WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT

OPERATION QUEENSLANDER

TEN IDEAS FOR AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE SUPPORT TO DISASTER RELIEF OPERATIONS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to articulate ten ideas for ADF support to disaster relief operations. These ideas originate from the development of the strategic, operational and tactical plans for Operation QUEENSLANDER in order to ensure that the ADF can continue to fulfil Defence White Paper 2009 requirements. These ideas are: intelligence preparation in disaster relief operations; the effectiveness of the Joint Military Appreciation Process; the utility of design in complex disasters; beyond whole of government – a comprehensive approach to disaster relief; maintaining momentum – establishing the campaign sequel; domestic disasters: templates and tensions; Defence as a supporting agency; whole of government planning, writing and language; the value of military education and training; future operations: workers, thinkers and leaders.

The Defence White Paper, 2009 Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific Century: Force 2030, states that Australia’s ‘most basic strategic interest remains the defence of Australia against direct armed attack’. In addition, Defence White Paper 2009 acknowledges the ‘vital role’ for the Australian Defence Force (ADF) in ‘supporting domestic security and emergency response efforts’ including disaster
Among other domestic threats, Defence White Paper 2009 recognises that ‘natural disasters such as cyclones, earthquakes, floods and bushfires can also threaten the security and safety of the Australian people’.

As a result of Queensland’s November 2010–February 2011 flood and cyclone-related events, thirty-seven people lost their lives, and all seventy-three local government areas in Queensland, some 20 per cent of the Australian continent, were disaster activated under Commonwealth–State Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements. As forewarned in Defence White Paper 2009, the security and safety of Australians, this time in Queensland, were threatened by fifty-nine rivers flooding with twelve breaking flood records, 19,000 kilometres of affected state and local roads, and 29 per cent of Queensland’s rail network damaged. Restoration and reconstruction costs were estimated at approximately $5 billion for flooding and more than $800 million for cyclone-related events.

Due to Queensland’s flood and cyclone-related events, and in accordance with commitments articulated in Defence White Paper 2009, the ADF seconded a small team of planners to the Queensland state government in January–February 2011 to assist in reconnecting, rebuilding and improving Queensland, its communities and economy. This team, working to build ‘a stronger, more resilient Queensland and Queenslanders’, authored Queensland’s strategic reconstruction plan: Operation Queenslander, The State Community, Economic and Environmental Recovery and Reconstruction Plan 2011–2013 (The State Plan). Following the release of the State Plan and the departure of the ADF planning team from the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (the Authority), Operation QUEENSLANDER was broadened to include operational and tactical plans titled: The Community, Economic and Environmental Recovery and Reconstruction Implementation Plan 2011–2013 (The Implementation Plan), and A Guide to Local Community, Economic and Environmental Recovery and Reconstruction Planning (The Local Plan).

The purpose of this article is to articulate ten ideas for ADF support to disaster relief operations. These ideas originate from the development of the strategic, operational and tactical plans for Operation QUEENSLANDER in order to ensure that the ADF can continue to fulfil Defence White Paper 2009 requirements. These ideas are:

1. Intelligence preparation in disaster relief operations
2. The effectiveness of the Joint Military Appreciation Process

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Each time the ADF deploys, based on the actions of ADF members, its profile and trust are reassessed by the Australian people.

IDEA 1: INTELLIGENCE PREPARATION IN DISASTER RELIEF OPERATIONS

Despite the Defence White Paper 2009 emphasising ADF domestic security and emergency response responsibilities, Defence’s primary focus is international. Defence White Paper 2009 states that Australia’s ‘expansive strategic geography requires an expeditionary orientation on the part of the ADF…underpinned by requisite force projection capabilities’. As a result of this ‘expeditionary orientation’, the ADF’s Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) is primarily focused on government roles and responsibilities in the context of potential areas for international deployment. For the majority of the ADF, JPME usually only examines the business and operations of state and territory governments in a peripheral manner within the context of Commonwealth–State and Commonwealth–Territory relations.

