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**NAVAL  
POSTGRADUATE  
SCHOOL**

**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

**THESIS**

**TRANSFORMING NORWEGIAN SPECIAL OPERATION  
FORCES**

by

Tom Robertsen

June 2006

Thesis Advisor:  
Second Reader:

Hy Rothstein  
Doug Borer

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**TRANSFORMING NORWEGIAN SPECIAL OPERATION FORCES**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN DEFENSE ANALYSIS**

from the

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## **ABSTRACT**

This paper explores transformation of Norwegian Special Operation Forces, raising the hypothesis that current organizational structure is inconsistent with future roles and missions. The inconsistency is derived from official documents pertaining to the transformation of Norwegian Armed Forces for the period 2005-2008. Where the military recommends disbanding two existing units, Marinejegerkommandoen and Hærens Jegerkommando, to re-commission a single unit under a single, unspecified command, the Government insists on maintaining the status quo. A likely consequence is a sub-optimal development of NORSOF as a strategic asset.

Using the dichotomy of direct action vs. indirect action capabilities as a framework for understanding how Special Operation Forces (SOF) in general conducts operations, the author claims NORSOF possess capabilities only for the former. Analysis of the forces themselves, the security environment, and the strategies adopted to deal with current and future threats leads to the conclusion that NORSOF will increase its relevance by acquiring competency in indirect capabilities. If indirect capabilities become a core task for NORSOF, then the current organization should be maintained. If not, both units will continue to maintain overlapping tasks in direct capabilities. Future transformation issues will then evolve based on traditional arguments related to the maritime and land domains.

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis is the result of a thought process on how Norwegian Special Operation Forces could adapt to requirements for transformation in a changed security environment. The end of the Cold War initiated questions and concerns about how this organization best should adapt, not only to changed security threats, but also to changed economic realities for the Norwegian Armed Forces in general. Competition for scarce resources is likely to create turf wars. This is not a Special Operations phenomenon, nor is it unique to the Norwegian defense. My background in the Norwegian Special Operations community has led to reflections on the future of these units. These reflections were further refined throughout my time at the Naval Postgraduate School.

I would especially like to thank my thesis advisors, Professor Hy Rothstein and Professor Doug Borer, for their contribution to this thesis. I would also like to include Professor George Lober, who occasionally convinced me that I was not alone with my academic fears. Lastly, I would like to thank MajGen (ret) Gullow Gjeseth for commenting on the paper.

Arguing for and against matters concerning Special Operations is not easy. Regardless of good intentions, being “born and raised” within the Naval SOF community makes me biased. However, the content, analysis, and recommendations in this thesis were pursued in accordance with principles of objectivity.

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# I. TRANSFORMING NORWEGIAN SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES

## A. INTRODUCTION

Since 2001, the Norwegian Armed Forces (NAF) has been through one of the largest transformation processes in the modern history of the state.<sup>1</sup> A recent government publication, White Paper no. 42 (2003-2004), *Den videre moderniseringen av Forsvaret* (Continuing Modernization of the Norwegian Armed Forces), which outlines the framework for the military between 2005 and 2008, notes that the NAF transformation is proceeding in accordance with political guidelines set forth in the earlier White Paper no. 45 (2000-2001), *Omleggingen av Forsvaret i perioden 2002- 2005* [Reorganizing the Norwegian Armed Forces 2002- 2005].<sup>2</sup> The overarching goal of both documents is to change NAF from a threat-based organization developed for Cold War scenarios to a capability-based organization able to meet diffuse challenges in a new security environment.

Since the end of the Cold War, the military transformation has been a continuous process to meet changes in both the security environment and economic realities. Which of these factors counts more is a matter of debate, but it is generally understood that the Cold War military structure was inadequate for the current security challenges. The economic framework will always be subject to question; conventional wisdom holds that the existing defense budget will remain essentially fixed in coming years. The implicit challenge is to develop the military structure within existing economic constraints.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Forsvarsdepartementet, *St.Prp.Nr.42 (2003-2004): Den Videre Moderniseringen Av Forsvaret i Perioden 2005-2008* [Modernizing the Armed Forces 2005-2008] (Oslo, Norway: Forsvarsdepartementet [Ministry of Defense], 2004), p.9 , <http://odin.dep.no/filarkiv/208105/STP0304042-TS.pdf> (accessed August 20, 2005).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>3</sup> Sverre Diesen, *Moderniseringen Av Forsvaret - Status Og utfordringer* [Modernizing the Armed Forces - Status and Challenges] (Oslo, Norway: Norwegian Defense, 2005), [http://www.mil.no/multimedia/archive/00069/Forsvarssjefens\\_fore\\_69112a.doc](http://www.mil.no/multimedia/archive/00069/Forsvarssjefens_fore_69112a.doc) (accessed February 10, 2006).

This thesis looks specifically at transformation issues pertaining to Norwegian Special Operation Forces (NORSOF).<sup>4</sup> According to White Paper 42 (a document essentially comparable to the US Quadrennial Defense Review) the political and military leadership of Norway have both emphasized the increased relevancy of a national special operations (SO) capability. However, the question examined here is the degree to which existing NORSOF organizational structure is inconsistent with emerging SOF roles and missions. This question is derived from apparent contradictions in statements between Ministry of Defense (MoD) and Chief of Defense (CHOD). According to White Paper 42, MoD states that the Navy's *Marinejegerkommandoen* (MJK) and the Army's *Hærens Jegerkommando* (HJK) will continue to exist as two separate units within their respective parent services.<sup>5</sup> However, CHOD's prior recommendation was to disband both units and create a new special operations force (SOF).<sup>6</sup> Where and how the new unit will be organized is not specified, and is among the subjects of this inquiry.

Although White Paper no.42, subsequently referred to as the *Long Term Plan* (LTP), is already in effect, it is important to study its details for several reasons. First, the CHOD's recommendation to stand up a new SOF unit will probably re-emerge as the next LTP is prepared. The inconsistency reflects a divergent view of NORSOF's collective capabilities. As this study will show, a core transformation principle is to eliminate redundant capabilities. That is, the ideal is that units that traditionally hold equal or similar roles and missions should be merged, or one of them disbanded. To phrase it as a question: Should both the Navy and Army retain separate SOF units with essentially redundant capabilities, or should the missions and roles of Army and Navy SOF be clearly differentiated?

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<sup>4</sup> In this paper NORSOF is used exclusively as a common term for the two tactical units *Marinejegerkommandoen* (MJK) and *Hærens Jegerkommando* (HJK). MJK is a Naval SOF unit while HJK is an Army SOF unit. The term NORSOF has no organizational meaning beyond this. The Air Force is currently tasked to stand up a SOF-capable helicopter unit, 137 Air Wing. This unit is not included in the discussion in this paper.

<sup>5</sup> Forsvarsdepartementet, *St.Prp.Nr.42 (2003-2004): Den Videre Moderniseringen Av Forsvaret i Perioden 2005-2008*, 56.

<sup>6</sup> Forsvaret, "Forsvarssjefens Militærfaglige Utredning 2003 [Chief of Defense Recommendation 2003]," Forsvaret [Norwegian Defense], [http://www.mil.no/multimedia/archive/00031/Forsvarssjefens\\_Mili\\_31672a.pdf](http://www.mil.no/multimedia/archive/00031/Forsvarssjefens_Mili_31672a.pdf) (accessed August 26, 2005).

Second, according to the LTP, the Norwegian military is presently required to develop a capability within an organizational structure which runs contrary to its own recommendations. This suggests the possibility that either one or both units will not develop optimally.

Third, the Norwegian government has not indicated why and how NORSOF should expand. To transform effectively, a relevant framework is required in which missions and roles can be specified. This framework does not exist.

Despite these challenges, NORSOF's role in contemporary wars and conflicts has proved increasingly important. Since the attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, NORSOF deployments to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom have gained considerable media attention, and the military has subsequently released more information on both MJK and HJK. Using unclassified sources, this thesis is an attempt to contribute to the continuous development of two professional units critical to Norway's national security.

## **B. THE LONG TERM PLANNING PROCESS**

This section briefly explains the long term planning process to provide a basic understanding of the main stakeholders and the documents generated throughout the process.

Every four years, the government issues a Long Term Plan to the military, specifying, among other things, its future structure. The LTP is issued as a White Paper or *Stortingsproposisjon* (St.prp.) from MoD on behalf of the government. Before the proposition goes into effect, it requires majority support from the parliament.

Before the proposition is developed and forwarded to the parliament for a vote, CHOD issues his recommendations to MoD through a committee called *Militærfaglig Utredning*. CHOD's military recommendations are based on existing economic constraints and national security political goals, along with other considerations. MoD adjusts CHOD's recommendations in accordance with political opportunities and constraints.

A proposition requires majority support from the parliament before it takes effect. The parliament discusses the proposition in a Standing Committee on Defense, which in principle consists of representatives from all political parties.<sup>7</sup> The Standing Committee on Defense make comments on the proposition through a document called *Innstilling*, which is an amendment to the proposition. The amendment and the proposition are then forwarded to the parliament for a vote. For all practical purposes, the outcome of the voting is determined in the committee. Once the proposition is accepted in the parliament, the proposition goes into effect. Figure 1 shows the political and military hierarchy and the functional relation between government and parliament.

After the proposition is in effect, MoD will issue a Letter of Instruction, or *Iverksettelsesbrev*, to CHOD, explicitly stating what the government wants the military to do in the forthcoming period. The process including relevant documents is illustrated in Figure 2.

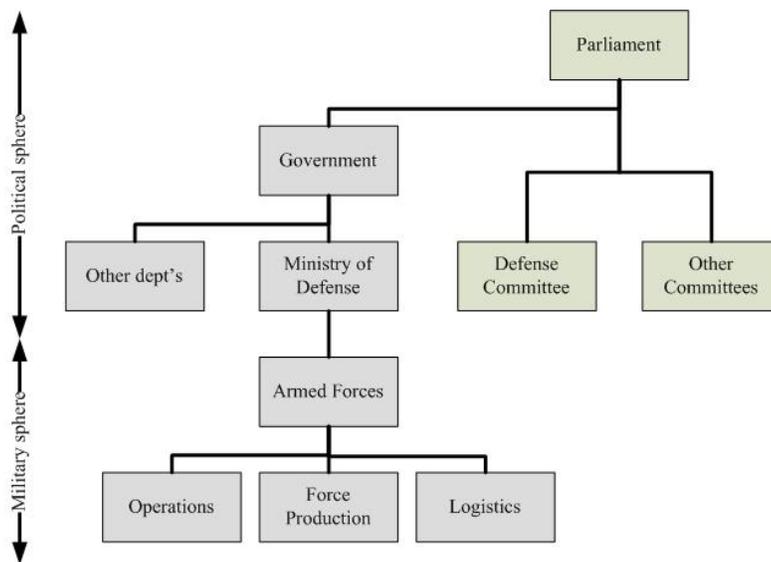


Figure 1. *Political and military hierarchies and functional relationships*

The process is simple, but involves political trade-offs on many levels. Within the military organization, CHOD's recommendations are often perceived as controversial

<sup>7</sup> Stortinget, *Stortinget (Norwegian Parliament) Rules of Procedure*, 2004, [http://www.stortinget.no/english/rules\\_of\\_procedure.pdf](http://www.stortinget.no/english/rules_of_procedure.pdf) (accessed September 8, 2005). See Section 8.

when they suggest that units or capabilities be reorganized or disbanded. By the same token, political trade-offs have implications for the organizational structure. Base realignment has been a contested issue for domestic policy reasons. More importantly, the recent strategic shift from national territorial defense to international expeditionary-type operations has sparked political tension. Military support for the U.S. led Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom has been and remains politically disputed.

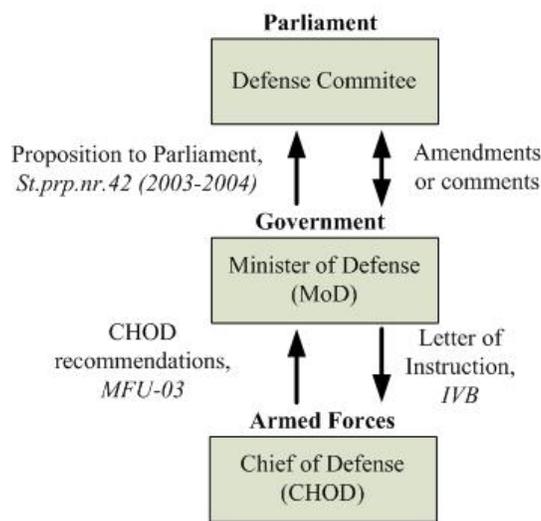


Figure 2. *The planning process (including document flow) of the Parliament, the Government, and the Armed Forces*

The current LTP is St.prp.nr.42 (2003-2004). A majority of Parliament clearly supported an increased focus on special operations capabilities. Not only does the government emphasize the importance of increasing existing capabilities, it also decided to create a special operations capable air wing to increase tactical support to NORSOF. These are important signals from the political-strategic level, and are also within CHOD's recommendations. However, while CHOD recommended disbanding MJK and HJK and create a single SOF unit, the Government decided that both units should be maintained and developed within their respective branch of service.

### **C. THE PROBLEM**

While the Government states that NORSOFF's capabilities are to be expanded, it does not say anything about why and how the units are supposed to expand, as is common for conventional capabilities. There might be rational reasons for this lack of guidance in unclassified documents. Yet, this inconsistency, along with the lack of political guidance, suggests that at least two competing perspectives exist on emerging NORSOFF roles and missions.

These competing views are mirrored within the military establishment. This assertion is first of all based on the assumption that political leaders normally do follow CHOD's recommendations. Political debate is sparked by base realignment or force structure because of employment, budgetary, or security policy issues. The extent to which the merger of two tactical units should create the same political debate is questionable.

There are two schools of thought that have led to these competing views: the view that would merge MJK and HJK and establish a new unit under a single service-branch, and the other view, which appears to emphasize maintaining the status quo. The first school, which CHOD represents, asserts that to merge the two units is the only rational organizational form given that both units operate within the same spectrum of missions. Maintaining two units producing the same output is not consistent with guidelines for the current transformation. Merging MJK and HJK will eliminate interoperability issues, a transformation factor pertaining specifically to NORSOFF. Factors pertaining to the current transformation process are discussed in Chapter IV.

The other school of thought, represented by the Government, emphasizes that the two units serve different purposes and complement each other over a wide spectrum of roles and missions. A naval SOF unit is better suited to support naval operations than an Army SOF unit. Maritime capabilities cannot be adequately trained and executed within an Army infrastructure. Service orientation is thus held as a capability on its own.

Which school best serves the national interest is hard to determine. If missions and roles are not clearly stated, a decision on future organizational arrangements will

necessarily be based on perceptions. The competing views suggest this is the case. Not only is political guidance unclear, but there is also no military strategy that could have guided this development. Hence a turf war has evolved over how to implement the LTP with regard to NORSOFF as a whole. This applies to the tactical as well as the strategic level.

Meanwhile, for better or worse, both units are expanding as a result of their respective Service Chief's benevolence. It is the Service Chiefs' responsibility to meet personnel constraints within their service branch. Given current personnel constraints, arguably the most critical factor in the current transformation of NAF in general, how can MJK and HJK, both referred to as a strategic resource, insure they receive the proper priority to meet the ambitious goals stated by Parliament? The current situation can be beneficial for the individual units given their respective integration and utility in their parent services. Arguably, HJK is better integrated in the Army than MJK is in the Navy. Small unit tactics, the essence of SOF operations, are more familiar to the Army than the Navy. But if SOF is a strategic resource, then decisions pertaining to roles and missions should not be left to their parent services to decide without proper guidance. This suggests that questions pertaining to NORSOFF future roles are reduced to the tactical/operational rather than the political/strategic level.

Based on this brief analysis, this paper hypothesizes that the existing NORSOFF organizational structure is inconsistent with emerging roles and missions. A full test of this hypothesis in an unclassified thesis is unlikely. At this stage in the analysis, there is no clear answer. But since the Cold War has ended, and the security environment definitely has changed, Cold War missions and roles might very well be obsolete; this is topic at least worth review. To begin such a process by discussing whether existing units should merge seems premature. The inconsistency suggests a lack of a thorough review of future roles and missions. There is at least lack of consensus on the issue. Chief of Defense Gen. Diesen claims that current funding of the NAF contradicts the Cold War concept of maintaining a "balanced defense structure" – a military structure consisting of the full spectrum of capabilities.<sup>8</sup> It follows necessarily that capabilities will be

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<sup>8</sup> Diesen, *Moderniseringen Av Forsvaret - Status Og Udfordringer*.

abandoned as economic constraints force a reorganization of the structure. However, reorganizing the structure will not in itself reveal which capabilities to maintain or disband. A different framework for addressing NORSOFF's future roles is thus required in order to address its future organizational structure.

One framework for addressing future transformation of US SOF is proposed by Christopher Lamb, former director of US Policy Planning in the Office for the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict.<sup>9</sup> According to Lamb, the following criteria should be used when discussing SOF roles and missions in the aftermath of the Cold War:

1. The nature of the security threat and the anticipated nature of the future security environment
2. The security strategy adopted to deal with the changed environment
3. The nature of the forces themselves

Although Lamb proposes this framework for US SOF, there are no apparent impediments to using the same framework as a starting point in discussing NORSOFF future roles and missions. Although other frameworks certainly could be applied, such as NATO requirements or a comparison with comparable European nations, Lamb's suggestion has several advantages.

First, defense planning is a question of national needs and requirements. For a smaller nation, Alliance requirements certainly apply. Commitments made by NATO's member countries in Prague in 2002 exemplify this.<sup>10</sup> But defense planning by consensus has so far not transcended national requirements to any significant extent. Standardization of forces is arguably still one of NATO's biggest challenges. Norway's newly commissioned Nansen-class Frigates exemplify the purchase of a combat platform whose primary role, anti-submarine warfare, is not in demand within NATO. Likewise, purchase of new airplanes to substitute for an ageing fleet of F-16's is not a NATO project. At

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<sup>9</sup> Christopher Lamb, "Perspectives on Emerging SOF Roles and Missions," *Special Warfare* (July 1995), 2-9.

<sup>10</sup> Information on the current transformation of NATO, including the Prague Capabilities Commitment, can be obtained from NATO's homepages at [www.nato.int](http://www.nato.int).

best, it is a common effort among a few nations, arguably for the benefit of reduced costs. It is unlikely, therefore, that the transformation of strategic SOF units will be a combined effort within NATO. Lamb's framework, focusing on national requirements, therefore seems more plausible and relevant as a starting point for discussing NORSOF transformation.

An extensive comparison with specific other nations is arguably most feasible for tactical reasons. In comparing units within NATO for standardization on techniques, tactics, and procedures, interoperability certainly will improve. This thesis, however, is not concerned with standardization at the tactical level, although standardization is a factor internal to NORSOF transformation, as discussed below. The questions raised in this paper are instead focused on NORSOF's potential and utility as a national asset. Norway's national requirements for strategic special operations (arguably a new role, but consistent with the LTP) can hardly be contrasted with, e.g., British requirements. Tactically, Norwegian units, whether SOF or conventional, can certainly operate in the same physical environment as their British counterparts. Strategically, however, this is not true, because of the national differences in foreign policy agendas, traditions, and the integration of the military as an instrument of statecraft.

#### **D. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Based on Lamb's framework, this paper is organized to address the following questions:

1. What are the traditional NORSOF roles and missions?
2. What is the nature of the security environment and perceived future threats?
3. What are the national strategies available to deal with the new environment?
4. What should be the future roles and mission of NORSOF?

Especially important, in Lamb's view, is the nature of the mission:

If Special Operations Forces are asked to conduct missions contrary to their current nature, they eventually will evolve into different types of forces. The risks inherent in such change is that SOF might duplicate

capabilities that already exist in other forces and that they would be unable to effectively conduct traditional special-operations missions.<sup>11</sup>

The principal method used to answer these questions will be a review of existing doctrine, literature, and practice. National and NATO doctrine, Forsvarets Fellesoperative Doktrine (FFOD) and Allied Joint Publication 1 (AJP-01(B)), both unclassified documents, are therefore essential for this examination, along with various other relevant government documents. With the exception of the WWII period, references to current NORSOF history are sparse. Erling Krange, a former Navy frogman, has published a book on Norwegian naval diving which includes a partial description of the early history of MJK. No similar publication is available to this author's knowledge, on HJK, except what can be found on Norwegian defense web pages. Due to recent international deployments beginning in the mid-1990's, MJK and HJK have become increasingly visible in the national media. Still, tactical information on the units themselves are protected from public access, and rightfully so. But there is no reference to NORSOF as part of national strategy except as a relevant and competent niche capability for NATO.<sup>12</sup>

Internationally, the literature on SOF is broader. Most of this literature is concerned with historical anecdotes from tactical battles or the story of the tactical units themselves. Interestingly, tactical information on MJK and HJK has become more available through international literature.<sup>13</sup> Less has been published on SOF's strategic utility. Eliot Cohen and Colin Gray, both noted strategists and defense analysts, are cited in this paper due to their contributions on SOF and strategy. Lucien Vandembroucke is cited for his evaluation of SOF as an instrument of US foreign policy in a book he wrote while working for the US State Department. Much of the relevant literature is fairly new, as prior to 1990 SOF in general had a mixed reputation. After all, conventional strategy, based on doctrines of attrition, dominated during the Cold War, and this is a strategy not

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<sup>11</sup> Lamb, "Perspectives on Emerging SOF Roles and Missions," 2.

<sup>12</sup> Forsvarsdepartementet, *Relevant Force: Strategic Concept for the Norwegian Armed Forces* (Oslo, Norway: Forsvarsdepartementet [Ministry of Defense], 2004), 73-74, <http://www.odin.no/fd/english/doc/handbooks/010051-120204/dok-bn.html> (accessed August 21, 2005).

<sup>13</sup> For example, see Leroy Thompson, *The Rescuers: The World's Top Anti-Terrorist Units* (Boulder, Co, Paladin Press, 1986), pp. 90-91, and Ross S. Kelly, *Special Operations and National Purpose* (Lexington, Mass: Lexington Books, 1989), 66-69.

necessarily favorable to SOF. The mixed reputation of SOF especially applies to US SOF after Vietnam, as documented by Thomas K. Adams. The British experience is arguably different, as the British successfully utilized SOF in post-colonial conflicts throughout the Cold War era.<sup>14</sup> However, less is written on the British SOF's strategic utility compared to the US tradition. Overall, the bulk of the literature describing SOF's role in a national, strategic perspective is influenced by US traditions and experiences.

The end of the Cold War saw an upsurge of interest in SOF and its applicability in "small wars." This has resulted in increased interest in the strategic use of SOF and a corresponding increase in articles on the subject. Although tactical stories still constitute the majority of published books, increasing numbers of relevant journal articles are being published through military journals and research institutes. Again, the articles are heavily influenced by US experience and lessons learned.

