input and coordination with the U.S. Department of State.¹⁹

South Korea

Another solid U.S. ally in the region, the Republic of Korea's (ROK) foreign policy focuses on the Korean "peace regime," the North Korean nuclear problem, and maintenance of the U.S.-ROK alliance.²⁰ With concerns for North Korean nuclearization and proliferation—what the ROK views as Japan's militarization—and China's increasing assertiveness and military modernization, South Korea already has a full plate of security cooperation initiatives with the United States. The Pacific Pathways design for South Korea, therefore, should implement already agreed upon activities (or pursue those already in active discussion) rather than identify new or additional initiatives.²¹ The U.S. remains focused on developing ROK capabilities to provide leadership and command/control of its military forces as South Korea moves toward a more reciprocal and equitable relationship.²²

From the ROK perspective, security cooperation training priorities with the U.S. include combined deterrence actions and enhanced defense capabilities. Two areas of particular emphasis are the development of the South Korean Theater Missile Defense system and realistic exercises based on the full range of possible North Korean actions. Pathways exercises can assist with contingency planning, re-examining U.S. and ROK approaches to planning for unexpected developments in North Korea, with the U.S. in a supporting role on the peninsula.²³ The demand signal from South Korea for U.S. security cooperation has been met for the past six decades with U.S. forces permanently forward-stationed on the peninsula. To create any additional resource demand for Pacific Pathways in Korea that moves beyond existing security cooperation exercises, therefore, may be a challenge.

The Philippines

As the largest recipient of U.S. security assistance in the Asia-Pacific region, the Philippine government is primarily focused on internal threats from the Communist Party of the Philippines New People's Army, Southern Philippine secessionist groups, and the Abu Sayyaf Group with extremist ties to Al-Qaeda. Furthermore, maritime security is an area of growing concern for the government. Competing territorial claims of the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea (specifically Scarborough Shoal and Reed Bank) are causing conflict with China over the right to exploit the possibly extensive reserves of oil and natural gas.²⁴ The 2014 U.S.-Philippines Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) reopens the use of Philippine bases for U.S. forces, but prohibits positioning any permanently based forces in the country. The EDCA addresses interoperability, capacity building, maritime security, maritime domain awareness, and Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief (HA/DR) cooperation. Domestically, rather significant opposition exists to the return of U.S. military forces to the Philippines, spurring, in fact, a challenge to the Philippine Supreme Court on the EDCA. Considerable political opposition to establishing closer security cooperation with the U.S. also exists, making U.S. military presence more difficult to sustain domestically.²⁵

The annual Balikatan combined military exercise included on the Pathway focuses mainly on the counter-terrorism campaign in the Southern Philippines and aims to counter the internal threats that remain the country's primary security concern.²⁶ Improvements to the external defense capabilities of the navy and air force, however, also require attention after many years of neglect due to the primarily internal counter-terrorism focus. The Philippine government views improving naval and maritime air patrol as a way to enhance their capability to defend territorial and maritime claims.

Military planners should exercise caution regarding the Philippines given the gap that exists between the U.S. views of its obligations under the 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty with the Philippines and Manila's expectations. In June 2011, a Filipino Presidential spokesman stated that in the event of armed conflict, Manila would expect the U.S. to come to its aid. The U.S. has stated that the treaty does not cover the disputed islands

in the South China Sea.²⁷ Close coordination with the U.S. Department of State must, therefore, occur for any expanded military cooperation beyond the current Balikpapan counter-terrorism focused exercise. Any Pathways initiatives should not demonstrate unintentional support for a diplomatically unsupported position.

Australia

Not under the direct threat of any country, Australia is concerned that competition between major regional powers may cause broader regional instability. Hugh White, from the Australian National University, stated that Australia is trying to avoid committing itself to either the U.S. or China in any confrontation that might arise and the Australian government says that both relationships are in good order.²⁸ The Australian government values a close defense relationship with the U.S. as a core strategic interest and seeks to keep the U.S. engaged in the broader security of the Asia-Pacific region. Common interests between Australia and the U.S. provide an opportunity to advance joint and multi-lateral Pacific Pathways exercises by including allies and close partners of both countries' militaries.

In 2013, Australia hosted a tri-lateral tabletop exercise between Australia, Indonesia, and the U.S. with a HA/DR Scenario (HADREX 2013) at Robertson Barracks in Darwin, Australia. Australia invited several East Asian Summit member countries to participate or observe the exercise with representatives from Cambodia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, and Vietnam. One explicit goal was to build habits of mutual respect, trust, and cooperation between and among militaries and the several nations in order to minimize the prospect of tension and miscalculation during other, possibly future, events.²⁹ Although not the type of training that contributes to high-end readiness of Pacific Pathways forces, including one of these exercises on a Pathway builds relationships and trust that will prove useful in the future.

The 2011 Force Posture Initiative between the U.S. and Australia allows for the forward-stationing of over 2500 U.S. Marines in Darwin, commits to closer cooperation between air forces, and enhances naval cooperation at Her Majesty's Australian Ship (HMAS) Stirling.³⁰ The minimal mention of U.S. Army initiatives in this document is likely due to the already extensive security cooperation between the U.S. and Australian Armies in military training, exercises, education, and intelligence cooperation. Socializing and synchronizing any Pathways exercise like HADREX 2013 early with our joint partners clearly articulates the roles of each service, benefits all forces involved, and will help avoid another inter-service debate on roles and missions of the U.S. military in the Pacific. The 2013 Australian Defense White Paper called for closer defense engagement in the Asia-Pacific—one that continues to grow between Australia and China.³¹ A multi-lateral exercise like HADREX 2013 may also present an opportunity to build mil-to-mil relationships with China in a non-U.S. led exercise.

Indonesia

Help with democratic transformation—politically, economically, and militarily—remains at the forefront of Indonesia's expectations of its partnership with the United States.³² Internal security challenges including terrorism, separatism, communal conflict, drugs, corruption, and natural disaster continue to threaten domestic stability and are likely to dominate Indonesia's security environment for the foreseeable future. Over the past several years, external security issues such as illegal fishing, mining, logging, transnational crime, maritime security, and territorial disputes have emerged as increasingly vital interests for Indonesia.³³ Because the Army dominates the Tentara Nasional Indonesia (TNI)—Indonesian Armed Forces—U.S. Army engagements through Pacific Pathways are both a convenient and logical fit for building capacity for offensive operations that address internal threats as well as defensive operations for response to external threats.

