Interagency interoperability key to success

A heightened level of shared knowledge, speed of information and sending professionals to the battlefield are crucial to future military endeavours, according the U.S. military’s top intelligence officer.


He addressed the Program on Terrorism and Security Studies, the Defense Department’s premiere counterterrorism course, and the Seminar on Transatlantic Civil Security.

Among the topics during a 45-minute speech, the 37-year veteran cited sharing information as paramount. Although sharing opportunities may have pitfalls, like the events leading to Wikileaks, he said the value of sharing information transcends the temporary damage that may have been caused.

“You can’t let an event like that slow down what you know to be the goodness of what it is you’re trying to do,” he said. “While that happens, you need to fix what may have caused leaks like that and ensure you put safeguards in place that allow you to protect information. You can’t let it detract you from what you’re trying to do overall.”

Burgess said intelligence products are being shared “to a degree I never thought possible.” He also said the time to build successful relationship and sharing opportunities come before things fall apart. “When crises occur,” he said, “that is not the time to be building relationships.”

With 875 people from his agency deployed in theaters across the globe, Burgess cited a watershed change in business practices that pulled the experts out from inside the Beltway and put them side by side with the war fighters.

“Intelligence is just one line of information coming into a commander. As such, they deserve our best assessment of what is going to happen. They should demand it,” he said. “We’ve had the most success when placed along-side other intelligence disciplines and agencies.”

He said his agency didn’t have an “upfront and central role” in finding and killing Osama Bin Laden, but did play a part in the May 2 operation. He said they supported the element that went in to do the mission, but cited “all source” intelligence as the key to success.

“Very seldom does single intelligence information by itself produce actual intelligence. It does happen. But, for the most part, it’s a fusing of all source intelligence and that’s what happened with Bin Laden. A lot of things came together,” he said.

For his own part and the parts played by his team of intelligence professionals, Burgess was blunt. “We speak truth to power ... we’re not paid to have a point of view.”

He talked about the importance both Marshall Center programs have to the war fighters and the world at large. “It demonstrates with each class the value of shared knowledge. At this very moment, our soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines are working side by side on the battlefield. We owe it to them to challenge ourselves,” he said.
Agency visit supports STACS course goals

Multinational participants attended an in-depth civil security course at the Marshall Center in July.

The group of 47 civil security professionals from 29 countries in Europe, Eurasia and North America completed the Seminar on Transatlantic Civil Security (STACS) on July 29 after spending three weeks looking at how nations can effectively address domestic security issues that have regional and international impact.

The seminar examines best practices for ensuring civil security and preventing, preparing for and managing the consequences of domestic and regional crises and disasters.

During the course, participants visited the Technische Hilfswerk (THW) – the German Federal Agency for Technical Relief - in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, hosted by STACS participant Dietmar Löffler, the THW state commissioner for Bavaria.

The visit included live demonstrations of some of THW’s equipment as well as a demonstration of how workers could remove someone trapped in rubble and work together with emergency medical services.

THW volunteers were out in force to greet STACS participants and gave a demonstration of proper wrapping techniques for a person with possible spinal cord injuries.

With about 80,000 voluntary experts, THW provides emergency assistance both domestically and abroad. Around the world, the structure of THW is unique: As a federal agency, THW belongs to the department of the German Federal Ministry of the Interior. However, only one percent of the staff works full-time for the THW while the rest are volunteers. THW even begins training Germany’s youth in civil assistance as early as age 10. Once they turn 18, the THW Youth Volunteers may become full-service THW volunteers.

STACS participants commented that the visit was one of the highlights of the course and they could bring home many of the ideas they learned from THW.

STACS is offered twice a year for military officers and government officials responsible for civil security policies and programs, as well as representatives of intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations with civil security responsibilities. With its focus on the development of core knowledge and skills, the course provides a critical professional development opportunity in the emerging field of civil security.

CT course looks at methods, countering

An international group of counterterrorism professionals celebrated completion of the Department of Defense’s premiere counterterrorism course in July.

The group of 65 participants from 46 countries graduated from the Marshall Center’s Program on Terrorism and Security Studies (PTSS) July 29, after five weeks of lecture, in-class discussion, a field study and exchanging ideas with peers. The course started on June 24.