One consequence of ADF JPME providing peripheral consideration to state and territory government business is that intelligence preparation in disaster relief operations within Australia relies, almost exclusively, on the assets and capabilities of Australia’s six state and two territorial governments. As a result, ADF planners...
for disaster relief operations in Australia need to quickly identify state government capabilities that enable intelligence preparation. For Operation QUEENSLANDER, six Queensland government departments were the core intelligence providers for ADF planners. The ADF planners were blind without the leadership and cooperation of the Queensland Department of Communities, Department of Employment Economic Development and Innovation, Department of Environment and Resource Management, Department of Transport and Main Roads, Department of Public Works, and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Two Queensland government innovations enabled these six Queensland government departments to effectively provide intelligence in disaster relief operations. First, each of the departments led a whole of state sub-committee which within Operation QUEENSLANDER, is responsible for one of six lines of reconstruction: human and social, economic, environment, building recovery, roads and transport, and community liaison and communication. These sub-committees comprised Commonwealth, state, business, peak body, non-government organisations, local government, and community-based membership. As a result, ADF planners quickly sourced vital intelligence used in the writing and development of Operation QUEENSLANDER. If ADF planners missed key information or factors required to reconnect, rebuild and improve Queensland, its communities and economy, members of the whole of state sub-committee quickly provided robust feedback, advice, and direction.

Second, Queensland state government departments, through their regional presence and experience combined with their connections to local government authorities, non-government organisations and communities, are well positioned to collect, quantify, measure and report on natural disaster damage, recovery and reconstruction. All six lines of reconstruction were mutually reinforcing, inter-dependent, synchronised and tailored, and departments readily adapted existing reporting metrics or developed new metrics to demonstrate the progress of Operation QUEENSLANDER. The Operation QUEENSLANDER Implementation Plan, the state’s operational plan, detailed the tasks and metrics used in reconnecting, rebuilding and improving Queensland, its communities and economy. In turn, the Implementation Plan enabled the Queensland Reconstruction Authority to develop and provide comprehensive monthly board reporting to Commonwealth, state, and local stakeholders.\textsuperscript{12}
What the ADF should do: For future intelligence preparation in disaster relief operations in support of state governments, Defence should sustain immediate cooperation with appropriate state and territory governments and their departments in order to gain the best possible ongoing intelligence. The Queensland government’s use of six whole of state sub-committees, responsible for six mutually reinforcing, interdependent, synchronised and tailored lines of reconstruction, is an excellent model for consideration in future disaster relief operations. In addition, the ADF’s JPME continuum should fix ADF members’ understanding of the business and operations of state and territory governments through a broader Defence to state–territory government education program.

IDEA 2: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE JOINT MILITARY APPRECIATION PROCESS

The Joint Military Appreciation Process (JMAP) was employed by the ADF planning team in authoring Operation QUEENSLANDER. The planning team applied the JMAP to analyse the mission, develop, test, recommend and select courses of action, and then write the State Plan. Notably, while the JMAP was employed, it was the skills, knowledge and attitudes of the ADF planners that enabled them to effectively conduct a JMAP to support ‘domestic security and emergency response efforts’ including disaster relief for Operation QUEENSLANDER.

Most ADF members receive training on a form of the military appreciation process. Following attendance at Australian Command and Staff College as mid-ranking officers, this military appreciation training includes the JMAP. As a result of challenges such as Operation QUEENSLANDER, the ADF will arguably be expected to support future disaster relief operations with skills that include the JMAP. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that all ADF members must be ready to apply the JMAP, often at short notice, in the context of a state–territory disaster event.

Arguably, the ADF training continuum does not fully support the notion that all ADF members can be ready to apply the JMAP, in the context of a state–territory disaster event. For example, the introduction of the JMAP to mid-ranking officers seems too late, especially when the small planning team that wrote Operation QUEENSLANDER included an Army captain who had not previously employed the JMAP. Readers of this article may also know situations where, on an exercise
or deployment, the bulk of JMAP analysis and development during planning activities was left to a few individuals—the so called ‘lead-planners’. Other cases may be known where ADF members preferred to attempt solving problems without employing the JMAP, often with less than satisfactory outcomes. Arguably, the late introduction of the JMAP into ADF training, with an emphasis on mid-ranking officers, and few non-commissioned officers, can lead to the JMAP assuming some form of mystic quality within the ADF, where the JMAP is seen to be too formal, or onerous, or complex for employment in problem solving.

Recognising the value of planning in the ADF, since 1991 ADF officers have attended advanced planning courses with three of the four services in the US military. These advanced planning courses are approximately twelve months of intensive study in planning and the operational art. While the advanced planning courses are of significant benefit to the ADF in terms of connections with our major ally, in developing planners and in avoiding the creation of a ‘home-grown’ ADF advanced planning school, in twenty-one years, the US advanced planning courses have only produced thirty-two ADF planners. Therefore, in addition to developing and employing advanced ADF planners, the ADF needs to focus on lifting the overall standard of planning, and employing the JMAP, by all ADF members, both officers and non-commissioned officers.