The dominance of literature showing US influence might initially seem to make a scholarly approach, and hence its conclusions, less relevant for a small nation like Norway. However, as NAF and NORSOF increasingly focus on international operations, certain common principles, whether tactical or strategic, still apply. NATO doctrine resembles US doctrine in many ways, especially with regard to SOF. Knowing that national doctrine on SOF is more or less a blue-print of NATO's doctrine, the US influence is already prevalent on the national level. The small nation's dilemma, however, is to utilize these lessons for its own national purpose. It is unlikely that Norway will experience its own Vietnam, Malaya, Son Tay, or for that matter Afghanistan.

Chapter II addresses historical as well as current NORSOF roles, missions, and structure. It begins with a general discussion of SOF to provide a conceptual framework for understanding special operations. Chapter II will answer the first question: What are the traditional NORSOF roles and missions?

Chapter III focuses on current and future threats. This chapter is necessary to define the types of conflicts or threats that may in the future generate roles and missions.

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<sup>14</sup> There are many accounts of UK SOF's tactical employments after WWII. See, for example, Robin Neillands, *In the Combat Zone: Special Forces Since 1945* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1997).

The chapter also discusses national strategies to deal with future threats. Although no coherent military strategy exists, historical and existing practice, along with recent political statements, indicate how the military is used as an instrument of state power. Chapter III answers the second and third research questions: What is the nature of the security environment and perceived future threats? What are the national strategies available to deal with the new environment?

Chapter IV addresses the last research question: What should be the future roles and mission of NORSOF? It suggests potentially new NORSOF roles and missions. The discussion is kept on an operational and strategic level; tactical level missions are generally not discussed. Whether HJK should have rubber boats or MJK should have vehicles is not important for this paper. More crucial is a conceptual clarification of roles in accordance with doctrinal terms. The chapter concludes with recommendations on future NORSOF transformation.

## II. NORFOP: TRADITIONAL ROLES AND MISSION

The first part of this chapter explores Special Operations (SO) and Special Operation Forces (SOF) in a national context through a review of existing doctrine, the best unclassified source of guidance from a military perspective, and existing literature on the subject. The last part of the chapter explores historical and recent practice in order to establish relevant facts about traditional roles and missions.

### A. DOCTRINE: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

*Forsvarets Fellesoperative Doktrine* (FFOD) is the central doctrinal document. It is divided into parts A and B. Principles regarding operations, including SO, are described in part B. Service based doctrines are subordinate to FFOD. There is no separate doctrine for SOF.

According to FFOD, doctrine consists of fundamental principles pertaining to the development and use of military forces.<sup>15</sup> Its central task is to describe the foundation for military activity, provide normative guidelines, and describe the capabilities needed to execute the doctrine. Doctrinal guidelines are not absolute, but rather strong recommendations. It is essential that doctrines change as required by security and defense policy, along with technological evolution. Accordingly, doctrine is only useful as a tool to the degree the future correlates with the past.<sup>16</sup>

FFOD is in its general form based on NATO's doctrine.<sup>17</sup> Central to NATO's doctrine is *Allied Joint Publications*, AJP-01 and AJP-3, *Operations*. As with FFOD, various service-based doctrines are subordinated AJP-01. Figure 3 illustrates the relationship between Norwegian and NATO doctrines.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Forsvarets Overkommando, *Forsvarets Fellesoperative Doktrine Del A - Grunnlag [Joint Doctrine Part A - General]* [Joint Doctrine part A] (Oslo, Norway: Department of Defense, 2000), 13.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. 1.5.1 and 1.5.2.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 18, table 1.1.

National			NATO		
National Joint Doctrine (FFOD part A and B)			Allied Joint Operations doctrine (AJP-01)		
			Operations (AJP-3)		
Doctrine for Land Operations	Doctrine for Naval Operations	Doctrine for Air Operations	Land Operations	Maritime and Amphibious Operations	Air and Space Operations

Figure 3. *Structural resemblance between Norway and NATO's doctrinal hierarchies (after FFOD part A)*

Chapter 15 of FFOD part B, *Spesialoperasjoner* (Special Operations), is a translation of Chapter 8, *Special Operations*, in AJP-01(B). Little or nothing reflects a national adaptation of FFOD. Like AJP-01(B), FFOD part B does define and describe SO tasks and characteristics in a general way.

### 1. Special Operations: Definition

Defining SO is essential to distinguish SOF from conventional forces. Without a proper definition or understanding of what SOF represents, SO could easily be defined as whatever a decision-maker wants SOF to be, including as a substitute for conventional forces. Likewise, if all there is to being "special" is a certain amount of training and equipment, most military units could probably be defined as special. An article recently published at the official defense website illustrates the point by claiming that NATO's training center for SOF "educates special soldiers from, among others, the HJK, Coastal Rangers Commando, MJK and ISTAR."<sup>19</sup> The point is not to insist that non-SOF units are not specialists. Coastal Rangers and ISTAR do perform special roles. But they are not conducting special operations.

Defining SO and SOF are important for functional purposes. Colin Gray asserts that "it is imperative to define special operations, but there is peril in the exercise."<sup>20</sup> A definition can be either "so vague and inclusive as to provide no meaningful guidance or

<sup>19</sup> Lars M. Hovtun, "Spesialister Får NATO- Trening [Specialists Trained by NATO]," Norwegian Defense, <http://www.mil.no/haren/start/article.jhtml?articleID=108557> (accessed October 11, 2005). Author's translation.

<sup>20</sup> Colin S. Gray, *Explorations in Strategy* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1996), 144.

so rigid and focused as to risk inhibiting the imagination of special operations forces themselves and of their political and military clients.”<sup>21</sup>

A simplistic definition of SOF is “that they are what conventional forces are not.”<sup>22</sup> Conventional forces are normally thought of as forces organized, trained, and equipped to defeat other conventional forces through battles. According to Ross Kelly, former senior analyst with the US Defense Intelligence Agency,

[t]he thrust of conventional force training...is the achievement of consistent performance of routine tasks to the highest attainable standard. By contrast, the emphasis in special operations is on directing individual skills to the accomplishment of functions unique to a given mission, generally a high-risk one. Improvisation and independent thinking are essential.<sup>23</sup>

Following Kelly, a significant difference between conventional forces and SOF is the latter’s emphasis on individual skills and the ability to perform unique missions. This is the central argument for claiming that the scope of conventional units is specialization while SOF is more general in nature. Kelly claims that special operations “address a spectrum of challenges not normally considered appropriate for regular armed military or national forces.”<sup>24</sup> What is appropriate or not can certainly be argued. One traditional distinction is SOF’s role as a military component operating independently in enemy controlled territory – behind enemy lines.

NATO’s definition of special operations is

Military activities conducted by specially designated, organised, trained and equipped forces using operational techniques and modes of employment not standard to conventional forces. These activities are conducted across the full range of military operations (peace, crisis and conflict) independently or in co-ordination with operations of conventional forces to achieve military, political, economic and psychological objectives or a combination thereof. Political-military considerations may

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<sup>21</sup> Gray, *Explorations in Strategy*, 144.

<sup>22</sup> Lamb, “Perspectives on Emerging SOF Roles and Missions,” 3.

<sup>23</sup> Ross S. Kelly, *Special Operations and National Purpose* (Lexington, Mass: Lexington Books, 1989), xvii.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, xvi.

require covert or discreet techniques and the acceptance of a degree of physical and political risk not associated with conventional operations.<sup>25</sup>

This definition requires some clarification. First, it states that SOF uses operational techniques and modes of employment not standard to conventional forces. To a certain extent this is correct. But at the same time, there are few operational techniques unique to SOF as such, as Gray also notes.<sup>26</sup> NATO's definition emphasizes SOF's ability to employ unique skills more than anything else. Tugwell and Charter use the term "unorthodox" to distinguish SO from conventional operations and units.<sup>27</sup> Unorthodox must be understood as referring to missions rather than techniques. It is the "quantity and intensity or level of skills required of each man or very small group"<sup>28</sup> that makes the significant difference, not the skill set itself. The higher level and broader spectrum of skills at the individual or small unit level make SOF more applicable to certain types of operations. Special Operations Executive's (SOE) operation against the heavy water plant at Rjukan in 1943 did not involve skills exclusive to SOF. Rather, a combination of personal skills, initiative, rigorous training and the ability to improvise made the operation a success.

The spectrum of conflict is defined from peace through crisis and conflict. The latter should be understood as war, a term included in national doctrine. In a post-Cold War scenario, this must be interpreted as the spectrum of conflict in the area of operation rather than in Norway proper. This point might seem obsolete, but the distinction is important because "war" is a negative word in comparison to the arguably more neutral term "operations." This became clear during NATO's air campaign in Kosovo in 1999, when then-prime minister Kjell Magne Bondevik, denied that Norwegian F-16 pilots

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<sup>25</sup> NATO, *Allied Joint Doctrine AJP-01(B)*(NATO, 2002), 8.1. FFOD explicitly states this is the definition used in national doctrine. See Forsvarets Overkommando, *Forsvarets Fellesoperative Doktrine Del B - Operasjoner [Joint Doctrine Part B - Operations]* [Joint Doctrine part B] (Oslo, Norway: Department of Defense, 2000), 203.

<sup>26</sup> Gray, *Explorations in Strategy*, 146.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 145. Tugwell and Charter define Special Operations as "[s]mall-scale, clandestine, covert or overt operations of an unorthodox and frequently high-risk nature, undertaken to achieve significant political or military objects in support of foreign policy."

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 146.

were engaged in war, claiming they were rather “part of a restricted military campaign.”<sup>29</sup> To wrongly interpret the level of conflict is likely to result in misuse of military power.

A feature arguably pertaining more than anything to the special image of SOF is its association with covert and clandestine operations. NATO’s definition uses the terms discreet and covert, while FFOD use the terms discreet, covert and clandestine. For the purpose of this thesis, the terms covert, clandestine, and overt will be used. A covert operation conceals its sponsor, i.e. national authorities do not take responsibility whether the operation succeeds or not. A clandestine operation conceals its existence, i.e., mission success hinges on the ability to keep planning and execution secret. The sponsor will, however, claim responsibility upon completion. An overt operation neither denies its nature nor its sponsor. A SO can be any of these types as well as a combination of covert and clandestine.

However, there are organizational and practical as well as moral and constitutional implications to the conduct of covert operations. Discussing the legal implications of snatching Osama Bin Laden in a covert operation involving US SOF in 1993, Vice President Al Gore’s remarked to President Bill Clinton that “[o]f course it’s a violation of international law, that’s why it’s a covert action.”<sup>30</sup> Covert operations are necessarily associated with high political risk. Special operations is traditionally a high risk venture for its sponsors. This is also reflected in NATO’s definition. Without this understanding of risk at the political and military strategic level, NORSOF might not be utilized at maximum capacity.

Special operations forces can achieve much within a certain set of parameters. But high gains for low costs come with greater risk. Militarily, the risk is the loss of personnel due to the risky nature of the mission; politically, the risk is loss of political prestige.

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<sup>29</sup> Halvor Elvik, "Ord Om Krig [Words on War]," *Dagbladet*, <http://www.dagbladet.no/nyheter/1999/03/26/161500.html> (accessed September 9, 2005). Prime Minister Bondevik later admitted that the pilots had participated in a war.

<sup>30</sup> Cited in Richard A. Clarke, *Against all Enemies: Inside America's War on Terror* (New York: Free Press, 2004), 144.

## 2. Special Operations Missions

It is normal in the US literature to separate SOF tasks in two categories, the commando role and the unconventional warfare role. David Tucker, Associate Professor of Defense Analysis at the Naval Postgraduate School, California, offers a slightly different framework in an article on US SOF, coauthored with Christopher Lamb. Tucker and Lamb claim there are two principal modes in which SOF accomplishes its tasks: the direct action approach, which brings force directly in contact with the enemy, and the indirect approach, which brings force to the enemy indirectly through a surrogate force. The essential idea is that there are capabilities for both direct action and indirect action.<sup>31</sup>

This separation is not recognized in NATO doctrine. Instead, AJP-01(B) defines three principal SO tasks: Special Surveillance and Reconnaissance (SR), Direct Action (DA), and Military Assistance (MA). Using broad descriptions, existing doctrine certainly does not limit SOF's potential. While doctrine should not limit the use of SOF by narrowing its potential tasks, it should not be so broad as to be meaningless. Whether the latter is the case can be argued. However, the principal tasks can be thought of as general capabilities.

Strategic reconnaissance tends to complement operational or strategic intelligence collectors in order to support the operational or strategic decision-making process. Strategic reconnaissance is exemplified in AJP-01(B) as:

- Area assessment
- Advance force operations (reconnaissance and surveillance prior to conventional operations)
- Target acquisition
- Early warning on enemy forces concentration, movement, command and control, etc.
- Intelligence on critical infrastructure in denied territory (meteorological, geographic, hydrographic, and post-attack reconnaissance)
- Close target reconnaissance

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<sup>31</sup> David Tucker and Christopher J. Lamb, "Restructuring Special Operations Forces for Emerging Threats," *Strategic Forum*, no. 219 (January 2006, 2006), 1-6, [www.ndu.edu/inss](http://www.ndu.edu/inss) (accessed January 31, 2006).

The list is not exhaustive, and neither should it be. The important aspect is the emphasis on operational or strategic intelligence collection. The question to be asked, however, is if current doctrine embodies ghosts from the past, i.e., Cold War strategic requirements. Do modern conflicts require a redefinition of the term? Denied territory, at least, has an expanded meaning after the Cold War. Increased urbanization and increased use of information technology are only two scenarios that require rethinking existing concepts. The classic Cold War scenario with its conventional, linear battlefronts is increasingly replaced by peace support operations and insurgent-type conflicts where frontlines simply do not exist. Iraq and Afghanistan are illustrative examples. In both conflicts, conventional combat operations terminated in a matter of weeks or months. The wars, however, are far from over. The relevance of intelligence however, has not decreased. Despite technological revolutions, it is questionable how far technology can substitute for human eyes and ears.

Direct action (DA) is normally thought of as small-scale offensive raids with operational or strategic value. Such raids, according to AJP-01(B), are “normally limited in scope and duration.”<sup>32</sup> The WWII British X-craft attacks on the battleship Tirpitz in Altafjord, and SOE raid on the heavy-water plant at Rjukan, are examples of strategic raids. The time factor associated with planning these operations is not necessarily limited, as both missions took months and years to develop. But once initiated, they clearly had both short durations and limited scopes. Examples of DA include the following:

- Attack on critical targets, whether personnel or materiel
- Attack on command and control lines or nodes
- Capture or recovery of designated personnel
- Operations involving weapons of mass destruction (WMD)
- Personnel recovery in hostile territory (CSAR)

As for strategic reconnaissance, a changed battlefield might also redefine where, when, and how DA is executed, including the legal and moral ramifications of DA. Conflicts short of war represent challenges not seen during WWII. Except for WMD,

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<sup>32</sup> NATO, *Allied Joint Doctrine AJP-01(B)*, 8-3.

doctrine refers to examples conveniently fitting Cold War thinking with its emphasis on a tactical battlefield and strategic depth.

Military assistance (MA) as defined in current doctrine is associated with training friendly or indigenous forces for a counterinsurgency role or irregular warfare. It can also be thought of as what strategic reconnaissance and direct action are not. Parts of the MA conception are closely associated with the term unconventional warfare (UW), a core task of US Special Forces (USSF). Examples of MA are:

- Assisting indigenous forces by training, equipping, or supporting them to exploit “a hostile power’s political, military, economic or psychological weaknesses.”<sup>33</sup> This is often referred to as irregular or partisan warfare.
- Assisting friendly governments by training, equipping, or supporting their military and paramilitary units to provide internal stability. This is in US terminology referred to as Foreign Internal Defense (FID)
- Assisting in the establishment of escape and evasion nets in hostile territory
- Training friendly forces to enhance alliance interoperability. This can be accomplished by joint exercises at all levels.

In addition, MA includes support to peace operations, a role arguably associated with post-Cold War conflicts. Support to peace operations includes:

- Technical support within areas like organizational planning, command and control (C2), health care, security, etc.
- Using cultural and language skills to provide assets for conflict resolution through liaison teams.

MA has traditionally not been part of NAF’s focus, although Norway has a longstanding tradition of participating in UN operations. Nor has MA been a task of importance for NORSOF, as will be shown later. Before NAF’s focus started to move outwards in the mid-1990’s, deploying for UN operations was not considered career enhancing for an officer. This indicates the low regard for UN missions in general and hence the potential for developing indirect strategies within NAF as an organization.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> NATO, *Allied Joint Doctrine AJP-01(B)*, 8-4.

<sup>34</sup> Ståle Ulriksen, *Den Norske Forsvarstradisjonen: Militærmakt Eller Folkeforsvar? [Norwegian Defense Traditions: Military Power or People’s Army?]* (Oslo, Norway: Pax Forlag A/S, 2002), 236-238.

According to Tucker and Lamb, strategic reconnaissance and direct action fall within SO direct action capabilities, while military assistance falls within indirect action capabilities. An important observation is that the two approaches can be mutually supportive. Likewise, using indirect capabilities “might include direct engagement of enemy forces.”<sup>35</sup> Tucker and Lamb’s division of roles will be used to clarify the discussion throughout this paper.

Doctrine does not say anything about missions and roles as developed within various services, i.e., whether there are characteristics, requirements, roles, or missions that distinguish Army, Navy, or Air Force SOF. Doctrine can therefore only offer general guidelines for NORSOF roles and missions. In particular, there is little or no guidance on how to understand service-based division of roles or NORSOF’s strategic utility.

### **3. Strategic Special Operations**

Strategic special operations require a separate definition because current doctrine does not address this topic. As per NATO doctrine, SOF pursues strategic objectives, implicitly addressing SOF as an operational level asset. According to Vandenbroucke, strategic special operations are strikes that “sought to achieve major foreign policy aims rather than just tactical objectives....These are secret military or paramilitary strikes, approved at the highest level of the U.S. government after detailed review.”<sup>36</sup>

Vandenbroucke claims that strategic SO support political rather than strategic objectives. Strategic SO are thus part of the U.S. government’s arsenal of state power, and as such represent an alternative to conventional military power. Vandenbroucke’s definition is narrow, and focuses exclusively on direct action operations. His case studies specifically include toppling foreign regimes (Bay of Pigs, 1961) and hostage rescue operations (Son Tay, 1970 and Iran rescue attempt, 1980). To qualify as a strategic SO,

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<sup>35</sup> Tucker and Lamb, *Restructuring Special Operations Forces for Emerging Threats*, 1.

<sup>36</sup> Lucien S. Vandenbroucke, *Perilous Options: Special Operations as an Instrument of U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 4. He emphasizes it is the unconventional application of force that differentiates strategic SO from conventional strikes in support of U.S. foreign policy objectives. The latter is exemplified by the 1986 air strike against Libya. Unconventional SO are exemplified by the Bay of Pigs (1961), the Son Tay raid (1970), and the attempt to rescue US hostages in Iran (1980). The latter eventually led to a reorganization of US SOF chain of command and the emergence of USSOCOM in 1986.

the operation must support a foreign policy crisis. Hence political oversight of planning and execution is required beyond what is considered normal for military operations.<sup>37</sup>

There might be more to strategic SO than strikes and a foreign policy crisis; military assistance could include operations through its definition that could be perceived as supporting foreign policy. Dr. J. Paul de B. Taillon, Director, Review and Military Liaison, Office of the Communications Security Establishment Commissioner in Canada, asserts in a concept paper published at the joint Special Operations University in Florida that SOF is one of Canada's two strategic assets, intelligence being the other, because "[t]he future employment of CANSOF, as a training asset to assist friendly nations, could ensure high-quality training while, at the same time, extending and leveraging Canadian foreign policy and interests and influence abroad.<sup>38</sup>

This might be true, but it raises the question whether the same effect might not be achieved with conventional assets. An extended conventional bilateral training program seems initially likely to achieve the same foreign policy effect. Also, a training program is less likely to be politically controlled beyond what is considered normal. To differentiate strategic SO from what can be labeled general SO, Vandenbroucke's definition seems more plausible than Taillon's.

Hence, for this thesis, strategic SO is defined as covert or clandestine direct action operation in support of national foreign policy objectives, approved at the highest level within the Norwegian government.

Conducting strategic operations requires SO influence at the appropriate level. Without such influence, strategic SO is not likely to be an option for policy makers. This assertion is based on the US experience and literature on this specific topic. It is commonly known that US SOF units were not held in high esteem by the conventional military leadership after the Vietnam War. US SOF Units were downsized, much like they were after WWII. This downsizing reached a culminating point in the catastrophic 1980 attempt to rescue embassy US personnel being held hostage in Teheran, Iran. The

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<sup>37</sup> Vandenbroucke, *Perilous Options*, ix.

<sup>38</sup> J. Paul de B. Taillon, *The Evolving Requirements of the Canadian Special Operations Forces: A Future Concept Paper* (Hurlburt Field, FL: Joint Special Operations University, 2005), 3.

incident triggered the 1986 creation of US Special Operations Command (USSOCOM). Once established, the new command started a process of leveraging SOF's influence, especially within the military hierarchy.<sup>39</sup>

Having USSOCOM as an overarching organization with distinct funding authority, responsibility for doctrines and for coordinating tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP) within the complete SOF community, helped to improve SOF's capabilities. It can be argued, however, that USSOCOM's strategic role is still challenged. According to Schultz, organizational behavior and lack of strategic influence prevented SO from being an option to eliminate the emerging threat of Al Qaeda prior to 9/11.<sup>40</sup> Although Schultz's article is written in hindsight, his argument illustrates the obstacles to SOF being used for foreign policy purposes. Much changed after 9/11, illustrating the importance of a visible crisis. Yet, according to the definition, it can be argued that current SOF operations in Afghanistan and Iraq are not strategic special operations; to the degree these are strategic, they support military strategic objectives, which again support foreign policy.

NORSOF's strategic importance is reflected in St.prp.nr.42 (2003-2004), stating that NORSOF is a strategic asset. St.prp.nr.42 also emphasizes that the military strategic level should be strengthened, and that it is necessary to "increase manning at the operational level in order to strengthen Commander National Joint Headquarter's ability to direct SOF missions when authority is transferred."<sup>41</sup> Command authority is thus retained at the military strategic level. The statements also indicate that this level is not yet capable of acting in its role as a strategic umbrella for NORSOF. The degree to which strategic SO currently has a role in the national context beyond the rhetorical is therefore

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<sup>39</sup> Susan L. Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare: Rebuilding U.S. Special Operations Forces* (Washington, D.C: Brookings Institution, 1997), 319. See especially pp. 60-90 for a thorough account of political involvement in this process.

