

## THE EVOLUTION OF CANADIAN CIVIL-MILITARY COOPERATION (CIMIC)

by Major Graham M. Longhurst

### Introduction

Canadian Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) is currently evolving and endeavouring to define itself. The success of CIMIC cells attached to military operations over the past few years has necessitated the defining of policy and procedures for this burgeoning area within our armed forces. With success comes an increasing scrutiny of how the business of CIMIC is being conducted, and whether it is being conducted at the same professional level across the armed forces. This article has been written with the hope that those 'in the trenches' will continue to influence the direction of this evolution.

Because CIMIC is in an early stage of evolution, it is important to understand how it has developed thus far, and to define a start state upon which improvements, conclusions, and recommendations can be made.

### Evolution of Canadian CIMIC

The Canadian military has been conducting CIMIC operations since the Second World War. In the past, it primarily consisted of humanitarian assistance (HA) in the form of physical goods needed to provide for the immediate needs of a civilian population, including drinking water, food, shelter, and clothing. In addition to HA, small projects, such as playgrounds, which could be completed during a single tour or rotation, were undertaken. Funding for those projects came from a variety of sources, but, quite

often, it came out of the pockets of the deployed soldiers themselves. CIMIC was considered a secondary duty, usually conducted by a volunteer, or someone with previous experience in the environment. This type of approach had proved to be fairly successful in the early stages of a relatively straightforward operation. However, increasingly complex deployments and environments eventually required a more sophisticated approach.

Over time, it was recognized that CIMIC could play an important role as a force multiplier. CF members were given CIMIC as a primary duty, and some even received specialized training. In August 2000, the Chief of the Land Staff (CLS) issued an Action Directive that CIMIC was to become a reserve capability, since it was recognized that reservists might have an inherent ability to interact with civilians. Thus, while CIMIC is not new, the overall approach to it is relatively new.

In the Land Forces Western Area, as well as in the other Land Force areas, a number of reservists with a wide variety of educational backgrounds, careers, and personal experience were interviewed with the intention of bringing together a CIMIC team that was greater than the sum of its parts.

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Major Longhurst is the CIMIC Officer for Land Forces Western Area (LFWA). He is currently helping to prepare some 67 CIMIC operators for future deployments.



While donating desks and supplies to a local school, Captain David Myles and Sergeant Tavis Beaubier, both of the Civil Military Cooperation (CIMIC) team, shake hands with Mayor Nasar Mohammed Tahj of Police District 7 in Kabul, Afghanistan.

### What is Modern CIMIC?

While it is important to understand how a modern CIMIC operator is preparing for the job, it is also important to understand who is filling that role. As part of discovering modern CIMIC, another good question would be, ‘What are the qualities of a good CIMIC operator?’ Traits or attributes, such as loyalty, honesty, ethical behaviour, courage, diligence, fairness, responsibility, selflessness, maturity, dedication, personableness, understanding, flexibility, resourcefulness, fitness, knowledge of military and civilian policy and procedures, and decisiveness – all leap to mind. Combining appropriate training and these specific qualities with an array of personal experiences creates the foundation for a CIMIC operator to thrive.

We have thus defined the type of training and the attributes that tend to produce a successful CIMIC operator. However, it is incredibly difficult to define exactly what CIMIC *is* and what it *accomplishes*, because it varies from operation to operation, depending upon the environment and the operator’s individual manner of handling specific situations.

A sufficiently vague textbook definition of CIMIC follows.

“Civil-Military Cooperation is a military function that supports the commander’s mission by establishing and maintaining coordination and cooperation between the military force and civilian actors in the commander’s area of operation.”

CIMIC is a command function and responsibility. Unity of command for a military force is critical in order to achieve unity of purpose and effort among all stakeholders and partners. However, there are an increasing number of non-military personnel, international organizations (IOs), non-government organizations (NGOs) and United Nations agencies involved in operations that exacerbate the problem of integrating and coordinating civil and military activities and efforts.