The government of Indonesia has struggled, like many others, to fulfill annual national defense requirements, resourcing only approximately 30-40% of Ministry of Defense and TNI requests.³⁴ The Indonesian government, therefore, views non-military means, such as diplomacy, as a way to defend the country and consequently engages with over 32 other countries in defense diplomacy—the top three being the U.S., Australia, and China. Willingness for multi-lateral defense diplomacy with nearly all Association of South East Asian Nation (ASEAN) partners may be an opportunity to leverage multi-lateral Pacific Pathways exercises among these nations with Indonesia proactively encouraging participation. Indonesia attaches paramount importance to building regional security emphasizing the utility of multilateralism, but also recognizes the growing significance of bi-lateral engagement with major and regional powers, particularly the U.S. and China.³⁵ Both the Indonesian Foreign Minister and Defense Chief have suggested that China should be invited to take part in joint military exercises with the U.S. and Australia in order to improve overall preparedness for humanitarian disaster relief.³⁶

Peacekeeping is one of the niche capabilities Indonesia possesses. In 2010, Indonesia was among the top 20 contributors of uniformed personnel to peace keeping missions and the largest contributor among ASEAN countries overall.³⁷ Wanting its peacekeeping training center in Sentul, West Java to become the hub for a network of peacekeeping centers in South East Asia, Indonesia would likely favor a Pacific Pathways security cooperation exercise that continues to build its peacekeeping capacity. Indonesia's Foreign Minister stated that the ultimate goal was for Indonesia to become one of the 10 largest contributors to UN peacekeeping operations in the world. Helping to build this capacity through training and resources would facilitate U.S. interest in supporting UN missions of this type while minimizing the U.S. signature and footprint in certain regions of the world.

Non-Pathways Nations

China

Not presently on a Pathway, China offers a different perspective. President Xi Jinping summarized the Chinese relationship to others in the region stating, “China cannot develop in isolation of the Asia-Pacific, and the Asia-Pacific cannot prosper without China.”³⁸ China's stated strategic perspective reflects a desire for a peaceful rise—one that is not belligerent, aggressive, or inherently militaristic.³⁹ U.S. policy supports this position politically. In an address to his party's Politburo, President Jinping also stated that China will:

stick to the road of peaceful development, but never give up our legitimate rights and never sacrifice our national core interests. . . . No country should presume that we will engage in trade involving our core interests or that we will swallow the bitter fruit of harming our sovereignty, security, or development interests.⁴⁰

This description explains some recent Chinese actions, such as the establishment of the expansive Air Defense Identification Zone in the East China Sea: a cause of concern for China's Asian-Pacific neighbors and the United States.

Observers from both the U.S. and China recognize that the military-to-military dynamic is the weakest component of the relationship. The U.S. worries that this will contribute to strategic mistrust or cause miscalculations leading to heightened tensions and potentially conflict.⁴¹ Miscalculations resulting in the exchange of fire could lead to further escalation and cause a military crisis unwanted by China, the U.S., and our Asian allies and partners. Engagements and exercises, therefore, which enhance the ability of the U.S. and China to cooperate are beneficial for this reason alone. Recommended areas of common interest for joint

exercises include counter-piracy, humanitarian assistance, and disaster relief operations.⁴² Encouraging Chinese participation in a Pacific Pathways exercise focused on HA/DR would present an opportunity to build trust between armies and to create a more transparent relationship.

Chinese military modernization continues to progress steadily. The Chinese have actively demonstrated their enhanced maritime and naval force projection capabilities with sea trials of Liaoning—the new aircraft carrier aimed at protecting its borders, population, sovereignty, and jurisdictional claims. Efforts in the areas of missile and rocket technology, cyber and space warfare, and use of RPAs are also top priorities.⁴³ By shifting from a regional structure to a sub-regional structure, the People’s Liberation Army is able to adopt a more flexible approach with a contingency focus.⁴⁴ Although joint U.S.-Chinese exercises fall beyond the current planning horizon, at this time, our partners and regional allies are very much focused on countering these capabilities in the interest of their own security. Pacific Pathways exercises designed to build partner capacity in countering potential threats and missteps would likely draw support from our partners while advancing overall U.S. interests in the region.

India

As the U.S. rebalances to the Pacific, India has begun to “Look East.” Although primarily viewed as economic in nature, the “Look East” policy forces India to rethink its inward-looking strategic orientation.⁴⁵ Historically, unresolved territorial and boundary disputes with China and Pakistan (as well as security challenges in Kashmir and Jammu) have driven India’s internal focus. Freedom of the seas, maritime security in the Indian Ocean, and concern with a strategic encirclement by China, however, have turned India’s eyes outward and primarily eastward. The new 10-year Defense Framework signed with the U.S. in January 2015 is more ambitious than the 2005 agreement as it strengthens the bilateral defense partnership and increase the scope and intensity of joint military exercises.⁴⁶ While discussing joint military operations, India’s Defense Minister, Manohar Parrikar, stated that “it was already going on and enhancing it is not a big problem,”⁴⁷ potentially opening the door for a future Pacific Pathways engagement.

China’s rapid military modernization has influenced India to accelerate the modernization of its military. Although India is spending considerably more money than it has in the past, the pace of modernization has been slow due to a low-technology defense industrial base, a lack of adequate funding, and delays in government decision-making.⁴⁸ As Defense Minister A.K. Antony noted, “new procurements have commenced, but we are still lagging by 15 years.”⁴⁹ With a 1.1 million-soldier army, India is trying to enhance capability without reducing the manpower for large-scale operational commitments to border security and counter-insurgency. The Indian Army’s weapons and equipment are bordering on obsolete and the term “night blind” describes most forces due to their inability to operate under darkness. The critical capabilities that India may seek to enhance include:

battlefield management systems, night-fighting capability, enhanced firepower . . . integrated maneuver capability to include self-propelled artillery, quick reaction surface-to-air missiles, the latest assault engineer equipment, tactical control systems, integral combat aviation support and network centricity.⁵⁰

Nearly all of these capabilities are already part of the current Pacific Pathways design and would provide beneficial training and readiness for both armies. Other security cooperation priorities for India include intelligence sharing, counter-terrorism, enhanced capability for surveillance and target acquisition at night, signal communications, and ISR.⁵¹ India’s goal to achieve joint warfare capabilities supports their desire to more easily undertake joint operations with multi-national forces should the need arise.