<sup>40</sup> Richard H. Shultz Jr., "Nine Reasons Why we Never Sent our Special Operations Forces After Al Qaeda Before 9/11," *The Weekly Standard*, <http://www.weeklystandard.com/content/public/articles/000/000/003/613twavk.asp?pg=1> (accessed February 7, 2006).

<sup>41</sup> Forsvarsdepartementet, *St.Prp.Nr.42 (2003-2004)*, 56, author's translation.

unclear. More importantly, strategic SO presents a specter of operations conducted in peace, not in war.

#### **4. Levels of Military Operations and Organization**

A discussion of levels of military operations is necessary to illustrate NORSOF's operational or strategic potential. This section also includes historical and current NORSOF C2 arrangements.

FFOD distinguishes four levels of military operations.<sup>42</sup>

- a. The political-military level, represented by the Government.
- b. The military-strategic level, represented by the Chief of Defense
- c. The military-operational level, represented by the National Joint Headquarters (NJHQ)
- d. The military-tactical level, represented by tactical units

The political-military level, hereafter referred to as the political level, is responsible for coordinating elements of national power in order to secure the nation's interests, whether economic, diplomatic, psychological or military.<sup>43</sup> The military-strategic level, hereafter called the strategic level, is responsible for coordinating military efforts to support political intentions. The operational level is responsible for planning and conducting joint operations as set forth in strategic directives, while the tactical level is responsible for tactical deployments and the use of force in support of operational plans. The hierarchy is illustrated in Figure 4.

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<sup>42</sup> These levels are retrieved from FFOD part A, ch 2.8., but are adapted to reflect recent changes in the military organizational structure as set forth in St.prp.nr.45 (2000-2001).

<sup>43</sup> Forsvarets Overkommando, *Forsvarets Fellesoperative Doktrine Del A - Grunnlag [Joint Doctrine Part A - General]*, 35.

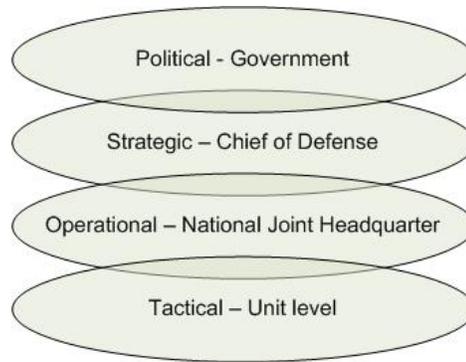


Figure 4. *Levels of military operation, and corresponding levels of responsibility*

The strategic level is retained by CHOD in an integrated Ministry of Defense which in turn represents the political strategic level.<sup>44</sup> The political and strategic command level is integrated and co-located in Oslo. The operational level leadership is located at the NJHQ in Stavanger. Joint SOF operations are executed from a separate cell within the J-3 staff/NJHQ.<sup>45</sup> As tactical units, MJK and HJK are located in Ramsund and Rena respectively. It follows from the previous section that unless authority is transferred to NJHQ, authority is retained at the strategic level.

As a rule, resources are allocated to the various units in NAF through the respective Service Chief. It is commonly known that the further down the chain a unit is located, the more resources are filtered. HJK is directly subordinate to Chief of Army Operations.<sup>46</sup> In contrast, MJK is two levels below the Commander of *Kysteskadren* (the Navy), who in turn is subordinate to Chief of Naval Operations.<sup>47</sup> An organizational outline of NORSOFF command and control relations is depicted in Figure 5. *Kysteskadren*

<sup>44</sup> Forsvarsdepartementet, *Forsvarsdepartementet: Integrert Fra 1. August 2003* [Ministry of defense integrated from April 1, 2003] (Oslo, Norway: Forsvarsdepartementet [Ministry of Defense], 2003).

<sup>45</sup> Fellesoperativt hovedkvarter, *Forsvarets Operative Ledelse: En Handlekraftig Fellesoperativ Ledelse for Nasjonal Sikkerhet Og Internasjonalt Engasjement* [An active joint leadership for national security and international engagement] (Stavanger, Norway: National Joint Headquarters [National Joint Headquarter], p.5 (accessed December 12, 2005). As St.prp.nr.42 (2003-2004) also highlights, NJHQ will only direct SOF operations when authority is transferred.

<sup>46</sup> Forsvaret, "Hærens Organisering [Army Organization]," Forsvaret [Norwegian Defense], <http://www.mil.no/haren/start/org/organisering/> (accessed November 10, 2005).

<sup>47</sup> Forsvaret, "Kysteskadren [the Navy]," Forsvaret [Norwegian Defense], [http://www.mil.no/sjo/keskdr/start/?jsessionid=0Q2TXHWV0BCYLF0UN3NCFEQ?\\_requestid=8850646](http://www.mil.no/sjo/keskdr/start/?jsessionid=0Q2TXHWV0BCYLF0UN3NCFEQ?_requestid=8850646) (accessed November 10, 2005).





Figure 6. *NATO's levels of military operations and associated focus (from AJP-01(B))*

The strategic level deals with campaign objectives, while the operational level plans and executes major operations. The tactical level is concerned with individual battles and engagements. Figures 4 and 6 both indicate the lack of clear separation between the various levels.

The command structure and associated levels for NATO are illustrated in Figure 7. The figure is simplified, and only indicates functional names at the appropriate levels. Unless operations are led from NATO's established command structure, a Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) will normally be established to handle individual operations. Figure 7 illustrates organizational arrangements for a CJTF. This is the current command relationship for NATO's operation in Afghanistan.<sup>49</sup> Depending on its mission, a CJTF may or may not have a SO Component Commander (CJSOCC) attached.

From the discussion thus far, it is clear that in a national context, NORSO's level of influence is retained at the strategic level. From an operational perspective, conditions are favorable for NORSO as a strategic tool. From a force provider perspective, a question can be raised whether resources are allocated appropriately? HJK is subordinate to the Chief of Army Operations, allowing tighter connection to the strategic level within the bureaucracy, while MJK is located lower in the bureaucratic hierarchy. A question

<sup>49</sup> NATO, "International Security Assistance Force," NATO, <http://www.afnorth.nato.int/ISAF/index.htm> (accessed November 10, 2005).

can therefore be raised with regard to strategic coordination of NORSOF in terms of funding and doctrine.

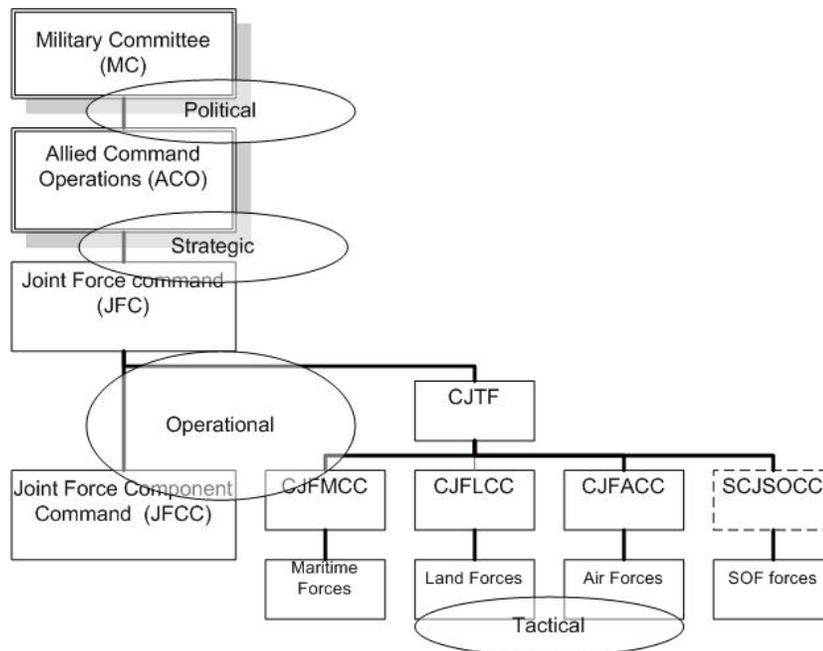


Figure 7. *NATO command hierarchy, the Combined Joint Task Force concept, and associated levels*

In a NATO context, SOF operations support strategic rather than political objectives. This does not exclude SOF from pursuing political objectives when the situation dictates. Since NATO in practical terms does not pursue political objectives on behalf of individual nations, and since consensus is required for collective action to be initiated, strategic SO in peacetime is not likely to be an option. Strategic variables determining SOF's utility are first and foremost found within classic, conventional strategy; they are time, space, and force disposition.<sup>50</sup> In other words, NATO SOF as a collective concept is still dominated by ideas first and foremost associated with Cold War conventional strategy.

<sup>50</sup> Sverre Diesen, *Militær Strategi* [Military Strategy], 2nd ed. (Oslo, Norway: J.W.Cappelens Forlag AS, 1998), 60.

NORSOF thus has two roles with respect to national and NATO utility. According to St.prp.nr.42 (2003-2004), in a national setting NORSOF can pursue political objectives; in a NATO context, it can pursue military objectives.

## **B. NORSOF: HISTORY AND CURRENT CONTEXT**

This section describes Norwegian special operations from WWII until today to provide an unclassified historical context for current roles and missions. Because there is no tradition for irregular warfare in a national context prior to WWII, it is the obvious starting point. This is not unique to Norway, and some have even argued that SOF is a product of the Cold War, an arguable proposition beyond the scope of this thesis.<sup>51</sup>

### **1. World War II**

A short recapitulation of WWII history is not necessary for the purpose of the thesis itself, but is included to explain national traditions. The most famous units operating in Norway were Company Linge and the Shetland Group. Both units were initially created and controlled in the early stage of the war by SOE. SOE, as a secret organization, was authorized in 1940 directly by Churchill “to promote sabotage and subversion in enemy occupied territory and to establish a nucleus of trained men tasked with assisting indigenous resistance groups.”<sup>52</sup> Command of the units later fell under national authority as the Norwegian government was reorganized in London. But their roles and tasks remained more or less the same throughout the war. A third group, the Partisans of Finnmark, also played a significant SO role during the war.

Company Linge was initially trained to perform raid operations on the British Commando model. The raid force concept was abandoned by the end of 1941, although the Company participated in successful raids in Norway. The Company’s founder, Martin Linge, was killed in a commando raid at Måløy in December 1941.

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<sup>51</sup> Richard H. Shultz, Robert L. Pfaltzgraff and W. Bradley Stock, eds., *Special Operations Forces: Roles and Missions in the Aftermath of the Cold War* U.S. Special Operations Command, 1995), 186. See also John Arquilla, ed., *From Troy to Entebbe: Special Operations in Ancient and Modern Times* (Lanham, Md: University Press of America, 1996), 360.

<sup>52</sup> "Records of Special Operations Executive," The National Archives, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/catalogue/DisplayCatalogueDetails.asp?CATID=153&CATLN=1&FullDetails=True> (accessed November 15, 2005).

Company training was redirected towards irregular warfare with the intent of deploying agents to organize, train and equip local resistance groups, or *Milorg*. The goal was to create a unified resistance organization that could support a possible allied invasion in Norway, attack communication nodes, conduct sabotage against selected targets, protect installations in case of a German retreat, and maintain stability in the immediate aftermath of a German capitulation. According to Jens Christian Hauge, who commanded Milorg in 1944 and served as Norwegian Minister of Defense from 1945 to 1952, it was mainly because of Company Linge that Milorg achieved those ambitious goals.<sup>53</sup> Its most famous operation, often cited as one of the most important strategic operations of WWII, was the 1943 attack on the heavy water plant at Rjukan, a location presumably crucial for Germany's nuclear program.

Throughout the war, 530 operators were trained; 51 were killed in action, and seven were captured. Several operators were killed during training, indicating a high level of realism in exercises.

The Shetland Group began as a British attempt to organize and utilize the refugee flow across the North Sea after the German occupation. Fishermen and others contributed in the evacuation of British soldiers retreating from combat actions in Norway after the capitulation in 1940. In November, Maj. L. H. Mitchell went to Shetland to organize this activity.<sup>54</sup> The intent was to create a sustainable organization that could ferry agents and supplies to Norway and return with refugees. Due to heavy fortification of the Norwegian coast, clandestine operations were the only viable option for bringing in necessary personnel and supplies. The Shetland Group thus became a main effort in shaping the various resistance organizations that emerged during the war.

In 1942, the group's operations, like Company Linge operations, were coordinated with Norwegian authorities. In 1943, the Shetland Group was implemented and organized in the Royal Norwegian Navy as a special unit.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Erling Jensen, Per Ratvik and Ragnar Ulstein, eds., *Kompani Linge (Vol.1)*, 2nd ed. (Oslo, Norway: LibriArte, 1995), 12-13.

<sup>54</sup> Forsvaret, "KNM Hitra [HNoMS Hitra]," Forsvaret [Norwegian Defense], <http://www.mil.no/sjo/hos/start/hitra/> (accessed March 16, 2005).

<sup>55</sup> Forsvaret, "KNM Hitra [HNoMS Hitra]"

The Shetland Group was also involved in offensive operations. In 1942, Capt. Larsen, the most notable group member, towed two Chariots (two-man torpedoes) with his fishing vessel across the North Sea into Trondheimsfjorden in an attempt to attack the German battleship Tirpitz. A severe storm made one of the Chariots break loose, and the mission was aborted before the attack could be initiated.<sup>56</sup> The Shetland Group was later issued US submarine chasers which radically improved their operational capability.

Due to the high risk mission profile and harsh winter weather in the North Sea, the Shetland Group suffered heavy losses throughout the war. During the winter of 1942/43, German counter-operations sank several vessels, leaving 33 dead. The largest individual loss occurred in November 1941, when the vessel *Blia* disappeared along with 43 people.<sup>57</sup>

A third group, the Partisans of Finnmark, was organized and trained by the Soviet secret police NKVD (precursor to the KGB) and the Soviet Northern Fleet. Although minor operations had already commenced in late 1940, the term “partisan” in this context normally refers to Norwegian personnel working for the Soviet Union between 1941 and 1944, after the German invasion of Norway in 1941.<sup>58</sup> Partisan activity was focused on operations in Troms and Finnmark County, the two northernmost counties of Norway.

The Soviets never coordinated partisan activity with Norwegian authorities as did the groups organized by the British. Instead, partisans were on occasions forced to sign a lifelong oath of allegiance for the Soviet Union. Implicit in the oath were threats of punishment if this connection was ever revealed. The partisans’ war efforts were thus never appreciated. Partisans were instead investigated after the war on suspicion of continuing to work for the Soviet intelligence. Their war efforts, however, were significant to the Soviet strategy of relieving German pressure against the Soviet 14th Army at the Litsa-front.<sup>59</sup> As such, their operations are interesting in a SO perspective.

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<sup>56</sup> Sven U. Larsen, "Shetlandsgjengen," Norgeslexi, <http://lotus.uib.no/norgeslexi/krigslex/s/s3.html#shetlandsgjengen> (accessed March 16, 2005).

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Tønne Huitfeldt, *De Norske Partisanene i Finnmark 1941-1944: I Skyggen Av Den Kalde Krigen* [Norwegian Partisans in Finnmark 1941-1944: In the shadows of the Cold War] (Oslo, Norway: Institutt for Forsvarsstudier, 1997), 5.

<sup>59</sup> Huitfeldt, *De Norske Partisanene i Finnmark 1941-1944*, 17.

Partisan missions focused on strategic reconnaissance (SR) against German shipping, establishing agent nets, and target acquisition on German base structure. The area of operation, located 1000 kilometers north of the Arctic Circle, was sparsely populated, with very little vegetation, which made operations extremely vulnerable to detection. Insertions could generally not be made during summer due to 24 hour daylight, and winter weather was harsh, making insertions, whether by submarine or airdrops, difficult.

Early attempts to establish and run local agent nets or partisan groups were quickly discovered by German counter-intelligence, mainly due to the transparency of the communities. The Soviets thus concluded that permanent partisan warfare was not possible.<sup>60</sup>

Strategic reconnaissance teams were initially more successful. Deployed at isolated locations on the coast, teams normally consisted of three operators; a mission lasted at least six months. Strategic reconnaissance missions contributed to the Soviet success in disrupting German naval supply lines established to support the 70,000 strong German presence in Finnmark and Northern Finland.<sup>61</sup>

Target acquisition on German air bases, fuel dumps, fortifications, etc., in vital areas enhanced the effectiveness of Soviet Air Force raids. In an early phase of the war, the Germans did not link the increasingly large number of sunken ships and the exact targeting of military installations to enemy activity. When this connection became evident in late 1942, German counter-intelligence initiated a series of counter-operations. Through two operations, *Mitternachtsonne* and *Tundra*, major portions of the partisan activity in Eastern Finnmark were uncovered.<sup>62</sup>

The exact number of partisans explicitly trained and used in operations is not known for certain; estimates suggest approximately 75 people. Partisan losses were more severe than for other groups. Ragnar Ulstein estimates 35 were killed or executed and refugees and captives brought the total loss close to 100 percent.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Huitfeldt, *De Norske Partisanene i Finnmark 1941-1944*, 7.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 6-7.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 11-13.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 5.

All three groups conducted irregular or special operations more or less throughout the war. Personnel were specially trained and equipped for small unit tactics behind enemy lines. The groups supported strategic or operational objectives whether through reconnaissance, direct action or unconventional warfare. Current definitions of SO thus apply to these groups.

The major difference between WWII and contemporary operations is that WWII groups operated behind enemy lines within their own country. This does certainly not make their war effort less important, sacrificing, or heroic. But although Partisan operations in Finnmark were hampered by societal transparency, in general cultural differences were clearly not a problem. History illustrates there is at least a national tradition, albeit a short one, on the conduct of special operations in war. More importantly, the modus operandi of these groups set the pattern for subsequent thinking about special operations in Norway.

## **2. The Cold War**

After WWII, special purpose units were disbanded, and their personnel were either dismissed or joined the conventional military as it was reconstructed. This process was not unique to Norway. To some degree, it reflects the status of special groups and their roles in warfare. Special operations as a national capability was not considered part of the new security environment.

The origins of MJK and HJK can be traced back to the early 1950's and 1960's. Both were organized under conventional military command within their respective services. The degree to which their creation was based on strategic or operational requirements, or resulted from enthusiastic insiders' bottom-up approach from is subject to debate. The latter is probably closer to the truth than the former.

*Hærens Fallskjermjegerskole* (HFJS), the origin of today's HJK, was established in 1962 as a school unit to train conventional Army reconnaissance units in parachute insertion techniques. In 1966 and 1967, the school started educating its own *fallskjermjegertrupp*, a platoon-size paratrooper unit designed for reconnaissance and sabotage in the enemy's rear, an area beyond the scope of conventional Army units. The

main body of its personnel consisted of conscripts serving a mandatory year of military service. At the same time, the school changed its name to *Hærens Jeger-skole* (HJS).<sup>64</sup>

*Marinejegerlaget* (MJL) was formally established in 1968, although its origins are older. The National Intelligence Service (NIS), strongly inspired by Italian and British successes during WWII with underwater attacks, asked the Navy in the early 1950's to establish a diving school. With NIS financial support, the first class of *froskemenn*, frogmen, was ready to be examined in 1953.<sup>65</sup> Training was based on a model adopted from the U.S. Underwater Demolition Teams, and its purpose was to develop "perfect saboteurs and underwater warriors."<sup>66</sup>

As their tasks grew to include a mixture of explosive ordnance disposal (EOD), deep-diving, rescue-diving and so forth, a decision was made to disband the frogman organization and create two new units. The new organization was established in 1968. Tasks categorized as offensive were assigned to *Marinejegerlaget*, and those defined as defensive to *Minedykkertroppen* (EOD). The MJL tasks were sabotage against ships and harbor installations, reconnaissance, raids, and the conduct of special operations at the joint level.<sup>67</sup>

Part of MJL's education involved parachute insertion techniques. Cooperation with HFJS had been initiated in 1965 for the parachute education of frogmen. The operational concept was to drop personnel close to ships or harbor installations, have them conduct the raid, and extract them with the assistance of paratroopers located onshore. As the new organization emerged, a decision was made to enlist most MJL personnel, mainly for safety reasons. The training was assumed to be too dangerous to be left to conscripts.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> HJK, "Hærens Jegerkommando [Norwegian Army Special Operations Commando]," Norwegian Defense, <http://www.mil.no/haren/hjk/start/Generelt/> (accessed March 15, 2005).

<sup>65</sup> Erling Krange, *Fra Marinedykkingens Historie i Norge [History of Norwegian Naval Diving]* (Kristiansand, Norge: Erkra Forlag, 1994), 99.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 102 The quote is a translation of "perfekte sabotører og undervannskrigere."

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 133 . According to Krange, one task was to "cooperate with other services in executing special operations," in this paper understood as operational-level tasks.

<sup>68</sup> Krange, *Fra Marinedykkingens Historie i Norge*, 135.

In 1978, the Government ordered Department of Defense to establish a professional counterterrorism (CT) capability aimed at assisting the police in case of terror attacks against the oil infrastructure in the North Sea.<sup>69</sup> Jurisdiction on the continental shelf was and still is retained by Ministry of Justice and Police. The Army was tasked to establish this capability. *Forsvarets Spesialkommando* (FSK) was established as part of HJS to support this task. The unit was declared operational in 1984.<sup>70</sup>

The decision to assign a maritime task to the Army might have altered an established division of roles between MJL and HJS. According to Berglund, the creation of FSK implied that HJS had to focus on two principal tasks: the 12 month training of the conscripted paratrooper, and training for offshore CT, the latter being the most challenging. Due to the focus on CT, HJS was unable to fill its traditional SOF role because the paratroopers were only capable of conducting limited SO missions. However, MJL, already partly professionalized and not involved in offshore operations, broadened its range of traditional littoral tasks to include land-based operations. Consequently, both units “have acquired expertise and tasks that naturally should have been in the other SOF unit’s domain.”<sup>71</sup>

The distinction between traditional land and naval roles became blurred. During the Cold War, this paradox never became apparent, nor was it disputed. Yet MJL focused its training on operations in the littoral in support of naval operations, while HJS focused on training its paratrooper unit in support of land operations. It is not obvious to what degree tactics, techniques, and procedures differed in the execution phase of a mission. Both units have thus possessed overlapping capabilities since they were established. It is

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<sup>69</sup> Justis- og politidepartementet, *St.Meld.39 (2003-2004) Samfunnssikkerhet Og Sivilt-Militært Samarbeid* [Societal security and civil-military cooperation] (Oslo,Norway: Justis- og politidepartementet [Ministry of Justice and Police], 2004), para 5.1.4 (accessed January 12, 2006).

<sup>70</sup> Frode Danielsen, "An Asset: The Special Forces," *Norwegian Defense*, <http://www.mil.no/languages/english/start/article.jhtml?sourceID=161791&source=ftd> (accessed March 15, 2005).

