

# LIAISON

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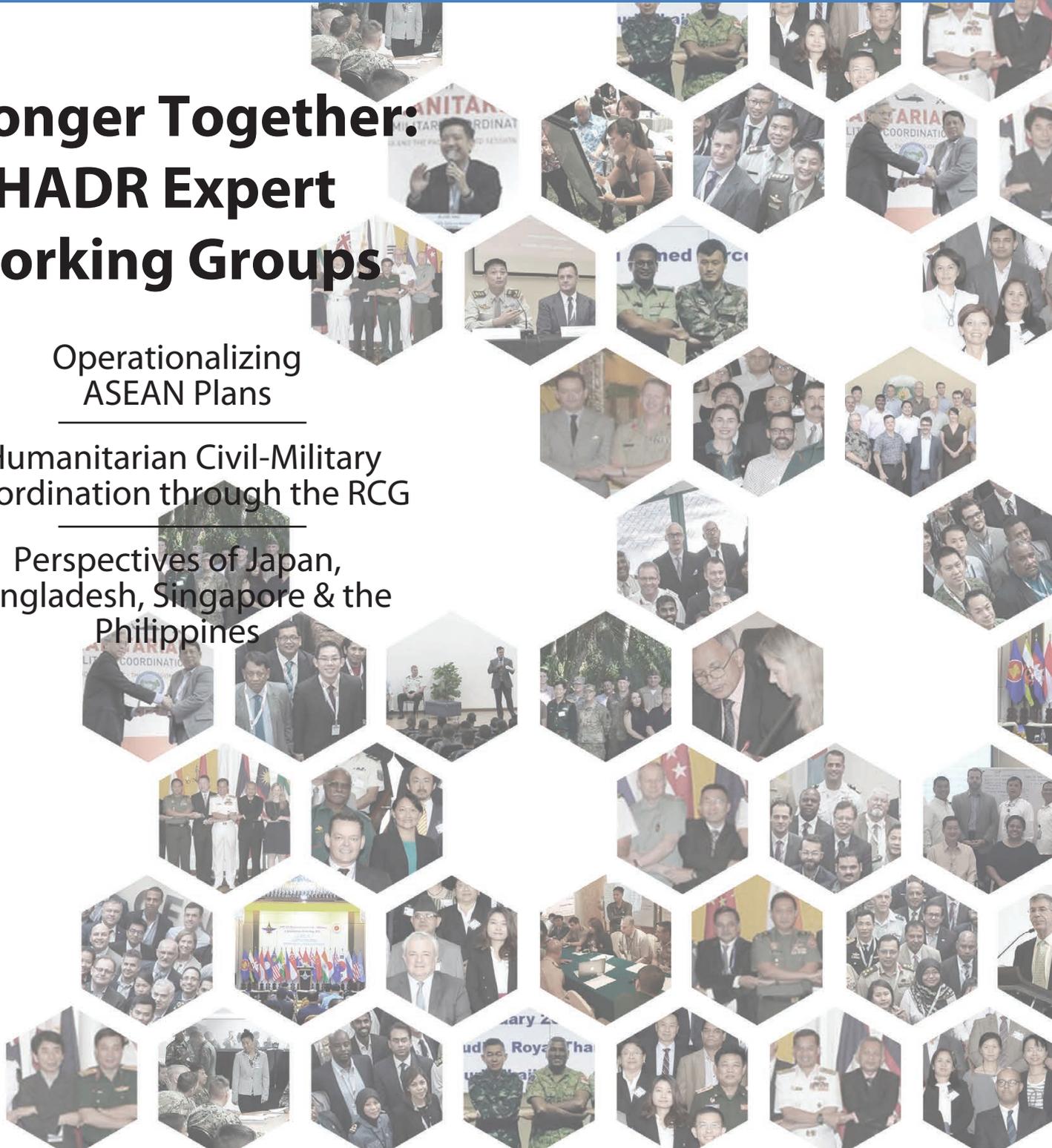
A JOURNAL OF CIVIL-MILITARY DISASTER MANAGEMENT & HUMANITARIAN RELIEF COLLABORATIONS

## Stronger Together: HADR Expert Working Groups

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ASEAN Plans

Humanitarian Civil-Military  
Coordination through the RCG

Perspectives of Japan,  
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## The Director's Letter

Joseph Martin, SES

**S**tronger together: this sentiment has never been truer than when it comes to disaster response. While nations in the Indo-Asia-Pacific have been able to learn from the tragic events that have struck their citizenry, no nation can promptly respond to a devastating disaster when their own first responders are victims themselves. This is where the international community can make a significant difference saving lives and alleviating suffering by those affected.

Humanitarian assistance and disaster response expert working groups are helping to coordinate that assistance. While the list of working groups is extensive, this issue primarily focuses on two: the ASEAN Defence Minister's Meeting Plus Experts' Working Group (ADMM+ EWG) on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief and the Regional Consultative Group (RCG) on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination for Asia and the Pacific. These EWGs bring together the top echelon of regional civil-military experts in disaster management.

The ADMM+ EWG strives towards a common goal to enable ASEAN militaries to promptly support the affected communities in times of disasters. This issue begins with a discussion about the struggle for success by Japan and Lao PDR, the co-chairs of the second cycle, ending in 2017. The current cycle, chaired by Malaysia and the U.S., has been able to build upon their achievements. In the last year, the ADMM+ EWG has seen significant progress with action to operationalize multiple plans for joint disaster response. The ASEAN Militaries Ready Group (page 36) and ASEAN Joint Disaster Response



Plan (page 43) are both becoming realities. The next few years will be an exciting time for the region in civil-military coordination in disaster management.

The second EWG highlighted is the RCG. CFE-DM has the privilege of acting as co-secretariat alongside UNOCHA's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. The RCG focuses on enhancing preparedness and cooperation in countries with a substantial risk of large-scale, sudden onset disasters in which foreign military assets are likely to support an international response. In 2017, each of the five nations assessed in this category continued development of work plans which identify how civil-military coordination can contribute to increasing the speed, volume and quality of life-saving assistance provided in the initial phase of a response. Multiple articles in this issue cover their progress.

These gains could be made without the EWGs; however, the building of relationships and coordination mechanisms launch progress to a new height. We here at CFE-DM look forward to assisting in this effort and watching the community grow stronger together.

Aloha,

# LIAISON

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LIAISON is a publication of the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DM) and serves to inform its diverse audience of current and emerging issues related to civil-military relations across the broad spectrum of disaster relief in order to enhance understanding among civilian and military practitioners and policy makers. Content is prepared in accordance with the *Associated Press Style Guide*. Contributions are welcomed and highly encouraged. The editor reserves the right to make editorial changes to any material submitted as deemed necessary.

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LIAISON provides an open forum for stimulating discussion, exchange of ideas and lessons learned – both academic and pragmatic– and invites active participation from its readers. If you would like to address issues relevant to the disaster management and humanitarian assistance community, or share a comment or thought on articles from past issues, please submit them to [editor@cfe-dmha.org](mailto:editor@cfe-dmha.org). Please specify which article, author and issue to which you are referring. LIAISON reserves the right to edit letters to the editor for clarity, language and accuracy.

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## LIAISON welcomes article submissions

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LIAISON is a journal of civil-military disaster management and humanitarian relief collaborations and aims to engage and inform readers on the most current research, collaborations and lessons learned available. If you are interested in submitting an article for consideration, please email your story idea to [editor@cfe-dmha.org](mailto:editor@cfe-dmha.org).

•**Format.** All submissions should be emailed to the editor as an unformatted Microsoft Word file. Footnotes are the preferred method of citation, if applicable, and please attach any images within the document as separate files as well.

•**Provide original research or reporting.** LIAISON prefers original submissions, but if your article or paper is being considered for publication elsewhere, please note that with the submission. Previously published articles or papers will be considered if they are relevant to the issue topic.

•**Clarity and scope.** Please avoid technical acronyms and language. The majority of LIAISON readers are from Asia-Pacific nations and articles should be addressed to an international audience. Articles should also be applicable to partners in organizations or nations beyond that of the author. The aim is for successful cases to aid other partners of the disaster management and humanitarian community.

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•**Supporting imagery.** Original imagery supporting any and all articles is welcome. Please ensure the images are high-resolution and can be credited to the photographer without license infringement. Images should be attached to the submission separately, not embedded within the Microsoft Word document.

•**Biography and photo.** When submitting an article, please include a short biography and high-resolution photo of yourself for the contributors' section.



**Bernardo Rafaelito R. Alejandro IV** has been in with the Philippine Office of Civil Defense-Department of National Defense for 18 years. He was the OCD Regional Director of the most disaster prone region of the Philippines, the Bicol Region - The Home of famous Mayon Volcano and the gateway of typhoons from January 2007 to March 2017. During his stint 10 year stint as Regional Director of the Bicol Region, he was heavily involved in spearheading and orchestrating various disaster management and response activities and/or operations, including search, rescue and retrieval, involving civilian and military organizations (both domestic and foreign military forces). The author is currently heads the OCD Policy Development and Planning Service having been appointed Director by the President of the Philippines in December 2016. He is a graduate of Public Administration from the University of the Philippines and holds a Masters Degree in Peace and Security Studies from the Bicol University. Has received various training on Disaster Risk Reduction and Management, including Incident Command System (ICS) Training, Crisis Management and Civil-Military Coordination Course.



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**Dr. Hank Brightman** is a full professor and EMC Informationist Chair at the United States Naval War College located in Newport, Rhode Island, where he has served since 2008. Previously, he was a tenured associate professor and Chair of the Criminal Justice Department at Saint Peter's University in Jersey City, New Jersey from 2000-2008. From 1990-2000, he also held a variety of law enforcement, investigative, and intelligence analysis positions with the U.S. Department of the Interior and the United States Secret Service. Beyond his civilian role at the Naval War College, he is currently a Lieutenant Commander in the United States Navy Reserve (Cryptologic Warfare Officer) and serves as Executive Officer of Navy Reserve, Navy Information Operations Command Texas (Minneapolis support element). The views and opinions expressed in this article are solely those of the authors, and do not reflect those of the United States Naval War College, the Department of the Navy, Department of Defense, or the United States Government.



**Brig. Gen. Azazul Bar Chowdhury** ndu, psc was commissioned in 'The East Bengal Regiment' corps in 1987. He has diverse experience including fighting counter insurgency operations in the southern region of the country and he also participated in the post conflict situation. Gen. Azaz served the United Nations in Mozambique and Sierra Leone as operational staff at the contingent and sector levels. At home, he commanded an Infantry Battalion and an Infantry Brigade. He held instructional appointments at Bangladesh Military Academy and the School of Infantry and Tactics. He also served as staff officer in different capacities as operational staff at the Brigade, Division and AHQ, and presently is at Armed Forces Division (AFD). As an officer, he visited a number of countries like the U.S., China, Russia, Iran, India, UAE, Sri Lanka, Mali and Central African Republic for different international seminars, exercises and dialogues. He has made significant contributions to HADR issues in Bangladesh with special emphasis on the DREE.



**Dr Alistair D. B. Cook** is Coordinator of the Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Programme and Research Fellow at the Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies (NTS Centre), S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU) in Singapore. His research interests focus geographically on the Asia-Pacific and Myanmar in particular and thematically on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), foreign policy and regional cooperation. He has taught undergraduate, graduate and professional development courses at Purdue University, University of Melbourne, Deakin University, Nanyang Technological University, Australian National University, Singapore Civil Defence Academy and SAFTI. He has recently published *Negotiating Access to Populations of Concern in Southeast Asia* (Pacific Review, 2017), *Humanitarian Technology Survey* (RSIS Policy Report, 2017), and co-edited *Civilian Protection in the Twenty-First Century: Governance and Responsibility in a Fragmented World* (Oxford University Press, 2016).



**Md. Mohsin** is currently working as an Additional Secretary, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief since December 2017. Before that he served as Joint Secretary in MoDMR from May 2015. He joined Bangladesh Civil Service (Administration) in 1991. He served in the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, Fisheries and Livestock, Primary and Mass Education, Religious Affairs, Labour and Employment, Food and Disaster Management, Environment and Forest, Public Administration in different capacities and field administration as Additional Deputy Commissioner, Upazilla Nirbahi Officer. Mr. Mohsin got his B. Sc (Hons) and M.Sc degree from University of Dhaka. As Additional Secretary his responsibility is to work for making plan and formulating policy in mitigating disaster risk, response & humanitarian coordination in crisis situation and to coordinate and negotiate among other ministries, development partners in the process of government's disaster management goal. He is responsible for monitoring regarding issuing and withdrawing of early warning and forecasts and activating all disaster management committees at local and national level. During his career he was directly involved with development projects and worked with development partners and other agencies during the implementation. He has had 13 research papers published in different international and national journals.