Ideas to lift the standard of planning in the ADF include introducing the JMAP earlier in JPME, simplifying the JMAP, and rigorously demanding JMAP’s use for problem solving throughout Defence. In addition, the introduction of the JMAP to other government agencies, especially emergency management and police authorities, at federal and state level, may assist in harmonising whole of government disaster relief planning efforts (see Idea 8 for an extension of this point). Finally, if the JMAP is not achieving planning outcomes needed for the ADF, especially in terms of operational design (see Idea 3), then the JMAP should be updated or changed.

**What the ADF should do:** For the effective employment of the JMAP in disaster relief operations in support of state–territory governments, Defence should fix JMAP training so that all ADF officers and non-commissioned officers are confident in the use of the JMAP, encouraged to use the JMAP for problem solving, and can lead JMAP planning teams. To achieve this requirement, the JMAP must be introduced earlier in the JPME training continuum and must be a core skill of ADF members. The introduction of the JMAP to other government agencies requires consideration.
Idea 3: The utility of design in complex disasters

The ADF planning team moved beyond the JMAP to apply design in developing Operation QUEENSLANDER. The ADF planning team initially deployed to develop a plan in response to flooding in regional Queensland. Through the employment of design methodology, the ADF planning team wrote a plan that enabled the Queensland government to respond to multiple events that occurred across the entire state including river and flash flooding, coastal storm, surges, cyclones and monsoonal rains.

Design is a ‘methodology for applying critical and creative thinking to understand, visualise and describe complex, ill-structured problems and develop approaches to solve them.’ Queensland’s November 2010–February 2011 flood and cyclone-related events, covering every Queensland local government area and 20 per cent of the Australian continent, were and remain complex and ill-structured problems. During the ADF’s January–February 2011 secondment of a small team of planners to the Queensland state government, the planning team applied critical and creative thinking to solve these problems.

It was the ADF planner’s skills in designing a framework for Operation QUEENSLANDER, the Queensland Reconstruction Framework (QRF), based on the six mutually reinforcing, interdependent, synchronised and tailored lines of reconstruction that allowed the state of Queensland to absorb multiple disasters while developing a State Plan that provided a vision for the future. Months after the ADF planning team left the Authority, and following an April 2011 flooding event in Roma, western Queensland, the QRF is adjusting, absorbing and adapting the design of Operation QUEENSLANDER, not only for Queensland’s reconstruction, but for additional environmental disasters, and political, economic, and social change.

In short, a well designed campaign supported by the QRF has set the platform for the Queensland government’s whole of state response in employing Operation QUEENSLANDER to adapt to unforseen and unfolding complex ill-structured problems.

What the ADF should do: For the employment of design in disaster relief operations in support of state governments, Defence should sustain ADF understanding and employment of this important concept. Like Operation QUEENSLANDER, all ADF operational challenges are plans in motion and therefore need critical and creative thinking to understand, visualise and describe complex, ill-structured problems and develop approaches to solve them.
IDEA 4: BEYOND WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT: A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO DISASTER RELIEF

For a small population such as Australia’s, whole of government operations are vital to ensure resources are effectively and efficiently coordinated to achieve specified missions and tasks. The primary advantage that whole of government operations provide government is unity of effort, whereby duplication of resources, capabilities and functions are avoided, while simultaneously achieving synergies in government services. The ADF strives to work with other government agencies in training and on operations and has effective working relationships with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Federal Police, and the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID). For domestic counter-terrorist arrangements the ADF has cooperative partnerships with state agencies and police services.21

In developing Operation QUEENSLANDER, the ADF planners were able to move beyond extant whole of government arrangements, and utilise a whole of state approach to disaster relief. This whole of state approach, which included Commonwealth, state, business, peak body, non-government organisations, local government and community-based participation, is similar to the comprehensive approach. The comprehensive approach is well articulated by the UK Ministry of Defence in a 2006 publication of the same name.22 For the United Kingdom, experiences in Bosnia, Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan and Iraq, made it ‘evident that [whole of government policy] coherence could only be achieved if strategic processes, planning and objectives were harmonised across all [available] instruments and agencies’.23