<sup>71</sup> Jan Berglund, "The Possible Merger of Norwegian Special Forces - an Assessment of Key Factors," (Term paper for MN 3121, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA, 2002). Berglund has previous operational experience in MJL and HJS/FSK; he served as MJK commanding officer from 1993 to 1996.

the environment defined by the maritime or the land domain respectively, that traditionally have distinguished MJK and HJS.

In terms of resource allocation, both units were subordinated to the equivalent of today's Service Chief. Command and control went through a SOF cell located in the Joint Staff at one of the two regional headquarters.<sup>72</sup> During the latter part of the Cold War, the Norwegian defense structure included two operational headquarters: DEFCOMMON located in Bodø, and DEFCOMSONOR located in Stavanger. Briefly, DEFCOMMON had operational control of units operating in the northern part of Norway, while DEFCOMSONOR had the equivalent responsibility in the south.<sup>73</sup> On a daily basis, C2 was retained principally through a SOF staff officer assigned the Joint OPS (See Figure 8). Due to low manning, MJL and HJS augmented the operational level headquarters during exercises. This arrangement was generally retained until 2003, when the current command structure, which involved merging the regional HQs, was implemented.

The Cold War roles and missions of NORSOE were thus focused on strategic intelligence and raids in the enemy rear, principally on national territory. NATO's role has always been defense of its own territory or restoration of a pre-war status quo. The resemblance to strategy and tactics used in WWII operations is obvious. The other principal role was the offshore CT mission, retained by HJS.

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<sup>72</sup> Practical arrangements, including the name of the cell, changed over time.

<sup>73</sup> Forces physically located south of the 65 parallel were operationally controlled by DEFCOMSO. When operating north of the parallel, forces changed command to DEFCOMMON. Air assets were controlled by CAOC 3, located at DEFCOMMON, regardless of physical location in national airspace.

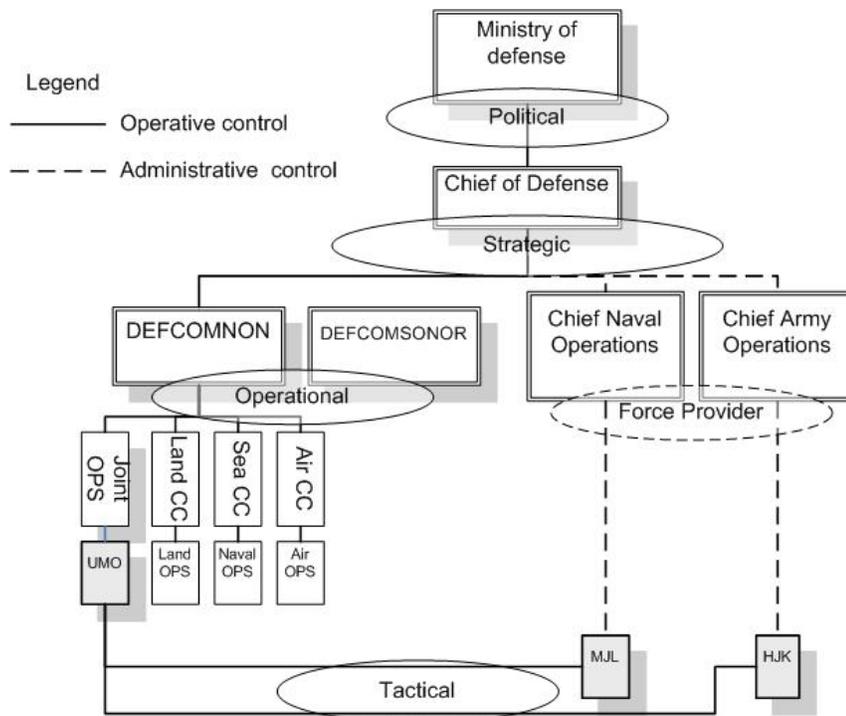


Figure 8. Cold War principal C2 arrangements

### 3. Post Cold War to the Present

The end of the Cold War implied changing the traditional roles of both NAF and NATO. Domestically, the debate focused on the relevance of a continuous strategy based on territorial defense. It is clear that throughout the 1990's, the military did not transform in accordance with political intentions. This is one reason given for the imbalance in the defense structure as set forth in St.prp.nr.45 (2000-2001). It is also clear that the end of the Cold War caused cuts in defense budgets. In the 1990's, NORSOF was spared while other units or capabilities were disbanded. The MJL had traditionally not been an expensive capability due to its small organization, low technological requirements, and unique capabilities within the Navy. This explains why MJL was sustained as a capability. The HJS CT role represented a unique capability within the military organization, which most likely explains why HJS was sustained.

In 1991 MJL was renamed to Marinejegerkommandoen (MJK), and in 1997 HJS was changed to Hærens Jegerkommando (HJK). The term NORSOF was first used when both units deployed to Afghanistan in 2001/2002 in support of Operation Enduring

Freedom (OEF), and is now a common term for the two units. It has no organizational meaning and merely serves as a common denominator.

From official sources, very little information is revealed on contemporary operations or the forces involved.<sup>74</sup> What is known, though, is that both MJK and HJK participated in NATO operations in the Balkan conflicts,<sup>75</sup> and HJK claim on their official home page to be deployed more or less continuously to international operations since 1996.<sup>76</sup> It is through recent operations in support of OEF that NORSOFF has received the most attention. While deployments to the Balkan theater occurred after peace negotiations were formally declared and initiated, Afghanistan was in a state of war when NORSOFF deployed in late 2001. Personnel from MJK and HJK have been recognized by US authorities for their contributions.<sup>77</sup>

The post-Cold War era thus increased the focus on international operations. For NORSOFF, this trend was not obvious, although Norway has a long tradition of UN operations.<sup>78</sup> Magne Rødahl, former Executive Officer at HJK, claimed as late as 1998 that it was time to re-evaluate the type of forces Norway normally contributes to international peace operations, and to explore NORSOFF's potential in such operations.<sup>79</sup> There were several reasons for Rødahl's claim. Prior to the Balkan Wars, Norwegian force contributions to international operations mainly consisted of volunteer units, stood up and designed for a specific mission. Standing units, designed for national defense, were not deployed collectively. The volunteer units were generally not given combat roles. An argument can be made that a combat role was inconsistent with national

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<sup>74</sup> Danielsen, *An Asset: The Special Forces*.

<sup>75</sup> Per Fr I. Pharo, *Norge på Balkan 1990-1999* [Norwegian participation in the Balkans 1990-1999] (Oslo, Norway: Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies, 2000), 7.

<sup>76</sup> HJK, *Hærens Jegerkommando [Norwegian Army Special Operations Commando]*. Norwegian Defense, <http://www.mil.no/haren/hjk/start/Generelt/> (accessed March 15, 2005).

<sup>77</sup> Ole K. Eide, "Special Forces Acknowledged," *Norwegian Defense*, <http://www.mil.no/languages/english/start/article.jhtml?articleID=94268> (accessed March 18, 2005).

<sup>78</sup> Ulf Andenæs, "Internasjonal Innsats Forsvarets Nye Mål: 'Ola Soldat' Går Utenriks [International Operations the New Modus Operandi for the Armed Forces]," *Aftenposten*, <http://tux1.aftenposten.no/nyheter/iriks/d192352.htm#bakgrunn> (accessed December 12, 2005).

<sup>79</sup> Magne Rødahl and Erik Dokken, "Norske Spesialstyrker i Fremtidige Internasjonale Fredsoperasjoner Operasjoner [Norwegian Special Operation Forces in Future International Peace Operations]," *Norsk Militært Tidsskrift*, no. 10 (1998), 5.

diplomatic as well as military traditions, because Norway has traditionally focused its international role as a peace broker. As a small nation, Norway sought solutions to conflicts through diplomacy. The NAF has thus been assigned a defensive role, and has traditionally been considered a last resort option for national defense. NORSOFF deployment to the Balkan theater represented a break with existing traditions in the sense that standing units were deployed. A national “lessons learned” seminar covering NAF’s involvement in the Balkan Wars concluded that NORSOFF capabilities should increase due to the flexibility and versatility of the units themselves along with international recognition of their job.<sup>80</sup>

Although little is publicly released on international operations, a fair assumption is that NORSOFF has been utilized within its traditional roles, which are part of direct action operations. There is nothing indicating NORSOFF participated with indirect capabilities. Since October 2001, OEF has focused on manhunt operations, implying that direct action rather than indirect capabilities are being utilized. Sean Naylor, senior reporter for the *US Army Times*, claims that coalition SOF, with the exception of the Australian SAS, did not bring sufficient capabilities in an early phase of OEF to act in anything other than a reconnaissance role. Hence NATO SOF’s role in Operation Anaconda in February 2002 was operationally limited.<sup>81</sup>

Domestically, HJK still retains the offshore counterterrorist role. Although HJK claims FSK is standing by for onshore operations as well, this claim is contested. HJK obviously has the capability, but the legal ramifications for military support to police operations are restrictive. A basic condition for military support to police operations is that the police must lack personnel or equipment for a particular operation.<sup>82</sup> Military support is thus generally considered on a case-by-case basis. While national police only have limited capabilities offshore, they maintain the full responsibility for onshore

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<sup>80</sup> Lessons Learned seminar for politicians, officers, academics, and high ranking civil servants, April 2000, coordinated by the Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies, the Norwegian Staff College, and the National Defence College.

<sup>81</sup> Sean Naylor, *Not a Good Day to Die: The Untold Story of Operation Anaconda* (New York: Berkley Books, 2005), 425.

<sup>82</sup> Justis- og politidepartementet, *St.Meld.39 (2003-2004) Samfunnssikkerhet Og Sivilt-Militært Samarbeid [Societal security and civil-military cooperation]*, ch. 4.2.

counterterrorism operations. Nevertheless, as long as FSK is on standby for offshore missions, it represents an option for onshore operations should the situation demand it.

Likewise, MJK is used domestically in support of Naval and Coast Guard operations, exemplified in the October 2005 Elektron incident. During an inspection by the Coast Guard, the skipper of a Russian trawler, Elektron, decided to run for Russian territorial waters with two inspectors still on board. According to Rear Admiral Grytting, only bad weather prevented the use of force to stop the vessel.<sup>83</sup> The inspectors were released when Elektron eventually reached Russian territorial waters.

In support of Berglund's assertion, the question whether MJK and HJK share the same roles and missions is arguably a result of two seemingly contradictions: Both units deployed during the Balkan Wars and Afghanistan, two landlocked theaters, and both units are used domestically, arguably in a counterterrorism role.

Naylor raises the first contradiction as an issue in regard to the American use of Navy SEALs in OEF. His anonymous sources claim that SEALs had no role in a land warfare scenario. Rather, this is the domain of Army SF.<sup>84</sup> However, there is no historical precedence for this claim. Navy personnel or units have on occasion successfully contributed in irregular operations outside the Navy's traditional areas of operation.<sup>85</sup>

A significant difference between Army and Navy SOF units is the environment where their activity normally takes place. This can be called the unit's niche, and could be illustrated by the US division of roles. Land operations normally fall within the land component commander's domain; hence support to Army operations is traditionally the responsibility for the US Army's Special Forces. The same applies for the Navy SEALs and support to naval operations.

However, as part of the Army, USSF was initially tasked to conduct irregular operations in Eastern Europe in case the Cold War went hot, and later to act in a counterinsurgency role in Vietnam. The USSF's modus operandi was focused on its

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<sup>83</sup> Sveinung B. Bentzrød, "Marinejegere Fløyet Ut [MJK Deployed]," *Aftenposten*, <http://www.aftenposten.no/nyheter/iriks/article1137707.ece> (accessed 9 November, 2005).

<sup>84</sup> Naylor, *Not a Good Day to Die*.

<sup>85</sup> Milton E. Miles, "Chinese Pirates and the SACO Dragon" in *From Troy to Entebbe: Special Operations in Ancient and Modern Times*, ed. John Arquilla (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1996), 288-311.

indirect capabilities or unconventional warfare (UW) role. The primary mission was to establish resistance groups (guerrilla warfare in Eastern Europe) or population control (counterinsurgency in Vietnam).<sup>86</sup> The USSF retained an offensive capability, partly because this is a component of any small unit's tactical requirements, and partly because training indigenous forces required this knowledge. Cultural knowledge and linguistic capabilities however, are the primary focus for those working with local populations, whether they be guerrillas or civilians. The focus of is on developing indirect capabilities.

For the SEALs, the traditional support for naval operations emphasized maritime capabilities. Operating in the littoral for intelligence or raiding purposes, or supporting the Navy with maritime interdiction capabilities for embargo operations, requires direct action capabilities. Diving, especially combat diving, is equally embedded in the maritime environment. The counterinsurgency or guerrilla role is thus not the primary focus. Navy SEALs can act in an advisory role, but since this is not their principal role, such missions are primarily assigned USSF. Both USSF and the SEALs have technical capabilities within each other's domain, which might seem odd from a transformation perspective. The key to understanding this redundancy in capabilities is that both must have small unit tactics capabilities in order to perform their primary missions. Figure 9, derived from Adams, illustrates this contradiction.<sup>87</sup>

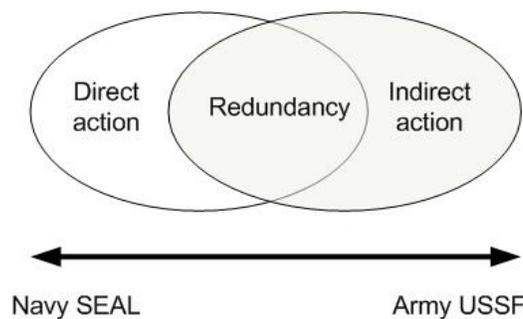


Figure 9. *SOF redundancy in terms of capabilities*

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<sup>86</sup> Thomas K. Adams, *US Special Operations Forces in Action: The Challenge of Unconventional Warfare* (London; Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 1998).

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

Counterterrorism is regarded as a highly specialized form of direct action. Due to the level of perfection required in hostage rescue operations (HR), the US has established separate units to fill this role, the Army Delta Force and the Navy SEAL Team Six.<sup>88</sup> Whether it is relevant to compare the US structure with Norwegian requirements can be argued. But this illustrates that different SOF units fill different niches, by nature implying redundant capabilities. In the US structure, however, primary roles and missions are clearly divided among the various SOF units.

The second contradiction is that MJK and HJK both conduct CT operations. This could seem odd. Although national CT readiness is HJK's domain, MJK at least shares a similar capability through its focus on Maritime Interdict Operations (MIO).<sup>89</sup> Traditionally, MIO is part of Naval SOF units' tactical support to maritime operations, and the recent deployment for the Elektron incident must be viewed as a function of MJK's MIO capability.<sup>90</sup> Whether this was a CT operation can be debated. Why the military decided to deploy MJK instead of HJK for the Elektron incident at least illustrates that roles and missions are not clearly defined or separated, even with regard to the CT role.

It can thus be argued that NORSOF traditionally has focused on direct action rather than indirect action capabilities. The question, however, is whether this is sufficient or desirable for the future.

### **C. SUMMARY**

History and recent practice both indicate that NORSOF's traditional roles and missions continue to be within the direct action spectrum of special operations, or strategic reconnaissance and direct action as defined in current doctrine. Both SR and DA are referred to as direct action capabilities in this paper, as both are intended to bring force directly to the enemy. These roles are shaped by the Cold War paradigm. During

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<sup>88</sup> Adams, *US Special Operations Forces in Action*, 160-167.

<sup>89</sup> Kysteskadren, *Det Nye Sjøforsvaret: Omstilling i Sjøforsvaret 2004-2010 [Changing the Navy 2004-2010]* (Bergen, Norway: Kysteskadren, 2005), 5.

<sup>90</sup> Bentzrød, *Marinejegere Fløyet Ut [MJK Deployed]*.

the Cold War, NORSOFF represented a service-based joint capability and thus was an operational asset for the pursuit of strategic objectives.

Throughout the Cold War it seems that MJL and HJS had similar or overlapping tasks. Each focused, however, on the environment as defined by their parent service: MJL operated in the littorals and HJS inland. Thus both units represented a service-based capability. The environment was then and remains now an important part of their internal niche; it represents an important component of their joint roles. The two organizations, MJL and HJS, had overlapping tasks insofar as both conducted strategic intelligence and direct action missions.

HJS was assigned a domestic offshore CT role in 1981, thus bringing a new capability to the military. The CT role is a supporting role to Department of Justice and Police. Introducing the CT role arguably altered the established land/naval distinction between MJL and HJS. While MJL expanded its missions to include operations beyond the littoral area, HJS concentrated its focus on CT.

The NORSOFF international deployments began when the Balkan Wars started in the 1990's. Lessons learned from the Balkan Wars suggested a further expansion of NORSOFF's capabilities, regardless of the costs involved. To a certain extent, this expansion is already complete, as HJK has been able to deploy internationally since 1996 while retaining its domestic CT role. According to Berglund, HJK did not have this capability before 1990. Likewise, MJK has expanded to manage its deployments. The degree to which MJL had this capability prior to 1990 is unclear.

It is through recent deployments in support of Operation Enduring Freedom that NORSOFF has gained the most public attention. The issue of overlapping roles is arguably fuelled by the fact that both Afghanistan and the Balkans are landlocked theaters. A question then arises: Why does Norway need both a Navy and an Army SOF capability? This is the question underlying this thesis. This thesis suggests that there is no contradiction in the overlap because the environment is the niche where one unit has certain advantages over the other. As current international practice illustrates, a degree of overlap between units should be considered a strength rather than weakness.

Recent deployments indicate that NORSOFF has deployed as an operational level asset supporting operational or strategic level objectives. This is also consistent with national and NATO doctrine. Yet, NORSOFF has a strategic role in a national context as stated in St.prp.nr.42 (2003-2004). This paper claims that existing doctrine does not cover this expanded role, and suggests a new definition. Thus NORSOFF can be seen as having two roles: a strategic role in support of national foreign policy objectives, and an operational role supporting strategic campaign objectives. NORSOFF's strategic role in support of national foreign policy seems at least unexplored through historical practice.

### **III. THE NEW SECURITY ENVIRONMENT, FUTURE THREATS, AND NEW STRATEGIES**

This chapter looks at the current security environment and strategy for dealing with current threats. The chapter answers these questions: What is the nature of the security environment and perceived future threats? What are the national strategies available to deal with the new environment?

A common framework for assessing future challenges for NAF is considering the type (conventional and asymmetric) and location (national or international) of potential conflicts.<sup>91</sup> Whether types of conflicts are best understood within a conventional/asymmetric framework is debatable. Based on recent experiences from Afghanistan and Iraq, a likely scenario is that future conflicts maintain both types, more or less at the same time. The location of future conflicts and the implications for NAF have been more prevalent as considerations in the national defense debate. Simply put, should NAF prepare for national or international tasks? While there might be dissent to the answer depending who is asked, most concur that NAF alone cannot deter or prevent an invasion of Norwegian territory. The crux of the discussion is the extent to which Norway can expect sufficient military and political support from its international partners, predominantly through NATO.

#### **A. A NEW DEFINITION OF SECURITY?**

The end of the Cold War altered the existing concept of security, a concept that since WWII had been more or less exclusively focused on state security, or state survival.<sup>92</sup> Recently, the concept of societal security has increased in importance. “Societal security concerns the safeguarding of the population and the protection of key societal functions and important infrastructure against attack and other kinds of damage, in situations in which the existence of the state as such is not threatened.”<sup>93</sup> Terrorism

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<sup>91</sup> Diesen, *Moderniseringen Av Forsvaret - Status Og Udfordringer*.

<sup>92</sup> Forsvarsdepartementet, *Relevant Force*, 16.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) are regarded as the gravest threats to societal security. Although due to its domestic nature, societal security is mainly the concern of civilian leaders and police forces, NAF must be prepared “to contribute when needed.”<sup>94</sup> In addition, human security, i.e. “protecting the individual with regards to human rights...”<sup>95</sup> has become increasingly important. Humanitarian concerns have been the direct objective of several interventions since the Cold War, including Somalia in 1992 and Kosovo in 1999.

An expanded security concept has “major significance for the tasks that military forces might be asked to carry out, and therefore also for training, equipment and operational concepts of NAF.”<sup>96</sup> Although the requirements of security have changed, the fundamental focus remains on state security and national survival. With the absence of a clear and present danger, the fundamental question then becomes how best to secure the state’s interest.

The Ministry of Defense in 2004 issued its strategic concept *Relevant Force*, stating the following objectives for Norwegian security policy:<sup>97</sup>

1. Prevent war and the emergence of various kinds of threats to Norwegian and collective security
2. Contribute to peace, stability and the further development of the international rule of law
3. Uphold Norwegian sovereignty, Norwegian rights and interests, and protect Norwegian freedom of action in the face of political, military and other kinds of pressure
4. Defend, together with our allies, Norway and NATO against assault and attack
5. Protect society against assault and attack from state and non-state actors.

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<sup>94</sup> Forsvarsdepartementet, *Relevant Force*

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 48.

According to *Relevant Force*, the military must prepare for eight specific tasks to achieve these objectives. These tasks are divided in three categories. “National tasks” are solved without Alliance support. “Tasks carried out in cooperation with allies and possibly others” imply coalition operations, preferably through NATO. “Other tasks” are supporting tasks to departments other than Ministry of Defense. The specific tasks are<sup>98</sup>

*National tasks*

1. Ensure a national basis for decision-making through timely surveillance and intelligence gathering.
2. Exercise Norwegian sovereignty.
3. Exercise authority in defined areas.
4. Prevent and handle security-related incidents and crises in Norway and in areas under Norwegian jurisdiction.

*Tasks carried out in cooperation with allies and possibly others*

5. Contribute to the collective defence of Norway and other parts of NATO against threats, assaults and attacks, including the use of weapons of mass destruction.
6. Contribute to multinational crisis management, including multinational peace operations.

*Other tasks*

7. Provide military support to diplomacy and to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.
8. Contribute to the safeguarding of societal security and other vital societal tasks.

While at first glance both objectives for security policy and tasks to the military might seem reasonable, neither, with the possible exception of framing tasks as national or Alliance-specific, gives significant substance to NORSOB specific roles and missions.

## **B. THE NATURE OF THE NEW SECURITY ENVIRONMENT**

Much is said about the new security environment. This section reviews only the most important features with regard to its implications for Norway. This analysis is undertaken in light of the expanded view on national security as outlined in Chapter I,

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<sup>98</sup> Forsvarsdepartementet, *Relevant Force*, 61-66.

and includes state security, societal security, and human security. The analysis uses the framing of tasks as either national or Alliance driven.