Vietnam

Even with a shared, common interest in freedom of navigation and the free flow of commerce in the South China Sea, wide-reaching differences exist in Vietnam over the role of military cooperation with the U.S. in the broader context of U.S.-Vietnam relations.⁵² The leadership of Vietnam has collectively stated that trade and economic cooperation anchor the relationship and the military-to-military element should not be the focus for the foreseeable future. This has slowed the pace of security cooperation between the two countries to the frustration of some U.S. military planners.⁵³ With respect to Vietnam, however, two key issues heavily influence U.S. decision-making: (1) how the U.S. influences and addresses human rights conditions in Vietnam, and (2) U.S. restrictions on lethal weapons sales to Vietnam. Vietnam leaders have stated they will not consider bilateral relations normalized until the U.S. makes a decision on lethal arms sales. Unfortunately, no precise roadmap identifies what Vietnam would need to do to lift that ban.⁵⁴

Although Pacific Pathways will not likely involve Vietnam in the near future, areas of common interest allow the Army to continue building relationships with the Vietnamese military. Vietnam War legacy issues such as Agent Orange, unexploded ordnance, Prisoners of War, and soldiers Missing in Action continue today and offer opportunities for security cooperation. In a 2011 Memorandum of Understanding on Advancing Bilateral Defense Cooperation, both countries agreed on regular high-level dialogues and cooperation in the areas of maritime security, Search and Rescue, HA/DR, and peacekeeping.⁵⁵ Military medicine and other non-combat training have also been included in annual engagement activities. Fostering mutual trust and understanding with Vietnam remains a key objective. Vietnam seems to prefer remaining independent, however, with little desire for a formal military arrangement with any foreign power.⁵⁶ Vietnam's leaders do not necessarily see moving closer to the U.S. military as a simple and viable answer to their security challenges. Instead, Vietnam remains focused on improving their own self-defense capabilities by acquiring military assets from the United States.⁵⁷

Regional Concerns

Although very few nations, if any, in the Asia-Pacific region will turn away from engagement opportunities with the U.S. military, several governments in the region have concerns about the sustained U.S. interest and commitment to the rebalance strategy. First, questions remain about whether the enthusiasm for the Asia-Pacific region will endure beyond the Obama Administration.⁵⁸ The newly formed 113th Congress, now led by Republican majorities in both houses, brings with it a level of anger and disagreement with current administration policies that some fear will dominate all aspects of both U.S. domestic and foreign politics, rendering U.S. foreign policy somewhat unpredictable. Some Asia-Pacific nations are understandably cautious about keeping their strategic options open should the Congress or the next U.S. President take a different course.⁵⁹ In 2012, Thailand's Permanent Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Sihasak Phuangketkeow, expressed this concern, stating that "We wonder whether the U.S. is able to have a sustained engagement in the region, given its many priorities and given the state of domestic politics within the U.S."⁶⁰ The Indonesian government and population at large share this concern. Based on his policies and the time he spent in Jakarta during his younger years, President Obama is widely popular in Indonesia. Indonesia, however, strongly opposed the U.S. decision to invade Iraq in 2003 and hoped for "a more benign United States after years of a belligerent America under President Bush."⁶¹ The Indonesian government is watching the 2016 U.S. presidential race very carefully.

The second concern focuses on U.S. fiscal realities. The U.S. debt ceiling debate, the government shutdown in October 2013, sequestration, and defense budget cuts have played out publicly on the international stage. Some feel that the U.S. commitment to the Asia-Pacific could well become hostage to pressing fiscal realities and question how the Department of Defense will ultimately resource the military components of the

rebalance strategy.⁶² Rhetoric alone is not convincing when vital national security interests are on the line in some countries.⁶³ Another economic concern driving skepticism relates to the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) free trade agreement. Presented as the economic centerpiece of the rebalance, many Asian-Pacific countries are watching closely to see how TPP implementation affects the region, international relationships, and free trade.⁶⁴ Continued doubt regarding U.S. commitment to the rebalance will likely persist until the TPP is concluded.

The third concern is that the U.S. has placed too much emphasis on the military dimension of the rebalance.⁶⁵ A follow-on comment from the Thailand Permanent Secretary of Foreign Affairs observed “We’re also a little bit concerned, I think, with the emphasis on alliances and the military dimension of the strategic rebalancing because that gives an appearance of containment.”⁶⁶ This aspect of the rebalance strategy has drawn wide debate. The perception is real, however, and should be considered in the development of the size and intensity of Pacific Pathways force packages. The U.S. Army must maintain a conscious balance between reassuring our partners and engaging in activities that increase regional tensions. Advancing regional stability is the ultimate U.S. end state.

Implications

Multiple opportunities, as well as several challenges, are associated with the future and design of Pacific Pathways. Several trends emerge from this brief analysis and are fundamental to successful implementation of the concept. Opportunities exist in four broad categories:

- building joint capabilities
- nesting with evolving military capabilities, roles, and missions
- leveraging common interests for multi-lateral exercises
- building the capacity of niche capabilities across the region

Each opportunity brings challenges that fall into four general areas:

- gaining diplomatic input to enhance a coordinated whole-of-government approach
- clarifying the extent and limits of U.S. commitments in the event of future disputes
- gauging the impact of Pathways initiatives so as not to embolden regional actors to become alarmed and possibly more assertive
- justifying funding for additional U.S. military presence in areas with existing forward-stationed troops.

Opportunities

Like the U.S., many nations are looking to enhance joint capabilities through force restructuring, acquisition, and modernization. With maritime security quickly rising to the top of many nations’ priorities, the initial impulse may be to focus resources on naval partnerships. Maritime security priority, however, presents a great opportunity to make Pacific Pathways a joint operation beyond military airlift and sealift to reach each location. A scenario or exercise that included both on and offshore training partnerships would truly test the interoperability of not just multi-national forces, but our own joint forces, while reassuring our allies and partners in the area of maritime security.

Evolving militaries (e.g., India and Indonesia) as well as those militaries taking on new roles and missions (e.g., Japan and South Korea) offer opportunities for Pacific Pathways to build capacity and capability where these militaries need it most. To meet a wide array of missions from integrated maneuver, ISR, and signal communications to military medicine, humanitarian relief and training for headquarters elements, the composition of each Pathways task force will not vary. At times, Pathways should involve subordination of a few of the U.S. unit’s training objectives to those of the host nation while remaining focused on long term

mutual benefit for both. Close coordination with country teams and synchronization with Regional Bureau Strategies and Country Plans far in advance of planned execution will ensure the coordination of desired training objectives from both the U.S. and the host nation. Interagency coordination is critical for those countries with which we have less mature diplomatic relations to ensure Pacific Pathways enhances a coordinated whole-of-government approach.