CIMIC candidates embarked upon a training regime to increase their knowledge and abilities to deal with specific situations that past rotations had identified as ‘Lessons Learned.’ Candidates conducted training and completed courses on various subjects, including:

- Negotiation / Mediation
- Interviewing Techniques
- Enhanced Cultural Awareness
- Battle Staff Training
- Battle First Aid
- Project Management Familiarization
- Law of Armed Conflict
- Language Training
- Media Training / Use of an Interpreter
- Interest Based Communications

This training, including that conducted at the Basic CIMIC Operators Course in Kingston, Ontario, has provided the groundwork for success.

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In order to ensure that an organization maintains its relevance, it must ask itself periodically the fundamental questions: ‘What is the purpose of CIMIC?’ and ‘Why do we have / need CIMIC?’

The answer is – whenever a military force deploys somewhere, whether it is for a peace support operation, for humanitarian assistance, or for warfighting, there is always a civilian dimension to consider. It may consist of refugees, a local population, local officials, even workers from international organizations. CIMIC constitutes a primary link between the military and these organizations. It works to coordinate and to elicit cooperation *from*, and *with*, the civilian dimension, in order to help ensure the overall success of a mission.

**Roles & Responsibilities**

To delve further into clarifying modern CIMIC, we need to ask a further question: ‘What are the specific tasks of a CIMIC operator?’

The assigned tasks will depend upon the stage of a particular operation, and the direction detailed in the CIMIC Annex to the operation order issued by the commander. In general, CIMIC operators will liaise with the civilian population, will participate in planning, will produce area assessments, and will identify worthy projects that meet local needs and fit within the guidelines of all concerned. In addition, CIMIC must be prepared to deal with issues regarding humanitarian assistance, civilian infrastructure, civilian administration, economic considerations, commercial affairs, and cultural affairs.

What *specific* activities do CIMIC operators then conduct? They include coordinating with civilian authorities, civilian agencies, allied and national or host nation military forces, IOs, and NGOs. The provision of advice to a task force (TF) commander in meeting legal and moral obligations to the local population can also become an important activity. CIMIC operators also provide program planning and technical advice, as well as assistance, to civilian authorities in

fields of expertise commensurate with operational requirements. Further activities may include coordinating requirements *for*, and assistance *in*, acquiring local resources and facilities. Another primary activity may entail the researching, preparation, and updating of area assessments, and, possibly, the same mandate for economic assessments.

**“... one of the key attributes of a good CIMIC operator is flexibility.”**

**CIMIC organization – the building blocks**

With the majority of the CIMIC tasks and activities now defined, it is appropriate to comment upon the size of a CIMIC organization required to optimize the force multiplier effect. As mentioned earlier, one of the key attributes of a good CIMIC operator is flexibility. Therefore, the organization itself should have a level of flexibility built into it.

The basic building block of a CIMIC organization is the Tactical CIMIC Team (TCT). As outlined in Figure 1, each team would consist of three trained CIMIC operators and two ‘CIMIC familiarized’ drivers. It is important that the drivers become an integral part of the CIMIC work-up training and are matched to their CIMIC operators, because they fulfil multiple roles of security provision, driving, observation, and coordination of some of the CIMIC tasks.

The CIMIC headquarters (HQ) cell collates and funnels timely and accurate information to a commander’s staff for area awareness and decision-making purposes.