## 1. The National Context

The conclusion of the Cold War ended an era where a single threat determined NAF's roles and missions. Although Russia still maintains a substantial military presence in and around the Kola Peninsula, its political intentions have changed. The pleasant implication is that the current threat of conventional war is negligible, at least in the short-term.<sup>99</sup>

Although conventional war is less likely, Norway still has unsolved jurisdictional and territorial disputes within its vast maritime economic zone. Figure 10 depicts Norway's economic zone (NEZ), which is seven times Norway's land mass. More than 70 percent of national revenues are extracted from activities in NEZ, and more than 80 percent of national import and export are shipped through the NEZ.<sup>100</sup> To secure free access, not only to NEZ, but to the high seas in general, is therefore a vital national interest.



Figure 10. Norwegian economic zones (NEZ. (from St.prp.nr. 42 (2003-2004))

<sup>99</sup> Diesen, *Moderniseringen Av Forsvaret*.

<sup>100</sup> Vidar Hope, "Regjeringen Satser i Nord: Må Ha Tung Tilstedeværelse [The Government Prioritizes the Barents Region: Must be Present]," *I Marinen*, no. 7 (2005), 7.

Sovereignty in the Barents region, however, has been contested since the 1950's.<sup>101</sup> Economically, the Barents region is increasingly important due to increased petroleum exploration. Although the sovereignty dispute most likely will lead to nothing more than a diplomatic tug of war, a satisfactory agreement has so far proven impossible. Several arrests of Russian and EU vessels fishing illegally in disputed areas around Spitzbergen and Bjørnøya in late 2005, along with the more dramatic Elektron incident, illustrate this area's potential to ignite a more serious crisis. Willy Østreng, Director of the Centre for Advanced Studies in Oslo, asserts that these incidents have the clear potential to set back political relations between Russia and Norway. Maintaining a firm yet credible policy with regard to jurisdiction in this region is therefore essential.<sup>102</sup>

On the mainland, Norway shares a border with Russia. The Army has national responsibility for surveillance and control of the remote parts of the shared border. This mission is executed on behalf of the Department for Justice and Police. The Army is issued limited police jurisdiction, as is the Coast Guard in NEZ, so it might quickly respond to border violations. The principal threats to this border are activities related to organized crime.<sup>103</sup> Since the border runs through a relatively isolated area, the possibility of terrorists using this route to pass from east to west cannot be excluded.

## **2. The Global Context**

International terrorism and local/ regional wars are presently assessed as more likely threats than conventional war.<sup>104</sup> Societal security is thus challenged more than state security. Apart from the global terror networks like Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda, weak or failed states, and WMD proliferation, these threats are not sufficiently

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<sup>101</sup> The contested areas are associated with the 200 mile zones surrounding Svalbard, and the dispute with the demarcation line in the "grey zone" in the Barents Sea. See Utenriksdepartementet, "Norway and Russia: Fisheries," Utenriksdepartementet [Ministry of Foreign Affairs], <http://odin.dep.no/ud/english/doc/handbooks/032001-990667/ram005-bn.html#ram5> (accessed January 4, 2006, 2006).

<sup>102</sup> Eirik L. Berglund, "Fare for Opptrapping [the Danger of Escalation]," Nordlys, <http://www.nordlys.no/nyheter/article1795749.ece> (accessed January 4, 2006).

<sup>103</sup> Espen B. Eide, *Ny Regjering – Ny Sikkerhets- Og Forsvarspolitik?* [New government - new security and defense policy?] (Oslo, Norway: Ministry of Defense, 2005), [http://www.odin.no/fd/norsk/aktuelt/taler/politisk\\_ledelse/010051-090015/dok-bn.html](http://www.odin.no/fd/norsk/aktuelt/taler/politisk_ledelse/010051-090015/dok-bn.html) (accessed January 7, 2006).

<sup>104</sup> Forsvarsdepartementet, *St.Prp.Nr.42 (2003-2004)*, 19.

understood. Globalization has made national economies increasingly dependent on international stability; hence it is a national interest to promote peace, stability, and democracy in troubled regions.<sup>105</sup> This somewhat vague description of threats illustrates the complexity of today's threat environment.

Although the threats can be difficult to operationalize, some more prevalent trends describe the changing nature of conflicts. One such change is the rise of global terrorism and non-state actors who can inflict damage previously only possible from nation states. Terrorism in itself is not a new phenomenon. What is new is a seemingly increased fanaticism "determined to inflict maximum civilian and economic damages on distant targets in pursuit of...extremist goals."<sup>106</sup> What is generally expected is that this new wave of terrorism, led by Al Qaeda, will be willing to use WMDs to promote their cause. It is unnecessary to document their potential to wreak havoc, which is most clearly demonstrated by the attacks in New York and Washington, D.C. in 2001.

Another trend is that intra-state conflicts increasingly have regional or global ramifications or spillover effects. The ongoing war on terror is illustrative. Weak or failed states like Afghanistan and Pakistan are the most likely harbingers of international terrorism. Although Pakistan plays a crucial role in the war on terrorism, its political and military control in Waziristan, a border region to Afghanistan, is seriously questioned.<sup>107</sup> The same argument can be used for weak or failed states or regions on the African continent where government functions are absent.

Norway and Norwegian interests have so far not been directly targeted by this new wave of terrorism. There are several reasons why this might be the case. The relative size of the Norwegian population compared to e.g., Spain or Great Britain, makes society itself more transparent. Likewise, having a smaller immigration community than Madrid and London allows for better control with potential radicalization within these groups. Norwegian foreign policy has also traditionally focused on promoting respect for

<sup>105</sup> Forsvarsdepartementet, *St.Prp.Nr.42 (2003-2004)*, 20.

<sup>106</sup> Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), vii.

<sup>107</sup> David Montero, "Pakistan's Tribal Strategy," *Christian Science Monitor*, [http://search.csmonitor.com/search\\_content/0125/p06s02-wosc.html](http://search.csmonitor.com/search_content/0125/p06s02-wosc.html) (accessed February 1, 2006).

international law based on justice and diplomacy rather than power. Norway in 1904 was entrusted with the authority to award the Nobel Peace Prize, further indicating the nation's history of peaceful intentions.<sup>108</sup> Thus, the perception of Norway as a peaceful nation without harmful foreign policy agendas might have an impact on potential terrorists.

Nonetheless, Jørn Holme, head of the Norwegian Police Security Service, claims it is just a matter of time before Scandinavia is hit by an attack. According to Holme, Norway is currently used as a safe haven by terrorists planning operations in Europe. Norway in the future could be regarded as a soft target due to its liberal society, making it easier to attack than cities like London or Madrid.<sup>109</sup> In addition, Norway is a strategic energy partner for several European countries, which might lead to terrorism on Norwegian soil for strategic purposes. Lastly, Norway has participated with troops in both Afghanistan and Iraq. Whether a UN resolution was the premise for military support is probably irrelevant to a terrorist. To assume Norway is safe from international terrorism is not prudent.

A third trend might be that conflicts have increasingly shifted from conventional, interstate wars towards intrastate conflicts or civil wars. Between 1946 and 1955, the ratio between these types of conflict was approximately equal. Between 1996 and 2000, the ratio shifted to 1:20, while the number of conflicts has remained unchanged. Likewise, the relationship between civilian and military casualties has shifted from 1:8 to 8:1 over the last 100 years.<sup>110</sup> The rise in the targeting of civilians indicates that war has become more political in nature. The trend is toward disputes over who shall rule rather than what shall be ruled. The shift from conventional wars towards "other" wars has led to new terms like low intensity conflict (LIC), military operations other than war, Crisis

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<sup>108</sup> Olav Riste, *War and Peace in the Political Culture of Scandinavia in the 20th Century* (Oslo, Norway: Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies, 2003), 8.

<sup>109</sup> Reuters, "Militants Will Try to Hit Scandinavia," *Aftenposten*, <http://www.aftenposten.no/english/local/article1179062.ece> (accessed January 5, 2006).

<sup>110</sup> Jan Ångström, "Lågintensiva Konflikter Som Forskningsområde: En Introduksjon [Introduction to Low Intensity Conflicts as Area of Research]" in *En Ny Medeltid? En Introduksjon i Lågintensiva Konflikter [Introduction to Low- Intensity Conflicts]*, eds. Arne Baudin, Thomas Hagman and Jan Ångström (Stockholm, Sweden: Försvarshögskolan, 2002), 3.

Response Operations (CRO) and the like. The current conflict in Afghanistan and Iraq both exemplify LIC, which is normally defined as a protracted conflict between a state and non- state actors.<sup>111</sup>

### 3. National Interests

From the above analysis it is clear that with the exception of threats to state security, Norway's national interests are connected to the maritime environment in general and the Norwegian Economic Zone (NEZ) in particular. Globally, national interests are connected to international stability, which Norway cannot provide on its own. Collective security is thus a keyword.

*Relevant Force* states that

protection of the environment, welfare and economic security is...a fundamental security interest for Norway....Norwegian security interests thus comprise challenges that might threaten international law, human rights, democracy and the rule of law, economic security, and the environment.<sup>112</sup>

It can thus be concluded that it is in the nation's interest to protect and defend these values.

*Relevant Force* further emphasizes NEZ's relevance for the national economy. Protection of the petroleum infrastructure is deemed particularly vital, not only by national authorities, but also for existing customers. "The same is the case for international regulations and principles connected to the freedom of the seas and the management of resources in the oceans."<sup>113</sup>

National security is closely connected to Euro-Atlantic security. Promoting "democracy in regions adjacent to Europe"<sup>114</sup> is therefore deemed a national security interest. Norway cannot do this by itself. Collective measures, primarily through NATO, thus become important to this objective. It is a national interest to create conditions

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<sup>111</sup> Björn Marcusson, "Kärt Barn Har Många Namn? Lågintensiva Konflikter Och De Militärteoretiska Klassikerna [Low- Intensity Conflicts and Military Theory]" in *En Ny Medeltid? En Introduksjon i Lågintensiva Konflikter [Introduction to Low- Intensity Conflicts]*, eds. Arne Baudin, Thomas Hagman and Jan Ångström (Stockholm, Sweden: Försvarshögskolan, 2002), 62.

<sup>112</sup> Forsvarsdepartementet, *Relevant Force*, 17-18.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*

favorable for collective security. The same argument applies to the UN's role as the transnational organ promoting international law.

The above discussion indicates that national interests are closely tied to the concept of security, where it must be assumed that national security is ranked higher than societal security, which in turn is ranked higher than human security. Accepting that Norway alone cannot defend its national interests in a hostile environment, a coherent alliance affiliation is the primary goal for national security. Defending national interests connected to the maritime environment, with emphasis on the NEZ, will be the next priority, along with societal security. Promoting democracy outside Europe is thus deemed less important than maintaining the national economy and national survival.

### **C. A CHANGED STRATEGY: COLLECTIVE SECURITY AND INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS**

It is one thing is to identify security challenges; it is quite another to create a coherent response strategy. As a small nation, Norway has a traditional policy of solving international disputes through diplomacy. For state survival, since WWII the national strategic plan has depended on NATO affiliation. A coherent defense alliance, however, requires a common identified threat or common foreign political goals to justify its existence. During the Cold War, the Soviet threat was sufficient for the European community to act as a coherent unity. This might no longer be the case.

According to Neumann, a serious impediment to creating a coherent Norwegian strategic plan has been the lack of a national strategic concept. Since Neumann made his claim in 2002, *Relevant Force* has been developed to fill this gap. Yet, as Neumann claims, the next step is to "concretize and formulate a national security strategy...and align military doctrines in accordance with the strategy."<sup>115</sup> The national security strategy is still lacking. However, historical precedents suggest strategic trends from which future NORSOF roles and mission might be derived. These precedents are connected to the requirements of national security policy, i.e., Norway's role in the international context.

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<sup>115</sup> Iver B. Neumann, "Norges Handlingsrom Og Behovet for En Overordnet Sikkerhetspolitisk Strategi [National Options and the Necessity of a Security Polical Strategy]," *Det Sikkerhetspolitiske Bibliotek*, no. 3 (2002), p. 19 (accessed December 12, 2005). Author's translation.

As described earlier, contested areas are located in the Barents Region and primarily associated with the NEZ. This is primarily a naval task, maintained by the Coast Guard and supported by surveillance assets from the Air Force. The Army maintains national responsibility for surveillance and control of the shared Norwegian/Russian border, a border which is also part of EU's Schengen border.<sup>116</sup>

The use of NAF to protect national sovereignty in times of peace is not without challenges. Chief of Defense General Diesen, according to the national newspaper *Verdens Gang*, is critical of the increased focus on NAF's role in the Barents Sea. Gunboat diplomacy, he claims, can only be effective if Norway is guaranteed mutual political and military support from its Allies. Without this support, diplomacy involving threat of force lacks credibility.<sup>117</sup>

In a regional context, Norwegian strategic thinking has changed dramatically since the end of the Cold War. From a paradigm predicting territorial defense and NATO reinforcements in case of war, the new paradigm is focused on expeditionary capabilities for NATO's out-of-area operations. A political as well as a military consensus support this new paradigm. Norway's strategic relevance has diminished since the collapse of the Soviet Union. To maintain credibility as a NATO ally, support for NATO's strategic concept is deemed necessary. There is, however, no consensus on how to implement this paradigm. The recent decision in Parliament to deploy F-16's in support of NATO's operations in Afghanistan, which caused political dispute, can illustrate this. Arguably, the dispute was not so much NATO's request for support *per se* but rather that the planes could be used to support coalition troops involved in OEF.<sup>118</sup> Inconveniently for the recently elected government, NORSOFF was deployed in support of OEF at the time a decision had to be made with regard to NATO's request. The deployment of F-16's eventually occurred, but conveniently not before NORSOFF was withdrawn from OEF.

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<sup>116</sup> Eide, *Ny Regjering – Ny Sikkerhets- Og Forsvarspolitik?*

<sup>117</sup> Bakkeli and Johnsen, *Advarte Mot Militær Maktbruk [Warned Against Use of Military Force]*.

<sup>118</sup> Tor A. Andreassen, "Anbefaler Afghanistan-Tur for SV [Recommends Trip to Afghanistan for SV]," *Aftenposten*, <http://www.aftenposten.no/nyheter/iriks/politikk/article1152241.ece> (accessed January 6, 2006).

The primary institutions shaping Norwegian strategy are the UN, NATO, EU, and the US. Since its inception the UN has been considered the principal organ promoting international security and stability. Only through international cooperation have smaller nations been able to influence great powers and their foreign policy agendas. As part of the League of Nations, a small state like Norway was granted “an unprecedented opening for [its] voice to be heard on matters of international politics.”<sup>119</sup> During the post-WWI era, Norway actively pursued a philosophy which “saw the minor powers as guardians of higher moral standards in the conduct of international affairs...”<sup>120</sup> After WWII, Norway continued its active role in shaping the UN, and provided its first Secretary-General, Trygve Lie. Support to the UN, as the principal transnational forum for solving international disputes, continues to the present day. Thus “[t]he United Nations play a key role in Norwegian security policy....Cooperation within the framework of the UN to safeguard international peace and security, therefore, is a major concern to Norway.”<sup>121</sup>

Since WWII, Norway has contributed considerably to UN operations. Between 1947 and 2000, more than 50,000 personnel participated in 30 missions around the world, the longest commitment being 20 years of commitment to UNIFIL in Lebanon.<sup>122</sup> Until Operation Desert Storm in 1991, Norway’s international military contributions were exclusively with UN peace operations. Since the mid-1990’s, however, international deployments have shifted in favor of NATO and US-led operations. The reason has not been discontent with UN so much as a lack of personnel resources.<sup>123</sup>

Since its founding, NATO has been the cornerstone of Norwegian security policy.<sup>124</sup> The emphasis on neutrality that kept Norway out of WWI, but failed to do the same in WWII, was abandoned for Alliance partnership in 1949. A new world order,

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<sup>119</sup> Riste, *War and Peace in the Political Culture of Scandinavia in the 20th Century*, 7.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Forsvarsdepartementet, *Relevant Force*, 32.

<sup>122</sup> Forsvaret, "Norsk Deltakelse i Internasjonale Fredsoperasjoner [Participation in International Peace Operations]," Forsvaret [Norwegian Defense], <http://www.mil.no/intops/start/historie/> (accessed January 7, 2006).

<sup>123</sup> Ulriksen, *Den Norske Forsvarstradisjonen: Militærmakt Eller Folkeforsvar? [Norwegian Defense Traditions: Military Power or People's Army?]*, 251.

<sup>124</sup> Forsvarsdepartementet, *Relevant Force*, 33.

along with the experience of WWII, left few options in the post-WWII security environment.

Yet Norway continued to maintain a “non-aggressive” posture within the Alliance, hoping to dampen Great Power tensions on the Scandinavian Peninsula. Several restrictions were unilaterally imposed on NATO’s strategy. Neither nuclear weapons nor permanent deployment of troops were allowed on national territory in times of peace. Another reason to impose restrictions was to ease domestic political disputes with regard to foreign policy. During the 1970’s, Norway’s importance as a strategic NATO flank increased due to the Soviet Union’s enhanced seaborne nuclear capability. Although restrictions were in force, as part of the Alliance strategy several NATO members had earmarked units ready for deployment to Norway in case of a conventional attack.<sup>125</sup> The military strategy was fairly straightforward: maintain a firm posture in defensive positions and await Alliance reinforcements.

Since 1990 NATO has been transforming, as have its member countries. The most important result is its out-of-area concept as set forth in its 1999 Strategic Concept and reiterated at the Prague Summit in 2002.<sup>126</sup> With this concept, NATO and its member countries must be prepared for operations on a global scale. This was clearly stated in 2003 by Lord Robertson, former NATO Secretary General, who said that NATO “must defend [its] security on the Hindukush.”<sup>127</sup> The creation of NATO Response Force (NRF) is another important result of NATO’s transformation. NRF, which is supposed to be fully operational by 2006, is a rapid reaction force designed to conduct the full spectrum of military operations from show of force to forced entry operations. Emphasis

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<sup>125</sup> Finn Molvig, *Norsk Forsvarspolitik i 1970- Og 80- Årene* [Norwegian defense policy in the 1970s and 80s] (Oslo, Norway: Norwegian Institute for Defense Studies, 1994).

<sup>126</sup> Sir Ian Forbes, "The Transformation of NATO - Speech by Deputy Allied Command Transformation Admiral Sir Ian Forbes, Høyres Hus, Oslo, 25 May 2004," The Norwegian Atlantic Committee, <http://www.atlanterhavskomiteen.no/Publikasjoner/Internett-tekster/Arkiv/24.html> (accessed January 9, 2006).

<sup>127</sup> George Robertson, “The Role of NATO in the 21st Century,” 2003, <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2003/s031103a.htm> (accessed August 22, 2005).

is put on deployability and interoperability, both necessary to fulfill new missions.<sup>128</sup> NORSOFF has been part of Norway's force contributions to NRF.

NATO's ambitions are clear, but the Alliance still works on the basis of political consensus. In itself, this principle is uncontested. But unless the mandate is founded in NATO's Article 5, NRF requires consensus for activation. Out-of-area missions could thus be politically challenging, especially because NRF participation commits more than was involved in earlier contributions.<sup>129</sup> It remains to be seen to what extent NRF will be an effective deterrent force. NRF will affect NORSOFF future roles and missions because emerging missions may be conducted in cultural settings and climate zones not previously considered relevant. This will not only affect the operational focus, but also factors like personnel selection and training, equipment, training exercises, and support elements.

According to NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, NATO's core mission remains collective defense as defined by NATO's Charter Article 5. However, most of NATO's involvements since the Cold War have been non-Article 5 missions ranging from peacekeeping in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan, to combating terrorism in the Mediterranean, to supporting disaster relief in Pakistan. Although NATO's efforts are impressive, Scheffer admits the Alliance is driven more by short-term ad-hoc decisions than by fundamental strategic choices. "In Afghanistan, for example, [NATO's] political rhetoric was not always matched by corresponding military commitments."<sup>130</sup> Unless NRF is activated as a collective instrument, national commitments to out-of-area operations are made on a case-by-case basis.

Within NATO, "[i]t is absolutely crucial that Norway consolidates its status as an Ally that is considered credible – both politically and militarily."<sup>131</sup> According to State

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<sup>128</sup> NATO, "The NATO Response Force: At the Center of NATO Transformation," NATO, <http://www.arrc.nato.int/brochure/nrf.htm> (accessed August 23, 2004).

<sup>129</sup> Harald Eraker, "Nato- Oppdragene Norge må Si Ja Til [NATO Missions Norway Must Accept]," *NyTid*, <http://www.nytid.no/index.php?sk=8&id=3156> (accessed February 1, 2006).

<sup>130</sup> Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, "Keeping NATO Relevant: A Shareholders Report," Speech by NATO Secretary General at the NATO Parliamentary Assembly Annual Session, Copenhagen, 15 November 2005, <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2005/s051115a.htm> (accessed February 2, 2006).

<sup>131</sup> Forsvarsdepartementet, *Relevant Force*, 35.

Secretary Barth Eide, ISAF will continue to be the largest operation involving Norwegian forces internationally.<sup>132</sup> Presently, Norway contributes an infantry company to ISAF and has responsibility for one provincial reconstruction team (PRT). NATO will take the lead in Afghanistan as the US reduces its presence in 2006, so NATO's role in the country will most likely change.

The EU is certainly an important political actor, but is not considered a major military actor in this thesis. Norway has signed an agreement to participate in EU's new Battle Group concept, and also participates with personnel in EU's continuing operation in Bosnia.<sup>133</sup> But Norway is still not part of the EU, and the EU is still working to formulate its security policy concept as a realistic alternative to NATO and the US.<sup>134</sup> The EU is thus not yet an important military actor for deriving new roles and missions for NORSOFF.

The US plays an important albeit ambiguous role in Norwegian security policy. During the Cold War, a close relation to the US as an Ally within NATO was fairly unproblematic. During the 1970's, cooperation increased. Despite national restrictions on the Alliance, Norwegian air bases were prepared for rapid deployment of US air assets (the COB agreement), and equipment for a complete brigade size reaction force was forward deployed in Trøndelag. Airlifts could then deploy personnel rapidly when necessary. Likewise, exercises were conducted in the 1980's, including US carrier groups operating as far north as the Vestfjorden basin.<sup>135</sup> Due to its proximity to the Soviet Union and the naval bases on the Kola Peninsula, an extensive intelligence collaboration program developed. Both nations benefited from this cooperation; the US had early

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<sup>132</sup> Eide, *Ny Regjering – Ny Sikkerhets- Og Forsvarspolitik?*

<sup>133</sup> Forsvarsdepartementet, "Avtale Om EU-Innsatsstyrke Signert i Brussel [Agreement on EU Reaction Force Signed in Brussels]," Forsvarsdepartementet [Ministry of Defense], <http://odin.dep.no/odinarkiv/norsk/fd/2005/pressem/010051-070018/dok-bn.html> (accessed January 6, 2006).