After three weeks studying the nature of terrorism, the vulnerabilities of terrorist groups, and terrorist finances and countermeasures, course participants took a week-long field study to Paris. Events during the week-long event included a visit to the Paris Police Prefecture and lectures by a number of government and military experts in counterterrorism. Many of the lectures took place at Ecole Militaire, near the Eiffel Tower.

Nick Pratt, PTSS director, said these field studies are invaluable to the participants, who come from all over the globe.

“The field study provides hands-on insight to one country’s practices and gives our students the opportunity to network, share ideas and see facets of a counterterrorism strategy they may have never otherwise seen,” Pratt said.

Participants – who come from countries like Greece, Israel, Kyrgyzstan, Uganda and beyond – peppered lecturers with questions about the way France handles terrorism, including finances, security and more. Hosni Ajarma, a participant from the Palestine Authority, said he was pleased to have an opportunity to hear the lectures and see how France does CT business up close.

“I like it. This is a very new experience,” he said. “Being able to speak with all of these different representatives is important.”

After their return to Garmisch, course participants looked at global cooperation and policy instruments in the war on terror before completing the course July 29. The Marshall Center holds two sessions of the PTSS per year.
Azerbaijan alumni talk civil-military relations

On July 21, Marshall Center alumni in Azerbaijan gathered in Baku to take part in a seminar on civilian-military relations.

The alumni and other select invitees were able to learn about and discuss U.S., German and Croatian parliamentary oversight of the military.

The alumni were welcomed by Defense Attache Col. Grillone from the U.S. Embassy in Azerbaijan and by Dr. Sven Gareis, Marshall Center German Deputy Dean. Dr. Dragan Lozancic, alumnus and former professor of the Marshall Center, had addressed the alumni on civil-military relations and made contact with some of his former students.

Other guests and friends attending the event included Dr. Kresimir Cosic, former member of parliament and deputy minister of defense of Croatia; Robert Baric, advisor to the Croatian Minister of Defense; and the Marshall Center’s Army Col. Paul Yingling, deputy director for the Program on Terrorism and Security Studies.

July distinguished visitors, speakers

+ Dr. Martha Crenshaw, senior fellow, Center for International Security and Cooperation, Stanford University and Dr. Sajjan Gohel, director for international security, Asian-Pacific Foundation, London, visited July 5 to speak to participants in the Program on Terrorism and Security Studies.
+ Dr. Raymond Brown, foreign policy advisor, U.S. Africa Command, visited July 8 to be the graduation speaker for the Program on Security, Stability, Transition and Reconstruction.
+ Sheikh Dr. Muhammad Al-Hussaini, fellow in Islamic studies, Leo Baeck College, London; Dr. Tawfik Hamid, senior fellow and chair for the study of Islamic radicalism, Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, Oakton, Va.; and Dr. Patrick Sookhdeo, director, Institute for the Study of Islam and Christianity, Wiltshire, UK visited July 8 to speak as part of a panel for the PTSS.
+ Maj. Gen. Peter Aylward, special assistant to the chief, National Guard Bureau, Arlington, Va., visited July 12 to speak to participants in the Seminar on Transatlantic Civil Security.
+ Judge Keith Allred, U.S. immigration court, Tacoma, Wa., visited July 12 to speak at the PTSS.
+ Gen. Carter Ham, Commander, U.S. Africa Command, visited July 18 to speak at the STACS.
+ Daniel Murphy, forecast director, intelligence systems support office, undersecretary of defense for intelligence, visited July 19-20 for an orientation.
+ Ambassador David Satterfield, director general, multinational force and observers, Rome, visited July 25 to speak at the PTSS.
+ Sir David Omand, visiting professor, war studies department, King’s College, London, visited July 25 to speak at STACS.
+ Michael Ritchie, director for interagency partnering, U.S. European Command, visited July 29 to be the graduation speaker for the STACS.
+ Garry Reid, deputy assistant secretary of defense, special operations and combating terrorism, office of the secretary of defense, visited July 29 to be the graduation speaker for the PTSS.

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