**Kazumi Naganuma** is working for the Office of International Security Policy, International Policy Division, Bureau of Defense Policy, in the Japan Ministry of Defense. Prior to his current role, he worked for the Maritime Staff Office C4I Department and later for International Operations Division in the Bureau of Operational Policy. In his previous roles he was responsible for international disaster relief operations and United Nations Peace-Keeping Operations in International Operations Division from April 2013 to March 2015. During this period, he managed cases including the disaster relief activity after Typhoon Yolanda/Haiyan, the search for Malaysia Airline MH370, the transport activity for the counter-Ebola mission in West Africa and the search for Air Asia QZ8501. Since April 2015, he has been mainly in charge of multilateral defense cooperation with ASEAN, including the ADMM-Plus. He also managed Japan's involvement in the ADMM-Plus HADR-EWG as deputy co-chair with Lao PDR, which resulted in a new SOP for the establishment of a Multinational Coordination Center during HADR operations. In addition, he took part in compiling the guidelines for Japan-ASEAN defense cooperation, known as the "Vientiane Vision", in late 2016 which led the way for the first-ever ASEAN-wide practical engagement opportunities such as the Japan-ASEAN Ship-Rider Cooperation Program and JXR Observation Program.



**Nate Nathanson** formerly served as the Senior Civil-Military Coordinating Officer for the World Food Programme (WFP) in the Asia Pacific Regional Bureau in Bangkok, Thailand. Since 2012, Nathanson has been the WFP focal point for humanitarian military interaction in the Asia and the Pacific region and as required serves as a global Civil-Military Officer working for WFP's Global Logistics Cluster. In this position, he has supported numerous humanitarian and military response preparedness capacity building engagements in dozens of countries. His WFP operational response experience includes serving as a UN Field security Officer for the Opening and reintegration for UN offices in Libya during a 13-month deployment. During this operation he was responsible for the safety, security, and the health and welfare for over 100 UN staff, led over 20 humanitarian missions for all U.N. agencies in the country, opened up the logistics and security corridor to Ajdabia, Misratha, Kufra, and led the first team to enter Libya during reentry operations during the conflict. Other response deployments include the Haiti earthquake of 2010, Ebola outbreak of 2014, the Nepal earthquake of 2015, and the Haiti hurricane of 2016. Prior to his work with the U.N., Nathanson served as Project Director for Lockheed Martin/ PAE's Southern Sudan projects (in South Sudan) funded by the United States Department of State.



**Martin Searle** specializes in the use of new technologies in humanitarian response, focusing both on what technology can do for humanitarianism in an operational sense, and what it may do to humanitarianism as a principle-based practice. He is an Associate Research Fellow on the Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief [HADR] Programme, Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies (NTS Centre), S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU) in Singapore. He previously spent 6 years with the international medical humanitarian organisation Médecins Sans Frontières/Doctors Without Borders (MSF), including in South Sudan, Central African Republic, Kenya, India, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Malaysia on a mixture of conflict response, healthcare exclusion, HIV and TB treatment, and migrant and asylum issues. He also worked at MSF headquarters on communications and advocacy for the South and Southeast Asia operational portfolio. He has recently published *Humanitarian Technology: New Innovations, Familiar Challenges, and Difficult Balances* (RSIS Policy Report, 2017), *Humanitarian Action & Coordination – Humanitarian Technology: Balancing Protection with Flexibility* (RSIS Commentary No. 229, 2017), and *The Humanitarian Access Paradox: Data Security in Contested Settings* (RSIS Commentary No. 166, 2017).

# Struggle for Success by Lao PDR & Japan:

**From Japan's perspective as a co-chair of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus) Experts' Working Group on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief<sup>1</sup>**



*By Kazumi Naganuma, Deputy Director & Project Manager for the Vientiane Vision, Office of International Security Policy, International Policy Division, Bureau of Defense Policy, Ministry of Defense, Japan*

Lao PDR and Japan co-chaired the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus) Experts' Working Group on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (EWG on HA/DR) during its second cycle from 2014 to 2017. During this period, we successfully prepared a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the establishment of a Multi-National Coordination Center (MNCC) as an annex to ASEAN's broader HA/DR SOPs. The MNCC SOP will maximize the effects of military contributions made by assisting foreign forces in response to large-scale natural disasters. This column aims to facilitate an understanding of regional activities in the field of HA/DR through introducing the efforts made by Lao PDR and Japan as co-chairs of the EWG on HA/DR.

This column firstly provides an overview of the ADMM-Plus and its seven EWGs. Secondly, it introduces

<sup>1</sup> I would like to show my gratitude for Mr. Michael Sashin to recommend me to write this column, Ms. Katryn McCalment to lead my writing as editorial staff, and Mr. Joseph Martin, Director of the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DM) to support relevant activities by Japan with great interests.



Airman 1st Class Christopher Quail/U.S. Air Force

Lao PDR and Japan efforts as EWG on HA/DR co-chairs, and then summarizes the progress the EWG has made over three separate cycles. Finally, the column concludes with short discussion of future challenges.

## ADMM-Plus and its EWGs

The ADMM-Plus is the only official defense minister-level meeting in the Asia-Pacific region along with the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM). Its members include all ASEAN Member States (AMS)<sup>2</sup> and the eight countries of ASEAN's dialogue partners, which are usually mentioned as "Plus countries."<sup>3</sup> Under the ADMM-Plus, there are officials-level meetings called ASEAN Defence Senior Officials' Meeting Plus (ADSOM-Plus) and associated ADSOM-Plus Working Group (ADSOM-

<sup>2</sup> Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam.

<sup>3</sup> Australia, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of India, Japan, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation and the United States of America.

Plus WG) meetings. In addition to these, the ADMM-Plus also has a unique mechanism of seven EWGs,<sup>4</sup> each of which is co-chaired by an AMS and a Plus country. The co-chairs have responsibility for a cycle of three years, and organize activities such as meetings, seminars and joint exercises.

## Struggle for Success by Lao PDR and Japan

The EWG on HA/DR was initially co-chaired by Vietnam and China from 2011 to 2014 (the first cycle), then by Lao PDR and Japan from 2014 to 2017 (the second cycle), and is now (from 2017) co-chaired by Malaysia and the U.S. (the third cycle). The first cycle EWG on HA/DR held a joint exercise co-hosted with the EWG on Military Medicine, whose then co-chairs were Singapore and Japan, in 2013. This was the first time that defense authorities of the AMS and the Plus countries conducted

<sup>4</sup> The seven fields are maritime security, counter-terrorism, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, peacekeeping operations, military medicine, humanitarian mine action, and cyber security.



Photo courtesy of AHA Centre

One ASEAN, One Response: ASEAN nations aim to collectively respond to disasters within and outside the region.

a multinational joint exercise, and it set a precedent for future EWGs to follow. Since that time, it has become routine for ADMM-Plus EWGs to co-host a joint exercise with another EWG in the last year of each cycle.

Co-chairs of EWGs under the ADMM-Plus, including those for the EWG on HA/DR, usually submit a three-year work plan to the ADSOM-Plus and its WG. The Lao PDR and Japan second cycle work plan was based on the outcomes of intensive consultation and cooperation conducted on the sidelines of various meetings in and outside of the ADMM-Plus framework. Compared to other EWGs, the Lao PDR and Japan work plan articulated clear vision, tasks, purposes, objectives, and ways and means, as well as detailed information on the schedule, venues and frequency of EWG meetings. As a result, the plan was highly appreciated from other ADMM-Plus member countries.

The Lao PDR and Japan work plan covered all of the three phases of an international military response to a large-scale natural disaster. The three phases are: (1) the first seventy-two hours immediately following a disaster (where the expected roles of foreign military forces are mainly search and rescue, and medical assistance including first aid for afflicted people), (2) the intermediary stage after the assisting foreign forces commence disaster relief activities (mainly transportation of relief goods and afflicted people, medical activities and epidemics prevention), and (3) the rehabilitation and reconstruction phase

after the redeployment of the assisting foreign forces (leading to a smooth transition to civilian actors).

Based on this work plan, the co-chairs achieved the following results:

**Phase 1:** EWG members identified the various issues that need to be resolved between an affected state and assisting foreign forces in order to facilitate a swift response where no specific agreements exist for accepting foreign forces between the affected state and assisting states. This discussion covered issues such as the legal status of assisting foreign forces in the affected state; smooth management of Customs, Immigration and Quarantine (CIQ) issues; and the issuance of ad hoc licenses and qualifications for medical activities, driving and so on.

**Phase 2:** The co-chairs prepared the MNCC SOP to maximize the effects of the military contributions made by assisting foreign forces. An MNCC enables assisting forces to share assessments on the situation of affected areas and create situational awareness of the activities being conducted by assisting states and international organizations. Ultimately the role of the MNCC is to facilitate seamless support to the affected state and afflicted people.

**Phase 3:** The EWG compiled a booklet of best practices focusing on the redeployment of foreign forces. The booklet aims to identify the criteria, conditions and other matters that need to be considered during the redeployment phase, so that assisting foreign forces can maintain

a relationship of mutual trust with the affected state and smoothly hand-over to civilian actors.

The MNCC SOP developed by Lao PDR and Japan supposes that an affected state will lead the coordination of assisting foreign forces. According to the SOP, an MNCC consists of four groups covering the basic functions of operations; operational support; planning; and liaison. The operations group has teams to manage coordination, requests for assistance (RFA), information/knowledge management, a common operating picture (COP) and strategic communication/public affairs. The operational support group has teams for logistics, engineering, movements, medicine, communications and MNCC support.

The planning group has teams for transition, assessment and lessons learned. The liaison group is in charge of military-military and civil-military engagement. These structures are based on U.S. Pacific Command's (USPACOM) Multi-national Force Standing Operating Procedures (MNF SOP), revised in November 2015 and incorporating the best practices identified following the response to Typhoon Yolanda/Haiyan in 2013.<sup>5</sup>

Among the EWG's three achievements as illustrated in the phases described above, the most significant was the development of the MNCC SOP. MNCCs are routinely established in military operations where a coalition is formed to achieve military objectives. For example, MNCCs have been integral in coordinating multi-national forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. USPACOM and the Multinational Planning Augmentation Team (MPAT)<sup>6</sup> have for a long time promoted the use of MNCCs in HA/DR operations through exercises and educational programs. ASEAN came to realize the importance of

<sup>5</sup> The MNF SOP used by Lao PDR and Japan was Version 3.0. The latest one is Version 3.1 released in December 2016.

<sup>6</sup> The MPAT is a cooperative multinational effort to facilitate the rapid and effective establishment and/or augmentation of a multinational task force headquarters, arranged by USPACOM.

an MNCC during the joint exercise co-hosted by the EWGs on HA/DR and Military Medicine in Brunei in 2013.<sup>7</sup> Following this exercise, Typhoon Yolanda/Haiyan brought serious and wide-spread damage to the Philippines in November of the same year. In response, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) officially established an MNCC at Camp Aguinaldo for the first time in a real-world operation in this region. Japan's Defense Minister at the time, Mr. Itsunori Onodera, visited the Philippines to encourage the Japan Self-Defense Force Joint Task Force that had been especially established to contribute to the international disaster relief efforts in the Philippines. During the visit he also made an on-the-spot



Itsunori Onodera, Japan's then Defense Minister, visited the Philippines after Typhoon Haiyan. He also toured the MNCC, which led Japan to consider preparing an MNCC SOP as a key outcome of its period as a co-chair of the EWG on HA/DR.

inspection of the MNCC.<sup>8</sup> This operation made Japan recognize the importance of an MNCC, and it led Japan to consider preparing an MNCC SOP as a key outcome of its period as a co-chair of the EWG on HA/DR.

Before preparing the MNCC SOP, Japan conducted extensive consultation with the AMS, and most of them generally appreciated the initiative by Lao PDR and Japan. However, some AMS expressed concerns that the effort might not be able to achieve satisfactory results if Lao PDR and Japan did not de-conflict with a number of ASEAN's existing SOPs.<sup>9</sup> They also pointed out the

<sup>7</sup> At this time, the MNCC in the exercise aimed at the allotment and coordination of military assets from the participating countries, and did not aim at emulating the MNCC's comprehensive role and function to amplify the effects of the comprehensive disaster relief activities by assisting foreign forces.

<sup>8</sup> For the details of the activities by the Joint Task Force, see Ministry of Defense, Defense of Japan 2014, Urban Connections, 2014, pp.308-312.

<sup>9</sup> The region has several SOPs for HA/DR such as the MNF SOP and exercise SOPs with the



Photo courtesy of the Ministry of National Defence, Lao PDR

Lao PDR and Japan hold a handover ceremony to pass the ADMM-Plus EWG on HADR co-chairmanship to Malaysia and the U.S. December 15, 2016.

necessity to maintain consistency with ASEAN’s existing agreements<sup>10</sup> and regional initiatives<sup>11</sup> on HA/DR.

Taking these comments into account, Lao PDR and Japan examined various SOPs and agreements in and outside of the ASEAN region, and developed the EWG’s MNCC SOP consistent with the following points: (1) developing an MNCC SOP based on the best and most effective practices identified following Typhoon Yolanda/Haiyan; (2) making the SOP practical and effective as a reference manual available to the AMS; (3) using the MNF SOP as a basis, because it is commonly used in disaster relief exercises in the region and was operationally-proven by the Philippines; (4) distinguishing the MNCC SOP from other exercise SOPs in the region so

that it can be used in actual disaster relief operations; and (5) contributing to ASEAN’s efforts to strengthen ASEAN centrality and unity in regional cooperation, we aligned the SOP with the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) and the Standard Operating Procedure for Regional Standby Arrangements and Coordination of Joint Disaster Relief and Emergency Response Operations (SASOP), and also consulted with the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) on civil-military coordination.