As noted in Idea 1, in Queensland the whole of state approach was largely facilitated by the establishment of six whole of state sub-committees, which in Operation QUEENSLANDER are responsible for one of six lines of reconstruction.24 As a result, ADF planners had ready access to a range of specialists and advisors beyond the usual whole of government arrangements. This access enabled agreement to Operation QUEENSLANDER, both within and outside the Queensland government, prior to release. In turn, this meant that after the release of Operation QUEENSLANDER, there was minimal disagreement with the plan’s fundamentals. Most importantly, the six whole of state sub-committees supporting Operation QUEENSLANDER retain an ability to adapt to the progressive reconnecting and
rebuilding of Queensland, while ensuring that processes and plans in Queensland are improved in preparation for future disaster events.

What the ADF should do: The ADF should sustain the development of whole of government coordination, at the Commonwealth and state–territory levels, in training and when deployed. Where possible the ADF should improve participation in whole of state, or whole of nation/comprehensive approach planning activities in order to prepare ADF officers for national responses to future challenges, including disaster relief operations.

Idea 5: Maintaining momentum – establishing the campaign sequel

Operation QUEENSLANDER directs the conduct of reconstruction activities across three phases:


Phase 3 – transition, is the least developed aspect of Operation QUEENSLANDER, and:

sees a progressive hand over of reconstruction responsibilities to agencies or organisations including government, local government, community-based or industry led sectors that would normally support the functional area. [Phase 3 - transition] ends when all reconstruction responsibilities are handed over to relevant agencies.25

In late May 2011, some twenty months prior to the December 2012 phase change, the Queensland Reconstruction Authority’s planners, led by a Queensland Police Service officer who is also an Army Reserve officer, began to develop broad courses of action for Operation QUEENSLANDER, Phase 3 – transition.26 By commencing Phase 3 – transition courses of action development early, the planners sought to create an iterative and adaptive planning continuum in order to maintain the momentum of Operation QUEENSLANDER. In short, the planners were seeking to establish ideas for the campaign sequel beyond the life of the Queensland Reconstruction Authority, which is due to end in February 2013.

The planning for Phase 3 – transition, which includes regular input by strategic leadership from all six lines of reconstruction, is designed to set the conditions for
the completion of the final element of the Authority’s mission: reconnect, rebuild and improve Queensland, its communities and economy. To achieve improvements, the Authority has a mandate from the Queensland government to work fast, drive value for money in capital and non-capital projects, and to create a stronger, more resilient Queensland. The improvement of Queensland, its community and economy is not only a requirement of Operation QUEENSLANDER, but it is the implied campaign sequel beyond the life of the Operation QUEENSLANDER campaign, which ends in December 2013.

In particular, planning for Phase 3 – transition, concentrates on ensuring the Authority’s key outputs, including Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements coordination, governance, land use planning, reporting and performance measurement, information management, local government authority engagement, departmental coordination, donation management and strategic planning are integrated into post-Authority business practices. These business practices will, ultimately, involve agencies or organisations including government, local government, community-based or industry-led sectors.

What the ADF should do: The ADF should sustain campaign planning as a fundamental skill for ADF officers in their education at Australian Command and Staff College, and beyond. This educational emphasis ensures that ADF officers are predisposed to designing campaigns when faced with complex adaptive long-term operational problems. In addition, campaign planning education should instil restlessness in ADF officers so that they are never satisfied with the plan as written and agreed. In short, ADF campaign planning should comply with Eisenhower’s dictum:

Plans are worthless, but planning is everything. There is a very great distinction because when you are planning for an emergency you must start with this one thing: the very definition of ‘emergency’ is that it is unexpected, therefore it is not going to happen the way you are planning.27

Idea 6: Domestic disasters – templates and tensions

For Operation QUEENSLANDER, the Authority and ADF planners received advice from past leaders of post-disaster planning and lessons learnt from other disaster events. This advice included lessons from international disaster events such as the 2005 Hurricane Katrina response in the United States, the Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority, which was established following the February 2009 Victorian
bushfires, and the Queensland government response to Cyclone Larry, which affected the area of Innisfail in north Queensland in 2006.

Understanding the complexities involved in post-disaster planning from past leaders and lessons from other disaster events are important to ADF planners for three reasons.