<sup>134</sup> Jahn Otto Johansen, "NATO Og De Transatlantiske Motsetninger - Kortsiktige Og Langsiktige Perspektiver [NATO and Trans Atlantic Contrasts - Short and Long Term Perspectives]," *The Norwegian Atlantic Committee - Sikkerhetspolitisk Bibliotek*, no. 3 (2004), 8, <http://www.dnak.org/publikasjoner/sp/2004/pdf/3-2004.pdf> (accessed August 22, 2005).

<sup>135</sup> Molvig, *Norsk Forsvarspolitik i 1970- Og 80- Årene*.

access to signal intelligence, and Norway had access to US technology. In addition, keeping close ties to the US reinforced the notion of Norway as an important ally.<sup>136</sup>

The collapse of the Soviet Union changed this relationship. Norway does not enjoy the same status as an important flank in America's grand strategy, which also is reflected in *Relevant Force*.<sup>137</sup> An alternative scenario is instead that US and Russian cooperation on petroleum issues could lead to a marginalization of Norwegian territorial interests in the Barents region. It is therefore uncertain how far Norway might rally support from the US in case of a more serious territorial dispute.

As by far the largest contributor to the Alliance, the US is the guarantor of NATO's continuous existence. If NATO should fail and disintegrate in the foreseeable future, most likely if the EU were to establish an alternative through its European Defense Agency (EDA), Norway will face a strategic choice: To integrate with the EU's defense alternative or to establish a bilateral defense pact with the US. According to Jahn Otto Johansen, notable journalist on East- and Central European affairs, the former is not a realistic option.<sup>138</sup> This is arguably a reason why *Relevant Force* does not exaggerate the political effects of the debacle that occurred between central European actors and the US in the run-up to the 2003 invasion of Iraq. It is of "utmost importance to Norway that NATO's role as a transatlantic forum for consultation be strengthened."<sup>139</sup> NORSOFF participation in OEF could then be evaluated as strategically important to maintain this relationship. The political effect is probably more important than the military. Viewed in this perspective, NORSOFF's strategic utility is clear.

Since late 1990, most assets deployed for international operations, including NORSOFF, have been in support of either NATO operations or US-led coalitions in the war on terror. Participation in UN operations has declined since 1995. The recently elected government, however, has signaled a change in priorities. State Secretary Espen Barth Eide, in a speech at the Norwegian Army War College in December 2005, states

<sup>136</sup> Rolf Tamnes, *Norges Hemmelige Tjenester Under Den Kalde Krigen - Et Sammenliknende Internasjonalt Perspektiv* [Norwegian Secret Services During the Cold War - A Comparative International Perspective] (Oslo, Norway: Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies, 1992).

<sup>137</sup> Forsvarsdepartementet, *Relevant Force*, 39.

<sup>138</sup> Johansen, *NATO Og De Transatlantiske Motsetninger*.

<sup>139</sup> Forsvarsdepartementet, *Relevant Force*, 39.

that the new government will increasingly emphasize peace operations, particularly on the African continent. International deployments will be diverted from US-led “coalitions of the willing” in favor of multilateral organizations like NATO, UN, and the EU. The new government will “to a larger degree prioritize Army units for international operations. This objective will be achieved by assigning Navy and Air Force capabilities to NATO and EU’s standby forces, like NATO NRF.”<sup>140</sup> Barth Eide suggests indirectly that NRF forces are more or less limited to Article 5- like operations. By its very nature, NRF ties up assets that otherwise could be used in peace operations. Accordingly, the NRF concept does not allow for NAF being used optimally for foreign policy purposes.

Whether Eide’s speech should be interpreted as strategic guidelines is open to debate. But it is by far the clearest and most current strategic guidance. Based on the above analysis, NAF’s future priorities can thus be listed in order:

1. Maintain national sovereignty within existing economic and political constraints. Unless threats are of military character, NAF’s role is primarily limited to a support role for Department of Justice and Police.
2. Prepare for NATO collective defense with capable Navy and Air Force units to the degree necessary to be assured continued Alliance support for domestic purposes when deemed necessary. NRF is the main priority.
3. Prepare for NATO non Article 5 scenarios with capable Army units to the degree necessary to support NATO’s new strategic concept and thus maintain Alliance coherence.
4. Prepare for UN peace operations, preferably on the African continent, with Army units to the degree necessary to maintain national influence in UN decision making processes.

This list, in the view of this author, is an accurate description of the national military strategy at the moment with associated priorities. Based on this list, the following goals should guide future NORSOB roles and missions:

1. Protect national interests, primarily the oil infrastructure, in NEZ.

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<sup>140</sup> Eide, *Ny Regjering – Ny Sikkerhets- Og Forsvarspolitik?* Author’s translation.

2. Maintain a coherent NATO through participation in Alliance operations and standing force contributions.
3. Maintain a coherent and credible UN through participating in peace operations to promote peace and stability in troubled regions.

The order of priority is state security, societal security, and human security. These goals will be used in the subsequent analysis of future roles and missions for NORSOFF.

#### **D. SUMMARY**

The current security environment is analyzed in national and international contexts. In the national context, threats to state security through conventional war are assessed as negligible, at least in the short term. Territorial disputes, especially in the Barents region, are instead the main area of concern. Jurisdiction in NEZ is primarily a Navy responsibility. Recent events in the region demonstrate the disputed nature of this area. The Army maintains jurisdiction on the Russian border which is part of EU's Schengen agreement. The threat to the border is first and foremost associated with organized crime.

In an international context, terrorism, failed and rogue states, and WMD proliferation are the dominant threats to international stability. Threats to societal security are first and foremost associated with international terrorism. There have so far been no terror incidents in Norway or against Norwegian interests abroad. National security authorities assert, however, that it is only a matter of time before Scandinavia will be hit.

In the larger scheme, conflict patterns have changed, indicating a shift from conventional interstate wars towards intrastate wars with regional or global spillover effects. Conflicts have become politicized over the last 100 years as civilians are increasingly targeted by combatants.

There is no coherent military strategy from which NORSOFF roles and missions can be easily derived. Therefore, existing practice and recent political statements are used to grasp the essence of a national military strategy. For the purpose of state survival,

Norway's predominant strategy continues to be remaining a credible ally in NATO. Only through active participation can this credibility be maintained. NATO is vital for national interests, hence Alliance cohesion is important. Only a continuous US presence and interest in the Alliance can maintain this cohesion. The EU is not a viable alternative to NATO.

The recently elected government has clearly signaled a diversion of emphasis from US-led coalition operations to NATO and UN operations. Operations in Afghanistan through ISAF will be NAF's main focus in the forthcoming years. UN operations, especially in Africa, will increasingly be emphasized. Participation in UN operations will be conducted primarily with Army units. To maintain NATO obligations, Navy and Air Force units will increasingly be assigned to stand by for NATO NRF.

## IV. FUTURE ROLES AND MISSIONS

This chapter begins by evaluating current and future NORSOF roles and missions. The discussion emphasizes principal SOF approaches to warfare through direct and indirect capabilities as outlined by Tucker and Lamb.<sup>141</sup> The intent is not to cover the complete spectrum of tactical missions but to focus on what are perceived and assessed as characteristic roles within each approach. The strategic value of NORSOF is also assessed. The question under consideration is, what are appropriate roles and missions for NORSOF in the future?

The last section of the chapter discusses issues of future transformation. So far, it appears that the inconsistency stated in the hypothesis stems from a lack of strategic guidance and a separation of roles more than from violations of the principles of transformation. The question remains: Is the current organization inconsistent with future roles and missions?

### A. EXPANDING ROLES AND MISSIONS

An important condition for this discussion is that future roles and missions are derived from expected future threats. As such, they are not based on current wars, although lessons learned from current operations certainly apply. In other words, previous experience from OEF and possible future engagements in Sudan are not the only experiences shaping future roles and missions. If this were the case, a strategic perspective on transformation would be meaningless.

One approach to emerging NORSOF missions is to look at the total spectrum of NAF's missions and roles, determine which missions are maintained by conventional forces, and subsequently assign NORSOF missions and roles to fill the "gap." There are two principal reasons why this approach is not used. First, current CHOD indicates that the principle of maintaining a balanced defense structure is no longer relevant. Hence the gap is probably already too large for NORSOF to fill. In addition, to operationalize the

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<sup>141</sup> Tucker and Lamb, *Restructuring Special Operations Forces for Emerging Threats*, 1-6.

concept of “balanced defense structure” is a challenge. Second, the emphasis on NATO as the cornerstone of national security policy forces Norway to participate with certain capabilities. The common denominator for SOF in NATO is AJP-01(B). Hence the focus for the following discussion is on the two principal SOF roles through direct and indirect capabilities. It also follows from this chapter that NORSOF roles should be clarified and identified in a national and international context, with the latter limited to include NATO and the UN.

This paper reduces the spectrum of operations to a dichotomy—war and peace—rather than using the division peace-crisis-war. The dichotomy is especially useful in a national context where NAF has its primary role. A grey zone certainly exists, but to make the discussion clearer, the term crisis is avoided. In a NATO context, the spectrum of operations is defined as Article 5 and non-Article 5 operations, where Article 5 operations are collective defense of trans-Atlantic sovereignty, while non-Article 5 operations, or Crisis Response Operations (CRO), encompass all other NATO engagements.<sup>142</sup> For UN operations, the spectrum of operations is simply defined as Peace Support Operations (PSO).<sup>143</sup> This framework is illustrated in Figure 11.

National	Peace	War
NATO	CRO	Article 5
UN	PSO	

Figure 11. *Framework for new roles*

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<sup>142</sup> NATO, *Allied Joint Doctrine AJP-01(B)*, para 2204.

<sup>143</sup> AJP-01(B) chapter 22, section III. Peace Support Operations might be divided into Peacekeeping and Peace Enforcement. In this thesis this distinction is not made because the focus is held on the impartial aspect of UN operations. Whether operations are offensive or defensive is deemed less relevant.

## 1. The National Context

To begin this discussion, it is useful to refer to the following statement in *Relevant Force*:

The use of military force by Norway in a purely national context is first and foremost an option in limited situations, connected to the exercise of national sovereignty and authority. In all other situations, the NAF will operate in a multinational framework – both inside and outside of Norway.<sup>144</sup>

Except for a clear military violation of national sovereignty and authority – an act of war – NAF's role is limited. The peacetime role is important, though, and potentially includes operations within as well as outside national borders. The Elektron incident illustrates operations within national borders. Potential roles outside national borders are illustrated by recent reactions to the “cartoon case,” the series of controversial cartoons depicting the Prophet Muhammad. The reactions to the publication of these cartoons included the burning of the Norwegian Embassy in Syria.<sup>145</sup>

In war, NORSOF's current roles will arguably still apply. Insofar as a military threat or situation exists, NORSOF's traditional roles will probably be as applicable in the future as they were during the Cold War. Both new concepts of warfare, like network centric warfare or information operations, and adaptation to new technology certainly apply to NORSOF as for NAF in general. This will not affect special operations *per se*, except that emerging technology and new concepts must be adapted and implemented. Direct action capabilities within the spectrum of DA and SR will therefore continue to be relevant.

Although NORSOF can conduct independent missions in the operational or strategic realm, its mission potential is highest in conjunction with conventional operations. This assertion seems reasonable knowing that the overall strength of NAF, in terms of maneuver units, has been significantly reduced since the Cold War. Likewise, conventional units increasingly adapt better technology and weapons systems, further

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<sup>144</sup> Forsvarsdepartementet, *Relevant Force*.

<sup>145</sup> Kristin Welle- Strand, "Ambassaden i Syria Brent Ned [Embassy in Syria on Fire]," *Verdens Gang*, <http://www.vg.no/pub/vgart.hbs?artid=181765> (accessed March 20, 2006).

reinforcing this point. SOF has also played an increasingly key role in conventional campaigns. The integration of SOF and the Air Force is often considered the successful formula behind the toppling of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in 2001. In a national context, within the next five to ten years Norway will have the most modern Navy in Europe.<sup>146</sup> It thus seems important for NORSOF to continue to integrate with the conventional parts of NAF, not only to gain support for its own operations, but also to support naval operations in the littoral. The same logic will apply to new concepts within land and air warfare.

Indirect capabilities, as described by doctrine, are less likely to be applicable in war on national territory. The primary role will be to apply capabilities directly at the enemy, not indirectly through a surrogate force. There is one exception, though, which is acting in an advisory role for both conventional and SOF Allied units. With few exceptions, international forces have proven less capable of operating independently in Norway, especially in winter. According to USSOCOM, in Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm, coalition warfare—warfighting with forces from more than one nation—“was arguably the most important of all the SOCCENT missions.”<sup>147</sup> This advisory role was assigned to both SEALs and to the Fifth Special Forces Group (5<sup>th</sup> SFG). Because NATO does not pre-designate units for Article 5 operations as it did in the case of Cold War scenarios, Norway cannot know in advance which units will deploy with Norway in support of Article 5 operations. Coalition warfare should therefore apply to NORSOF.

In times of peace, it follows from *Relevant Force* that missions and roles are limited to issues involving sovereignty and authority. Whenever the military is used outside its primary role, this will be within the context of other departments, and most likely the Department of Justice and Police. This pertains to the Coast Guard maintaining

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<sup>146</sup> Ole M. Rapp, "Får Europas Beste Marine [the Best Navy in Europe]," *Aftenposten*, <http://www.aftenposten.no/nyheter/iriks/article962380.ece> (accessed January 17, 2006).

<sup>147</sup> USSOCOM, *United States Special Operations Command: History* (Tampa, FL: USSOCOM, 2002), 37.

national interests in the Barents region, the Army's expanded Schengen mission on the Norwegian-Russian border, and HJK in its CT role in NEZ.<sup>148</sup>

The MJK has the capability for ship boarding, or Maritime Interdict Operations (MIO).<sup>149</sup> This role is useful for supporting naval units like the Coast Guard. Where required and authorized, NORSOF support could thus be utilized to maintain national interests where civilian authorities lack capability. Again, the Elektron incident illustrates this point.

The Elektron incident, however, has spurred an emerging debate over NAF's domestic role and responsibility in times of peace. The Home Guard is currently being restructured and equipped to focus on terrorism instead of its traditional role, which has been focused on security of vital property. This shift of focus has created tension between NAF and the police. According to an unidentified police source, "it is a paradox that parts of NAF are specializing in services that are not in demand."<sup>150</sup> The question is not whether terrorism is a threat; rather, the question is whether this is a role for NAF in times of peace. Truls Fyhn, Chief of Police in Tromsø, claims that the police's own CT unit, *Beredskapstroppen*, has the capability to handle jurisdictional incidents requiring the use of force, including support to the Coast Guard.<sup>151</sup>

Whether or not Fyhn is right with regard to tactical capability is of little interest for this paper, although it is clear that the police do not have the necessary tactical mobility to execute complex missions offshore without military support. Fyhn's main argument, however, is that jurisdictional responsibility over use-of-force in times of

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<sup>148</sup> See Merete Voreland, "Utfordringer i Norske Kyst Og Havområder [Challenges in Norwegian Maritime Areas]," Forsvaret [Norwegian Defense], <http://www.mil.no/sjo/kv/start/article.jhtml?articleID=110005> (accessed January 17, 2006); Forsvarsdepartementet, "Forsvarets Bistand Til Politiet [Armed Forces Support to Police]," Forsvarsdepartementet [Ministry of Defense], <http://odin.dep.no/fd/norsk/dok/regelverk/010011-990214/dok-bn.html> (accessed January 17, 2006); Eide, *Ny Regjering – Ny Sikkerhets- Og Forsvarspolitik?*

<sup>149</sup> Kysteskadren, *Det Nye Sjøforsvaret: Omstilling i Sjøforsvaret 2004-2010 [Changing the Navy 2004-2010]*, 5.

<sup>150</sup> Sveinung B. Bentzrød, "Politi Mot Forsvaret i Terrorkonflikt [Police Against the Military in Terror Conflict]," *Aftenposten*, <http://www.aftenposten.no/nyheter/iriks/article1164493.ece2005>.

<sup>151</sup> NTB, "Beredskapstroppen Burde Stoppet 'Elektron' [Police Delta Force Should Have Stopped Elektron]," *Verdens Gang*, <http://www.vg.no/pub/vgart.hbs?artid=299536> (accessed January 10, 2006).

peace is not clear. A grey zone thus exists between the police and the military with regard to CT. An occupied oil platform in NEZ is geographically confined within Norwegian jurisdictional territory, but outside the reach of normal police duty. To use HJK in a designated role for this scenario seems fairly unproblematic. To what extent NORSOFF can be assigned specific roles beyond offshore scenarios, is, however, uncertain. The counterargument is that available assets should be used whenever the situation dictates. This is certainly true. But facing a more dangerous and destructive terrorist than the initial offshore scenario was intended to counter, a rigid set of rules might be obsolete.

If Fyhn is right, then there is redundancy between civilian and military authorities with regard to jurisdiction over NORSOFF roles. The MJK's MIO role, however, is of interest in an alliance context. Hence, a redundant capability exists for national purposes. Implicit in Fyhn's assertions is also that the police might have tactical capability with regard to CT operations on petroleum installations in NEZ. Insofar, this role is not officially contested.

The role of NORSOFF in support of national authority outside Norway, noncombatant evacuation operations and hostage rescue seems clearer. The wellbeing of national citizens is a national responsibility. Such incidents are not covered through national doctrine, but it follows from AJP-01(B) that NATO or NATO forces could ally to initiate such operations.<sup>152</sup> From international experience, NEO and HR frequently involve the use of SOF, and the role should thus be applicable for NORSOFF as well. This scenario is illustrated by the kidnapping of the Norwegian UN observer Knut Gjellestad in Sierra Leone in 2000. Gjellestad was eventually rescued in a British operation.<sup>153</sup> Because failed or rogue states continue to exist, especially on the African continent, and radical terrorist groups deliberately target Western citizens, both missions will likely emerge in the future.

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<sup>152</sup> NATO, *Allied Joint Doctrine AJP-01(B)*, para 2230.

<sup>153</sup> V. G. Nett, "Hensynsløse Soldater Holder Gjellestad Som Gissel [Ruthless Soldiers Keep Gjellestad Hostage]," *Verdens Gang*, <http://www.vg.no/pub/vgart.hbs?artid=7368061> (accessed February 7, 2006).

Normally, NEO is associated with military operations, and is thus generally undisputed with regard to jurisdiction. Depending on the circumstances, a NEO operation involving national citizens clearly justifies NORSOFF participation. The role of NORSOFF is less clear with regard to HR. It will certainly depend on the circumstances, such as whether the hostage is located in a conflict area where friendly forces are deployed, like Afghanistan or Iraq, or whether it is a civilian in any given country. The former would arguably fall under the domain of Department of Defense, the latter under the Department of Justice and Police.

However, *Politiforum*, a journal for the Norwegian police, reports that Beredskapstroppen recently participated in the Balkan theater as a combined CT police unit called Team Six, among others conducting HR operations.<sup>154</sup> Norwegian citizens have not been the objective, but nevertheless this indicates that the police have the capability for international operations in areas where jurisdiction might not be as clear as if hostages were located in Baghdad or London. The previously described tension between police and NAF in domestic operations could thus exist in operations outside national territory. However, HR seems appropriate for NORSOFF given HJK's existing CT mission and MJK's maritime MIO capability.

The national roles for NORSOFF are traditionally CT in NEZ along with possible support to other military units with regard to jurisdiction. Open source documentation suggests that HJK's CT role is the only role assigned NORSOFF in times of peace. Other missions thus depend on availability of forces at any given time. Two roles normally associated with SOF, NEO and HR, seem appropriate for NORSOFF as well.

Missions and roles as derived above all fall under SOF direct action capabilities. Given the previous discussion, it is necessary to clarify the roles of NORSOFF vs. the police. This has ramifications for NORSOFF's readiness status, which eventually ties up scarce resources that could be used more efficiently elsewhere.

This author has defined NORSOFF's strategic role as promoting national foreign policy objectives. This role is not defined by doctrine. Vanderbrouche defines strategic

<sup>154</sup> Politiforum, "Takk Og Pris (Editorial) [Thank God!]," *Politiforum*, <http://www.politiforum.no/artikkel.jsp?id=821> (accessed January 18, 2006).

SOF missions as offensive strikes seeking to achieve foreign policy objectives, citing the Bay of Pigs and the 1980 attempt to rescue US embassy personnel in Iran as examples.<sup>155</sup> According to Vanderbrouche, a national HR capability falls within the strategic realm.

Whether Norway, with its current foreign political ambitions, has the political and military will to conduct such strikes is questionable. Dr. Richard H. Shultz Jr., longtime analyst and writer on military affairs, questions whether even the US dare use its SOF in a strategic offensive role for national purposes. Prior to 9/11, then-President Clinton signed several presidential directives targeting Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda network. Despite the political will, in most cases the Pentagon was reluctant to conduct SO for this purpose.<sup>156</sup> This runs contrary to the belief that politicians are more reluctant to use military force than the military itself.

Much changed after 9/11, but such strikes conducted today or in the future are likely to be within an Alliance or coalition context. Although NATO is a political as well as military organization, its role as a foreign policy instrument is limited to Alliance consensus. Excluding an HR scenario, it is unclear to what extent Norway can garner sufficient support within the Alliance to pursue national foreign policy objectives. According to Hans Binnendijk, Director of the Center for the Study of Technology and National Security Policy at the Institute for National Strategic Studies, NATO's NRF force is not constructed to act in this role. Unless NATO develops a NATO Special Operations Force concept broadly modeled on the USSOCOM concept, NATO SOF will not in itself constitute a strategic resource.<sup>157</sup> NORSOF's role as a strike force pursuing national foreign policy objectives is thus limited, although HR operations could be defined as strategic strikes.

Strategic utility, however, might be achieved by other means. In *Commandos and Politicians*, Dr. Eliot Cohen suggests three motivations for the creation, nurturance, and

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<sup>155</sup> Vandenbroucke, *Perilous Options*.

<sup>156</sup> Richard H. Shultz Jr., "Nine Reasons Why We Never Sent our Special Operations Forces After Al Qaeda Before 9/11."