Regarding the fifth point, the ASEAN Chiefs of Defence Forces Informal Meeting (ACDFIM) and the ADMM had already begun discussing cooperation for disaster relief operations when Lao PDR and Japan commenced as co-chairs of the EWG on HA/DR. These forums emphasized the importance of consultation with

purpose of one-off use limited to the specific military exercises.

<sup>10</sup> For example, the AADMER and the SASOP.

<sup>11</sup> The initiatives include those by the AHA Centre as ASEAN’s official and common organization and by the Regional HA/DR Coordination Centre controlled by the Ministry of Defence Singapore at Changi Base.



other AMS and held many meetings in order to respect ASEAN centrality and unity. In particular, from 2011 to 2015, Indonesia and Singapore led the ACDFIM preparation of Chapter VI of the SASOP, which deals with the facilitation and utilization of military assets and capacities. Therefore, it was important to coordinate the new SOP with the Indonesia and Singapore initiative. After consultation with both nations, Lao PDR and Japan decided the new SOP should be an annex to the SASOP's Chapter VI. As a result, the October 2017 ADMM agreed to submit the new MNCC SOP to the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) as an input to the SASOP's Chapter VI.<sup>12</sup> During this process, Lao PDR and Japan received support from USPACOM including the CFE-DM, and the Indonesian and Singaporean Ministries of Defence including the Changi Regional HA/DR Coordination Centre (RHCC). At the conclusion of the second cycle we successfully tested the MNCC SOP through a command post exercise (CPX) jointly conducted by the Military Medicine and HA/DR EWGs in Thailand in September 2016.

Despite the short co-chairing period of three years, Lao PDR and Japan exceeded initial expectations. The first reason for the success was that the ADMM-Plus members maintained

their strong interest in HA/DR. The second was that Lao PDR and Japan selected the best practices in the region and close coordination with AMS to ensure consistency with ASEAN's broader HA/DR initiatives. Finally, the ADMM-Plus countries regarded the activities not as "other people's business" but as "their own business" with positive attitudes.

## Success of Succession: Handovers Through the Cycles

Another great success of the EWG on HA/DR is the steady development of activities with seamless transition between the cycles.

The first cycle of EWG on HA/DR led by Viet Nam and China shared the best practices in the field of HA/DR

through various presentations in the midst of a trial and error process that was seeking to determine what kind of cooperation would be possible in the ADMM-Plus soon after its establishment. What was done at this initial stage can be described as the "sharing of tacit knowledge," in which participants attached importance to establishing mutual understanding by focusing on the voluntary introduction of their domestic/international disaster relief activities and relevant systems.

In the second cycle, Lao PDR and Japan aimed at producing practical deliverables easily applicable in cases of real-world HA/DR operations. This was achieved through coordinating regional initiatives on HA/DR as well as identifying knowledge based on actual experiences and systems. As a result, we produced three tangible results as mentioned above. Thus, this stage can be regarded as the "shaping of explicit knowledge."

Now in the third cycle, Malaysia and the U.S. as co-chairs of the EWG on HA/DR are working on the creation of a SOP for the ASEAN Militaries Ready Group on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (AMRG), refinement and familiarization of the MNCC SOP, and coordination between the two. They will seek to further familiarize ADMM-Plus participating countries with the SOPs through exercises like a tabletop exercise (TTX) and a CPX. From this perspective, this stage can be regarded as "solidifying practical knowledge."

## Future Challenges

As has been described above, various efforts in the EWG on HA/DR have contributed to regional HA/DR activities. We hope that the region will utilize the MNCC SOP and operationalize the AMRG. Of course, the SOP itself never works automatically nor is it a panacea. The new SOP is an open-ended initiative, and continuous kaizen or improvement should occur incorporating updated regional disaster relief best practices, while paying close attention to the cohesion and affinity with existing regional initiatives.

It goes without saying that what is most important is developing a rapid and effective response to large-scale regional disasters utilizing close military-military and civil-military cooperation. Efforts by ASEAN and other regional states, international organizations and civil actors continue in order to address these old and new challenges.

<sup>12</sup> As for the joint declaration of the 11th ADMM, see [https://admm.asean.org/dmdocuments/2017\\_October\\_11th%20ADMM\\_Clarification%20October%202017\\_%20Joint%20Declaration%20\(as%20of%2023%20Oct%202017\).pdf](https://admm.asean.org/dmdocuments/2017_October_11th%20ADMM_Clarification%20October%202017_%20Joint%20Declaration%20(as%20of%2023%20Oct%202017).pdf).

# Perspectives from Singapore

## Regional Consultative Group on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination for Asia and the Pacific

*By Tan Keng Meng, Defence Policy Office,  
Singapore Ministry of Defence*

Singapore, represented by the Ministry of Defence (MINDEF) and Singapore Armed Forces (SAF), chaired the Regional Consultative Group on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination for Asia and the Pacific (RCG) last year. Established in 2014, the RCG brings together civilian and military actors involved in disaster preparedness and response in the region. It seeks to advance the coordination between civilian and military actors in HADR; facilitate exchange of innovative ideas and information to enable needs-based and well-coordinated disaster response to a variety of humanitarian situations; and strengthen linkages with relevant regional and international platforms.<sup>1</sup>

Singapore's chairmanship concluded with the hosting of the RCG Third Session from 5 to 6 December 2017 at the Changi Regional Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Coordination Centre (RHCC). More than 130 participants from 26 countries and 24 regional/international organisations, academia, and the private sector attended the event that discussed themes including the regional coordination architectures and policies in disaster response, lessons learnt from HADR exercises, humanitarian technology, and country-specific disaster response work plans of RCG countries.<sup>2</sup>

It was a productive year for the RCG and Singapore was glad to have the strong support from RCG members and the RCG Secretariat comprising the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) and United States Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (US CFE-DM). We were excited to chair the RCG and contribute to the growth of this young forum for three reasons.

### Strengthening Linkages in the Region and Beyond

A common saying amongst HADR practitioners is that disaster response should be as local as possible and as international as necessary. From Singapore's perspective, we believe in the importance of an open, inclusive, and flexible



<sup>1</sup> RCG Terms of Reference – <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/asia/document/rcg-tor>.

<sup>2</sup> A copy of the RCG Third Session Summary Report is available at <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/asia/document/rcg-third-session-2017-summary-report>.

HADR architecture that allows local and international actors to work together and leverage each other's capabilities to deliver effective disaster response. Countries and organisations have responded to this need for cooperation as evinced by their active participation in the HADR working groups and platforms in the region. Within ASEAN alone, countries have made much progress in the last decade ranging from the development of robust national and regional disaster management plans to the establishment of coordination bodies such as the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre).

The RCG provides a useful, “one-stop” platform for

disaster-prone countries and coordination centres to update humanitarian actors of their disaster management efforts. Hence, the membership is kept broad to include actors from the region and beyond from military and government to academics and charity organisations. This helps humanitarian actors prioritise and ensure their HADR efforts are harmonised with local conditions and internationally established humanitarian principles.

At the RCG Third Session, we heard updates on HADR work plans from countries such as Bangladesh and Indonesia; discussed the latest trends and projects in humanitarian civil-military coordination such as the ASEAN Joint Disaster Response Plan; and explored ways





Photo courtesy of Singapore Ministry of Defence

The Regional Consultative Group Third Session saw a dedicated Humanitarian Technologies panel discussion on the prospects and challenges for the use of new technologies in humanitarian civil-military coordination. Representatives from UNOCHA, Mercy Relief, Facebook, Deutsche Post DHL Group and POD Structures participated.

to strengthen linkages among the various HADR coordination architectures in the region such as the UN's On-site Operations and Coordination Cell, Multinational Coordination Centre, and Emergency Medical Team Coordination Cell.

We also continued the conversation on ASEAN HADR initiatives at this broader regional level. It was useful for extra-regional countries and non-governmental organisations to understand the initiatives, so that they can contribute more effectively to disaster response within the region. We also had the opportunity to discuss the responses to recent complex emergencies in the region such as the Philippines' presentation on the humanitarian challenges to the Marawi Siege. Beyond these rich discussions, it is valuable in itself to have this broad network of humanitarian actors come together in one single room to build relationships.

### Advancing Civil-Military Coordination

Asia-Pacific is the only region that has established a Consultative Group that focuses on humanitarian civil-military coordination. This mirrors the trend within ASEAN where we are increasing such coordination efforts with the establishment of platforms such as the Technical Working Group on Civil-Military Coordination. These platforms are essential to facilitate strategic

and operational coordination between civil and military actors to ensure predictable and effective disaster response.

Civil and military actors exchanged updates in their areas of work at the RCG Third Session. From the military's perspective, it was important to reinforce the concept that disaster response should primarily be a civilian mission with the military supporting in areas where it can enhance the speed and reach of humanitarian assistance. This was useful given the possible signatures associated with deploying militaries and helps to clearly communicate what the militaries can offer to ensure their response coheres with the civilian effort. We also heard the lessons learnt from HADR exercises conducted in 2017 such as the Tempest Express series.

For Changi RHCC, we were excited to share with the RCG the lessons learnt from the multinational HADR table-top exercise, Exercise Coordinated Response (Ex COORES), which we had co-organised with the US CFE-DM and Armed Forces of the Philippines in January 2017.<sup>3</sup> Given the diverse groups of humanitarian actors (military, civil, and nongovernmental organisations), it is useful to have a mutual understanding of each other's norms and processes to ensure effective disaster response.

<sup>3</sup> Exercise Coordinated Response – [https://www.mindef.gov.sg/oms/imindef/resourcelibrary/cyberpioneer/topics/articles/news/2017/jan/25jan17\\_news.html](https://www.mindef.gov.sg/oms/imindef/resourcelibrary/cyberpioneer/topics/articles/news/2017/jan/25jan17_news.html).

## A Platform for Innovation

With its diverse and inclusive membership, the RCG is a useful platform to crowdsource for innovative solutions and test new ideas that could help to enhance the region's capacity for HADR. It was with this in mind that Singapore had proposed for the RCG in 2017 to look into humanitarian technology. The importance and utility of technology to improve HADR has been regularly highlighted in forums such as the Global Disaster Relief Summit in September 2015 and World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016. It was useful to contextualise these discussions to Asia-Pacific, given varying technological governance frameworks and humanitarian challenges. For Singapore, we are constantly exploring ways to strengthen information-sharing. Changi RHCC's OPERA Computer Information System is one such effort to facilitate HADR operations by providing users with a situation picture of the disaster and ongoing relief efforts.

The RCG Third Session saw a dedicated panel discussion on the prospects and challenges for the use of new technologies in humanitarian civil-military coordination. We were grateful for the enthusiastic response of invited speakers and volunteers who were keen to share their experiences and perspectives on the topic. The panelists came from a broad section of the humanitarian community: international and local relief agencies (UNOCHA and Mercy Relief), information-sharing platforms (Pacific Disaster Center and Facebook), and logistics (Deutsche Post DHL Group and POD Structures).

Discussions during the panel were wide-ranging. We covered current gaps in information-sharing such as between civilian and military platforms, raised awareness of existing disaster monitoring tools and logistical solutions, discussed privacy and governance issues, and heard experiences of how humanitarian technology has amplified the efforts of local relief agencies. Technology can be a key force multiplier in

HADR and this will continue to be an area of cooperation that we will support.

## Way Forward

Singapore handed over the RCG Chairmanship to Bangladesh at the conclusion of the RCG Third Session. Since its first session in 2015, the RCG has matured quickly with its growing participation and interest for the RCG to do more. Discussions at the RCG Third Session helped participants crystallise ideas that were put forth as themes for the RCG in 2018, such as the establishment of a RCG Information Sharing Working Group (ISWG). Bangladesh, together with the RCG Secretariat, is studying the ISWG's establishment which will improve information sharing between civilian and military actors. As humanitarian challenges continue to grow amidst finite resources, it is ever important for us to strengthen humanitarian civil-military coordination so we can do more with less. We look forward to the continuing success of the RCG in building stronger relationships among humanitarian actors across the region. Our best wishes to the Bangladesh Chair for a productive RCG 2018!



The RCG Third Session ended with Singapore handing over the RCG chairmanship to Bangladesh.

# WFP & the RCG

*By Nate Nathanson,  
former Senior Civil-Military Coordinating  
Officer, World Food Programme Regional  
Bureau for Asia and the Pacific*



Given the complexity and the relevance of logistic in the coordination of operational planning between civilian and military actors, an RCG Logistic Working Group (RCG-LWG) was established with the overall RCG framework, to facilitate inter-governmental and inter-agency discussions on critical logistic issues. The RCG-LWG focus will be on: a) assessing logistics needs and identifying gaps in capacity at regional and national level; b) discussing and making recommendations on the use of Foreign Military Assets (FMA) to augment humanitarian logistic capabilities and ensure that coordinated logistic response operations takes place. Possible areas of discussion and intervention will include (but are not limited to):

1. Mapping of the unique Foreign Military Assets (FMA) that could be mobilized to optimize logistic operations and compare the information with what is usually required during an emergency. The objective is to reduce the gap between the onset of disasters and the point at which response reaches scale, while not bringing unnecessary assets. A review of the 'Gap Fit' analysis from the Global Consultative Group will also be discussed;

2. Dissemination of information on existing logistics tools and services (role of Logistics Cluster, cargo, logistic capacity assessment, etc.) and awareness raising of their implementation during disaster response operations in the region;

3. Revision of existing regional civil-military coordination guidance to reflect current operational modalities for the effective and efficient use of FMA to fill identified gaps in logistics capacity;

4. Training of key stakeholders, including military planners, on humanitarian civil-military coordination and logistics, also through the use of innovative platforms.