First, despite apparent dissimilarities between disasters, consultation with people who responded to other disaster events can identify fundamental ideas and principles for a new disaster event. For example, in early 2011 the senior leadership of the Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority briefed the Queensland Reconstruction Authority, provided a useful series of lessons, and seconded an experienced employee to support Queensland’s disaster response efforts.

Second, as identified in Idea 3 on the employment of design in disaster relief operations, ADF operational challenges are plans in motion and therefore need critical and creative thinking to understand, visualise and describe complex, ill-structured problems and develop approaches to solve them. Due to the complex nature of disasters, the response to other domestic disaster events cannot provide a template to design new post-disaster plans. However, lessons from previous disasters can assist in guiding planners as new plans and campaigns are created.

Third, the tension between what was done in previous disasters, and what is to be done in new and evolving disasters is real and must be seen by ADF planners as a legitimate input into the planning process. Planners will be time poor. They will face overwhelming advice from other disaster ‘experts’. Information will arrive in multiple forms from phone conversations, email, letters, rumour, websites, personal representation, the media, formal direction and post-activity reports. ADF planners must be prepared for this overwhelming influx of information. Take all information, including lessons learnt, and fuse it into the design process. Keep an open mind, there will be ideas that can assist in the design of new plans, and there will be ideas to avoid.

**What the ADF should do:** The ADF should sustain engagement with holders of post-disaster knowledge, including lessons learnt, so that ADF planners can quickly gather information in the design of post-disaster operations. ADF planners should understand that, at least initially, they will receive inputs and advice from multiple sources right at the time they are most time poor; accept this as a legitimate aspect of designing a response to complex problems, and take all inputs while avoiding templates between different post-disaster operations.
IDEA 7: DEFENCE AS A SUPPORTING AGENCY

Quite often the ADF is a lead agency in domestic and international operations. Regardless of lead agency status, when faced with a crisis, challenge or significant event, domestically or internationally, the ADF quickly establishes a Joint Task Force (JTF). A JTF ensures that command and control is unified and ADF capabilities are unambiguously assigned for a specified task and mission. Recent examples of JTFs in support of domestic events in Australia include: JTF 630, Operation LARRY ASSIST, North Queensland, 2006; JTF 636, Melbourne Commonwealth Games, 2006; JTF 634, Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting, Sydney, 2007; JTF 637, Operation QUEENSLAND FLOOD ASSIST; and JTF 664, Operation YASI ASSIST supporting Queensland flood and cyclone events, 2011.

In Queensland in January–February 2011, the magnificent work by JTF 637 and JTF 664 in supporting Queenslanders facing severe flooding and cyclones was the key focus for ADF support to the Queensland government. In a less conspicuous development, Major General Mick Slater was, on 4 January 2011, seconded to the Queensland government and appointed Head – Flood Recovery Task Force. On 19 January 2011, the Queensland Reconstruction Authority was announced, with Major General Slater as the Chair and Mr Graeme Newton as the Chief Executive Officer.

As a result of the Flood Recovery Task Force and Queensland Reconstruction Authority arrangements, a JTF was not established by the ADF to support the development of Operation QUEENSLANDER. Instead, in addition to Major General Slater, the ADF seconded a small team of planners to the Queensland state government in January–February 2011 to assist in reconnecting, rebuilding and improving Queensland, its communities and economy.

Without a JTF to support the development of Operation QUEENSLANDER, Defence became a supporting agency to the Queensland government and government departments. The ADF presence was tiny, with a planning team of three assigned with sole responsibility for writing Operation QUEENSLANDER. Yet, this unusual arrangement worked for two reasons.

First, the Queensland government and government departments readily agreed to the presence of an ADF planning team. Initially, this agreement coincided with disaster response work conducted by JTF 637 and 664 which demonstrated ADF competence and capability. It was also as a result of Major General Slater’s ability to quickly develop a sound working relationship with the Queensland government, and
his partnership with Mr Graeme Newton. Finally, Queensland’s senior bureaucratic leadership, who were well organised and leading six lines of reconstruction sub-committees, quickly grasped the value a dedicated group of ADF planners could bring state recovery and reconstruction capabilities.

Second, ADF officers are well trained and this training allows rapid adaptation to changing circumstances. The three ADF planners who wrote Operation QUEENSLANDER deployed at short notice into circumstances of crisis to work for a state government of which they had peripheral knowledge and no experience; only one of the three planners resided in Queensland. These planners, through dint of their selection as ADF officers and subsequent single service and joint training, two for example as Australian Command and Staff College graduates, adapted to a new and complex environment to quickly write the State Plan. Training ADF officers is a serious and demanding process, and high training standards, as demonstrated in the development and writing of Operation QUEENSLANDER, are essential in supporting Australian national interests.