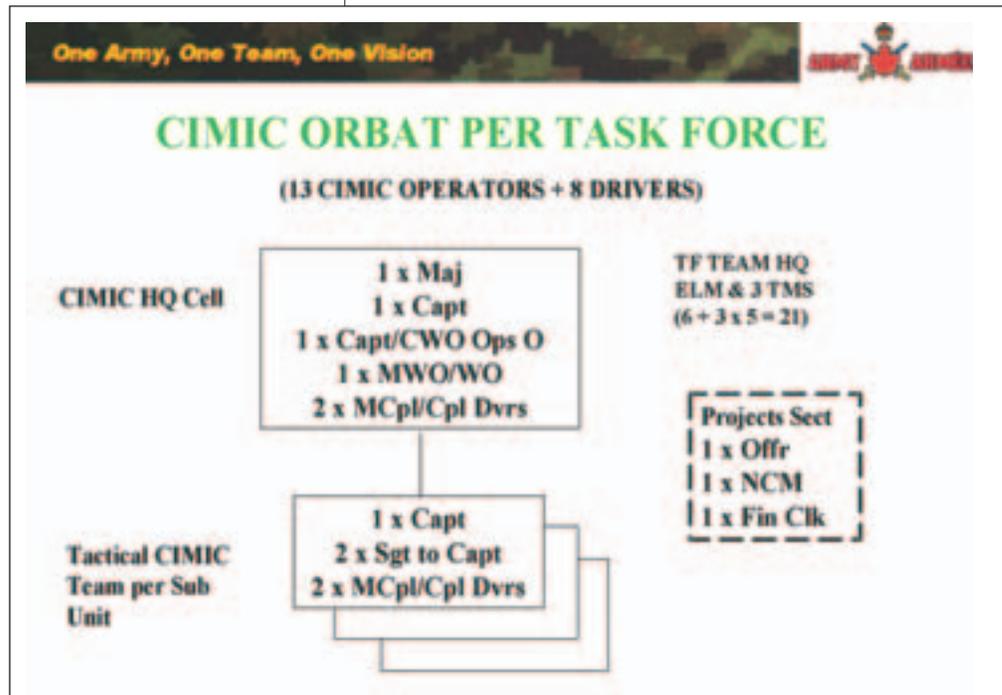


Figure 1 – The CIMIC organization for a given task force

A major acts as the adviser to the commander on CIMIC issues, and also serves as his Senior Liaison Officer (SLO), attending meetings between the military and civilian participants. A captain functions as his deputy.

The CIMIC operations officer runs the tactical CIMIC operation, and is integrated into the operational planning process with the rest of the planning staff (i.e., operations, intelligence, psychological operations, and public affairs). Coordinating CIMIC activities and summarizing the daily CIMIC situation reports are also time-consuming tasks for the operations officer.

The CIMIC projects cell or section becomes incredibly important to the operation when a task force is provided with funding for community improvements projects, and it ensures greatest influence of the commander's contingency fund. The project process, from initiation to completion, is time-consuming and paper-intensive, in order to ensure all legal and financial criteria are achieved. This drives the requirement for a dedicated cell.

Using the example of the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan, Figure 2 provides a 'snapshot' of the required personnel positions (ORBAT). It should be noted that the Projects Section is 'a must' within this structure, but it is capable of coordinating projects for both the Task Force and the PRT. The clerk needs to be familiar with Canadian contracting processes, in order to meet Canadian legal requirements. Certain aspects of projects must be completed to a *Canadian* standard versus a *local* standard, in order to ensure no legal repercussions result against the Canadian Forces (CF).

### Bosnia Herzegovina

In this particular case, CIMIC was among the busiest elements within the battle group. The amount of time spent on typical CIMIC tasks was broken down approximately as follows:

- 40 percent – Liaison and information gathering
- 30 percent – Community Improvement Projects (CIP) and Humanitarian Assistance Projects (HAP)