The first meeting of the RCG-LWG was held virtually on Tuesday, 2 May 2017. The WFP Regional Bureau for Asia and

the Pacific, as the RCG-LWG Chair, took the lead for the meeting, with OCHA ROAP acting as the Secretariat. The RCG-LWG is linked to the Logistic Working Group established at global level, informing current thinking and discussions from a regional perspective. During the meeting, WFP provided an overview of the recommendations the RCG members formulated in relations to logistics civil-military coordination during the RCG First/Second Session (December 2015; October 2016). In addition, all the RCG-LWG members were given the opportunity to formulate what were their expectations in relations to the group. Based on the expressed recommendations and expectations, WFP put forward the following strategic deliverables that could be addressed by the RCG-LWG:

- Scenario-based analysis to look at planning processes and identify what military functions, appropriate relief tasks, and effects may be required by the military to support civilian-led response efforts. The analysis could start with the scenarios included in the ASEAN Joint Disaster Response Plans (AJDR) for the RCG priority countries (ASEAN): Indonesia, Philippines and Myanmar.

- Focus on the concept of the Humanitarian Staging Areas (HSA) as a hub for predictable civil-military logistic response to rapid-onset disasters; discussion among RCG-LWG members on the modalities to move cargo from the HSA.

- Dissemination of information on existing logistics tools and services (role of Logistics Cluster, cargo tracking, logistic capacity assessment, etc.) for the RCG five priority countries: Bangladesh, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal and the Philippines.

- Overview of current military-to-military arrangements for the mobilization of logistic assets during HADR Operations.

- Review of the 'Gap Fit' analysis from the Global Consultative Group.

A second meeting of the RCG-LWG took place on 5 September 2017 at the WFP office in Bangkok, Thailand. During the meeting, participants shared information on key logistics tools and services, with a particular focus on the Humanitarian Staging Area as a hub for predictable civil-military logistic response to rapid-onset disasters. In addition, the meeting provided the opportunity for participants to discuss upcoming engagement opportunities in civil-military coordination, including the RCG Third Session.

**Reprinted from the Regional Consultative Group on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination for Asia and the Pacific Third Session Report. The report can be found at <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/asia/document/rcg-third-session-2017-summary-report>**



Frederic Fath/ UN

# Seamless Civilian & The Philippine

*By Bernardo Rafaelito R. Alejandro IV,  
Director, Policy Development and Planning  
Service, Office of Civil Defense-  
Department of National Defense  
All photos courtesy of Bernardo  
Rafaelito R. Alejandro IV*

**M**ore than five decades ago, the foundation of the Association of the South East Asia Nations (ASEAN) focused centrally on the cooperation for development of regional organization. Some years later, ASEAN member states (AMS) agreed to extend assistance for relief to other member states in distress and intensify their cooperation in disaster management.<sup>1</sup> Basically, this built the foundation for the establishment of the AHA Centre as an “inter-governmental organization which aims to facilitate cooperation and coordination among AMS and with the United Nations and international organizations for disaster management and emergency response in ASEAN region.”<sup>2</sup>

During the 9th ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting (ADMM), the important role of the military force as well as the various sectoral bodies within the ASEAN were emphasized for the AMS to work more efficiently and to minimize duplication.<sup>3</sup> This led to the adoption of Terms of Reference (TOR) on the establishment of the ASEAN Military Ready Group (AMRG) on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response (HADR) for quick deployment to disaster areas of the affected AMS. The AMRG “aims to strengthen the coordination of respective ASEAN military forces of the various AMS working under a single ASEAN banner at a multilateral level taking into account the existing regional response mechanism coordinated by the AHA Centre.”<sup>4</sup>

The AMRG on HADR shall coordinate through their respective National Focal Point (NFP), AHA Centre and other relevant organizations in conducting all phases of

<sup>1</sup> Cook, A.D.B. (2017). Southeast Asia. Disaster Response Architecture: Assessing Future Possibilities. 2058 Msluhia Road Honolulu, HI 96815. [www.apcss.org](http://www.apcss.org)

<sup>2</sup> <https://ahacentre.org/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://prezi.com/zvugnrhh5-c1/asean-militaries-ready-group-on-humanitarian-assistance-and/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/AJDRP.pdf>



# Military Partnerships: Experience





Under the ambit of the Philippine Department of National Defense, the Office of Civil Defense and the Armed Forces of the Philippines work hand in hand during disaster response and humanitarian assistance operations. The seamless civil-military cooperation provides an example for neighboring countries.

HADR operations. For the purpose of discussion, the NFP may be used interchangeably with the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO). In the Philippines, the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) serves as the NDMO with a “primary mission of administering a comprehensive national civil defense and disaster risk reduction and management program by providing leadership in the continuous development of strategic and systematic approaches as well as measures to reduce the vulnerabilities and risks to hazards and manage the consequences of disasters.”<sup>5</sup>

The OCD, as one of the bureaus of the Department of National Defense (DND), serves as the implementing arm of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC). Likewise, the Armed Forces of the Philippines, another bureau of the DND, takes the lead in humanitarian assistance and disaster response (HADR). Peculiar among the AMS, the Philippine example synergized an almost seamless partnership on civil-military cooperation with the co-existence of the OCD and AFP under the ambit of the DND. This cohabitation of the OCD and AFP allowed for sensitivity of civilian needs and concerns during the HADR.

On regular disaster response operations, the AFP takes the lead in the Search Rescue and Retrieval Cluster while the OCD leads both the Logistics and Telecommunication Clusters while also serving as the coordinating arm of the NDRRMC. Further, during the onslaught of the Super Typhoon Yolanda, the NDRRMC, through the OCD, re-organized the disaster response cluster composed of various government agencies and other acknowledged nongovernmental organizations to address the immediate needs of the affected areas and populations. Nevertheless, uniformed personnel were also given vital responsibilities under the Task Force Cadaver Collection and the Task Force on Law and Order.

Way back in these days, I was serving as the director of the OCD Regional Office V and headed the Team Albay – OCD 5 Humanitarian Mission. Team Albay – OCD 5, composed of various teams such as water and sanitation, psychosocial care, search and rescue, relief and clearing operations, emergency communication and health services, and rendered immediate emergency assistance at the ground zero in Tacloban City. Through the years, Team Albay – OCD 5 also sent some other 17 humanitarian missions to respond to various disasters and emergencies across the nation.

For human induced-hazards involving terrorism, the role of the OCD along with the AFP cannot be discounted. During the Marawi Siege in Mindanao, the AFP took charge of military operations against the terrorist forces while OCD (through the NDRRMC Response Clusters) orchestrated a centralized communication for logistics

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.oecd.gov.ph/index.php/about-oecd/mandate-mission-and-vision>



Then director of the Office of Civil Defense Regional Office V, Bernardo Rafaelito R. Alejandro IV coordinates with the Armed Forces of the Philippines and a number of other organizations and humanitarian groups in the aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan.

management, evacuation, and management of displaced population, safety of the civilian population as well as coordination for the management of foreign aids and donations. Meanwhile, in the recovery and rehabilitation efforts, the military not only augmented labor forces but also remained committed in providing security and safe-keeping the government and nongovernment humanitarian frontliners.

Relative to this, the NDRRMC facilitated the approval of the Philippine International Humanitarian Assistance Cluster (PIHAC) to allow for proper coordination and mobilization of resources between the government of the Philippines and the international assistance providers in times of disasters and emergency. This simplifies that in case of Level 3 (L3) response operations, AFP acts as the conduit of foreign military forces and establishes close coordination with the NDRRMC through the PIHAC for the request, facilitation, mobilization or deployment of humanitarian aid. The Philippines managed to craft this innovation due to the exposure of our leaders in the various ASEAN Expert Working Groups.

Based on Philippine experience on the dynamics of the

NDMO and the military forces during disaster response, the operationalization of the AMRG on HADR for AMS is critically timely and necessary for L3 response operations in the ASEAN region. Military representatives in the AHA Centre shall serve as the liaison of the centre to the affected AMS and respective AMRG on HADR. This encourages a whole-of-society approach on HADR such as search and rescue, emergency medical aid or distribution of supplies and goods on the affected AMS parallel with the One ASEAN, One Response vision. With this in mind, it is imperative that principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and national unity among the AMS shall uphold the establishment of AMRG on HADR for ASEAN.



## Interview with Mark Swayne, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Stability and Humanitarian Affairs, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy

### LIAISON Staff

**M**ark Swayne is the Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Stability and Humanitarian Affairs (SHA) within ASD for Special Operations/Low – Intensity Conflict in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (OUSD) for Policy. SHA develops defense policy for embassy security, humanitarian assistance, disaster response, peacekeeping, stability operations, international rule of law, prevention of atrocities, human rights, lethal autonomous weapons systems, and women, peace and security.

He previously served as the Director for North-West-Central Africa and Horn of Africa Regional Director in OUSD Policy. He retired from the US Navy in 2008, and has been working defense policy issues since January 2002. Previous to working at OSD Policy, Mark was with the State Department and Interagency Liaison officer for the US-Africa Command's Pentagon Office.

In his current role, one of his many responsibilities

includes representing the United States as the co-chair for the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Experts Working Group's third cycle, in partnership with Malaysia.

**LIAISON:** What is the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Experts Working Group (ADMM+ HADR EWG) and what is the U.S. role?

**DASD Mark Swayne:** The Experts Working Group (EWG) on HADR is one of seven EWGs (Counter-Terrorism, Maritime Security, Peacekeeping, Military Medicine, Humanitarian Mine Action, and Cyber) under the auspices of the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting Plus. Established in 2010, ADMM-Plus and its subordinate mechanisms are represented by all ten ASEAN states, namely, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore,

Thailand and Viet Nam, and eight dialogue partners or “plus” countries, namely Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, and the United States.

The U.S. currently co-chairs the EWG on HADR with Malaysia, which is the third EWG cycle from 2017 to 2019. My counterpart is Mr. Ahmad Nadzri bin Mohd Hassan, the Undersecretary for Policy and Strategic Planning at the Malaysia Ministry of Defence.

commitment.

**L:** As this is the third round of the HADR EWG, who were the previous co-chairs and what were their objectives? What are the EWG’s major and sub-objectives?

**MS:** Viet Nam and China co-chaired the first cycle from 2011 to 2013 and Lao PDR and Japan co-chaired the second cycle from 2014 to 2016. The first cycle’s capstone exercise, held in Brunei in June 2013, was one of the largest multinational HADR exercises ever executed. The U.S. sent experts to the multinational coordination center



Mark Swayne, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Stability and Humanitarian Affairs, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, co-chairing the Experts Working Group on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief.

**L:** Why did the U.S. volunteer to be the co-chair of the EWG with Malaysia?

**MS:** Our engagement is important to the Department. Secretary Mattis has indicated that it is in the national interest of the United States and the Department of Defense (DOD) to strengthen the capacity of Southeast Asian nations and work with ASEAN.

DOD takes pride in how far we’ve come in our defense relationship with ASEAN. Today, U.S.-ASEAN defense relations are positive and robust, and based in mutual trust, respect, and shared interests. We share a commitment to a stable and peaceful Southeast Asia region and a common approach to the region’s security challenges. We see our co-chairmanship of the EWG on HADR, and our representation at other EWGs, as an expression of this

(MNCC), integrated military medicine professionals at three level 1 and 2 medical facilities, deployed the USNS Matthew Perry with military engineers, provided rotary wing lift assets, and notional disaster relief supplies.

The second cycle focused on the EWG on HADR developing and adopting an ASEAN Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for a MNCC. An MNCC is a mechanism, led by the affected state, through which assisting state militaries coordinate the delivery of disaster relief. Lao-PDR and Japan built upon the progress of the Brunei exercise to further develop the MNCC construct and integrate it into ASEAN’s “Standard Operating Procedure for Regional Standby Arrangements and Coordination of Joint Disaster Relief and Emergency Response Operations,” or SASOP.



(Clockwise from top) Mark Swayne, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Stability and Humanitarian Affairs, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy speaks at importance of Global Health Engagement at the Global Health Engagement Summit in June 2017; Defense Secretary Jim Mattis and defense ministers from the Association of South East Asian Nations stand together during the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore, June 4, 2017; Swayne speaks at the International Forum Challenges of Peace Operations at the U.S. Army War College in March 2017.



The primary objective of the third cycle is to operationalize the ASEAN Military Ready Group (AMRG) on HADR and to integrate past and present EWG on HADR initiatives into the broader ASEAN disaster relief mechanisms. The AMRG on HADR is a voluntary mechanism by which ASEAN militaries can deploy together, under one ASEAN banner, to support a fellow ASEAN member state in need. An SOP is in development and will be tested at a tabletop exercise this year and a larger capstone exercise in late 2019. We not only want to test the AMRG SOP, but also refine the MNCC SOP under which the AMRG will interface during a civilian-led disaster

relief operation. Our efforts support the collaboration by key military and civilian regional response stakeholders in progressing toward the ASEAN Ministers on Disaster Management 2015 declaration of “One ASEAN, One Response.”