<sup>157</sup> Hans Binnendijk, David C. Gompert and Richard L. Kugler, *A New Military Framework for NATO* (Washington DC: Center for Technology and National Security Policy, 2005), [http://www.ndu.edu/ctnsp/defense\\_horizons/DH\\_48\\_R1.pdf](http://www.ndu.edu/ctnsp/defense_horizons/DH_48_R1.pdf) (accessed February 8, 2006).

deployment of elite military units: military utility, the romantic image of war, and political utility.<sup>158</sup> While Cohen's definition of military utility and the romantic image of war might not be useful for understanding strategic utility as defined by this author, his discussion on political utility is more promising. Due to the increasingly political aspect of conflicts after WWII – who shall rule as opposed to what shall be ruled over – Cohen suggests that “small, discrete military actions can be used to signal to a number of audiences (an opposing government, its population, one's own population) threats, commitments, and intents.”<sup>159</sup> NORSOFF's deployment to Afghanistan late 2001 is an example of such a signaling effort. While this might have been unintentional (the mission was initially a low profile deployment) the deployment clearly signaled national will and commitment to both domestic and international audiences. Deploying NORSOFF indicated a policy shift wherein Norway deployed offensive units intended for combat operations. Whether political opponents agreed on the decision is irrelevant. NORSOFF brought national values and colors to the fight. By deploying a capable and relevant force, the government achieved this effect while simultaneously lowering the political risk; the military footprint was low, yet capable; the standard of the forces was high, hence the probability of success high as well. Using NORSOFF in this role could thus be interpreted as pursuing foreign policy objectives.

This effect is not necessarily exclusive to NORSOFF, as other units were deployed more or less simultaneously. Later in 2002, F-16s were deployed, and mine clearance troops were deployed before NORSOFF to Afghanistan. But NORSOFF was the first Norwegian combat unit to be deployed and utilized. A “signaling” role contradicts the low profile generally sought in conjunction with SO, and is thus open to question.

Thus it is unclear to what extent NORSOFF is a strategic force beyond the military domain. Gray asserts that SOF only “have strategic meaning...with reference to war, or other kinds of conflict, as a whole.”<sup>160</sup> While Vandembroucke disagrees, the question is

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<sup>158</sup> Eliot A. Cohen, *Commandos and Politicians* (Cambridge, Mass: Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, 1978), 136.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.

<sup>160</sup> Gray, *Explorations in Strategy*, 143.

whether Norway is willing or capable to use NORSOF for strategic purposes, i.e., to pursue policy objectives. The albeit limited earlier discussion suggests that NORSOF's strategic impact is low except for its potential signaling effect, an effect that also can be attributed to conventional units.

A principal arrangement of NORSOF missions in a national context could thus be depicted as in Figure 12.

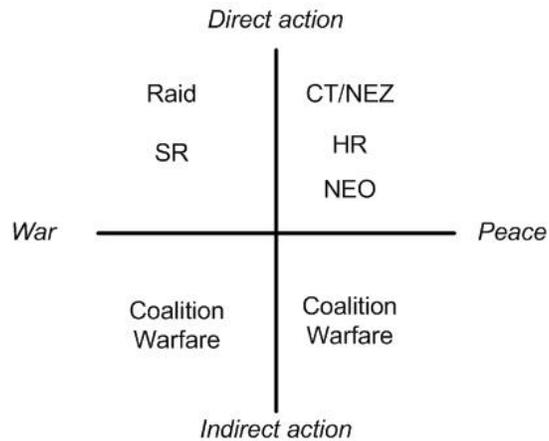


Figure 12. *NORSOF potential for SO missions in a national context*

## 2. NATO and the UN

For NATO operations, the dichotomy of peace/war is replaced by the dichotomy of Article 5/CRO. The previous discussion of national roles in war pertains to Article 5 operations as well, since Article 5 primarily is concerned with territorial defense. It can thus be concluded that the discussion of national roles in times of war applies to NATO and Article 5. For territorial defense purposes, NORSOF's current direct action capabilities therefore apply.

The extent to which NRF will be used beyond Article 5 operations remains to be seen. It is clear that NRF is intended as an initial entry force with capabilities within the complete spectrum of operations. NRF is designed as a "first in–first out" expeditionary force.<sup>161</sup> SOF support to NRF operations are thus likely to be within the direct action spectrum of capabilities. Beyond global reach and Alliance integration, which might

<sup>161</sup> NATO, *Improving Capabilities to Meet New Threats* (Brussels, Belgium: NATO, 2004), 9, <http://www.nato.int/docu/briefing/briefing-capabilities-e.pdf> (accessed February 27, 2006).

require extended training in various climate zones and combined joint exercises, SOF's roles will arguably remain constant.

Although NATO's strategic concept implies that threats are challenged before reaching Alliance territory, it is less likely that NATO will initiate preventive operations. Given the negative European reaction to the US concept of preventive war, preventive military operations are less likely to be a political option for NATO. Offensive "war by consensus" is inherently more challenging than its defensive counterpart. Non-Article 5 conditions are therefore likely to apply to most, if not all, out-of-area operations.

This leaves Norway with an option regarding future NORSOF roles and missions, because out-of-area operations are based on national interests, and not Alliance requirements. "[U]nlike Collective Defence operations, there is no automatic commitment of forces for non-Article 5 CRO..."<sup>162</sup> Further, "[a] nation's level of interest in a non-Article 5 CRO may vary in relation to its national strategic interest in the operation. Therefore, national commitment to provide forces will vary accordingly..."<sup>163</sup> Given the low probability of Article 5 scenarios in today's Euro-Atlantic area, this suggests NORSOF should adapt new roles to stay relevant beyond Article 5. This assertion is based on strategies increasingly pursued by both the Norwegian government and NATO.

According to Scheffer, NATO's core mission remains collective defense. But he also asserts that NATO should be used throughout the complete spectrum of operations, including non-military missions like nation building.<sup>164</sup> SOF in general and NORSOF in particular could certainly play a key role at this lower end of the conflict scale. From US experience, low intensity conflicts (LIC) have traditionally been a SOF niche capability.<sup>165</sup> Although direct action capabilities are applicable in low intensity scenarios, indirect capabilities have traditionally proven more effective against insurgents and

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<sup>162</sup> NATO, *Allied Joint Doctrine AJP-01(B)*, Para 2204.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, para 2209.

<sup>164</sup> Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, "Keeping NATO Relevant: A Shareholders Report," Speech by NATO Secretary General at the NATO Parliamentary Assembly Annual Session, Copenhagen, 15 November 2005.

<sup>165</sup> Adams, *US Special Operations Forces in Action*.

irregular opponents. The latter is exemplified by the ongoing conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Knowing that wars are increasingly politicized further underscores the necessity of an indirect approach to win hearts and minds.<sup>166</sup>

The essence of the indirect approach is to work by, with, and through an indigenous force or population to gain tactical and strategic advantages. As per AJP-01(B), MA as an indirect approach broadly includes two roles: the guerrilla/insurgency role, and peace operations, as discussed in Chapter II. These roles can be broadly distinguished by the relationship to the host nation or the belligerents. Acting in the first role, the operation supports one side in a conflict, either the existing government or its opponent. Conversely, in peace operations, the operation does not support a side, but rather works to stabilize the conflict. Peace operations can be divided into peacekeeping and peace enforcement, depending on the nature of the conflict and to what extent the stabilizing force is accepted by the belligerents.

From the previous analysis, it is clear that NORSOF is not traditionally focused on the indirect spectrum of capabilities. Because most contemporary conflicts pertain to the low intensity range of the scale, and because this trend will probably continue for the foreseeable future, changing focus could increase NORSOF's flexibility and relevance. The instructor role is thus applicable, whether this role applies to an organization within the host government (FID) or at the local village level (UW). Instead of using the US terms FID and UW, the term advisor, also found in doctrine, is appropriate. The USSF is used widely in this role to train elements of the national Army, including in Afghanistan and Iraq. In a broad sense, the Norwegian-led Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Meymaneh, Afghanistan, is part of an indirect strategy. While the PRT effort is run by conventional units, there is no reason why NORSOF could not contribute in a USSF-like role in remote or high threat areas, or where a large conventional footprint is impossible or undesirable. This capability does not currently exist.

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<sup>166</sup> Nigel Aylwin-Foster, "Changing the Army for Counterinsurgency Operations," *Military Review* (November- December, 2005), 2-15. Aylwin-Foster criticizes the US Army's tendency to place too much emphasis on offensive approaches to destroying Iraqi insurgents in later phases of OIF.

In Afghanistan, NATO supports the existing government through ISAF. Thus the counterinsurgency role (COIN) in all its aspects will increasingly be important. So far, ISAF is not involved in the more troubled southeast region of Afghanistan. With the Afghan insurgency rising steadily, NATO will have to face this challenge as the US decreases its presence.<sup>167</sup> For Norway to contribute with a competent COIN capability adds to the relevancy of NAF. For NORSOF to be assigned MA as an additional core capability adds to the relevancy of NORSOF as a niche capability in NATO.

Roles and mission in a NATO context are exemplified in Figure 13.

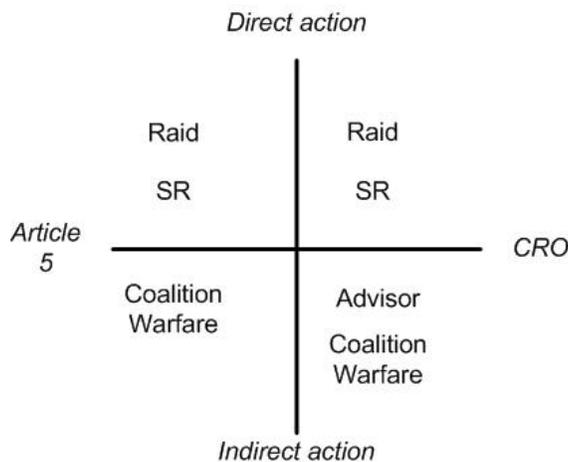


Figure 13. *NORSOF potential for SO missions in a NATO context*

It is also clear from current government statements that Norway will increasingly focus its military support on UN operations. In 2006, NAF will deploy to Sudan, possibly through the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS). It is not yet clear what capabilities will be assigned to the mission. According to State Secretary Barth-Eide, Norway does not presently have forces with the necessary competence to participate in UN operations.<sup>168</sup> He does, however, claim that Norway could deploy command and control capabilities, intelligence, communication, and CIMIC units, along with “capable combat elements like

<sup>167</sup> Michael Smith, "Afghan Posting 'Too Dangerous' for Dutch Army," *The Sunday Times*, <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2089-1880012,00.html> (accessed January 18, 2006).

<sup>168</sup> Marita I. Wangberg, "Nordisk Samarbeid Om FN- Bidrag [Nordic Cooperation on UN Participation]," *Forsvaret [Norwegian Defense]*, <http://www.mil.no/start/article.jhtml?articleID=113314> (accessed January 18, 2006).

mechanized infantry and special operations forces.”<sup>169</sup> In one sense, this is a misperception of the general capabilities SOF can bring to the operation, and amplifies NORSOFF as a direct action capability. On the other hand, his statement also underscores NORSOFF’s lack of capabilities beyond direct action.

Whether NORSOFF represents a capability intended to deploy for UN operations, or whether the UN actually wants SOF capabilities in their operations, is of less relevance for this paper. This is ultimately a political decision. More relevant is NORSOFF’s potential capabilities in case of political will. In other words, can NORSOFF be utilized for UN operations? If missions are appropriate for SOF in the first place, it seems less important whether the operation is led by the UN or NATO. NORSOFF’s existing offensive capabilities should thus be applicable. In addition, by virtue of its SO status, NORSOFF has certain tactical capabilities that technically should be relevant in UN operations: a small organizational footprint, a substantial C2 capability, and enhanced medical capability. These are capabilities that should make NORSOFF capable of participating in e.g., initial entry operations, area assessments, and other operations not dependent on a large conventional presence. NORSOFF’s intelligence capabilities could also be utilized in early phases of an operation to establish early warning indicators, although this might require skills beyond those considered necessary during the Cold War.

Increasing emphasis on indirect capabilities will allow more robust NORSOFF participation, which also could extend over time. An indirect approach, however, would require increased emphasis on the social, political, and cultural aspects of a conflict. To be effective in this “less direct” setting requires prior training and mental preparation. It is not good enough to be a Special Operator to sustain these capabilities.<sup>170</sup> These requirements apply to CRO operations as well. The ability to operate in the cultural and political setting of the conflict would allow NORSOFF to fully employ existing tactical capabilities as mentioned above. In addition, working through the local population in, for

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<sup>169</sup> Eide, *Ny Regjering – Ny Sikkerhets- Og Forsvarspolitik?* Author’s translation.

<sup>170</sup> See Tucker and Lamb, *Restructuring Special Operations Forces for Emerging Threats*, 1-6.

example, a Sudan scenario would add to the intelligence collection aspect of the operation.

NORSOF's potential missions and roles in PSO are depicted in Figure 14.

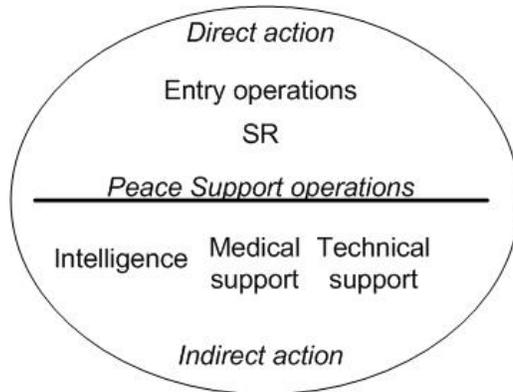


Figure 14. *NORSOF potential missions in an UN context*

### **3. Implications**

The most important observation from the previous section is that NORSOF lacks indirect capabilities. Two questions emerge from this discussion. First, is increased emphasis on indirect capabilities desirable or necessary? Second, can direct action and indirect action capabilities be developed within the context of a single unit?

Given the priorities for security, direct action capabilities should continue to be NORSOF's primary focus. Indirect action capabilities are not necessary for national defense purposes. Accepting that international cooperation is vital for national defense purposes does not alter this assertion. However, national defense is a function of international cooperation, which requires Alliance participation, with NATO as the cornerstone. Because current NATO operations are conducted under CRO conditions and NATO will be increasingly involved in protracted low intensity conflicts, indirect capabilities will increasingly be demanded or preferred. More emphasis on UN operations will reinforce this demand. NAF and NORSOF will thus become more involved in political conflicts where population control, impartiality, human rights, and controlled use of force are keywords. By focusing on indirect capabilities, NORSOF will

continue to be relevant. By maintaining its direct action capabilities, NORSOB will continue to be flexible. The answer to the first question, then, is yes.

Can a focus on both direct and indirect action capabilities be maintained within a single unit? The answer is not obvious. Increasingly, combatants must be able to switch between high intensity combat operations and humanitarian assistance, all within the same mission. It is a challenging task, and one that few conventional militaries train for.<sup>171</sup> Within the US SOF community, Army SF has the indirect approach as its primary role (UW), while the Navy SEALs have direct action roles as their primary task. Yet both units have historically first and foremost been used in direct action roles. According to Adams, Army SF actually prefers direct action roles over indirect action. One possible explanation is that indirect warfare strategies have never been emphasized by the conventional military, in part because indirect action missions are “very hard to define and prepare for.”<sup>172</sup> The US military experience in Vietnam illustrates what happens when a direct action strategy is consistently applied to an enemy who just as consistently refuses to fight on those terms. The current Iraqi conflict also demonstrates that conventional military strategies might prove ineffective against a ferocious insurgency.<sup>173</sup>

Tucker and Lamb claim that it is essential to distinguish between the two SOF approaches. Not only is it necessary to distinguish roles at the tactical level, i.e., what unit is assigned what capability, but USSOCOM should assign responsibility for direct and indirect capabilities to two separate commands within the strategic headquarters. Only through such a division will an indirect approach (military assistance, in NATO terms) receive the proper attention.<sup>174</sup> This division is neither possible nor desirable for Norway for several reasons, including national ambitions and the size of the forces involved. But Tucker and Lamb’s argument underscores that an offensive nature does not imply

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<sup>171</sup> Max Boot, “The Struggle to Transform the Military,” *Foreign Affairs*, March/April (2005). 103-118.

<sup>172</sup> Adams, *US Special Operations Forces in Action*, 307.

<sup>173</sup> Aylwin-Foster, *Changing the Army for Counterinsurgency Operations*, 2-15.

<sup>174</sup> Tucker and Lamb, *Restructuring Special Operations Forces for Emerging Threats*, 1-6.

excellence or even competence in MA. This view is shared by Adams.<sup>175</sup> British (UK) SOF, on the other hand, does not seem to distinguish between indirect and direct capabilities to the same degree as the US does. This is less documented through literature. The British way of war, however, is distinguished from the Americans' by their historical precedents in fighting small wars and counterinsurgency operations. This is a heritage from colonial times, and so is contemporary British doctrine.<sup>176</sup> Whereas British SOF has contributed successfully in counterinsurgency operations as part of British colonial and post-colonial wars, NORSOF is regarded as a niche capability within NATO. Thus the question: With no longstanding national military culture beyond national defense, is British experience and practice, embracing the full spectrum of SO capabilities separated by a maritime/land role, a better model than the US for Norway? It is important to note that no definite line exists within either model, although the intent is to assign primary and secondary missions and roles instead of having overlap. To develop niche capabilities, which is Norway's primary approach to alliance warfare, dividing direct and indirect capabilities between two units seems more appropriate than not.

This leads to a third question with regard to future NORSOF roles: if NORSOF is assigned responsibility for an indirect capability, will it be utilized effectively, assuming that indirect capabilities involve protracted engagements? The US SOF community consists of more than 50,000 personnel, more than twice the size of NAF in total. Norway has signaled a contribution of 200 soldiers to the forthcoming UN mission in Sudan. Will an MA-capable NORSOF make a difference? Given Norway's previous experience with UN operations, a capable NORSOF element could easily make a difference, depending on what strategies are adopted in the operation. If capabilities do not exist, however, the chosen strategy is likely to reflect this. You can only wish for what you have.

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<sup>175</sup> Adams, *US Special Operations Forces in Action*, ch. 11.

<sup>176</sup> Robert M. Cassidy, "The British Army and Counterinsurgency: The Salience of Military Culture," *Military Review*, May-June (2005), 53-59.

## **B. TRANSFORMING NORSOF**

The last part of this chapter presents ideas about the transformation of NORSOF. The underlying question is whether the current organization structure is inconsistent with future roles and missions. Put differently, do future requirements justify maintaining the current organizational structure? One clear challenge is the lack of a framework for how NORSOF should redefine or clarify its roles. Based on existing practice and security policy, it is reasonable to assume that Norway can choose its future wars unless operations are initiated through a NATO Article 5 scenario. Out-of-area operations, CRO, are based on national voluntariness, and participation is usually rooted in national interest of some sort.<sup>177</sup> Technically, then, NORSOF should be able to adapt new roles based on which wars Norway choose to participate in. These are the wars that justify the term niche capability. A war on national territory will not require niche capabilities; it would require a total effort of available assets, whether labeled “niche” or not.

Given the analysis in Chapter II, choosing missions and roles using NORSOF as the level of analysis is fairly easy, but separating roles and missions using MJK and HJK as the level of analysis could be a challenge. The existing division is rooted in a naval/land warfare framework. The inconsistency suggests this framework can be considered obsolete or at least less relevant. Existing doctrine does not distinguish maritime skills from land warfare capabilities. Historical practice, both national and international, does indicate the relevance of service-based SOF affiliation. Underwater capabilities are skill sets historically developed within a Navy context. Operations inland are traditionally thought of as an Army capability; hence Army SOF has developed with skills traditionally found within the Army. In NORSOF history, this has been the traditional separation of roles. But history is also inconsistent. Questions frequently arise about whether MJK should be equipped and train with vehicles, or whether HJK should be equipped and train with rubber boats. As suggested above, MJK and HJK today possess capabilities normally thought of as part of each other’s domain. MJK’s operations in

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<sup>177</sup> See Preben Bonnén for an alternative view of Denmark’s choice of wars in the aftermath of the Cold War. Preben Bonnén, "Danmarks Valg Af Krige Og De Indenrigspolitiske Konsekvenser Af En Aktiv Udenrigspolitik [the Danish Choice of Wars and Consequences of an Active Foreign Policy]," *Norsk Militært Tidsskrift*, no. 5 (2005), 11-15.

Afghanistan and HJK's maritime CT mission suggest this is true. While other, comparable nations continue to maintain service-based capabilities, the same nations continue to use their SOF units in scenarios in Afghanistan and Iraq regardless of service affiliation. This suggests overlapping capabilities are common with regard to SOF, and that certain types of missions can be considered generic to SOF regardless of service affiliation. The challenge is to draw a dividing line in so that units do not duplicate all their special missions and special gear, the latter clearly entailing a cost factor. If units are duplicated, then the rationale for separate units seems weak.

The rest of this paper is concerned with transformation issues. St.prp.nr.42 (2003-2004) provides broad guidelines for the transformation of NAF and NORSOE, defining military transformation as "...a change in the structure and characteristics of military forces as well as the way they operate."<sup>178</sup> The hypothesis of this thesis is that the current organization is inconsistent with future missions and roles. A merged organization is then treated as the dependent variable, while missions and roles are treated as the independent variables. St.prp.nr.42 further outlines criteria or factors to which military transformation should conform. These factors are treated as intervening variables.

A major principle for the overall transformation is to *maintain complementary instead of overlapping capabilities*, meaning two units should not possess similar core capabilities. *Flexibility* is another principle, and could be defined broadly as the ability to cover a widest possible spectrum of tasks or operations. This factor is then understood as *flexibility with regard to the spectrum of operations*, meaning operations ranging from high intensity conventional war, to humanitarian operations and perhaps to nation building. *Relevance for NATO's structure* is important due to the change of focus from national operations to international participation through NATO or other coalition operations. Units exclusively designed for national purposes will only exist to the degree that their capabilities are unique to the defense of national territory. Such units will not be trained and equipped to participate in out-of-area operations. A revitalized Home Guard exemplifies such a force element. Since the UN is increasingly vitalized as an organ for future operations, the author adds *the UN* to this factor. The traditional focus on services

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<sup>178</sup> Forsvarsdepartementet, *St.Prp.Nr.42 (2003-2004)*, 50. Author's translation.

is considered less vital for the future as joint operations will be dominant. This does not imply service affiliation is obsolete, but whether a capability belongs to the Navy or Army is deemed less relevant in an operational context. This factor, *interoperability*, relates most to how units are trained and equipped to fit interoperability standards.<sup>179</sup>

According to St.prp.nr.42 (2003-2004), two additional requirements are particular to NORSOFF. The first is *the requirement to increase NORSOFF's general capability* in order to improve “national freedom of action, flexibility, and sustainability.”<sup>180</sup> This increase is important for fulfilling NATO requirements as well. While this requirement could be associated with increased unit size, this paper defines increased capability in terms of *scope of SOF core tasks*. This factor is closely associated with the general principle of complementary capabilities. Since NORSOFF, by definition, is complementary to NAF, the complementary factor will be discussed in the context of NORSOFF. *Complementary instead of overlapping tasks* thus equals *scope of SOF core capabilities*. Ideally, the widest possible scope will enhance national freedom and flexibility.