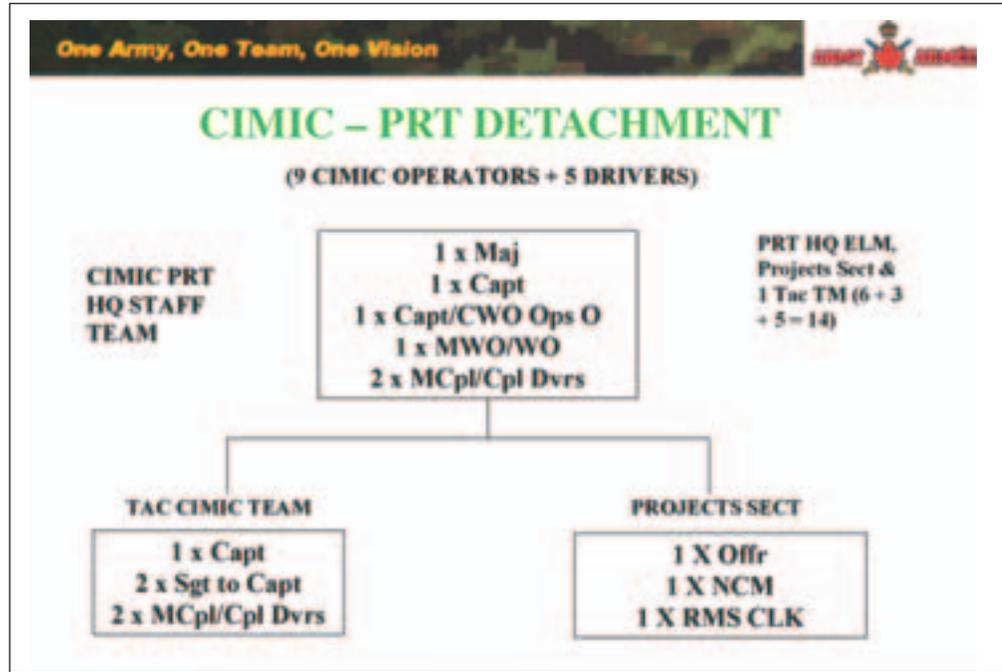


Figure 2 – What has worked and what has not?

- 20 percent – Humanitarian Assistance (HA)
- 10 percent – Miscellaneous activities that are generated by CIMIC activities

CIMIC provided the commander with the capability to greatly influence the operational environment across a broad spectrum, at the community level through the passage of information, or by completing community improvement projects (CIP). It was also effective at the family or individual level, through humanitarian assistance projects (HAP) and humanitarian assistance (HA) activities.

By establishing close relationships with key community players, CIMIC operators were able to gather key pieces of the information puzzle that provided the battle group with a clearer picture of its operational environment.

This information was used to assess where the battle group could make the greatest positive impact, given its resources. One area where the Canadian battle group gained a level of influence was through the funding allocated from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

It is important to note that the undertaking of these projects was an extensive process. CIMIC operators first went out to the local communities and asked them what their priorities were for infrastructure. Without this liaison, the system would have been liable to repeat mistakes that had been made in the past, such as, the rebuilding of schools that no children

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ever then attended. Projects were filtered against the criteria laid out by CIDA, and then prioritized for presentation for the commander's approval. The CIP funds were then allocated as far down the prioritized list of projects as possible. The projects were put out to tender, with a minimum of three project bids being required from independent contractors – ones that had not yet been blacklisted for poor performance. The contractor with the most detailed bid, the best reputation, and most accurate pricing was then allocated the project. A CIMIC operator then interacted with the contractor on a weekly basis as the project took shape. This ensured that the details of the contract were being met.

A portion of the CIDA funds was allocated for humanitarian assistance projects (HAPs). These projects allowed the officers commanding the sub-units, as well as individual soldiers, the opportunity to gain influence with families or individuals that could use help. Any soldier could submit a CIMIC aid request through the chain of command to access HAP funds. These funds were then used to purchase small items, such as firewood, plastic sheeting for low expense winterization, candles, fencing, stoves, gravel, radios and toilets. The items were priced out, purchased by CIMIC members, and then given to the initiating soldier for distribution.

CIMIC operators, as well as the soldiers, also had the ability to influence the hearts and minds of the population through the distribution of HA in the form of teddy bears and stuffed toys, linen and blankets, school supplies, winter mitts and toques, adult and children's clothing, winter coats, shoes, and other small items directed at the well-being of an individual or a family. The CIMIC drivers played an important role in matching up the requests for HA with the current inventory available, and in ensuring timely distribution. It was important that the individual who initiated the aid request be the one to actually deliver the items, thereby ensuring that the member felt they had participated in helping someone. All this HA was gathered through an organized donation program brought about by the generosity of the Canadian public.