**L: Who in the U.S. is involved with the EWG?**

**MS:** I am lucky to have tremendous support from a number of DOD organizations with HADR and Indo-Pacific security expertise. My delegation includes great folks from the Department of Defense’s Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance

(CFE-DM), Daniel K. Inouye Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies (DKI APCSS), the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for South and Southeast Asia, Pacific Disaster Center, U.S. Marine Forces Pacific, the U.S. Mission to ASEAN, and U.S. Pacific Command. Since the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is the lead federal agency for U.S. international disaster response, I am pleased to welcome their support to our efforts as U.S. military HADR is always in support of civilian-led activities.

I'd like to add that DKI APCSS not only provided me with great subject matter expertise, but offered a fantastic venue and logistics support when I hosted the EWG on HADR in Hawaii in September 2017 and February 2018. As we gear up for the upcoming tabletop exercise in July 2018, the next U.S. hosted EWG on HADR meeting at DKI APCSS in March 2019, and the capstone exercise in July 2019, I know the demands on the Hawaii-based folks will become even more significant.

**L: Do you see the ADMM+ EWG on HADR process leading to a lesser role for U.S. military involvement during disaster response throughout the theater?**

**MS:** That is a great question. I see the DOD's role in the EWG on HADR, like other security cooperation and capacity building defense engagements with ASEAN, is to collectively contribute to a stronger security architecture in Southeast Asia. In fact, many ASEAN countries have advanced significantly and have prioritized disaster preparedness and risk reduction efforts to withstand greater natural disasters. Due to this trend, the U.S. military has responded less frequently to disasters across the Indo-Pacific region in recent years and we hope this continues. However, sometimes the scale of the disaster doesn't lend itself to going it alone and the U.S. military will standby to support USAID and the affected state, if required, when a large scale disaster strikes the Indo-Pacific theater.

**L: Have there been specific challenges during the EWG? If so, how have these challenges been addressed?**

**MS:** The challenges we face in co-chairing the EWG on HADR are no different than other multilateral forums. Although I am the co-chair, I consider Malaysia my senior partner in this effort. As an ADMM-Plus dialogue partner, we can only provide our best advice and partner with Malaysia in facilitating an effective EWG on HADR that leads to tangible results for ASEAN. Mr. Nadzri and his team have been exemplary and we are completely aligned on the goals and direction of the EWG on HADR. We overcome challenges, which have been few, through sustained dialogue prior to and after formal meetings. Consensus among the 18 delegations at a EWG on HADR meeting is often achieved at the margins of the

formal plenary sessions during the coffee breaks, lunches, and official dinners.

**L: What are the key upcoming events?**

**MS:** There will be a EWG on HADR meeting in Kuala Lumpur in July, where we will also conduct a tabletop exercise to test the AMRG on HADR SOP and MNCC. This will be followed by a U.S. hosted meeting in Hawaii in March 2019, the capstone exercise later that year, ending with the final EWG on HADR meeting in Malaysia in late 2019.

**L: When will the next set of co-chairs be selected?**

**MS:** Dialogue partners are not privy to the decision process. We can place preference bids for a EWG co-chairmanship, but the decision is ASEAN-only. If the past is any indication, we will probably see a decision in the summer or early autumn of 2019.

**L: Do you think that this ADMM+ EWG on HADR will be successful in achieving its goals?**

**MS:** Yes, because our goals are very practical and tangible. A draft SOP for the AMRG on HADR has already been shared and deliberated by the EWG on HADR and other ASEAN bodies. The AMRG on HADR SOP and the MNCC SOP will be tested at a tabletop exercise in July to identify any refinements that may be needed prior to the capstone exercise in 2019. Following our due diligence, I am confident that the EWG on HADR will endorse a well-tested AMRG on HADR SOP for adoption by ASEAN by the end of 2019, which will essentially operationalize the AMRG concept. If ASEAN members choose to deploy their militaries under a single AMRG banner, then they will have an SOP that ensures they plug into existing disaster response mechanisms and adhere to established HADR best practices to save lives. That is the goal of this EWG on HADR.



## Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination for Asia & the Pacific

*By Viviana De Annuntiis, former Civil-Military Coordination Officer, U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific*

Following the devastating 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, a series of Asia-Pacific Conferences on Military Assistance to Disaster Relief Operations (APC-MADRO) took place between 2005 and 2010, with the aim of developing guidelines that would assist in planning for the use of foreign military assistance during disaster response operations in the region. At the end of this process, the Asia-Pacific Regional Guidelines for the Use of Foreign Military Assets in Natural Disaster Response Operations (APC Madro Guidelines) were finalized and endorsed, and as a result, the Regional Consultative Group (RCG) on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination for Asia and the Pacific was formed in 2014.

A multi-stakeholder platform, the RCG acts as a regional forum to bring together humanitarian, civilian and military actors involved in disaster response preparedness planning and disaster response in the region. It was formed to discuss response preparedness planning, with a particular focus on coordination between civilian and military actors; to facilitate the exchange of information and innovative ideas to enable well-coordinated and needs-based response; and to strengthen linkages with other relevant platforms, especially regional organizations and the Global Consultative Group on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination.

The RCG meets on an annual basis to discuss key issues that are central to advancing the civil-military coordination agenda in Asia and the Pacific. The first and second sessions were held in Bangkok, Thailand, with the third held in 2017 in Singapore.

The RCG has five sub-groups focused on enhancing

preparedness and cooperation in countries with a high risk of large-scale, sudden onset disasters in which foreign military assets are likely to support an international response. These are: Bangladesh, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal, and the Philippines. Each of these countries has developed their own work plans which identify how civil-military coordination could contribute to increasing the speed, volume and quality of life-saving assistance provided in the initial phase of a response and by augmenting efforts led by the affected state.

**Bangladesh:** The Government of Bangladesh 2017 work plan focused on preparedness efforts for a large-scale earthquake in Bangladesh (primarily Dhaka, Sylhet, and Chittagong) and the development of a related Disaster Impact Model (DIM). Furthermore in 2017, the government, with the support of humanitarian partners, continued to work on the revision of the national coordination architecture, focusing efforts in better understanding how the military-to-military as well as the civil-military coordination mechanisms could be implemented and tailored to the specific context of Bangladesh.

**Indonesia:** In 2017, the Government of Indonesia finalized the National Disaster Response Framework (NDRF), Indonesia's primary guidance document for all stakeholders involved in disaster response at all levels of government and society. Over the last year, Indonesia's National Disaster Management Agency, the Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Bencana (BNPB)-led Technical Working Group (TWG) on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination continued to meet and agreement was



Anthony Burke/ UNOCHA Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

reached that Foreign Military Assets (FMA) in Indonesia will be coordinated by the Ministry of Defence through the Multi-Agency Coordination Center (MAC). Detailed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the MAC are now being developed. Finally, under the leadership of BNPB, the focus of the 2017 work plan was on the operationalization of the One ASEAN One Response Declaration, including through engagement in relevant simulation exercises.

**Myanmar:** A key component of the 2017 work plan focused on capacity building in Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination. A Technical Working Group (TWG) on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination will be established with dedicated focal points from both the civilian and the military community. One of the key tasks of the TWG will be to facilitate the dissemination of the recommendations that resulted from the national workshop in all Army, Navy and Air Force regional commands.

**Nepal:** In 2017, the Government of Nepal further

refined the Disaster Impact Model (DIM) and Key Immediate Needs (KIN) focusing on a large-scale earthquake in western Nepal. Furthermore, an important focus of the 2017 work plan was placed on the development of the new National Disaster Risk Reduction Policy & Strategic Action Plan (2017-2030). The document represents the main policy reference to guide the resilience building agenda in Nepal and guide the formulation of cross-sectoral policies and legislations.

**Philippines:** In 2017, the Government of the Philippines worked to further refine the DIM focused on a 7.2-magnitude earthquake scenario in Metro Manila. In relation to the coordination architecture, military-to-military coordination focused on the development of temporary Status of Forces Agreements (SOFAs) during emergencies to stipulate the terms of reference of assisting countries' foreign military forces. Civil-military coordination (led by the Office of Civil Defence) focused on capacity building with UN-CMCoord training for AFP officers at the General Headquarters and Field Command

level. In terms of next steps, the Government of the Philippines is planning to develop country-specific Guidelines on the Use of Foreign Military Assets (FMA) during natural disaster, including tracking and requests for assistance.

Given the importance of logistics to the coordination of operational planning between civilian and military actors, the RCG established a Logistics Working Group (RCG-LWG) in 2016 with the support of the World Food Programme (WFP) Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, to facilitate inter-governmental and inter-agency discussions on critical logistics issues. The RCG-LWG is linked to the Logistics Working Group established at the global level, and works to inform current thinking and discussions from a regional perspective.

The current chair of the RCG for 2018 is the Government of Bangladesh. The Chairmanship provides a significant opportunity for the Government of Bangladesh to bring their knowledge, capacity and expertise to bear on the enormous challenges at hand in responding to large-scale disasters in Asia, as well as bringing valued regional perspectives and ownership to global discussions on humanitarian civil-military coordination. As part of the RCG Third Session, Bangladesh consulted RCG members in relation to the key themes that should be addressed by the RCG in 2018. In addition to ensuring continuity with key RCG themes, including updates from the five priority countries, the RCG Logistics Working Group and the synchronization of Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) events in the Asia-Pacific, new themes were proposed by the RCG membership, including:

- Establishment of an RCG Information Management Working Group;
- UN-CMCoord in refugee situations;
- Civil-Military coordination regarding Urban Search



Delegates at the Third Regional Consultative Group Session hear from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nepal, Myanmar, and the Philippines on disaster management improvements and key civil-military coordination outcomes for the last 12 months.

and Rescue (USAR), under the auspices of the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) and the new Emergency Medical Team (EMT) system discussing best-practices and how to apply this to different contexts in the region.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) and the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DM) serve as co-Secretariat for the RCG.<sup>1</sup>

Since 2005, ROAP has worked with regional partners to tailor global guidance on humanitarian civil-military coordination (UN-CMCoord) to the regional context, to strengthen humanitarian civilian-military coordination for response preparedness, and to ensure enhanced predictability of civil-military coordination processes and platforms during a response.

In addition to its role as co-secretariat, past contributions to the RCG from CFE-DM have included presentations on regional coordination mechanisms, information sharing, and best practices / lessons learned from HADR exercises.

<sup>1</sup> For further information about the RCG, please email: [rcgpolicy@gmail.com](mailto:rcgpolicy@gmail.com) or visit: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/asia/civil-military-coordination-working-group>

# Advancing Civil-Military Coordination in Bangladesh

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**B**angladesh has been developing strong civil-military coordination mechanisms as it tackles recurring natural and manmade disasters such as cyclones, floods, landslides, fires and chemical accidents. Regarding disaster response, civil and military actors have been working together in many areas, but especially for search and rescue, debris removal or the restoration of bridges and roads. In addition, since 2010, the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR), Armed Forces Division (AFD), Government of Bangladesh have been organizing annual regional and international Disaster Response Exercise and Exchanges (DREE) for improving its level of preparedness to respond to mega disasters.

Based on this long-standing civil-military coordination experience in the country, alongside annual DREEs, Bangladesh is enabled to contribute to the Regional Consultative Group on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination for Asia and the Pacific (RCG) by nurturing strong partnerships and developing mutual understanding with regional and international stakeholders. The RCG platform is of great importance to Bangladesh to learn from other countries' lessons and robust coordination mechanisms for ensuring effective disaster response.

The Government of Bangladesh is glad to have the strong support from RCG members and RCG Secretariat to further develop civil-military coordination strategies and identify gaps specific to local context. In 2017, the RCG secretariat supported Bangladesh in organizing a civil-military coordination training, as well as a Senior Leaders Seminar for reviewing the existing disaster re-



The Bangladesh Fire Service and Civil Defense team, carries a wounded man on a stretcher from a damaged building during the 2017 South Asia Pacific Resilience Disaster Response Exercise and Exchange in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Sgt. 1st Class Corey Ray/ U.S. Army

sponse mechanisms. Aligning with the above, Bangladesh keeps updating the legal framework and operational tools pertaining to disaster risk management.

In the context of the on-going influx of forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals that started in August 2017, many stakeholders such as civilian, military actors, U.N. bodies, NGOs and other agencies are working in a well-coordinated manner. Despite the relative exceptional circumstances, Bangladesh is making full use of longstanding coordination mechanisms and providing massive humanitarian support.

The RCG Chairmanship was handed over to Bangladesh from Singapore after great success of the third session of the RCG in December 2017. As 2018 RCG Chair, Bangladesh will take stronger steps to successfully build on the significant milestones already achieved in humanitarian civil-military coordination in the Asia-Pacific region. Bangladesh appreciated the continued support of UNOCHA's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) and the U.S. Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DM), as well as the RCG Secretariat.

Building on the good practices established by Singa-

pore, Bangladesh will provide updates to the RCG members with a dedicated (quarterly) newsletter. In addition, we would like to continue to strengthen the RCG community through regular updates of the RCG website as well as by holding at least one mid-term meeting with the RCG members.