What the ADF should do: The ADF should sustain excellence in training to enable the development of adaptive officers who can design and plan in the most complex and demanding circumstances whether Defence leads or supports an operation.

IDEA 8: WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT PLANNING, WRITING AND LANGUAGE

Operation QUEENSLANDER amplified differences in whole of government planning, writing and language. The JMAP, while not perfect, has no observed equal for Commonwealth or state–territory government planners. Writing styles, including the content and context of government briefing notes, are not uniform between Commonwealth and state governments, or between state government departments. The language of planning and operations in the ADF is vastly different, and foreign, to state government departments.

None of these differences are impossible to overcome or absolute barriers, but uniformity in whole of government planning, writing and language will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of ADF support to disaster relief operations.

The JMAP, despite its focus on an enemy’s centre of gravity, was easily modified by planners. For example, the intent statements in Operation QUEENSLANDER moved from the military ‘purpose, method, and end state’ to a civilianised ‘why, how, and outcome’. Noting the requirement for JMAP modification, challenges such as Operation QUEENSLANDER indicate it is time for the JMAP to move to whole of government planning process: a Joint Inter-agency Appreciation Process.

Time is lost and plans are delayed when government officials are frozen through their inability to write, understand or develop briefing notes due to jurisdictional
nuances, archaic rules and procedures. An ADF officer, with a bias for action, can be stopped dead-cold by a bureaucrat defending the mysteries of a Commonwealth or state government administrative system.

In Operation QUEENSLANDER the ADF planners were guests. They had to modify their actions to comply with an existing culture, work practices, procedures and agendas. The experience was similar to ADF officers working in a United Nations or North Atlantic Treaty Organisation Headquarters. In these situations, ADF officers are rarely in charge, but they are always influential. Operation QUEENSLANDER was the same.

The shock of Queensland’s November 2010–February 2011 flood and cyclone-related events allowed the ADF planners to quickly get inside the central apparatus of government to plan, influence, affect and cajole, and then leave a framework for others to follow.

**What the ADF should do:** For whole of government planning, writing and language in support of state governments, Defence should fix ADF capabilities including the development of a Joint Inter-agency Appreciation Process and planning language. In addition, the ADF should lead the development of a guide to whole of government writing.

**IDEA 9: THE VALUE OF MILITARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

In terms of educating its people, the ADF is a generous employer. In the development of Operation QUEENSLANDER, ADF planners drew upon their ADF education and training to design and plan in a complex, changing and unusual environment while in a crisis situation. One citizen commented to the author, ‘finally, you can use your expensive military education to directly assist Australian people.’

This leads to two important points regarding the value of military education and training.

First, as ADF members we should ensure that we make the most, personally and professionally, of every education and training opportunity. ADF members are developed via a progressive and comprehensive system of Joint Professional Military Education Training. In contrast, people from other Commonwealth and state government agencies tend to experience ad hoc training opportunities, many of which are self-generated. Members of the ADF must never take education and training opportunities for granted.

Second, ADF education and training is not restricted to the classroom, firing range or field training area. The ADF experience in Operation QUEENSLANDER is an excellent example of the ADF seizing an opportunity to enhance its people’s education and training, outside formal education and training processes. As late as May 2011, the Queensland Reconstruction Authority comprised 11 per cent ADF personnel,
both full-time and part-time, including the Authority Chair, engineers, local government advisors, community engagement, administrative support, and planners. All of these personnel participated in work with the Authority for which they had not been specifically trained, and yet they were able to adapt and thrive in unusual and demanding circumstances. Importantly, the ADF personnel became fully integrated with the Authority, with the only distinguishing feature being that they wore an ADF uniform.

Significantly, the education provided to ADF personnel by their experience in the Authority will benefit those personnel and the ADF for many years. Exposure of ADF personnel to whole of state operations, local government authorities, complex urban planning challenges, non-ADF leadership styles and Commonwealth–State interactions are unique experiences, and will ultimately contribute to enhancing the ADF’s future capability to work in complex and demanding multiagency environments.