The CIMIC cell was accepted initially with some reluctance on the part of the

battle group commander, since it was an organization imposed upon the battle group from outside. However, the CIMIC operators in Bosnia Herzegovina quickly proved their value and changed the commander's opinion as to its force multiplier effect.

### Haiti

One of the most interesting aspects of the deployment to Haiti (*Operation Halo*, then *Operation Hamlet*) was the stand-up and deployment of the mission itself. The entire process, from the passing of the UN Security Council Resolution, to the Canadian Forces actively participating in operations, took less than one month.

This rapid time line, while quite appropriate for the situation, created some challenges for CIMIC. For example, the operational planning process for the mission was abbreviated to the point of being almost non-existent. Despite the fact that several of Canada's national objectives for the mission seemed to involve CIMIC directly, actual CIMIC involvement in the planning process was minor. Other planning priorities, such as logistics support, rules of engagement, the length of the mission, accommodation, transport, the defined area



During a humanitarian assistance visit to a village near Kandahar, Bombardier Dale Boyd helps local residents choose shoes that fit their children. Boyd, a member of the 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment, Royal Canadian Horse Artillery (1 RCHA), was the second in command of a CIMIC cell deployed in Afghanistan with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (3 PPCLI) Battle Group on Operation *Apollo*, Canada's military contribution to the international campaign against terrorism.

DND IS2002-0046a photo by Master Corporal Danielle Bernier, DGPA/JSPA Combat Camera

of operations, and virtually every other detail of what was, by Canadian standards, a large-scale operation, overshadowed any significant CIMIC planning.

Most military commanders would likely state that a safe and secure environment will always be their number one priority during a peace support operation. Even though CIMIC involvement in this mission appeared to be critical, there was some question at the outset as to when and where CIMIC personnel would be employed, and even whether they would be useful at all. As it materialized, the overall US Task Force (TF) Commander elected to retain his CIMIC presence at the US National Command Element (NCE) headquarters.

The US forces had brought a rather sizable civil affairs element with them, consisting of two six-man civil affairs teams, and a headquarters element commanded by a lieutenant colonel. These teams, operating as they did out of the US NCE headquarters, gave them the latitude to operate throughout Haiti.

The presence of such a relatively large US civil affairs component made it redundant for the Canadians to maintain a CIMIC element at the US NCE. However, as it then materialized, rather than providing improved latitude, Canadian CIMIC activities had to be coordinated through at least two other headquarters.

Complicating this situation further was the fact that the Canadian CIMIC teams were housed with their own National Support Element (NSE), due to a shortage of space at the NCE headquarters location. This created yet another level of liaison that was required before any CIMIC activity could take place. Therefore, Canadian CIMIC personnel had to liaise with as many as four separate headquarters prior to conducting any activity. This was a considerable strain on resources that led to great frustration, and it caused friction at one time or another between the Canadian CIMIC component and each of the other organizations.

Early in the mission, CIMIC established a priority of building a rapport with major NGOs and IOs, including the United Nations, 'on the ground' in Haiti. However, this was complicated by the fact that many UN agencies had already removed their personnel, due to security considerations. Once the area was secured, the UN agencies transitioned through a number of personnel changes,

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which complicated the exchange of information even further. An overall lack of a two-way flow of information from the UN made it exceedingly difficult to accomplish UN objectives.

The bulk of Canadian CIMIC activity throughout the Haitian operation consisted of small projects, which focussed upon education, water, and sanitation. For the most part, they appeared to be 'band-aid' projects designed to assist schools and orphanages. Unfortunately, it is debatable whether these projects accomplished much, either in the sense of support to the civil environment, or in support to the military forces present.

CIMIC personnel did manage to conduct a certain amount of liaison by identifying and dealing with some UN personnel, some NGOs, and whatever local government personnel could be identified and located. There were varying degrees of success in conducting these liaisons, as there was a sense among those who had been deployed to Haiti for some time that the military presence was not there to stay. This feeling probably was somewhat justified, as the Multinational Interim Force (US, Chile, France, and Canada) was in the country under a very limited mandate of 90 days, with no certainty of what would transpire thereafter. This impeded attempts at relationship-building both with local citizens and the international participants.