In addition to sustaining the RCG themes – including the RCG-Logistic Working Group led by the World Food Programme – the Government of Bangladesh, as 2018 RCG Chair, would like to support additional new subjects that RCG members highlighted in the third session. First, we will try to enhance inter-regional cooperation between ASEAN and SAARC countries by supporting exchange of lessons learned and best practices. Also, stakeholders expressed interest in a dedicated Information Management Working Group to bridge information gap between civilian and military actors. With the support of the RCG Secretariat, we will explore the best possible means to establish these mechanisms. Finally, we hope to contribute towards more fruitful platform of the RCG and to solidify linkages among various stakeholders so that an effective disaster risk reduction mechanism can be created for stable and sustainable development of the region.



Members of the Bangladesh Armed Forces Division respond to an emergency scenario during the 2017 South Asia Pacific Resilience Disaster Response Exercise and Exchange in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Sgt. 1st Class Corey Ray/ U.S. Army



NEPAL

BANGLADESH

MYANMAR

PHILIPPINES

INDONESIA

# Priority Countries

LIAISON *Staff*

Natural disasters in the Asia-Pacific are all too common. However, five countries stand out as being highly vulnerable to large-scale natural disasters: Bangladesh, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal, and the Philippines. There is a growing recognition among these five countries, as well as partners in the disaster-prone region as a whole, to improve coordination in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR). A Regional Consultative Group (RCG) on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination for Asia and the Pacific was formed in 2014 to be a regional forum bringing together humanitarian, civilian, and military actors involved in disaster preparedness planning and response in the region. During the first session of the RCG in 2015, these five countries were prioritized and committed to engage in response preparedness planning, with a focus on coordination of operational planning between civilian and military actors. Since then, there has been second and third sessions continuing to build on the outcomes of the first session and address additional key issues.

While each priority nation joined the RCG at different stages in their disaster coordination progress, they each joined for greater engagement and enhanced coordination between civilian and military personnel engaged in disaster management. Since 2015, these countries have made independent progress on civil-military coordination mechanisms and have addressed logistical challenges. This article will look at the gains made in coordination by each nation and how the RCG has supported an open forum for dialogue and coordination.<sup>1</sup>

## Bangladesh

At the first RCG session in December 2015, a 2016 work plan for Bangladesh was developed focusing on three main areas: coordination mechanisms; the use, allocation and tracking of foreign military assets (FMA); and coordination of logistic planning.<sup>2</sup>

The Government of Bangladesh and the Bangladesh Armed Forces acknowledged a need for additional military-military and civil-military coordination mechanisms adapted to fit the needs of Bangladesh. The knowledge of these mechanisms – a Multinational Coordination Centre (MNCC) and the Humanitarian-Military Operations Coordination Concept (HuMOCC), respectively – were then tested in October 2016 during the Disaster Response Exercise and Exchange (DREE) and again at the 2017 DREE. The DREE represents a major capacity development tool led by the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR), and the Armed Forces Division

(AFD). During the DREEs, the MNCC concept is regularly tested and improved. In 2016, with continued support from United States Pacific Command (USPACOM), the DREE engaged the humanitarian community through the Humanitarian Coordination Task Team (HCTT). Building on previous DREEs, the 2017 DREE tested the HuMOCC and the request for assistance (RFA) process, whereby the affected state requests unique military capabilities from assisting states to deliver humanitarian assistance in support of disaster relief efforts.

Bangladesh joined the RCG with a Joint Needs Assessment process in place. This assessment served to gather information needed to prioritize key immediate needs prior to disaster striking. By then conducting an immediate needs assessment following a natural disaster, the Government of Bangladesh can identify any FMA capabilities needed to support response efforts. This assessment was taken a step further with the establishment of a national website to act as an “information hub, coordination tool, and knowledge and inventory resources management.”<sup>3</sup> The Government of Bangladesh 2017 work plan focused on preparedness for a large-scale earthquake and the development of a Disaster Impact Model (DIM).<sup>4</sup> A Damage and Need Assessment (DNA) system and a 72-hour rapid assessment methodology are tools needed to further refine and determine ‘key immediate needs’ against the DIM.

As a pro-active member of the RCG, Bangladesh continues to organize several civil-military coordination (CMCoord) capacity development events annually. In March 2018, MoDMR organized a workshop to support the operationalization of the HCTT Earthquake Contingency Plan. The workshop focused on four areas of interventions in the scenario of an earthquake in Bangladesh: 1) key immediate needs (KIN) that will have to be addressed in the first three months of the response; 2) roles and responsibilities, and major challenges or gaps in capacity to respond to the KIN; 3) minimum preparedness actions (MPAs) to identify possible gaps to be filled and/or required modifications to implement the response and; 4) sequence of key actions to be followed by the humanitarian community in the immediate aftermath (first 5 days) of a major earthquake in Dhaka in order to assist the national authorities in implementation of the GoB-led response, including CMCoord.

Bangladesh serves as the RCG chair in 2018. Some of the key national priorities on CMCoord related issues are the development of a national CMCoord strategy, the finalization of the National Emergency Operation Center (NEOC) concept and the subsequent revised Standing

1 All information was compiled from UNOCHA's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific's Regional Consultative Group (RCG) on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination for Asia and the Pacific Session Reports and Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination in Emergencies: Towards a Predictable Model report, [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/RCG\\_05042017\\_Final\\_electronic.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/RCG_05042017_Final_electronic.pdf)  
2 [https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/rcg\\_first\\_session\\_summary\\_report\\_final.pdf](https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/rcg_first_session_summary_report_final.pdf)

3 RCG Second Session Report, October 2016.

4 [https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/rcg\\_summaryreport\\_final.pdf](https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/rcg_summaryreport_final.pdf)

Orders on Disaster (SOD, 2010) which will be updated to refer to the HCTT coordination platform and CMCoord concepts.

## Indonesia

Indonesia created the Technical Working Group (TWG) on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination in 2015 and made quick progress on four areas of focus from the 2016 work plan: coordination mechanisms; use, allocation and tracking of FMA; coordination of logistic planning; and information sharing platforms.

Pre-existing, in-country coordination mechanisms are used to reinforce the ties between the UN Logistic Cluster and the TWG. Furthermore, the TWG determined that logistics planning and key immediate needs should be included in arrangements under the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Joint Disaster Response Plan (AJDRP).

The Indonesia Ministry of Defence through the Multi-Agency Coordination Center (MAC) coordinates FMA. Standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the MAC are being developed, and the Multinational Coordination Centre will act as a national coordination mechanism within it.

The Government of Indonesia worked with ASEAN and humanitarian agencies to finalize the National Disaster Response Framework (NDRF) in 2017. The NDRF is the primary guidance for all stakeholders involved in disaster response, and addresses all steps needed to effectively respond to a disaster. The 2017 work plan, under the leadership of the Indonesia's National Agency for Disaster Management (BNPB), will operationalize the One ASEAN, One Response Declaration to include relevant simulation exercises.

## Myanmar

In 2016, Myanmar focused on capacity building initiatives, including a Civil-Military Coordination and Disaster Management Workshop in August. Civilian and military representatives participated in the workshop, while the Government of Myanmar increasingly focused its efforts on expanding understanding of humanitarian civil-military coordination concepts among

all stakeholders.<sup>5</sup>

Myanmar continued the CMCoord focus in 2017, hosting a civil-military coordination sensitization workshop with senior officials from 14 regional commands. The nation also sent representatives from the Relief and Resettlement Department and the Tatmadaw (the Armed Forces of Myanmar) to UN-CMCoord courses in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

The 2018 work plan includes establishing a technical working group on humanitarian civil-military coordination with dedicated focal points from the civilian and military communities. A key task of the working group will be to disseminate recommendations from the national workshop to the individual branched military commands.

## Nepal

The Nepal work plans for the RCG also focus on coordination mechanisms and use of FMA, but elected to prioritize information sharing platforms as significant goal for the country.

After the April 2015 earthquake, Nepal was able to identify challenges and incorporate lessons from the response operations into the country's 2016 work plan. Lack of functional bilateral agreements between the Government of Nepal and assisting states was identified as an element of coordination that needs improvement.

In 2016, two civil-military coordination exercises were held: Multinational Planning Augmentation Team

<sup>5</sup> RCG Second Session Report, October 2016.



Participants in the Nepal Pacific Resilience Disaster Response Exercise & Exchange (DREE) conduct a mass casualty medical drill at Birendra Army Hospital during the 2013 exercise in Kathmandu, Nepal.



A1C Yupangco, PIO-PAF

The Philippine Air Force, Army, National Police, the Bureau of Fire Protection, and local governments cooperate to unload relief supplies from the Department of Social Welfare and Development in 2015.

(MPAT) Tempest Express 28 and a DREE. These events tested the progress of the coordination mechanisms, as well as the coordination between the Multinational Military Coordination Centre (MNMCC), the National Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) and humanitarian coordination structures. The exercises in 2016 also solidified the MNMCC as the national-level coordination platform for all FMA.

Numerous policies were also completed including the finalization of SOPs for the MNMCC; drafting of national Guidelines for International Assistance; and revision of the NDRF.<sup>6</sup> Added to the 2017 work plan was development of the new National Disaster Risk Reduction Policy & Strategic Action Plan (2017-2030). The Government of Nepal upgraded the National Disaster Management Portal for civil-military coordination information sharing.

## The Philippines

After Typhoon Haiyan devastated the nation in 2013, the Philippine government activated the Philippines International Humanitarian Assistance Cluster (PIHAC), which exists to enhance civil-military coordination mechanisms and policies during large-scale emergencies. As a result, when joining the RCG in 2015, the nation developed objectives that further refine the PIHAC as a primary national coordination mechanism; established Status of Forces Agreements (SOFA) with ASEAN and other assisting states; prepared a list of national capabilities for acceptance of FMA based on identified gaps; and developed an information sharing platform.

In 2016 and 2017, progress was made on the drafting

<sup>6</sup> RCG Third Session Report, December 2017.

of temporary SOFAs for times of emergencies. The agreements stipulated terms for assisting countries' military forces, while future guidelines for the use of FMA are being created. Additionally, guidelines on the activation and operation of the Multinational Coordination Centre (MNCC) were developed.

A key component of the Philippine push toward strong civil-military coordination lies in building capacity within the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). As a result, AFP officers at the General Headquarters and Field Command level have undergone UN-CMCoord training. More significantly, the AFP Command and General Staff College has developed a civil-military course that has been included in the school curriculum for all students.

While each of these five nations continue to have challenges in relation to civil-military coordination, the gains made through the RCG platform are discernable. Coordination mechanisms have been developed and in most cases tested through exercises and disaster events; relationships with foreign militaries and plans for unique foreign military capabilities have been established based on specific disaster scenarios; and information sharing platforms have been launched for seamless tracking of requests for assistance and asset allocation. The RCG has proven itself to be a beneficial venue for coordination progress, and is expected to be for years to come.

# ADMM-Plus EWG: Operationalizing the ASEAN Militaries Ready Group

LIAISON Staff

The 2004 Boxing Day Tsunami, the 2008 Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar, and the 2013 Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines are all examples of ASEAN-centered disasters that required large-scale international support. Regional organizations like the Association for Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) are increasingly seen as major power brokers globally, providing

binding agreement, the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER). AADMER is the first of its kind globally. It was enacted in July 2005 and went into force in December 2009. The overarching goal of AADMER is to “substantially reduce loss of life and damage to economic, social, physical and environmental assets of ASEAN Member States caused



by natural and human-induced disasters.”<sup>1</sup> The agreement works to build disaster resilient ASEAN nations to reduce disaster losses and develop ASEAN nations’ capabilities to jointly respond to disasters. In October 2013, during the 23rd ASEAN Summit, ASEAN leaders signed the “Declaration on Enhancing Cooperation in Disaster

both a venue and coordinating authority to address 21st century security challenges, like disaster response. This has been particularly true of ASEAN in the area of disaster cooperation between its ten member states: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

ASEAN’s role in regional disaster cooperation in the years following the 2004 tsunami is a global model for regional cooperation. This is largely due to the legally

Management” that urges ASEAN nations and relevant ASEAN bodies to take necessary steps to strengthen integration, coordination, and strategy in joint emergency response.

The primary focal point for the implementation of the AADMER is the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) based in Jakarta, Indonesia. The AHA

<sup>1</sup> ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response Work Programme for 2010-2015. December 2013. [http://www.asean.org/storage/images/resources/ASEAN%20Publication/2013%20\(12.%20Dec\)%20-%20AADMER%20Work%20Programme%20\(4th%20Reprint\).pdf](http://www.asean.org/storage/images/resources/ASEAN%20Publication/2013%20(12.%20Dec)%20-%20AADMER%20Work%20Programme%20(4th%20Reprint).pdf)

Centre serves to implement the AADMER efforts in disaster monitoring, preparedness and response, and capacity building. The AHA Centre is also home to the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC), which operates as the central location in monitoring disasters and coordinating ASEAN's collective response to disasters. During a response the AHA Centre leverages its online-based platform called the Web Emergency Operations Centre (WebEOC) to facilitate the exchange of information among member states, situation monitoring of affected states and ASEAN field teams, and process requests for and offers of assistance.