The second requirement is that HJK and MJK should be able to conduct operations as one single unit or entity. *NORSOFF interoperability* is thus important. Since recent operations demonstrate that NORSOFF is interoperable with coalition partners, *NORSOFF interoperability* will substitute for the general term *interoperability* mentioned above.

The last factor pertaining to NORSOFF's transformation is its strategic role, arguably a new one since the end of the Cold War. This factor, more than any, should determine future organizational structure, but this role is not listed as a factor *per se*. Rather, it should be viewed as such once the future organization is developed.

Table 1 summarizes the intervening variables held as important for future transformation.

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<sup>179</sup> Forsvarsdepartementet, *St.Prp.Nr.42 (2003-2004)*, 53-54.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*, 56. Author's translation.

Flexibility within the spectrum of SOF core capabilities
Flexibility within the spectrum of operations
Relevance for NATO and UN
NORSOF interoperability
NORSOF's strategic role

Table 1. *Factors pertaining to NORSOF transformation*

### 1. Flexibility Within the Spectrum of SOF Core Capabilities

In this paper SOF core capabilities are defined as a dichotomy, separating direct from indirect action capabilities. Chapter II suggests that MJK and HJK have capabilities within the direct action spectrum. How complementary their capabilities are today can only be determined by looking at the individual unit focus on either land or naval warfare, a study that would be classified. The land/naval aspect—the domain in which the forces are designed to operate—thus does matter. This is illustrated in Figure 15.

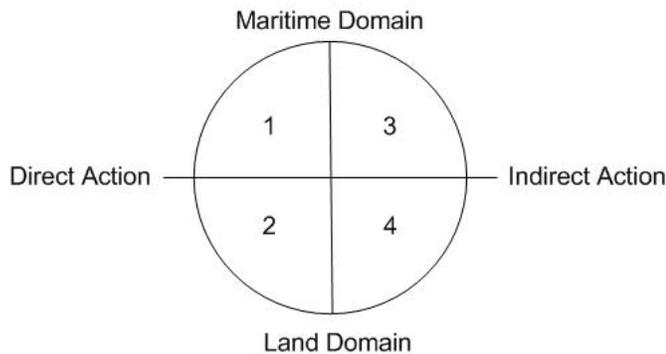


Figure 15. *SOF core capabilities*

Both units have repeatedly demonstrated their mastery of land warfare (Balkans and Afghanistan), and neither unit has official international experience in naval warfare operations. As this study has shown, however, both units have focused training and exercises according to their service affiliation. Both units collectively represent capabilities within quadrant 1 and 2 of Figure 15. This is the flexibility NORSOF is assumed to represent today. Within the defined dichotomy, including the domain naval/land warfare, NORSOF represents a less flexible SOF capability according to current

doctrine. Merging the two units is not in itself likely to alter this situation. On the contrary, merging the two units without specifying new roles is likely to diminish existing capabilities within one of the domains because of organizational preferences, pending a new unit's organizational location (Army or Navy). Maintaining the status quo is therefore likely to be a better option if domain matters. This argument follows the same logic as do Tucker and Lamb in justifying their claims for a division of direct and indirect action capabilities in the US SOF.<sup>181</sup>

Clarifying and adding core capabilities towards the indirect end of the spectrum of operations, which this paper suggests is necessary, will increase flexibility within the total range of capabilities. Again, merging the organizations is not likely to be a better option than maintaining the status quo. From a direct/indirect perspective on roles, the status quo does not necessarily require reference to SOF's domain. However, if indirect action capabilities are required or desired within both quadrants 3 and 4, domain matters. The conclusion is therefore that the status quo is better than a merger in terms of future roles and missions. A merger is likely to reduce the existing capabilities. National interests are primarily within the maritime domain (see Chapter III). If NORSOF is merged and located within the Navy, land warfare capabilities will likely be diminished, and vice versa. From the perspective of national interests, establishing a new, merged SOF unit within the Navy seems more logical than not.

## **2. Flexibility Within the Spectrum of Operations**

Flexibility within the spectrum of operations can be seen as a function of NORSOF's capabilities. A continuous focus on direct action capabilities will necessarily limit the type of future conflicts that best suits both units. A direct action approach favors participation in campaigns or missions where force is brought to bear directly against the enemy. The initial phase of Operation Enduring Freedom is a scenario where NORSOF is better prepared. NORSOF is less likely to make a difference in counterinsurgency operations or low intensity conflicts like in today's Afghanistan and Iraq and on the African continent. This is not to say that NORSOF participation is irrelevant, but only

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<sup>181</sup> Tucker and Lamb, *Restructuring Special Operations Forces for Emerging Threats*, 1-6.

that it is less relevant as a force if the overall strategy focuses on an indirect approach to solving the conflict. NATO's ISAF mission clearly resembles the latter.

Merging the units is therefore less likely to make a difference than continuing with the status quo because changing organization structure does not imply a change of tasks. Only by expanding existing roles will organization matter. While technically is there no problem with a unit maintaining several roles, in the case of direct and indirect capabilities, separating these roles is necessary, say Tucker and Lamb, to increase proficiency at the indirect approach. With both roles kept in a single unit or organization, the emphasis tends to be on direct action capabilities.<sup>182</sup> Thus, by adding indirect capabilities as a core task, maintaining the status quo is a better option than a merger. The merger option is less desirable.

### **3. Relevancy for NATO and UN Operations**

As this paper has shown, MJK and HJK are traditionally trained and equipped for NATO's Article 5 scenario. For non-Article 5, Crisis Response Operations, NORSOF's relevance will generally follow the same logic as above: MJK and HJK are more relevant in force-on-force scenarios, and less relevant for CRO unless these focus on direct action strategies.

In principle, by virtue of its direct action focus NORSOF is a less relevant option for UN operations. Unless the objective is working by, with, and through indigenous forces, NORSOF's primary contribution will arguably be as support to conventional operations and campaigns involving raids and intelligence collection. For some scenarios direct action capabilities might initially prove extremely valuable (Sudan and Congo are examples). However, offensive UN operations have a "mixed" reputation, as exemplified by Operation Restore Hope in Somalia in 1993.<sup>183</sup> The UN's primary focus is to maintain impartiality to the belligerents. A direct action focus seems thus less optimal as a generic capability for future UN operations. Neither a merger nor the status quo will change this.

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<sup>182</sup> Tucker and Lamb, *Restructuring Special Operations Forces for Emerging Threats*, 1-6.

<sup>183</sup> Mark Bowden, *Black Hawk Down: A Story of Modern War* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1999), 386.

Again, by adding consideration of indirect action capabilities, NORSOF is likely to be more relevant for the whole spectrum of NATO operations. ISAF is an example of CRO missions. The true dividend will be NORSOF's relevance for UN operations. Adding indirect capabilities to increase relevance for NATO and the UN seems at first glance not to be organizationally conditioned. Following recent deployment patterns, it is unclear whether MJK's or HJK's service affiliation had an impact on operations. Therefore, whether or not NORSOF is merged into one unit seems less significant in terms of NATO and UN relevance, because relevance is tied to flexibility within a spectrum of tasks and a spectrum of operations. For NATO and the UN, national organization matters less.

#### **4. NORSOF Interoperability**

In any organization, level of interoperability is a function of subunits' interdependence, i.e., "the extent to which departments depend on each other for resources or materials to accomplish their tasks."<sup>184</sup> According to Thomson, co-locating units within an organization is desired the more their joint task depends on mutual communication, and when the level of coordination is high. Daily face-to-face interaction, teamwork, and quicker decision-making are all benefits of increased closeness. Daft uses hospitals to illustrate business practices where co-location is both necessary and desired.<sup>185</sup>

A military joint operation is an example of a task requiring high levels of communication and coordination. Co-location of task headquarters is the means to achieving the interaction between units necessary to shorten decision making processes and so forth. Whereas a hospital is permanently located and repeats tasks over time, a military task organization is normally established for a single mission limited by its objectives. Its various task units are not organizationally merged beyond the immediate mission. As missions change, so will the task organizations.

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<sup>184</sup> Thomson in Richard L. Daft, *Essentials of Organization Theory and Design* (Mason, OH: South-Western College Publishing, 2003), 195.

<sup>185</sup> Richard L. Daft, *Essentials of Organization Theory and Design* (Mason, OH: South-Western College Publishing, 2003), 195.

Interoperability at the tactical level is a concern in direct action operations, especially in CT scenarios where margins of error and timing are critical. Tactics and procedures are developed to enhance intra-team cooperation to counter or diminish interoperability issues. MJK and HJK have both conducted joint operations with personnel or units from other nations; as long as teams are not mixed interoperability does not pose the greatest challenge.<sup>186</sup> The purpose of small unit tactics is to manage interdependence in small teams, not in large formations. The only possible mission requiring a large formation is the national CT role. Maritime installations undoubtedly require more than a single twelve-man team for an attack. On the other hand, merging for the purpose of the national CT role has not been an issue until recently, indicating that either the previous national CT strategy was flawed, or that the threat has changed. What seems clear from the new wave of religious terrorism is that hostage scenarios are increasingly replaced with destructive suicidal operations. The main concern is now the combination of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction.<sup>187</sup>

This does not justify decreasing the national CT alert. And if the objective of a merger is to increase the national CT alert, merging MJK and HJK seems more appropriate than the status quo. If SO in a military context is to continue focusing on small unit tactics, merging units is not necessarily cost-effective beyond potential economic benefits. If increased interoperability requires MJK and HJK to merge will therefore hinge first of all on HJK's ability to execute its classic CT mission within existing constraints. In other words, if the intent is for both units to retain the same primary missions, the most obvious solution is to merge.

## **5. NORSOF's Strategic Role**

This factor, more than any other, should, determine NORSOF's organizational structure. The US learned after the Vietnam War, and later after the fatal 1980 raid on their embassy in Iran, that SOF could not function optimally as a strategic tool unless it was organizationally separated from the conventional military. SOF was not given

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<sup>186</sup> Author's personal experience based on participant observation in joint operations.

<sup>187</sup> David C. Rapoport, "The Four Waves of Modern Terrorism" in *Attacking Terrorism: Elements of a Grand Strategy*, eds. Audrey K. Cronin and James M. Ludes (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2004), 46-73.

priority with regard to needs like manning and equipment. Through the establishment of USSOCOM, doctrines along with force funding were directed outside the conventional military organization.<sup>188</sup> The UK SOF has a similar organization through the military strategic level (DSF). Yet both countries maintain service-based SOF units, arguably to maintain environmental capabilities. American and British foreign policy ambitions differ significantly from Norway's, which should account for a different national approach when determining NORSOF's strategic role and subsequent strategic organization.

Whether the US or UK model is appropriate for Norwegian purposes is far from obvious. But the principles on which USSOCOM and DSF are established might suggest what is required for NORSOF to act as a strategic asset. Today's organization, depicted in Figure 5, is sufficient for strategic decision-making purposes, and resembles in some degree both the US and British models. It is questionable the extent to which the current organization is *staffed and capable*, however.<sup>189</sup>

According to Figure 5, HJK, directly subordinate to the Chief of Army Operations, has a more favorable organizational location than MJK. HJK's position within the Army allows for short communication lines to the strategic level as well as direct funding from a higher level within the military. MJK does not have this flexibility given its location within the Navy organization.<sup>190</sup> Therefore, MJK and HJK are likely to develop differently because resources and priorities are likely to be viewed differently from service to service. For the strategic decision-maker, this situation will likely create a less coherent strategic NORSOF organization. Whether a merger or the status quo is better for the strategic outcome is unclear insofar as NORSOF continues to develop capabilities required by the strategic level. Like NAF in general, NORSOF is a small organization. Command lines are shorter and less bureaucratic compared with the US military.<sup>191</sup>

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<sup>188</sup> USSOCOM, *United States Special Operations Command: History*, 3-6.

<sup>189</sup> Forsvarsdepartementet, *St.Prp.Nr.42 (2003-2004)*, 56.

<sup>190</sup> James Q. Wilson, *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It*, 2nd ed. (Basic Books, 1989).

<sup>191</sup> This assumption is based on discussions from the class DA3202, International Strategic Decision Making for Irregular Warfare, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, 2005.

Merging the units definitively quells turf wars and competition, but a merger is not likely to alter established roles and missions. Adopting the US model, which implies funding from outside the realm of the Service Chiefs, will effectively create a fourth service. Removing both units from the Service Chiefs' domains, and continuing to claim service dependency, arguably makes little sense given NAF's relative size. Creating a fourth service is therefore likely to result in a merged unit. Introducing new roles in a fourth service is likely to be suboptimal, again according to Tucker and Lamb, because of the dynamics between the two principal tasks. The direct action approach tends to be overemphasized and indirect action downplayed when applied in the same unit, an argument also made by Adams.<sup>192</sup>

With regard to NORSOF's strategic role, creating a separate service, effectively merging the two units, is therefore less likely to enhance NORSOF's relevance, at least for international operations. NORSOF's size and ambitions are simply too different from USSOCOM's 50,000+ organization; it does not make sense to establish a fourth service for strategic purposes. As discussed in Chapter II, NORSOF's strategic utility is questionable. It is, at best, not well-defined. One likely option is increased strategic guidance within the existing organizational framework. However, this might marginalize the Service Chiefs' authority and interests in their respective units. The challenge is to develop and utilize NORSOF as a strategic asset within the framework of the current command structure while maintaining relevance in the service-based context. The outcome of a merger for strategic purposes therefore is unclear. Strategic utility is likely to be more influenced by vertical command arrangements than by a tactical reorganization.

### **C. CONCLUSION – IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The points covered in the preceding discussion are summarized in Table 2. The discussion is based on the assumption that indirect capabilities are added as a core capability. By introducing another capability, separate organizations are required for an optimal outcome. The conclusion is based also on the assumption that certain

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<sup>192</sup> Adams, *US Special Operations Forces in Action*.

environmental capabilities are better developed within a service domain if optimal performance is desired.

Factors	Merge	Status Quo
Spectrum of core capabilities	-	+
Spectrum of operations	-	+
Relevance for NATO and UN	0	0
NORSOF interoperability	+	0
NORSOF's strategic role	0	0

Table 2. *Factors ranked for a merge or status quo*

Table 2 ranks the various factors more or less in accordance with St.prp.nr. 42 (2003-2004). A plus sign (+) indicates a more favorable solution, a zero (0) indicates no significant difference, and a minus sign (-) indicates a less favorable solution with regard to merge/no merge.

According to this analysis, whether NORSOF should merge or not depends first of all on the factors *spectrum of core capabilities*, *spectrum of operations* and *interoperability*. In summary, adding indirect capabilities as a *primary* capability is likely to suffer from a merger solution. Keeping the status quo is more favorable. If this is true, then merging MJK and HJK is not an ideal option with regard to new and expanded roles. That said, Tucker and Lamb do not advocate Navy and Army separation, only that direct and indirect action capabilities be separated organizationally. In other words, for national purposes, relocating MJK or HJK is certainly possible if indirect capabilities are the main issue. The existing Navy/Army division is first and foremost a question of environmental capabilities, meaning maritime and land warfare. Likewise, if interoperability with conventional units is not important, then service-based capabilities seem less necessary. Interoperability for joint national tasks will be improved by a merger. It is uncertain how much interoperability is necessary for international obligations. Future ambitions are not described thoroughly enough (at least in unclassified terms) to make any useful recommendation. The other factors highlighted as important for transformation seem less relevant to the question of merging the units.

Assuming that one accepts the existing organization to better support NORSOFF relevance, the final question becomes how to divide the roles internal to NORSOFF. For national defense purposes, the existing division of roles by service is as relevant today as during the Cold War. Given Norway's maritime interests, it seems unreasonable to decrease existing maritime SO capabilities, while a war on national territory, though unlikely in the short term, would require land warfare SO capabilities.

However, the previous and current governments have increased the emphasis on international operations, primarily within a NATO framework. The current government has focused on the UN as a likely framework while simultaneously de-emphasizing participation in US-led coalition operations. Afghanistan and ISAF will continue to be NAF's focus in years to come. Likewise, the UN and Sudan is held as the next priority mission. By virtue of their landlocked locations, both Afghanistan and Sudan are in the domain of land warfare. If indirect capabilities are required to stabilize these conflicts, it seems natural that HJK be assigned the indirect warfare role as its primary responsibility. Assuming the Army in general will be involved in low intensity conflicts, counter-insurgency operations, nation building, and humanitarian operations, HJK will become increasingly relevant within NATO's CRO and the UN's peace support operations. Developing parts of NORSOFF as an indirect force will thus improve Norway's ability to offer NATO and the UN capabilities for operations outside the conventional realm.

Direct action capabilities should continue as MJK's primary role. The focus must continue to be maritime capabilities. If MJK's focus shifts towards land warfare capabilities, its relevance as a Navy unit will be questioned. MJK's challenge is thus to balance its maritime focus against naturally overlapping SOF capabilities. If economic considerations motivate the merger/no merger discussion, maintaining two units trained and equipped for the same land warfare scenarios will necessarily raise both costs and doubts about the redundancy. Because Norway's main national interests are maritime, a continuous concern with maritime SO is reasonable.

In an international context, MJK, with its maritime, direct action capabilities, could be Norway's SO niche capability contribution to NATO's response force. Given its stated objective, NRF is more concerned with force-on-force scenarios than with

nation building. This division of roles, at least in an international context, is also consistent with Barth-Eide's suggestion to keep international responsibility for PSO and CRO operations with Army units and subsequently maintain NATO standby obligations through Navy and Air Force participation. At least the forces involved would know what scenarios to prepare for as their primary responsibility. Today's situation, with more or less global participation across the whole spectrum of conflict, seems extremely ambitious given Norway's foreign policy ambitions along with the current economic outlook for the NAF.

A further question is whether this principal separation should affect HJK's national CT role. Logically, the CT mission would fall into MJK's domain since CT above all is a variant of direct action. It undoubtedly involves a maritime component when located offshore. However, given that HJK already is organized and trained for this task and has proven capable of sustaining it while deployed on international missions, it seems less than appropriate to transfer this organization. This conclusion is not obvious and, since CT is a tactical mission, has not been a focus of this paper.

This division of roles and missions would enhance national capability across the spectrum of SO, which was a goal in St.prp.nr.42 (2003-2004). The division would also underscore and increase NORSO's status as a niche capability, because NORSO as a whole will be capable over a larger spectrum of conflicts. NORSO's future roles and missions are graphically illustrated in Figure 16, which separates national from international roles, shows maritime and land warfare in a national context, and distinguishes direct from indirect action in an international context.

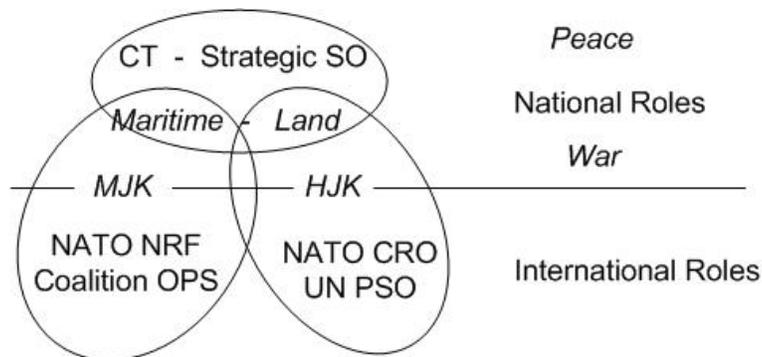


Figure 16. *NORSOF future roles and missions separated by functionality*

There clearly are challenges to the proposal presented in this thesis, which is to assign direct action capabilities as MJK's primary role, and indirect action capabilities as HJK's primary role. Likewise, the proposal is to separate both units in terms of primary international commitments. The first likely objection to this proposal is that it would degrade the national ability for SO strikes outside the maritime domain. In a national context, this might be less relevant, because all strategic targets are located on the coastline. Whether this counts as a maritime or land warfare approach in a SO context is therefore irrelevant. However, in an international context, it is not clear why Norway must support missions like, for example, offensive SO capabilities for Operation Enduring Freedom, except for the fact that offensive operations have become the only option because of the forces involved. With increased emphasis on indirect action capabilities, NORFOT in general and HJK in particular could represent a greater potential for alternative missions leading to the same strategic end. That said, an indirect approach requires more than indirect tactical capabilities; it also requires a strategic approach to indirect strategies. Although OEF was initially a SOF-dominated campaign, the Afghan insurgency has continued to gain momentum since 2002, and parts of the country seem less secure today than three years ago. This suggests that an indirect strategy has not been preferred or consistently pursued in OEF. Likewise, participation with maritime SO capabilities in scenarios other than OEF might have achieved the same political strategic effect as participation in OEF. In an international context, whether Norway should contribute primarily with land or maritime units (and whether they are direct action capable or not) seems unclear. From a national perspective, offering niche SO capabilities, trained and equipped for scenarios aligned with national interests, seems more appropriate than continuously developing units for all options, everywhere, at any time. The latter is more a matter of general capability than a niche.

A second objection to this proposal might be based on the flawed belief that SOF, which enjoys a high status, can resolve all missions the conventional military cannot. This is simply not true. History reveals many missions where SOF were essential for success. But history also reveals failures. The British experience in the 1991 Gulf War

and the Ranger operation in Somalia in 1993 are but two examples.<sup>193</sup> Both demonstrate that SOF operates with the same constraints as conventional units. To assume that SOF, by virtue of its status, is proficient in direct and indirect action because of doctrinal definitions is a misinterpretation of doctrine. Even Company Linge had to switch focus during WWII when a changed strategy required irregular warfare rather than commando-style raids.

A third challenge to this proposal might involve concerns about joint operations, especially where maritime proficiency is required for indirect approaches. SOF technical assistance to a foreign maritime force offers an example. To the extent this is a problem, principles for joint SOF operations still apply. The US experience from the Philippines is that when naval expertise is necessary, Navy SEALs support the Army SF in their main effort.<sup>194</sup>

The hypothesis initially proposed in this thesis was that current NORSOFF organizational structure is inconsistent with future missions and roles. Based on a logical analysis of future missions and roles, the initial hypothesis appears to be false. Rather, future missions and roles instead seem to favor continuation of two units. By adding and clarifying roles and missions, NORSOFF will maintain or increase its relevance. By maintaining maritime capabilities, NORSOFF will continue to support Norway's primary national interests. By adding indirect capabilities, NORSOFF will become increasingly relevant for scenarios, especially in a NATO CRO and UN PSO context. To achieve the goals as stated St.prp.nr.42 (2003-2004), NORSOFF should emphasize developing additional skills to embrace the full concept of SO. To simply increase the size of existing forces in order to fulfill political expectations seems insufficient for meeting Norway's future military needs.

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<sup>193</sup> See Andy McNab, *Bravo Two Zero* (New York: Island Books/Dell, 1994); Bowden, *Black Hawk Down: A Story of Modern War*.

<sup>194</sup> According to LtCol Greg Wilson, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA.

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