Approximately three months into the deployment, the United Nations, with Brazil being the major contributor, assumed command of the mission. Canadian forces remained in Haiti for a further three months, moving from Port-au-Prince to Gonaïves. With the move, the CIMIC team ended up under direct operational control of the Canadian infantry company on the ground. This change in arrangements appeared to be much more efficient. It allowed the CIMIC team to react quickly to the tactical situation on the ground, and to deal directly with the tactical headquarters. Increased support was also made available to the CIMIC team.

While it was considered a success just for CIMIC to be included in this mission, there is little else with respect to *Operation Halo* that should be considered successful from a CIMIC point of view. Perhaps the most significant achievement was for seven CIMIC qualified reservists from across the country to be identified and tasked for deployment in less than a week.

### **Afghanistan**

**T**he Canadian CIMIC mission during *Operation Athena*, Rotation 2, was to support the commander's intent by enhancing the force protection of *Task Force Orion* and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)

**“Thus, there was a significant need to manage local expectations and to minimize disappointments.”**



DND photo KA2003-A428D by Master Corporal Brian Walsh

Private Shawn Loucks greets a child at the Tayi Maskan Kindergarten School, in Kabul, Afghanistan. Loucks served with the CIMIC cell of the Third Battalion Royal Canadian Regiment Battalion Group in Kabul. The CIMIC cell purchased 200 desks for the school, which previously had no desks for the approximately 350 students being taught there.

The Canadian CIMIC team consisted of six members – three operators and three drivers. This establishment proved to be too small, and at least one more operator was felt to be required.

During the seven months in Kabul, the tactical CIMIC team was able to support the commander’s intent effectively by enhancing the force protection in two of the police districts. Thirty-five projects were commenced and completed, with financial assistance from CIDA. Six legacy projects, passed on from Rotation 1 (all wells), were completed, and liaison/relationship-building with the local Afghan people and authorities continued.

through creation of an environment whereby local citizens would inform ISAF / Canadian troops of any opposing military force activity in their area of operation (AOO). This was done through the building and continuation of trusting relationships with the local populace.

The following methods were used to establish these relationships:

- Holding regular meetings with mayors, police chiefs, governors, *Wakils* (village representatives), villagers, school teachers, directors, and students.
- Conducting small, quick, high impact projects that benefited the community, such as road repairs, road construction, and the supply of desks to schools.
- Donating school and medical supplies to the applicable institutions.
- Distributing the *ISAF News* to local villages and communities. This was the first regular publication received by many of the residents of Kabul. It was deliberately ‘pro ISAF,’ and was therefore a useful psychological operations tool.

The area of operation rested within the boundaries of Kabul province. German, Canadian, British, Belgian, Hungarian, French and Italian forces each fielded a CIMIC detachment, and they all varied in size between three and eight operators.

Kabul CIMIC teams worked well at the *tactical* level – coordination of effort between teams was conducted to ensure this occurred. However, *strategic* coordination was very poor, and, as a result, there was very little direction and communication between ISAF Headquarters and the Kabul Multinational Brigade (KMNB) Headquarters on the CIMIC net. It was felt frequently that advice provided from the tactical level upwards was not being given due consideration.

While CIMIC continues to prove its worth at the tactical level, some individuals believe that CIMIC should not be doing any project work, feeling that such endeavours cross the line between NGO and military responsibilities. However, CIMIC operators in Kabul felt that projects were essential elements of the CIMIC team’s repertoire. It allowed them the flexibility to do something quickly that had dramatic impact upon the local community.

To simply go to meetings and to try to build friendships without being able to pragmatically help solve the issues can create frustration and distrust on the part of the local inhabitants. Small gestures, such as the donation of school desks to the local schools, or the construction of a community well, are inexpensive to implement, and the results are not only beneficial to the community, but also to the military force regarding force protection by virtue of the goodwill the projects generate.