Identifying where diplomatic and security ties are strongest between our allies and partners will help identify those countries with which to pursue tri-lateral or multi-lateral Pacific Pathways exercises. Strong bi-lateral ties between two U.S. allies or partners presents opportunities for the U.S. Army to participate in exercises on a Pathway that is not historically U.S. led (e.g., the Australian led HADREX in 2013 vice an exercise like Balikpapan or Cobra Gold known for U.S. leadership). Leveraging ASEAN focused security meetings provides another way to promote multi-lateral engagement such as the ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting, ASEAN Chiefs of Defense Forces Informal Meeting, ASEAN Chiefs of Army Multi-lateral Meeting, and ASEAN Military Intelligence Meeting.⁶⁷ Socializing the initiative and opportunities in multiple venues with different members of the ASEAN Defense Ministries and militaries may build more widespread support for multi-lateral engagements.

The final category of opportunity focuses on building niche capabilities of certain countries to benefit the region as a whole and support larger U.S. initiatives. Training on a Pathway that mutually supports the U.S. Global Peace Operations Initiative—a joint endeavor between the DoD and the Department of State—may drive a demand signal for resources and draw interagency elements into the initiative. Precedence for this exists: the U.S. has paid to train and transport Indonesian personnel and equipment to Lebanon through the Global Peace Operations Initiative, and Vietnam conducted its first International peacekeeping deployment under this same initiative in 2014.⁶⁸

Challenges

The primary challenges to Pacific Pathways require interaction with the Department of State, congressional leaders, and host nation governments for resolution. First, the Army must gain diplomatic input to the greatest extent possible prior to planning, coordinating or committing to specific types of training events. This is particularly critical for those nations with whom we have less mature or strained diplomatic relations. Agreements made at the military-to-military level should enhance a coordinated, whole-of-government approach and complement U.S. positions, actions, and initiatives in the political, economic, and informational realms.

Second, the Army must seek as much clarity as possible on the extent of U.S. commitment and obligation in the region, as well as the limits of likely U.S. involvement in potential future disputes. This will “avert a setback in U.S. relations with regional nations due to perceptions of unfulfilled expectations.”⁶⁹ Third, the U.S. must avoid, through either words or actions, getting drawn into exercises too closely related to ongoing territorial or other disputes by nations who seek to use U.S. presence and partnership to back the legitimacy of their claims. Strengthening the capacity and capabilities of smaller powers in the region assumes some risk of emboldening them to challenge their adversaries more assertively and could unintentionally increase their expectations of U.S. assistance in a crisis.⁷⁰

The final challenge relates to justifying resources for Pacific Pathways. Justification of additional funding beyond that already allocated for long-running annual exercises is more difficult when the Pathway moves through a location where U.S. forces are already forward-stationed, such as Japan or South Korea. If a premise for Pacific Pathways is that its method of forward-presence provides positive benefits without the large costs associated with extended overseas presence, then United States Army Pacific (USARPAC) must articulate

the additional benefits of Pacific Pathways to convince the DoD to properly resource both forward-stationed and forward-presence forces in the same location.⁷¹ Under current fiscal constraints, the use of both types of forces in the same location may not gain traction. USARPAC should consider prioritizing locations without forward-stationed or forward-deployed forces to support cost saving initiatives.

The demand for U.S. military involvement throughout the world is not diminishing, and certainly not in the Asia-Pacific region. No amount of reassurance is excessive when it comes to our allies and partners, and nothing solidifies commitment like the presence of U.S. Soldiers. Incorporating, fusing and balancing host nation security cooperation priorities and their evolving military roles and missions into the Pacific Pathways design will enhance success. Understanding the perspectives of the Asian-Pacific countries in Pacific Pathways planning will ensure the mission is politically supportable within the host nation's security strategy and should help garner U.S. interagency support as a complementary part of a whole-of-government rebalance to the Pacific.

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Pathways and the Army Operating Concept

Lieutenant Colonel Dennis R. Hawthorne and Colonel James Frick

Innovation is the ability to see change as an opportunity – not a threat.

—Unknown¹

Tomorrow's global uncertainties will test the capability, capacity, and innovative nature of the United States Army. The Army must, therefore, invest in the readiness, training, leader development, and operational employment of its force. Diminishing resources and force structure, however, will require a more cost effective approach to meet future commitments. Thus, the Army's leadership created a framework to mitigate such constraints while maintaining its relevance to the nation in the *Army Operating Concept: Win in a Complex World (AOC)*.² The Army Service Component Command (ASCC), U.S. Army, Pacific (USARPAC), has combined this framework's core competencies with a forward-thinking approach referred to as "Pacific Pathways." This operation provides U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM) an adaptive solution that builds regional competence while concurrently positioning forces forward to enhance security and stability. USARPAC's innovative use of the Total Force in operations such as "Pacific Pathways" embodies these core competencies within the Army Operating Concept.

If Pacific Pathways truly represents the AOC framework, then a comparison of this approach alongside the concept is necessary. This essay examines the reasons for a new framework and how the Army will attempt to mitigate future challenges. It then identifies the trials facing USARPAC's operational implementation of the framework, evaluates Pacific Pathways 14 to determine if it was an innovative method worth replicating, and provides recommendations.

Army Operating Concept

The U.S. Army Operating Concept provides a set of core competencies to ensure that the Army provides the capability to meet tomorrow's security requirements. Needed competencies do not merely focus on how to fight and win a conflict, but include methods to shape the environment and deter aggression. Because "our adversaries will continue to close the capability gap in the future."³ The AOC addresses this ever-changing environment and explains how the force can adapt to these challenges by emphasizing seven essential competencies. They include: 1) shape the environment, 2) set the theater, 3) project national power, 4) combined arms maneuver, 5) wide area security, 6) cyberspace operations, and 7) special operations.⁴

1. Shape the Environment: An adaptive force must shape the environment by deterring possible threats while simultaneously building partnerships that promote peaceful collaboration. The National Guard Bureau's State Partnership Program (SPP), for example, joins States and their Guard forces with a partner nation to develop long-term relationships that promote Theater Security Cooperation (TSC)

goals. Of the seventy-four nations participating in the SPP, eight reside in the USPACOM Area of Responsibility (AOR).⁵

2. **Set the Theater:** The Army sets the theater by establishing conditions that enable a joint force to function once in a disaster or conflict zone. Providing secure infrastructure, communication nodes, logistics, and command and control capabilities reduces operational risk while enabling future operations. Dependent on the threat level, this force must adapt as the environment changes. Afterwards, the Army must “deploy and sustain itself rapidly and effectively from multiple locations.”⁶
3. **Project National Power:** An adaptive force incorporates planning, reconnaissance, rehearsal, and appropriate use of forward-deployed forces and pre-positioned equipment to effectively project power.
4. **Combined Arms Maneuver:** Once deployed, the force must employ combined arms maneuver to achieve an operational advantage over a threat, or in response to a disaster. Because today’s operational environment encompasses adversaries who apply asymmetric means to traverse all domains, Army capabilities must operate in a joint environment and integrate with air, sea, cyber, and space capabilities.
5. **Wide Area Security:** The next competency, wide area security, facilitates stability by protecting private, business, and governmental infrastructures and the populace until local governance has the capacity to maintain order.
6. **Cyberspace Operations:** Today’s advanced technology is not without its own weaknesses; as an adaptive force must provide defenses through the development of both offensive and defensive cyberspace capability. Doing so provides the Army greater value in peacetime, conflict, and war.
7. **Special Operations:** The last competency, special operations, performs across the full range of military operations. This highly adaptive force performs both open and clandestine missions, and has great utility in a complex environment.⁷ In theory, accomplishing these core competencies deters potential aggression and maintains stability in today’s operating environment.