National militaries in the ASEAN region often play a key role in their national disaster response plans. Meanwhile, the U.S. military is often the largest foreign military contributor in response to large-scale disasters. Like the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD), militaries in the ASEAN region are taking on a more active role in regional and international disaster response. Since 2004, the U.S. military has supported a number of ASEAN's multilateral and bilateral disaster cooperation efforts linked to AADMER. The U.S. DoD has been a key player or participant in the ASEAN Regional Forum's (ARF) Standard Operating Procedure for Regional Standby Arrangements and Coordination of Joint Disaster Relief and Emergency Response Operations (SASOP); the ARF Work Plan on Disaster Relief and Pandemic Influenza preparedness efforts; and the ASEAN Regional Forum Disaster Relief Exercises (ARF DiREx).

Currently, the U.S. and Malaysia are co-chairs for the ADMM-Plus Expert's Working Group on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response (ADMM-Plus EWG on HADR) for the 2017-2020 working session. The ADMM-Plus convenes a series of topical working groups to enhance overall regional collaboration across common security challenges. Since 2010, the ADMM has convened the ADMM-Plus with the eight non-ASEAN partners: Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, ROK, Russian Federation and the United States.

During the 9th ADMM-Plus in March 2015, the group adopted the Concept Paper on ASEAN Militaries Ready Group on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (AMRG on HADR). The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the AMRG on HADR were accepted during the 10th ADMM-Plus in May 2016 in Lao PDR. The ADMM-Plus EWG on HADR convened in 2017 with Malaysia and the U.S. as co-chairs to implement a work plan focused on developing and testing standard operating procedures (SOP) for the AMRG over a three-year period from 2017-2020.

The AMRG on HADR is by design meant to prepare the ASEAN military group for quick deployment to disaster areas in a coordinated manner under the banner of ASEAN. The AMRG is guided by the AADMER and

the SASOP. Per the August 2017 2nd Draft SOP for the AMRG on HADR:

AMRG on HADR can be activated and deployed even if not all AMS contribute to the HADR operation. A request to activate the AMRG on HADR will be made by the Affected State.<sup>2</sup>

The participation and contribution of AMRG on HADR shall be flexible, non-binding and voluntary, and shall be consistent with the rights and obligations of the AMS under any existing agreements to which they are parties. AMS can continue to provide assistance to the Affected State bilaterally.<sup>3</sup>

AMRG on HADR shall, through each AMS's National Focal Point (NFP), work under the coordination of the AHA Centre, in collaboration with other relevant regional and international HADR partners and act in accordance with the guidelines of respective National Disaster Management Offices (NDMO).<sup>4</sup>

Types of support provided by the AMRG to an Affected State may include but not be limited to: search and rescue; emergency medical aid; distributions of goods; transportation and evacuations; and exchanging and sharing of expertise, experiences and information.

AMRG on HADR shall, through each AMS's National Focal Point, work under the coordination of the AHA Centre, in collaboration with other relevant regional and international HADR partners and act in accordance with the guidelines of respective National Disaster Management Offices (NDMO).<sup>5</sup>

As part of the ADMM-Plus EWG on HADR 2017-2020 cycle, Malaysia and the U.S. are working together to plan and execute several exercises to test and validate the AMRG on HADR SOP as drafted. The first exercise will take place in July 2018 and is planned as a tabletop exercise (TTX) designed to test the role of the AMRG within the existing regional disaster response framework. The intent is to bring together all key stakeholders that would be part of a regional disaster response and test and validate the roles, responsibilities, processes, and procedures of the AMRG within this existing framework shaped by AADMER and SASOP.

Following the outcomes of the TTX, the ADMM-Plus EWG on HADR will be able to further refine the SOP, which will be tested again in 2019 during a staff exercise (STAFFEX). The 2019 STAFFEX will be for decision makers and staff to exercise the AMRG on HADR SOP. Based on those outcomes, further refinements on the SOP will be incorporated as needed and the final draft of the SOP will be submitted at the conclusion of this iteration of the ADMM-Plus EWG on HADR in 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Second Draft AMRG SOP, August 2017.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

# #HUMTECH

## A Help or Hindrance in Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination?

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As new technologies develop, they offer opportunities for humanitarian action. UAVs are facilitating medical support in remote areas of Papua New Guinea. They have also mapped affected areas after the 2015 Gurkha Earthquake in Nepal. Data from social media platforms is improving contextual understanding, and helping friends and family communicate during emergencies. Digital food programmes are improving aid effectiveness by bolstering the autonomy of those affected by disaster, ensuring they get the food they need. Technology brings clear and exciting potential benefits in humanitarianism.

However, technologies are not deployed in a vacuum, and their interactions with the contexts into which they are inserted raise questions. For instance, who is rendered invisible by the maps created by UAVs or social media data? Who ultimately owns any data collected and who is responsible for its safe-keeping? How are risks stemming from the humanitarian use of new technologies managed, and how can those deploying technologies be held to account for that management? These questions highlight the importance of balancing innovation with consideration for affected populations. This underscored the panel discussion on Humanitarian Technology at the 3rd session of the multi-stakeholder Regional Consultative Group (RCG) on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination for Asia and the Pacific on 5 December 2017 at the Regional HADR Coordination Centre on Changi Naval Base, Singapore.

The RCG was formed in 2014 to act as a regional forum that brings together the humanitarian, civilian and military actors involved in disaster emergency prepared-

ness planning and disaster response in the region. It builds upon the Asia-Pacific series of Conferences on Military Assistance to Disaster Relief Operations (APC-MADRO) that took place from 2005 to 2010. At the end of this process, the Asia-Pacific Regional Guidelines for the Use of Foreign Military Assets in Natural Disaster Response Operations (APC Madro Guidelines) were finalized and endorsed. The RCG is the successor forum to continue dialogue and improve humanitarian civil-military coordination in the Asia-Pacific.

With significant interest in the use of new technologies to improve humanitarian action worldwide, the panel discussion was timely. Presentations were delivered by Josef Reiterer, Chief of Civil-Military Coordination Section of the UN OCHA; Alvin Tan, Head of Public Policy for Southeast Asia for Facebook; Tingjun Zhang, Executive Director of Mercy Relief; and Kay Lian Lee, Chief Operating Officer of POD Structures. Presenters were asked to reflect on four key tensions identified in RSIS's most recent policy report on this issue: Humanitarian Technology: New Innovations, Familiar Challenges, and Difficult Balances. The tensions identified were: (a) between the humanitarian imperative and other public goods; (b) between short- and long-term interests of those affected by disasters; (c) between the needs of disaster responders and the disaster-affected; and (d) between centralized coordination and individual autonomy.

One challenge highlighted was the proliferation of online coordination platforms both within and across sectors. Militaries, civilian agencies and NGOs recognize the need to improve communication amongst themselves and across the civil-military divide, which has prompted the development of online communication platforms to enhance interoperability. However, organizations' pre-existing information management systems tend to be incompatible with one another, relying on different software, or distinct categorizations or organizational principles for their data. It is important as civil-military coordination in the Asia and the Pacific moves forward that it adopts a 'one less app for that' approach, reducing the number of parallel systems in existence. However, this might exist in tension with the desire born of the current

appetite for innovation to create new solutions. Furthermore, any effort to create a unifying platform – or at least minimize the number of platforms – will require changes to data collection, storage and sharing. Inevitably, the burden of these changes will not be equally spread among organizations: any mutually agreed systems and protocols will invariably lie closer to the existing practices of some organizations, and further from those of others. This imbalance must not be allowed to obstruct progress. A second challenge is one of trust: sharing information requires faith in those with whom one is sharing. Exercises such as the 2017 Ex COORES, which included military participants and civilian observers, are a step in the right direction.

The discussion on social media highlighted several positive elements. Individuals are using platforms to signal friends and family that they are safe. Social media companies are exploring how to use their data to inform contextual understanding of civil-military responders, for instance identifying needs and their location. One area that is worthy of further exploration is how to ensure that information sharing is two-way. Social media brings the potential not only to draw on user-generated data to inform central disaster responders, but also to disseminate information to affected communities and individuals in the aftermath of a natural disaster. This would empower those affected to make informed decisions that mitigate their own risks, and be aware of available assistance. But again, despite the clear positive potentials, the use of social media platforms to stir controversy and whip up hysteria is a substantive cause for concern.

The empowerment drive is also part of the global localization agenda within the humanitarian community. NGOs and the private sector have collaborated to develop cash transfer programmes that have seen credit card

companies facilitate cash distribution to those affected by disaster. This has allowed individuals to purchase food or other items they need most rather than rely on bulk distributions that, by definition, cannot be tailored to individual needs. This is one example for potential partnerships that allow business skillsets to dovetail humanitarian work to the benefit of effectiveness and response.

But this too raises important challenges. Are affected communities fully aware when they are participating in experimental programmes such as these? Are alternatives available if they do not wish to take part? This challenge underlines the importance of developing a review process to mitigate the inherent risks associated with new programmes developed by aid providers for affected populations. This is especially important if offering alternatives is simply not feasible. One important avenue to develop in this regard is the engagement of affected populations earlier in the development phase to integrate particular community needs into the design of programmes and products, and to ensure that their consent to any novel programming is fully informed.

The latest technological developments offer us cautious optimism to how civil-military coordination can be improved under the right conditions. From these discussions, what remains an underlying need is for humanitarian responders to engage communities before disaster occurs to develop appropriate mechanisms to inform emergency preparedness and response plans. There remains a healthy balance between skepticism and willingness to coordinate between the different stakeholders in the field of humanitarianism. The avenue that RCG provides for humanitarian civil-military coordination in Asia and the Pacific facilitates this so long as it remains a forum to explore these opportunities and allows respectful disagreement.



# Civil-Military Partnerships & Working Groups in Humanitarian Response

By Dr. Hank Brightman, Professor and EMC Informationist Chair, United States Naval War College, & Lily Bui, PhD student, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Department of Urban Studies & Planning

One of the greatest challenges in the development of a civil-military humanitarian response resource repository is the absence of opportunities for evidence-based data collection to inform the research agenda.<sup>1,2,3,4</sup> While field professionals periodically meet within their respective disciplines to share meaningful anecdotes, events in which practitioners and scholars from across a range of specializations within the humanitarian space are rare. Accordingly, the annual civil-military coordination workshop conducted by the U.S. Naval War College (NWC) serves as an important example of a holistic gathering where experts in areas ranging from information technology communications, data mapping, and international humanitarian law, to urban response, disease mitigation, and military support to civil authority can engage in a candid and open exchange of ideas about humanitarian response to disasters and complex emergencies. To date, there have been two events of this kind: the Civil-Military Humanitarian Response Workshop initially took place October 26-27, 2016, as well as the most recent event from August 25-26, 2017. Facilitated by the U.S. Naval War College (NWC) and hosted at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, with support from its Humanitarian Innovation Initiative (HI<sup>2</sup>), the latter event brought together over 100 participants representing nongovernmental organizations, academe, international governing bodies, and senior military and public health entities.

Of particular note is this recent event's focus on building physical and social networks of best practices

1 Kaplan, J., & Easton-Calabria, E. (2016). *Militaries and Humanitarian Innovation: Opportunities and risks* (WORKING PAPER SERIES NO. 113). Oxford: Refugees Studies Center.

2 Tatham, P., & Rietjens, S. (2016). *Integrated disaster relief logistics: a stepping stone towards viable civil-military networks?* *Disasters*, 40(1), 7-25.

3 Wentz, L. (2006). *Information and Communication Technologies for Civil-Military Coordination in Disaster Relief and Stabilization and Reconstruction*. Defense and Technology Paper, 31.

4 Brooks, J., & Polatty, D. (2015, September). *Civil-Military Coordination and Information Sharing in a Digital Humanitarian Age*. *Liaison*, 7(Fall Issue), 50-53.

in a manner devoid of the technical jargon and stove-piping that often overshadows the efforts of those working within the international cluster system. The purpose of this article is to highlight specific best practices and new civil-military working groups borne from the most recent workshop facilitated by the NWC. We identify key insights and takeaways from this event, and discuss how they can be used to further advance evidence-based research within the humanitarian space.

## Workshop Structure, Data Capture, and Analytic Framing

To capture the breadth and depth of practitioner experience and scholarship, the Civil-Military Humanitarian Response Workshop was organized into eight working groups, which convened for multiple sessions during the three-day event. Each working group had a specific focus: international humanitarian law; response challenges within the urban environment; effective use of information, communications and technology within the humanitarian space; global health issues; pandemic mitigation and response; awareness of gender issues and support for vulnerable people; the role of the military in humanitarian response; and the overarching impacts of climate change as catalysts to instability. Subject matter experts addressed each topic independently in their respective working group sessions, as well as collectively during the workshop's three plenary events. Subject matter experts were invited based on their connection to the humanitarian sector, knowledge of the working group's subject matter, and experience working in their respective fields.

Regardless of their area of specialization, all eight working groups were encouraged to discuss salient issues, including case studies, neutrality, security, information sharing, technology, and opportunities to apply existing frameworks to the challenges resident in their fields of study. Much of the discussion within each group focused on the scarcity of evidence-based data within the humanitarian space that can be applied to scalable models

or adaptable policies.

Using common guidelines for group reporting, embedded ethnographers within each working group and the three plenary sessions captured data about the discussion electronically using a Microsoft Word-based template. Paper-based notes could also be taken

but were ultimately transcribed using Microsoft Word. Each ethnographer was provided with pre-workshop training in the proper methods for capturing data without influencing participant behaviors, and best practices to guard against single-respondent dominance and intrinsic ethnographer bias. Once recorded, these eleven datasets (i.e., one from each of the working groups and the three from the plenary sessions) were provided to the NWC for subsequent analysis.