Corporal Yan Lacroix (left) and Master Corporal Dany Dudemaine (right), members of Combat Support Company, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion Royal 22<sup>nd</sup> Regiment Battalion Group (3 R22eR Bn Gp), hand out toys to young children in a small village near the capital city of Kabul, Afghanistan.

Similar to what had occurred during earlier rotations, the primary role assigned by the Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (DCDS) to CIMIC was to provide advice, liaison, and assessment to support the Commander *Task Force Orion*, to facilitate civilian support to the task force, and, within resources and capabilities, to provide support to the civilian environment. Additionally, the CIMIC detachment was to provide support to the other ‘All of Government’ operating agencies. CIMIC operations were grouped into four areas: liaison, coordination of province-wide Civil-Military Operations (CMO), project facilitation, and the provision of support to the Afghan New Beginnings Program.

Supporting the other government departments (OGDs) within the Kabul Provincial Reconstruction Team (KPRT) was an important task for CIMIC. Due to government restrictions upon the movements of the OGD partners, CIMIC became the ‘boots on the ground’ for both CIDA and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT). Although both these agencies conducted many planning sessions with the Kandahar provincial and district leadership, bureaucratic ‘red tape’ resulted in none of their collective budget – some \$16 million of

project funding – being spent during either Rotation 0 or Rotation 1. Thus, there was a significant need to manage local expectations and to minimize disappointments. However, in this writer’s view, DND has no reason to feel superior in this regard, since departmental financial authorities appeared to fear a confrontation with an auditor more than one with the Taliban, and thus, project deliveries were occasionally slower than they needed to be.

### **What improvements can be made?**

**W**ith the start state for CIMIC defined and examples provided from different operations, one can now comfortably offer a number of recommendations, based upon the experience Land Forces Western Area CIMIC has accrued over a number of years.

#### **Operationally assigning (OPCON) Tactical CIMIC Teams (TCTs) to a sub-unit with an area of responsibility.**

The first recommendation is that the Tactical CIMIC Teams should be operationally assigned to a sub-unit, such as a company, for logistical and support requirements early in

the work-up training and/or deployment phases. CIMIC operators work most effectively when they are assigned a specific area of responsibility. The CIMIC operator would then interact with whatever level of NGOs, agencies, local authorities, and community members are present in the area, then report relevant information up the chain of command in a timely manner.

**Establishing inter-agency cooperation – starting from the top down.**

Civilian agencies operating alongside military organizations in Afghanistan and Iraq have accused the military of conducting CIMIC operations in order to manipulate the local population. These civilian organizations profess to be providing aid in an altruistic manner and not mixing human requirements with the mission. While there may be an element of truth in this accusation, if one delves deeper into the reasons why both civilian and military organizations are where they are – they appear to have significantly common goals.

If CIMIC is conducted properly, as trained for by CIMIC operators according to fundamental CIMIC doctrine, there should be little conflict between what the military and the civilian organizations are doing. In fact, quite often the two separate entities work together quite effectively at the tactical level. The only time the argument carries some weight is when organizations do not take the time to coordinate the distribution of limited resources. It could be argued that these conflicts are more frequently a result of poor training and/or personality conflicts between the organizations.

CIMIC, when conducted in an impartial, neutral, and independent manner in the eyes of the national authorities and the local population, is a force multiplier, not only for the military but also for civilian organizations working towards common goals.

A second recommendation is that any international organization or NGO that frequently works in conjunction with the military should be involved in relationship-building by participating in military exercises and by attending CIMIC courses concurrently with military members. An example of an organization beginning to build such a working relationship with our armed forces is the Peace Operations Working Group of the Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee, who have entered into discussions with respect to the Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan, and the militarization of Humanitarian Assistance. Additional agencies with whom the military should coordinate more are CIDA, DFAIT, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP).

A third recommendation is that these organizations should be involved as early as possible in the planning process leading up to an operation in order to coordinate issues, such as HA distribution, economy of effort, and mutual support.

Implementation of these recommendations will take time, but, once these relationships are established, the investment will improve the force multiplier effect significantly and thus increase any given mission's possibility of success.