What the ADF should do: The ADF should sustain its comprehensive approach to professional military education and training in order to ensure ADF people are ready when called upon. ADF people should take full advantage of every education and training opportunity offered, including non-traditional training opportunities such as service with the Queensland Reconstruction Authority.

IDEA 10: FUTURE OPERATIONS – WORKERS, THINKERS AND LEADERS.

The development of Operation QUEENSLANDER in January–February 2011 by a small team of ADF planners confirmed that, for operational and strategic success, planning future operations requires a combination of workers, thinkers and leaders. For a week prior to the arrival of the ADF planning team, the then Flood Recovery Task Force had a number of workers—people working hard to do things, and some leaders—people providing guidance and vision to the workers. What was lacking was a dedicated group of thinkers—people whose sole purpose was to provide a strategic vision and a plan.

While none of these three groups is exclusive—that is workers can also be thinkers and leaders, and vice versa—the arrival of three ADF planners allowed Queensland and the Flood Recovery Task Force/Queensland Reconstruction Authority space to think. Without the ADF planners, Operation QUEENSLANDER would have been delayed due to workers and leaders being consumed with non-planning tasks.

ADF planners drew upon their ADF education and training to design and plan in a complex, changing and unusual environment while in a crisis situation.
In essence, the ADF planners created a future operations cell for the state of Queensland. While Queensland’s leaders and communities were fully occupied with countering multiple natural disasters, the ADF planners looked to the future and relentlessly designed, wrote, briefed and socialised the State Plan—Queensland’s strategic reconstruction plan. As noted earlier, a key element of success in writing the State Plan was the six departmental-led whole of state sub-committees. In designing future operations for Queensland, a key role for the ADF planners was to work with the six departmental-led whole of state sub-committees to ensure their input, support and approval of Operation QUEENSLANDER.

What the ADF should do: The ADF should sustain a deployable future operations planning capability that provides thinkers who link workers and leaders in strategic and operational design. The temptation for organisations is to work hard on current problems. A dedicated team of people need to be separated from this temptation in order to enable them to plan for complex, evolving and long-term issues and challenges.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this article is to articulate ten ideas for ADF support to disaster relief operations. These ideas are derived from the 2011 development of the strategic, operational and tactical plans for Operation QUEENSLANDER. Importantly, the ideas are designed to ensure the ADF can continue to fulfil Defence White Paper 2009 requirements to support disaster relief operations. In doing so, this article has identified three issues for the ADF to fix, one issue to improve and eight issues to sustain.

Three issues for the ADF to fix:
- ADF understanding of the business and operations of state and territory governments through a broader Defence to state–territory government education program;
- Joint Military Appreciation Process (JMAP) training so that ADF members are confident in the use of the JMAP, encouraged to use the JMAP for problem solving, and can lead JMAP planning teams; and,
- develop a Joint Inter-agency Appreciation Process complemented by whole of government language for planning.

One issue for the ADF to improve:
- ADF participation in whole of nation/comprehensive approach planning activities, in order to prepare ADF officers for national responses to future challenges, including disaster relief operations.
Eight issues for the ADF to sustain:

- post-disaster, immediate cooperation with appropriate state and territory governments and their departments in order to gain the best possible ongoing intelligence;
- ADF understanding and employment of design in seeking to understand, visualise and describe complex, ill-structured problems and develop approaches to solve them;
- development of whole of government coordination, at Commonwealth and state–territory levels, in training and when deployed;
- campaign planning as a fundamental skill for ADF officers in their education at Australian Command and Staff College and beyond. In addition, campaign planning education should instil a restlessness in ADF officers so that they are never satisfied with the plan as written and agreed;
- engagement with holders of post-disaster knowledge, including lessons learnt, so that ADF planners can quickly gather information in the design of post-disaster operations;
- excellence in training to enable the development of adaptive officers who can design and plan in the most complex and demanding circumstances. This includes circumstances where Defence leads or supports an operation;
- comprehensive professional military education and training in order to ensure ADF people are ready when called upon. ADF people should take full advantage of every education and training opportunity offered, including non-traditional training opportunities; and,
- deployable future operations planning capabilities that provide thinkers who link workers and leaders in strategic and operational design.

At present, the ADF is operationally focused and has significant elements of the force deployed away from Australia. In an era of persistent conflict, high force tempo and demand for ADF capabilities, including planners, is likely to remain. Therefore, all members of the ADF need to ensure that they are personally and professionally ready for a diverse range of challenges. To prepare for a diversity of challenges, this article describes ADF actions employed in the development of Operation QUEENSLANDER, and aims to assist ADF learning, improvement and adaptation.