By leveraging the integration of the Total Force Policy (TFP)⁸ and Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF),⁹ the AOC seeks to provide an adaptive force. Doing so, however, requires commitment. Proper resourcing of the total force will provide Army Service Component Commands (ASCCs) with sufficient committed regional (theater) forces to achieve AOC core competencies and develop/maintain a truly adaptive force. Several obstacles (e.g., budgetary constraints, emerging operational requirements, and a lack of complete integration of TFP and RAF), however, threaten to minimize this capacity and create gaps in consistent surge capability. In the face of these challenges, maintaining Total Force readiness—the fundamental characteristic of any adaptive force—is essential.

Readiness is the critical requirement that permits execution of AOC core competencies in support of the regional CCMDs. Equivalent standards in personnel management, equipping, training, and sustaining are also critical for the Total Force to adapt concurrently.¹⁰ To facilitate this effort, TFP and RAF leverage the capacity of both forward deployed and rotational forces to enhance readiness. This allows ASCCs to train forces while simultaneously performing core competencies, ultimately supporting national interests. Consistent theater security engagement using active, National Guard, and reserve units, for example, develops AOC directed individual and leader skills while concurrently maintaining readiness and enabling capacity to “prevent, shape, and win” in concert with U.S. partners.¹¹

ASCC Challenges

Many challenges affect the ASCCs ability to maintain readiness and attain the operational effects required in theater. These include fiscal and geographic constraints, Force and equipment stationing, and integration/interoperability within the Joint Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational (JIIM)

environment. Should permanent stationing continue or can rotational force deployments provide an acceptable level of commitment and deterrence? Substantial arguments support either option.

Fiscal Challenges

By creating gaps in unit “training and maintenance,” for example, an austere fiscal environment increases the level of risk involved to protect national interests within the region.¹² Thus diminishing budgets, force reductions, and deferrals in modernization continue to complicate today’s operational environment. The approved 2015 Army budget shrank by approximately \$4.5 billion from 2014, including an initial reduction of 27,000 personnel followed by a cut of another 92,000 personnel (minimum) through 2019. Additionally, modernization expenditures dropped by \$6.1 million.¹³ These reductions affect training resources not related to scheduled deployments, thus precluding units from training at the collective level. Additionally, Army personnel must become more familiar with tasks formerly conducted by civilians released during this constrained environment. Total Army Analysis, for example, cut both vertical and horizontal engineer assets from USARPAC and placed them in BCTs Army wide.¹⁴ Such reductions severely affect USARPAC’s ability to sustain readiness, participate in regional exercises, and conduct operations. Furthermore, these budget reductions result in only two of the six USARPAC Brigade Combat Teams being maintained at the highest level of readiness.¹⁵ This alone presents USARPAC with a significant challenge in responding to USPACOM demands. Currently, USPACOM directs USARPAC to provide a total of four BCTs to support the following tasks: Contingency Response Force (CRF), Theater Security Cooperation (TSC), Rapid Response Force (RRF) and a Quick Reactionary Force (QRF).¹⁶ USARPAC must therefore develop innovative solutions by which to accomplish these demands with only two BCTs at the highest readiness, and the remainder spread across the Army Force Generation Model (ARFORGEN) training levels.

Geographic Challenges

One of the greatest challenges for USARPAC is the utter magnitude and maritime nature of the Pacific theater which comprises of “over half of the world’s surface.”¹⁷ Yet, USARPAC’s ability to project forces across USPACOM’s AOR is critical in molding the region in support of U.S. strategic interests. As President Obama stated in the 2015 National Security Strategy, “American leadership will remain essential to shaping the region’s long-term trajectory to enhance stability and security.”¹⁸ Significant obstacles exist, however, to accomplish this objective, including the sheer expanse of the Pacific and the time necessary to traverse it, along with multiple annual natural disasters. The Pacific Ocean is larger than all combined landmass in the world, is approximately 15 times larger than the United States, and includes 16 time zones. Additionally, movement of the Earth’s crust along the “Pacific Ring of Fire” results in multiple tsunamis, volcanic activity, and earthquakes annually.¹⁹ To complicate the environment even further, four of the world’s top ten megacities are in this region, with millions more living in and around the littoral areas.²⁰ Unrestrained, this volatile and complex physical environment can create leadership vacuums and a general lack of security, potentially giving rise to violent extremist or terrorist activities. USARPAC must remain involved with regional partners to help mitigate these risks and to promote military security within Indo-Asia-Pacific nations.

This region has no permanently positioned U.S. Army forces other than those in Japan and Korea, making travel time a major hindrance to USARPAC’s ability to provide immediate support. The closest available USARPAC forces are in Hawaii, Alaska, or Fort Lewis. To provide but one example, time for a USARPAC unit in Fort Lewis, Washington to travel to Darwin, Australia, is approximately 16 hours by air or 12 days by sea.²¹ As the Army itself has no long-range transport capability, these times assume the availability of adequate contract or sister service airframes and/or ships. Forward deployed units can mitigate this time challenge. In

2013, for example, Typhoon Haiyan struck the Philippines. USPACOM forces from Japan deployed to support the Republic of the Philippines in just two days. It took three additional days for naval forces to arrive from Hong Kong.²² In comparison, it would have taken a force from Fort Lewis approximately 10 days.²³ Even without the issue of travel time, supporting a multi-island nation is a significant challenge. As it was, it took two weeks for humanitarian relief to reach most of the affected populace.²⁴

Force Stationing

The difficulty of traversing such a vast area in a timely manner raises questions concerning forward stationing of Army personnel. U.S. posturing of permanent forward force stationing has changed little since the end of World War II. Post-Cold War Pacific basing focused on deterring communist aggression by the USSR, China, and the Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea (DPRK). DPRK remains a significant threat to regional stability justifying a large permanent U.S. presence in Northeast Asia. Yet as Alexander Cooley explains, most Indo-Asia-Pacific nations are hesitant to allow permanent stationing of U.S. forces:

Although U.S. policymakers and scholars have consistently overlooked the internal political dimension for host countries, U.S. overseas bases and their governing arrangements repeatedly have been implicated in those countries' democratic struggles, authoritarian propaganda, populist election campaigns, and political infighting and factionalism. In short, I found that the U.S. basing presence means different things to different actors and that these views, even for the same actor, vary considerably over time.²⁵

Permanent basing requires strong support of U.S. presence from the host nation. Many factors have created barriers to the U.S. establishing a permanent presence in South and Southeast Asia. As a result, USARPAC's ability to shape the South China Sea is diminished due to its lack of forward positioned forces in this area. If USARPAC could establish permanent forward stationing, Army forces would be in a better position to respond to crises. In addition to strong support from host nations, forward basing would require significant startup costs to establish infrastructure, training areas, lodging and security. Based upon a 2006 Army estimate for overseas bases, a replacement cost varied from \$1.61 billion for a large base to \$862 million for a small installation.²⁶ Day-to-day operational costs would also be high.

The greatest benefit of a permanent force is a long-term presence. Rotational forward stationing, however, may provide a less threatening, more cost effective solution. In most cases, a rotational force will not require the same infrastructure footprint resulting in a lower cost due to the rotation's limited timeframe. A rotational force also presents less negative connotations than a permanent U.S. presence. Unfortunately, lack of permanence also means less guarantee of continued host nation commitment. A host nation may suspend the invitation for rotational forces at any time. Historically, re-establishment of such a presence has proven difficult.²⁷ Either stationing option will provide interaction with the populace, awareness of an emerging threat, and may reduce "black swan" or unforeseen events that could change U.S. strategic direction.

Pre-Positioned Equipment

Force access to equipment in the region is also a concern. A product of the Cold War, Army pre-positioned stocks (APS) may provide options in the wake of budgetary constraints. Various levels of pre-positioned equipment are placed in critical geographic positions around the world—normally within 1000 miles of a strategic hotspot. USPACOM's ability to rapidly project and sustain forces may depend upon stocks located afloat, on the Korean Peninsula, and in Japan.²⁸

The Department of Defense (DoD) originally established APS to support major contingencies, but the new strategy includes “activity sets” for HA/DR, building partner capacity, and equipment to further support port opening and combined arms operations.²⁹ Upgrading the capability of APS solves only one problem, however. The next hurdle is to expand APS availability for use during TSC training events. The ability to train with this stock will help mitigate transportation costs while maintaining APS operability. USARPAC use of these activity sets, within APS, allows for some deliberate integration. Geographic challenges, however, are not so easily overcome. Additional locations and full use of available equipment are needed to avoid delayed response.

Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational Integration (JIIM)

Due to the size of the AOR and other geographical challenges, USARPAC must operate within a JIIM environment. Land forces (Army, SOF and Marines) alone do not have the capability to reach across the Pacific. They are dependent upon the Air Force and Navy, specifically in regards to projection and sustainment. The Army also has joint responsibilities under the heading of Army support to other service (ASOS) to provide “force protection, theater-level logistics, command and control, joint reception, staging, onward movement and integration.”³⁰ USARPAC’s integration and interoperability within the JIIM environment, therefore, will determine its ability to support theater security cooperation.

Interagency and intergovernmental coordination is especially critical in the preparation, response, and recovery subsets of a HA/DR mission. A Department of State representative is present in almost every Pacific nation to manage the diplomatic efforts, and to assist in the integration of military operations with the host nation. Additionally, the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), in coordination with USAID and other U.S. agencies, serves as the lead U.S. governmental representative during overseas disasters.³¹ Thus, USARPAC must include these agencies during HA/DR exercises to ensure each have a common understanding of roles and responsibilities, and that any interoperability challenges are mitigated. Lastly, the multinational facet is the foundation of building partner capacity and includes senior leader engagements, HA/DR missions, multi-lateral and counter-terrorism training, and SPP events. A greater integration of JIIM during Phase 0 and Phase 1 operations will shape the environment, and expectantly provide a strong deterrent for violent extremist and terrorist organizations.³² If deterrence is unsuccessful, relationships formed between USARPAC and JIIM participants will provide greater cooperation during a crisis or conflict.

Analysis of Pacific Pathways Implementation

In an attempt to resolve the aforementioned challenges while nesting within the AOC framework, USARPAC implemented Pacific Pathways. As assessed during USARPAC’s 2014 proof of concept, Pathways 14 embodied most of the AOC core competencies and successfully mitigated many of the challenges that USARPAC faces in its operating environment. This essay identifies recommendations for future improvements from the 2014 proof of concept experience.

Pacific Pathways is an innovative concept that employs AOC core competencies. Prior to 2014, USARPAC conducted numerous bilateral exercises that were unassociated with other regional events. This did not, however, fully employ the resources available to meet USPACOM goals. USARPAC therefore linked three of these exercises into the single Pacific Pathways operation, which allowed them to affect multiple lines of effort in their support of USPACOM’s goal to maintain a stable and secure environment.³³ The following review examines Pathways 14 by applying the seven AOC core competencies as criteria for success.

Shape the Environment

The AOC suggests the necessity of shaping the environment to deter possible threats and build partnerships that promote peaceful collaboration. This message is consistent with former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's emphasis on the importance of constant engagement to fully implement President Barack Obama's "shift to the Pacific."³⁴ USARPAC has attempted to embrace this "constant engagement" vision to shape the environment through Pacific Pathways.

Historically, bilateral exercises focused solely on training arrangements with one nation's army, and rarely impacted other exercises. Additionally, TSC exercises typically comprised battalion-sized elements or smaller for short durations. Pacific Pathways changed this way of operating by conducting multiple exercises as a single operation over a sixteen-week period, with division and brigade level leadership providing mission command.³⁵ Through training that included Humanitarian Assistance / Disaster Relief (HA/DR) support, Non-Combatant Evacuation (NEO) operations, Security Cooperation, and Diplomatic Reinforcement, Pathways further emphasized collaboration and building partner capacity to foster long-term relationships.³⁶ To enable this training, USARPAC also adjusted the type and amount of equipment it brought forward. Focusing on these mission types helps to transcend national boundaries by allowing for shared understanding that further develops trust.