**Establishing a policy and procedures for humanitarian assistance (HA).**

A fourth recommendation is that the CF develops a standard policy and procedures for humanitarian assistance. This could be an agreement with an aid agency to provide HA alongside the military. This would have the mutual benefits of removing the armed forces from a mandate of distributing food, shelter, and necessity items, and it would provide security to a civilian organization operating within an area. It also would reduce significantly the haphazard nature of the collection and distribution of HA that the Canadian military has undertaken to date.

**Establishing a policy and procedures for humanitarian assistance projects (HAP).**

A fifth recommendation is the establishment of a policy and procedures for humanitarian assistance projects (HAP). Collaterally, a specific amount of funds should be set aside for HAP for each rotation in operation. Adopting an approach such as this would have many benefits for the military. As described in the Bosnia example, funds were set aside to purchase items from the local economy to help local residents in need. Initiated at the individual and patrol level, a request would then be staffed up the chain of command by the patrol. Funds would be regulated and then approved, the item purchased, and then distributed by the CIMIC cell to the patrol for delivery. This would allow the patrols to influence their environment, and it would also allow the military to distance itself from the physical storage and logistical requirements of humanitarian assistance, which is often expensive to transport, and is bulky and space consuming. It thus becomes difficult to transport the items from Canada to the area of operation. By using the dedicated HAP funds approach, this has the additional advantage of supporting the local economy, which is highly desirable in many of the areas within which the CF operates. Local inhabitants are much more motivated to improve their own situation if they are provided with economic opportunities, rather than simply receiving handouts from the military.

**Establishing a policy and procedures for community improvement projects (CIP).**

A sixth recommendation concerns the task force commander's ability to influence the environment within which he is operating by establishing a policy and procedures for community improvement projects. A standard agreement could be made with CIDA or the Canadian Embassy to provide each task force commander

with funds to be used for such projects. As in the Bosnia and Afghanistan examples, these projects need to be recommended by the community itself, and their involvement must remain throughout the process, in order to ensure a beneficial effect. These projects increase favourable opinions among local inhabitants with respect to a military presence in an area of operation. A dedicated CIMIC projects section within a task force commander's headquarters or within a provincial reconstruction team headquarters could implement the project process and provide for its administration.

**Establishing a coordinated plan between CIMIC pre-deployment training and task force work-up training with predictability regarding the time commitment involved.**

This final recommendation is very important, due to the fact that CIMIC is a reserve forces mandated capability. If one is to obtain the correct and the most capable operators for the job, one needs predictability with respect to the time commitment required. The best CIMIC operators come from a variety of backgrounds, and they tend to be successful in their civilian careers. Some accept significant reductions in salary in order to participate in an overseas deployment. They are motivated by what CIMIC does, what it represents, and the experience they will accrue. Uncertainties with respect to contracts and poor administration have led to wide frustration, and have even resulted in some CIMIC operators deciding not to go on deployment. A level of consistency is required in order to gain permission and to plan for a leave of absence from civilian occupations.

**“These projects increase favourable opinions among local inhabitants with respect to a military presence in an area of operation.”**

A predicted 18-month time allotment for the work-up training and deployment of an impending task force is unprecedented. There is no question that our CIMIC operators need to be prepared for any eventuality, and thorough preparation is absolutely essential, but every effort should be made to reduce the current work-up training period as much as possible. There are currently a high percentage of trained CIMIC operators who are unable to leave their civilian employment for periods greater than a year, as this has negative implications upon seniority and pension plans.

**Conclusion**

**T**his article has covered the evolution of CIMIC to date, defined the start state, and made a number of recommendations, based upon current operational experience.

There remains a continuing education process, required throughout the chain of command, in order to employ CIMIC properly to its maximum advantage for the Canadian Forces.

I challenge those who read this article to give my recommendations serious consideration. Any resulting debate will create a better CIMIC organization. I would ask civilians to help build the necessary relationships with the military so that we can better work together to achieve our common goals. In turn, I would ask the military members to use their influence to affect the direction of CIMIC activities.