All eleven datasets borne from this workshop were descriptive, revealing the nature of experiences, processes, relationships, and systems. However, they could not be generalized beyond the range of participants in the event. In an effort to move beyond simple content analysis and word-based frequency counts as the basis for forming conclusions, the NWC used a software application known as Atlas.ti (version 8.1). This program, which is widely employed in the social sciences, provides a structured analytic process for examining broad and often disparate outputs within the qualitative arena. Atlas.ti uses a “grounded theory” methodology to identify patterns in multiple sets of observations.<sup>5,6</sup> Data are coded into families or hierarchies, and these hierarchies are then compared across a range of documents within a collection. In addition, data were aggregated to protect the identity of each attendee.<sup>7</sup>

Traditionally, Atlas.ti compares codes identified within a body of existing literature (i.e., selective codes)



Civil-Military Humanitarian Response Workshop was facilitated by the U.S. Naval War College August 25-26, 2017.

with those captured from the participants during an activity or event (referred to as in-vivo codes).<sup>8</sup> Ultimately, this comparative process may also yield greater insights beyond source literature or the ethnographers’ notes by generating a set of serendipitous codes. In addition, the software automatically presents a correlation-like coefficient table,<sup>9</sup> which is useful to further understand the co-occurrence of terms, phrases, and ideas in a given problem space. Given the applied research orientation of this workshop with its dual emphasis on practitioner experience and academic subject matter expertise, selective coding borne from a review of related literature was not part of this analytic process. Instead, Atlas.ti was employed to identify commonly shared in-vivo codes for the eleven working groups which formed the core of the August Civil-Military Humanitarian Response Workshop at Brown University. Table 1 summarizes the Atlas.ti results by displaying a “primary term or phrase,” a “correlating term or phrase,” and the r-value or correlation coefficient, which describes the strength of the relationship between the primary and secondary terms or phrases.

## Findings

First, in-vivo coding and analysis highlighted the inseparable role that militaries play as a facet of the response process. However, the military’s response role is not merely constrained to coordination; rather, it needs to be included as a major element of research in the

5 Guetzkow, H. (1950). Unitizing and categorizing problems in coding qualitative data. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 6(1), 47-58.

6 Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. M. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Sage Publications, Inc.

7 Muhr, T. (1991). ATLAS/ti—A prototype for the support of text interpretation. *Qualitative sociology*, 14(4), 349-371.

8 Smith, J., & Firth, J. (2011). Qualitative data analysis: the framework approach. *Nurse researcher*, 18(2), 52-62.

9 Although not a true r-value, per se, since correlation is not derived from quantitative data, this statistic is useful for better understanding relationships between terms, phrases, and ideas in the qualitative arena.

Primary Term or Phrase	Correlating Term or Phrase	Representative r-value (Atlas.ti v. 8.1)
Military/Militaries	Response	0.46
	Simulation	0.43
	Coordination	0.41
	Mistrust	0.41
	Frustration	0.39
	Suspicion	0.39
Response Data/Data	Vulnerable People	0.44
	Security	0.44
	Fear	0.41

Table 1 – Summary of Atlas.ti Correlations Based on In-Vivo Codes

humanitarian sector. Both practitioners and academicians asserted the need to develop in-depth simulations for humanitarian response, which would include the participation of militaries along with international and governmental structures and nongovernmental organization. The simulations must also be capable of exploring the dynamic nature of responses, such as a sudden shift from steady state into destabilization. Priority areas for simulation and research include pandemic response, coordination between state, non-state, nongovernmental, and military actors, and community-based influence in humanitarian response operations.

Second, analysis of workshop content also reveals a common concern among participants regarding militaries and uncertainty in defining the dominant and subordinate roles that key stakeholders will play in future of humanitarian response operations. Attendees expressed trepidation that the current U.S. presidential administration’s shift away from Department of State-led initiatives towards a marked Department of Defense presence in the initial response phase of an operation could foster an environment that yields less data sharing and communications between stakeholders. Ultimately, this could result in a sub-optimal response with regard to information sharing among actors. This “mistrust,” “suspicion,” and “frustration” (each of these terms was identified in in-vivo coding) could foster additional instability in response efforts led by military, government, civil society, and other actors, during later phases of a humanitarian operation.

Lastly, the issue of security as it corresponds to response data was a major area of discussion among participants in the Civil-Military Humanitarian Response

Workshop. This concern was presented not solely in terms of the emerging role of the U.S. military as a primary responder might play in influencing perceptions of impartiality and neutrality among international relief organizations, but also in terms of safeguarding data to preclude misuse. In-vivo coding revealed noteworthy correlations between “response data,” “vulnerable people,” “security,” and “fear.” These relationships appear particularly pronounced with respect to data pertaining to urban centers, likely given the potential for density for illicit targeting. Working group comments suggest that issues pertaining to security, especially data security, are less readily examined using simula-

tions or technological solutions than the development of policies and legal frameworks around similar topics.

## Conclusions

The Civil-Military Humanitarian Response Workshop serves as evidence that although the number of military participants was far smaller than other stakeholders representing academe, nongovernmental organizations, and international groups, militaries continue to play an increasingly essential role in responding to natural disasters, crises, and complex emergencies within the humanitarian space. Accordingly, they must be actively involved in generating applied research, informing policy, and developing simulations that emphasize the full range of engagement with educational institutions, international entities, nongovernmental organizations, and other key stakeholders in the area of humanitarian assistance and disaster response. Importantly, the event resulted in new working groups for civil-military coordination in the humanitarian sector spanning a new spectrum of research topics that aim to contribute new knowledge to the civil-military intellectual community.



# Operationalizing the ASEAN Joint Disaster Response Plan

## LIAISON Staff

In September 2016, the Declaration on One ASEAN, One Response: ASEAN Responding to Disasters as One in the Region and Outside the Region was adopted. A month later the establishment of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Joint Disaster Response Plan (AJDRP) provided a common framework to deliver a timely, at-scale and joint response through mobilization of required assets and capabilities.<sup>1</sup> Adelina Kamal, Executive Director of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre), states, “the AJDRP personifies the One ASEAN, One Response concept. After Typhoon Haiyan, in 2013 in the Philippines, the AHA Centre recognized gaps, such as the need to enhance coordination with ASEAN Member States, the AHA Centre, and international humanitarian actors. The effort of the plan was to maximize capabilities, strategies, identify pre-positioned resources, specific skill sets, and provide a regional mechanism for disaster response that is politically accepted. In essence, it is there to anticipate the needs and add value in an effort to save lives and alleviate suffering.”<sup>2</sup>

The initial planning workshop took place in Jakarta, Indonesia in January 2016. The workshop gathered over a hundred stakeholders from a variety of sectors to identify fictional scenarios and develop response modules. Three disaster-prone countries were selected as the basis for drafting country-specific ASEAN contingency plans and to operationalization of the AJDRP. The three possible large-scale disasters selected as reference points were: a Metro Manila earthquake in the Philippines; a tsunami on the west coast of Sumatra, Indonesia; and a tropical

cyclone in rural areas of Myanmar.

The ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) endorsed the AJDRP in 2016. Over the following 18 months, three workshops were conducted to support the development and implementation of country-specific plans.<sup>3</sup> The plans lay out ASEAN’s mechanisms, standby arrangements, and procedures for disaster response tailored to the needs of the three nations. The goal of each workshop was to apply the AJDRP to the three scenarios and identify key gaps in the countries response plans. Proposals were then developed for AMS to fill identified gaps.

The first workshop to develop the contingency plan was held in the Philippines in October 2017. The workshop focused on the effects and response to a potential 7.2-magnitude earthquake in Metro Manila. The Philippines has an increased vulnerability to natural hazards, which is mostly attributed to the nation’s position between the Eurasian and the Pacific tectonic plates.<sup>4</sup> The country is vulnerable to typhoons, volcanic eruptions, floods, landslides, earthquakes, droughts, and tsunamis. The workshop in the Philippines was attended by various government organizations led by the Office of Civil Defense and members of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRMMC) which includes the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the Department of Health (DOH), the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA), the Philippines National Police (PNP), the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), and partner agencies such as the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), the Philippine

1 AHA Centre. 2017. ASEAN Joint Disaster Response Plan

2 Interview with Adelina Kamal, Executive Director of the ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance Centre (AHA Centre)

3 AHA Centre. 2018. Operationalising One ASEAN One Response.

4 AHA Center. 2017. ASEAN Joint Disaster Response Plan.

Red Cross (PRC), and the Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF). Also in attendance were nine ASEAN embassies based in Manila. The collaboration of these agencies allowed for the identification of gaps that allowed the AHA Centre and other ASEAN partner nations to identify if these gaps could be filled under the One ASEAN, One Response vision. Gaps identified – such as the need for more urban search and rescue capabilities and a surge in structural assessment capabilities – were imperative to the outcome of the workshop.

As a result of the workshop, the NDRRMC and MMDA continue to develop their disaster response plan by involving various stakeholders and is focused on four strategies: preparedness activities, pre-deployment of resources, prioritization of response clusters, and partnership with the petroleum industry to ensure continuity of fuel supply.<sup>5</sup>

The second national workshop for the development of a Myanmar specific response plan was held in Myanmar in December 2017. Myanmar is affected by many natural hazards including earthquakes, cyclones, flooding, landslides, and periodic droughts. Cyclones are the most damaging hazard in Myanmar, therefore the workshop focused on a large-scale cyclone scenario impacting Rakhine State. The workshop was attended by 30 participants, including policy makers, disaster management specialists, and military counterparts. The workshop resulted in the first National Contingency Plan (NCP) in Myanmar that can be supported by the AHA Centre and partners under the AJDRP framework.

The third and final national workshop for the development of the ASEAN Regional Contingency Plan was held in Indonesia in March 2018. The workshop focused on a large-scale earthquake, triggering a tsunami, and then followed by an industrial accident, which required HAZMAT handling. The National Agency for Disaster Management (BNPB), Ministry of Health, Ministry of Immigration, Ministry of Defense, Indonesian Police Department, Indonesian Customs, Indonesian Armed Forces (TNI), Provincial and District NDMOs (BPBDs), Ministry of Transportation, the U.S. Forest Service (Indonesian Liaison), and USAID Indonesia participated in the workshop. The collaboration proved that interagency and

private sector cooperation is critical in the initial phase of a disaster, particularly when a significant issue like a HAZMAT secondary disaster is involved. Indonesia demonstrated that finding the gaps in the national response is key to having a needs-based response. Such gaps include the need to recognize specific skill sets and equipment required to approach a HAZMAT disaster scenario. This outcome identified the need for technical performance and interoperability of chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosives (CBRNE) technology, appropriate equipment deployment, and effective user training.

The three nation-specific workshops will culminate in the ASEAN Regional Disaster Emergency Response Simulation Exercise 2018 (ARDEX-18), which will be held in November. Indonesia will host the exercise, and the main effort will be led by the BNPB. ARDEX-18 is a full-scale simulation exercise that will test, practice,



Personnel from 18 Asia-Pacific nations participated in the ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief and Military Medicine Exercise hosted by Brunei in 2013.

review, and evaluate ASEAN’s emergency response and disaster management mechanisms, the AJDRP. The collaboration and lessons learned from the three workshops are key to the success of ARDEX-18. According to Ms. Kamal, “operationalizing the plan is key. By utilizing the workshops, we are showing the host countries the capabilities and the added value that the AHA Centre can provide during a crisis. ARDEX-18 will provide insights to gaps, as well as allowing presentations bringing together core elements of emergency response coordination, to allow participants to examine common challenges faced during natural disasters, looking at what has worked best, and lay the foundations for the development of their own national work plans.”<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> UNFPA. Philippines. Emergencies. <http://philippines.unfpa.org/en/node/15308>

<sup>6</sup> Interview with Adelina Kamal, Executive Director of the AHA Centre.

**1** **Fijian Government & Australian Government  
Pacific Civil-Military Disaster Response Coordination  
Workshop**  
May 21 – 23  
Suva, Fiji



**2** **Center for Excellence in Disaster Management &  
Humanitarian Assistance**  
**Focus In, 2018**  
May 30 – June 10  
Honolulu, Hawaii



**2** **6**

**3** **Government of the Philippines Office of Civil Defense  
& INSARAG Secretariat**  
**INSARAG Asia-Pacific Regional Earthquake Response  
Exercise 2018**  
June 25 – 29  
Clark, Angeles City, Philippines



**4** **Association of Southeast Asian Nations**  
**ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Experts' Working  
Group on HADR Exercise**  
July 22 – 27  
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia



**5** **Chilean Army**  
**Volcano Exercise 2018**  
July 25 – 27  
Punta Arenas, Chile



**6** **Center for Excellence in Disaster Management &  
Humanitarian Assistance**  
**Health Emergencies in Large Populations (H.E.L.P.) Course**  
July 30 – August 10  
Honolulu, Hawaii





**7 U.S. Naval War College Humanitarian Response Program**

**Civilian-Military Humanitarian Response Workshop**

August 16 – 17

Providence, Rhode Island



**8 U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs**

**Regional Consultative Group (RCG) on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination for the Asia-Pacific Fourth Session**

December TBD

Dhaka, Bangladesh





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