



Why Mission Integration is Critical to Counter Domestic Terrorism

By [David Williams](#), Senior Associate, Booz Allen Hamilton

Our adversaries consider US territory an integral part of a global theatre of combat. We must therefore have a strategy that applies to the domestic context the key principles that are driving the transformation of US power projection and joint expeditionary warfare.

--Department of Defense Homeland Defense Strategy

While the investigations remain ongoing and the accused have the right of the presumption of innocence, recent arrests of alleged terrorists in New York and Colorado serve to remind all of us a simple fact: Terrorism knows no borders. It can be planned and carried out anywhere.

Given these realities, we need to balance vigilance with the recognition that, in a free society, we cannot control every outcome no matter how serious the ramifications.

Even so, the current atmospherics give pause not just for thought, but for action, too.

Within the US, people are being radicalized by foreign terrorist networks, as well as by home grown terrorist organizations. For example, in addition to the arrests in New York and Colorado, US counterterrorism officials have recently noted a disturbing pattern of recruitment of Somali youth in Minnesota and other states - one that mirrors al-Qaeda methods - and could spawn insurgents and suicide bombers in the US.

Our national security infrastructure, including DoD, must be prepared to draw upon lessons learned and tools developed outside the continental US and bring those capabilities to the US in a manner that is consistent with the body of law and rights to privacy that make America the place it is.

Without question, it's something on which many people have been working diligently for many years. Let's consider the current landscape, how we got there and an effective path forward.

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In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, the President and Secretary of Defense formed the US Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) with the specific mission to lead the homeland defense effort and defeat attacks on the US and its immediate neighbors. The mission of NORTHCOM is three-fold: lead military missions that dissuade, deter, and defeat attacks upon the US; support civil authorities in the execution of their missions; and enable the sharing of expertise and technology across military and civilian boundaries. In situations other than those so egregious that the President promulgates martial law, the role of USNORTHCOM will likely be as a *de facto* supporter of the Department of Justice (DoJ) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), which have lead roles in combating terrorist acts within the United States.

While the DoJ and the FBI are vested with the operational lead, the Secretary of Homeland Security is responsible for the protection of critical infrastructure and key resources, as well as support to state and local law enforcement through grants, training, equipment, exercises, and planning activities. Optimum success, however, in defeating domestic asymmetric attacks will be dependent on mounting a “whole of government” approach to the challenge.

Effective solutions will require complex operations that include DoD in its homeland defense role and reach across individual agencies and departments to develop interdependent solutions across a diverse set of players. The role of DoD will be to bring resources and the depth of experience gathered in combating asymmetric foes in Iraq and Afghanistan to the US arena.

Mission Integration

The defeat of asymmetric foes in a complex environment that extends beyond a single agency will mandate the application of a concept we call *mission integration*, which requires blending technological, operational, cultural, managerial, and policy solutions for maximum impact.

The integrated application will best enable the partnership between the government and the people in defeating a domestic campaign within the confines of the Constitution. Our nation will be best protected by a hybrid force and an integrated government approach that includes DoD, DOJ, and other government and non-government entities that meld information and missions. We must establish effective rules across agencies to reach an understanding of governance through the integration of policy, strategy, and planning.

Involved agencies need to ensure alignment of resources against the established plans through a common approach to management and budgeting. Cultural challenges can become derailleurs. In the civilian community, there is a clear need to create incentives to collaborate and share information, intelligence, and technical analyses across different organizational cultures. Information technology is important. We will need to integrate disparate information across military and civilian agencies and systems as we develop the capability to share with all involved stakeholders.

Finally, the involved agencies and departments need to ensure the integrated execution of plans across agencies in a melded, coordinated approach to operations. It is in the areas where policy, strategy, and

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planning; management and budgeting; people and culture; information technology; and operations converge and overlap, that mission integration can occur to maximum effect.

Within the US, the rules of engagement, legalities for intelligence collection capabilities, and the ability to leverage many electronic countermeasures (ECMs) will be different than encountered in combat zones.

Certain considerations would apply with respect to both intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) and ECM capabilities. It can be assumed that many DoD ECM applications may include certain sensing and suppression mechanisms that, if employed in the United States, may constitute a legal search under the Constitution and federal law. Clearly, surveillance, electronic or otherwise, that peer into private premises would constitute a search requiring a subject-specific court authorized search warrant.

Mission integration will link involved agencies and their functionalities to meet challenges that impact the "whole of government." There is a movement, however, to step beyond the government to include wider segments of our society in problem solving. It is called *megacommunities* and represents an evolution that is driven by an ever-increasing awareness of the capabilities inherent in the military, civil society, and corporations. Drawing on their natural flexibility, corporations are able to adapt more quickly than government agencies and to maintain positions on the cutting edge of technology and change management, thus providing agile partners in challenge resolution.

Finally, let us not forget the lessons of Carl von Clausewitz, who rightly proclaimed that defeating the enemy's army alone would not guarantee success in reaching the political goals of conflict. He understood that, "*...in our current circumstances it is actually the will of the people that is often the objective being sought - yet there is still a tendency to use overwhelming military force in the belief that winning the trial of strength will deliver the will of the opponent*"

Von Clausewitz wrote those words about 200 years ago. Here in the 21st century, the US is in need of a hybrid force that couples a powerful military to defeat state adversaries and an equal "soft" focus on winning the people in an asymmetric environment.

Dave Williams is a Senior Associate at [Booz Allen Hamilton](#) with expertise in Law Enforcement-Counterterrorism. Prior to joining the firm, he served for nearly 30 years in the FBI as a Special Agent investigator, where he specialized in counterterrorism matters, and progressed to executive leadership roles. He is a member of various professional organizations including the International Association of Chiefs of Police and the Intelligence and National Security Association.