During the execution of its first Pacific Pathways operation, USARPAC learned several security cooperation lessons. Initially, participant countries lacked a clear understanding of the operational intent. They failed to comprehend that Pathways 14 exercises constituted one continuous operation, requiring unity of effort across all the involved nations, not a string of individual training exercises.³⁷ Given the recent stationing of Marines in Darwin, Australia, participants like Indonesia were suspicious as to the motives of the operation.³⁸ Key leader engagement was therefore necessary to clarify the intent of the rotational operation and better achieve operational integration between participating countries.³⁹ Future Pathways iterations should seek to better inform participants at the outset and to strive for better integration of civilian and military stakeholders during both planning and execution. Incorporating existing relationships like the State Partnership Program between the Hawaii National Guard and the Republic of Indonesia was also instrumental in mitigating lack of understanding. The hierarchy of participating headquarters carries significant weight with the host military. As General Iwata, Chief of Staff of the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force, remarked: "It is critical to establish these relationships early to stabilize the region in efforts to prevent contingencies from occurring."⁴⁰ This increased level of leadership, combined with a longer continuous operation, underscores U.S. military commitment and ability to support during a crisis. Bottom-line: partnerships are established through trust. Although the operation was ultimately well received, USARPAC must ensure partner understanding and buy-in at the onset to adequately shape the environment. To meet this goal, participating countries may need to be brought together early in the planning process.

Set the Theater

A majority of Army personnel and equipment are positioned in the continental United States. As a result, providing an appropriate response can be difficult depending on the nature and location of a crisis. Challenges range from force projection and sustainment to coordinating the arrival, reception, staging, and interoperability with the host nation. The Army therefore has prioritized setting the theater as necessary to mitigate these challenges. Pacific Pathways has the potential to be a beneficial means of supporting this competency.

Because the Army does not have a permanent presence in either South or Southeast Asia, USARPAC's first iteration of Pathways encountered integration challenges when preparing infrastructure to receive forces.

Pathway 14 units lacked knowledge in partner port capability and vessel type features complicating reception, staging, onward movement, and integration (RSOI).⁴¹ The host nation was similarly unprepared to facilitate this process.

Historically, USARPAC did not deploy TSC exercise forces either with aviation assets or with such a high density of wheeled-vehicles requiring multiple carriers. USARPAC's integration of forces and essential enablers created a larger footprint than previously utilized. This was further complicated by the duration of the operation and the movement between countries. Because previous TSC exercise units had not employed like equipment across the theater, Pathways 14 tested established systems and procedures.⁴² Additionally, USARPAC staff focused on supporting each of the exercise goals with logistics left primarily to ASCC sustainment personnel.⁴³ After realizing this was insufficient, headquarters adapted by implementing alternative measures such as: (a) expediting requests through individual Country Teams at each Embassy, (b) cross-leveling of equipment between units, (c) adjusting work priorities to train port crews, (d) funding additional commercial ships and rental vehicles, and (e) the letting of contingency contracts.⁴⁴ Future operations will require greater Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational (JIIM) integration to mitigate challenges (e.g., fuel procurement, contracting, force movement, and port operations). Additionally, 593rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command may serve as a better option to coordinate the previously noted sustainment requirements for future Pathways.⁴⁵

Interoperability was also a challenge due to the expanse of the operating area, and various levels of partner nation modernization. Historically, USARPAC units only required long-range communication capability between home station and the exercise country. With Pathways 14, however, USARPAC had to establish communications across four separate countries as the brigade headquarters deployed forward, leaving a rear operation center at the home station.⁴⁶ I Corps units also found a need for more "non-standard systems" to mitigate interoperability issues between military and commercial technology.⁴⁷ The force adjusted by using basic tactical communications with the partner's military until they could establish enhanced network interoperability. Overall, this proved to be a challenging aspect of the operation. Expanding operations will clearly require enhanced command and control nodes, as well as a more robust network capability to sustain communications.⁴⁸

Preparation and execution of Pathways 14 also provided valuable information for future operations in that location, including site reconnaissance and rehearsed maneuvers. In addition, the first iteration generated a database of participating host nation port information and required enablers, and allowed for refinements in standardized mission equipment lists and port procedures that can improve operational and sustainment efficiencies.⁴⁹ This is exactly within the AOC expectations for setting the theater.

Project National Power

USPACOM requires specific capabilities postured to effectively shape the theater and enhance force projection. Fiscal challenges and force cuts degraded some of USARPAC's ability to provide a complete force package to meet these needs. During Pathways 2014, USARPAC sought to mitigate some of these concerns by deploying from multiple locations and integrating Army Reserve and National Guard units from Hawaii and Washington to achieve a Total Force mix.⁵⁰ This allowed USARPAC to employ units both familiar with the operating area and possessing low density capabilities required for theater operations not resident within a BCT.⁵¹ This operation required the same rear operations construct used during deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. Specific tailoring of the stay behind force to leverage reach-back capabilities such as the Intelligence Readiness Operations Capability (IROC) helped meet operational requirements without the deployment costs.⁵² The first iteration had some setbacks: late force requests, availability of enablers, and

inadequate funding, equipping, and manning of reserve component forces all reduced operational effectiveness.⁵³ Future iterations must identify/coordinate Total Force requirements early in the planning cycle.

APS is another factor that supports force projection. Its availability can reduce the amount of equipment that needs to be deployed, as well as decrease deployment times, costs, and number of transport platforms. Well placed APS can allow a force to deploy by air when normally the amount of equipment would require sea lift. Historically, DoD has used APS for “unexpected contingencies.” USARPAC did not use the full complement during Pathways 14. Future strategies will include the use of “activity sets to support building partnership capacity events.”⁵⁴ Not only will employing APS during future iterations of Pacific Pathways reduce costs and transportation timelines, its availability will also provide USARPAC with planning options for use during crisis response. Such adjustments will require the Army to make policy adjustments on the use of pre-positioned stocks.

Although desiring “transport that would enable operations across the vast expanses of the Pacific,” USARPAC is also restrained in its projection of forces.⁵⁵ Historically, Air Force and Navy transport has often been unavailable or too costly. Consequently, U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) would bid out the contract to a civilian vessel.⁵⁶ Under the Pathways construct, USARPAC was able to reduce costs and expand type and amount of equipment within this transportation framework by employing as a single operation compared to previous exercise participation where they conducted separate transport to and from each exercise. Further improvements are needed. First and foremost, joint operations should occur during steady state, not just during contingency. The Navy employs a Joint High Speed Vessel (JHSV) in USPACOM’s AOR where this vessel recently “participated in Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) Exercise 2014.”⁵⁷ Historically, USARPAC has used the three Logistic Support Vessels (LSVs) and ten Landing Craft Utility (LCU) vessels from APS during Combined/Joint Logistics Over the Shore (C/JLOTS) exercises. Future exercises should also consider and coordinate for these vessels, along with other Joint transport, to support Pacific Pathways, especially in RSOI and regional mobility.⁵⁸

Combined Arms Maneuver

The Army is very capable of developing its ability to conduct combined arms maneuver within its own force structure during home station and CTC training. Theater operations, however, encompass a greater requirement for integration. In theater, all services must rely on JIIM capabilities to operate. Pacific Pathways expands the development of this core competency while also integrating other critical enablers and simultaneously expanding readiness.