ENDNOTES

2 Ibid., pp. 11, 62.
3 Ibid., p. 24
4 Operation Queenslander, The State Community, Economic and Environmental Recovery and Reconstruction Plan 2011–2013, Queensland Reconstruction Authority, 23 March
Whole of Government  
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6 Ibid.

7 Ibid., p. 14. The small team of planners was led by Lieutenant Colonel Jim Hammett (Royal Australian Infantry Corps), and included Lieutenant Colonel Sue Graham (Royal Australian Corps of Transport) and Captain Evan Armstrong (Royal Australian Corps of Signals). Other ADF members who made significant contributions to Operation QUEENSLANDER, especially the Implementation and Local Plans include: Lieutenant Commander Jo Beadle, RAN, and Squadron Leader Alan Brown, RAAF. In addition, Queensland Police Service members, who are also Army Reserve Officers, made considerable contributions to Operation QUEENSLANDER, including: Superintendent Mark Plath (Colonel, Army Reserve), and Detective Senior Sergeant Steve Vokes (Lieutenant Colonel, Army Reserve).


10 The author is grateful to a colleague for providing key intellectual components for this paragraph.


13 The JMAP is a logical decision-making process that enables a rigorous analysis of all the relevant factors in a situation and the efficient coordination of all staff functions towards the development of the most appropriate plan of action. Australian

14 Defence White Paper 2009 - Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific Century: Force 2030, p. 11, 62

15 Officers usually attend Australian Command and Staff College as lieutenant commanders (Navy), majors (Army), and squadron leaders (Air Force).

16 The advanced planning courses attended by ADF officers in the United States include: US Marine Corps School of Advanced Warfighting (first attendance 1991–92, and now eighteen graduates); US Army School of Advanced Military Studies (first attendance 2000–01, and now nine graduates); US Army Advanced Operational Arts & Sciences Fellowship (first attendance 2007–08, and only one graduate); Joint Advanced Warfighting School (first attendance 2009–10, and only one Graduate); School of Advanced Air & Space Studies (first attendance 2006–07, and now three graduates). To date, no Australians have attended the US Navy’s Maritime Advanced Warfighting School which is a 13-month course providing officers in the ranks of lieutenant commander and major with planning knowledge, leadership skills, and advanced warfighting for follow-on assignments to operational planner billets. ‘NWC Graduates Maritime Advanced Warfighting School Students’, NNS090910-13, United States Navy, 9 October 2009, <http://www.navy.mil/search/display.asp?story_id=48193> accessed 31 August 2011.

17 Of these thirty-two planners, the author is aware that at least eight, or 25 per cent, have retired from the ADF.

18 Field Manual 5-0, The Operations Process (Final Approved Draft), Headquarters, Department of the Army, Washington DC, 2010, p. 3-1.


21 For example the ADF ‘could be called on to resolve a domestic terrorism incident in extreme cases where state police and emergency services do not have the capability to deal with that situation. ADF call-out could potentially involve the use of force, and such incidents could include recapturing buildings, freeing hostages, cordonning off areas or reacting to a chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear or explosive incident’. Quote by then Major General Ken Gillespie, ‘Official Committee Hansard, Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, Reference: Watching Brief On The War On Terrorism’, Monday, 9 December 2002, Canberra, p. 10. <http://www.aph.gov.au/hansard/joint/committee/j6085.pdf> accessed 8 September 2011. General Gillespie was later Chief of the Australian Army 2008–11.


23 Ibid., pp. 1-1, 1-2.
24 Six lines of reconstruction: human and social, economic, environment, building recovery, roads and transport, and community liaison and communication.


26 Detective Senior Sergeant Steve Vokes (Lieutenant Colonel, Army Reserve).


28 The ADF planning team members are outlined in footnote 7.


30 The author, for example, is privileged to have been given eight years of professional military education and training by the ADF in twenty-seven years of service: officer cadet, four years; junior officer career and specialist courses, one year; command and staff college and school of advanced warfighting, two years; higher defence college, one year.

31 Quote from a conversation between a citizen and the author, January 2011.


THE AUTHOR

The then Colonel Chris Field was Chief Operations and Plans, Queensland Reconstruction Authority, January–June 2011.