Before Pathways, USARPAC conducted bilateral exercises with a much smaller footprint that did not include air capability. Pathways, however, integrated a much larger force and equipment package. With such a diverse force package, USARPAC was able to expand its options to achieve combined arms integration with each of the Indonesian, Malaysian, and Japanese Armies, as well as the U.S. Navy.⁵⁹ While in Indonesia, USARPAC conducted a live-fire exercise that joined AH-64 Apaches, HH-60 Pave Hawks, UH-60 Black Hawks, and Strykers with the Indonesian Army’s MI-35 and their land forces.⁶⁰ They conducted similar training in Malaysia and Japan. Additionally, while in Japan, USARPAC aircrews trained with the U.S. Navy on “over-water operations” conducting “hundreds of deck landings.”⁶¹ In Malaysia, combined arms training allowed USARPAC to test and share tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) to counter-improved explosive devices (C-IEDs). The dense jungle required modification of these TTPs developed from OEF/OIF.⁶²

The efficiencies gained through the Pathways concept increased training opportunities and actually enhanced joint and multinational integration. Previously, Army leaders believed that CTC was the capstone event for training their brigade combat teams (BCTs), and were concerned readiness would drop during the

operation. USARPAC's first iteration of Pathways in 2014 proved to the contrary—units actually built upon the CTC experience—in ways the Army could not provide through that venue.⁶³ Additionally, employing the CTC trained BCT in Pathways adheres to the deployment training methodology over the last decade of using CTC as the Mission Readiness Exercise in preparation for OEF/OIF. Instead of deploying to Iraq or Afghanistan, the BCT deployed to the Pacific. This operation also proved important to the readiness of those organizations unable to train at a CTC. Future iterations should continue to employ enablers like rotary capability and seek joint integration in addition to the accustomed multinational training exercises. USARPAC should also consider incorporating its Joint Pacific Multinational Readiness Capability (JPMRC).⁶⁴ Utilizing this capability in support of a Pathways operation offers a CTC-like experience to those units unable to attend a CTC rotation before deployment, as well as joint and partner nation participants.

Wide Area Security

Pathways better develops an adaptive force to conduct wide area security missions (e.g., HA/DR, NEO, and Diplomatic Reinforcement). Specifically, it provides ready forces forward in the event of disaster or crisis while also improving upon readiness and JIIM interoperability. Immediate response capability mitigates the challenge of forward force stationing and the extended travel time required from the U.S. to a crisis. Pathways 14 also allowed USARPAC to better support USPACOM crisis response directives by tailoring forces to include a CTC trained BCT as the Pacific Pathway's unit serving concurrently as the Contingency Response Force (CRF). This will help mitigate the two of six BCT training challenges previously discussed. USARPAC's force construct for this operation parallels CRF requirements, so in theory, such an action would equate to forward positioning the CRF under the Pathways umbrella. Additionally, with a training focus on crisis response type missions and with the availability of the aforementioned JPMRC, USARPAC can further develop the CRF for future missions. Since not every Pathways operation may be able to employ a CTC trained BCT, this operation still remains a vehicle for training and projecting a crisis response force forward, thus, reducing time in which a security vacuum could occur and lead to a new stability threat.

Cyberspace Operations

USARPAC did not categorize cyberspace as a separate area during Pacific Pathways. Its units maintained both tactical and operational communications across protected networks with no interruptions from a "hack." Nonetheless, USARPAC worked in collaboration with each host military to ensure information security throughout the operation.⁶⁵ Pathways' greatest cyber challenge, however, potentially derives from the interoperability between civilian and military architecture on a secure network. Although not mentioned as a specific challenge, USARPAC may become vulnerable to future cyberspace threats if defensive measures are not in place while Pathways operations seek to sustain mission command across a region.

Special Operations

The first iteration of Pathways failed to integrate the capabilities of Special Operations Forces (SOF), even with mission sets that included HA/DR, NEO, Security Cooperation, and Diplomatic Reinforcement. USARPAC requested 351st Civil Affairs Command (CACOM) support, but did so too late within the command's training timelines for it to participate during the Pathways 2014 operation.⁶⁶ Utilizing SOF capabilities like Civil Affairs during a Pathways operation is not the only way USARPAC can nest with this competency. Opportunities also exist to enable ongoing SOF operations. Special Operations Command, Pacific (SOCPAC) requires support from a number of enablers. SOCPAC, for example, contracts out rotary-winged

aviation support in the Philippines. A future Pathway that includes this country could employ rotary-winged aviation in support of a real world operation as well as a military-to-military exercise. Future integration of SOF will provide opportunities for joint interoperability within JIIM and demonstrate this AOC core competency.

Summary

Pacific Pathways provides an innovative solution for building partner capacity while projecting rotational forces in efforts to maintain theater stability and security. Readiness and operational effectiveness were increased as USARPAC built regional competence and developed leaders during the operation. There is, however, room for improvement. Future Pathways should: (1) incorporate early and efficient use of key enablers across the Total Force, (2) be more closely integrated with the SPP, (3) facilitate improved stakeholder understanding of Pathways, (4) insist upon JIIM integration during Pathways planning, (5) include iterative request for full use of APS, (6) engage in JPMRC integration with Pathways partners, (7) better integrate cyber and SOF into Pathways planning and execution, and (8) entail Pacific Pathways BCT serving concurrently as the CRF. In conclusion, USARPAC's use of the Total Force in operations such as Pacific Pathways embodies the core competencies of the Army Operating Concept while mitigating many of its theater challenges.

Endnotes

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⁴ Ibid., 20-22.

⁵ National Guard Bureau, *Posture Statement: Trusted at Home, Proven Abroad* (Washington, DC: National Guard Bureau), 25-26.

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⁹ RAF endeavors to align these forces with combatant commands (CCMDs) to allow the operations.

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- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, 6.
- ²⁷ Giving up bases in Taiwan and Philippines has made it extremely difficult to gain back. The Philippines wrote into their constitution that they would no longer allow foreign permanent basing and reestablishing basing in Taiwan is exceedingly contentious in view of U.S.-Sino relations. *Ibid.*, 82, 86-87.
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