

**“Mission Creep”:
An examination of an overused
and misunderstood term**

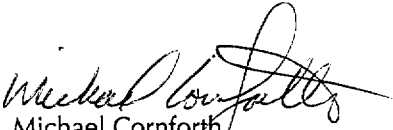
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Summary

“Mission Creep” is a code-word phrase that influences the US government’s approach to military operations even though no common definition or understanding exists as to what “mission creep” means. In short, the term Mission Creep is:

- An unclear concept
- A powerful term that stifles discussion
- An attempt to preempt the inevitable.

This research memorandum attempts to shed some light on “mission creep” to improve the level of debate surrounding military operations and tasks within these operations.

Mission Creep Concepts and Concerns

At least nine different concepts of “mission creep” exist. Each of these concepts leads to a set of implications that differ, just as the concepts themselves differ. Table 1 summarizes these “mission creep” concepts and their implications.

In addition to differing definitions, the concern over “mission creep” captures many anxieties and has a number of causes. In no small part, “mission creep” concerns derive from fears—both legitimate and questionable fears—that a military force might be misused or events could lead an operation into a more dangerous situation. When the spectre of “mission creep” is raised, it could refer to a concern that the situation might lead a military force to:

- Lose focus on what matters
- Lose focus on security situation
- Loss of certainty

Table 1. Nine mission creep concepts

Mission Creep is conduct of:	Implies that: / Implications
Unplanned-for tasks	Planners have perfect knowledge and ability to plan for all eventualities. Contradictory to concept of flexibility as a core competency of military operations.
Unanticipated or unintended task	Again, assumes perfect knowledge before arrival on the ground to know all potential tasks before deployment. Events on the ground drive change in mission and tasking.
Untrained for tasks	At odds with military emphasis on flexibility in adverse environments. Would any military officer suggest that troops in a combat environment should only conduct tasks for which they had trained?
Nation-building tasks	Uses one buzz-word to define another. Could aggravate problem that in civilian agencies tasks might be slower starting on the ground than military mission. Denies that there is a military role in helping reshape a society when this might be the central requirement of the overall mission.
Activities due to outside demands	Requirement to have conscious understanding of outside pressures and retain a focus on political guidance, the mission derived from that guidance, and the tasks associated with that mission. Where authorities and responsibilities are unclear, other organizations will push for the military to do more.
Undesired extension of mandate	This suggests two basic tensions: civilian vs. military (military should control); and, Key decision-making should rest with the force commander. Suggests that the military force should have control over their mandate and changes to it
Activities outside political guidance	If political guidance changes, review military tasks. If political guidance shifts, important to communicate this clearly to military commands. If the guidance changes and tasks are adjusted accordingly, then this is not mission creep. The need for a clear military understanding of political guidance and the need for appropriate political oversight of a mission.
Entangling tasks	Uses one buzzword to define another. Suggests that mission creep is equivalent to a failure to define or reach an "end state" (which can be looked on as yet another buzzword).
Adding functions without reviewing force capabilities	The need for constant review of force responsibilities vs. assigned missions. Any change of mission/tasks requires review and might require change of force structure and capabilities.

- Become entangled in a “quagmire”
- Have to assume costs (lives, fiscal, etc.) for additional tasks
- Get involved in “civilian” tasks
- Do things that “misuse” military assets

Even more concerns lie behind use of the “mission creep” pejorative to describe a situation or proposed action. For example, for at least some in the military, professional distaste of being asked to do “civilian” or “do-gooder” humanitarian assistance tasks underlies the concern over “mission creep”.

Four types of mission change

In terms of actual use, however, “mission creep” is rarely defined, the concerns are not articulated, and the implications of these remain hidden. On consideration, at least four different types of mission change exist:

- *Task accretion* is the general assumption of tasks necessary to achieve the mission’s initial objective.
- *Mission shift* occurs when forces adopt tasks which expand the mission.
- *Mission transition* is an unclear or unstated transition to a new set of objectives.
- *Mission leap* occurs with a clear decision to change the mission and, therefore, the military’s tasks. The key difference is that this represents an explicit choice.

That missions change and that the tasks required to achieve a mission might evolve are simply facts. Denying this simply causes more problems. The above definitions form a framework for understanding when mission change is appropriate or when it might create a dangerous situation.

Getting inside and avoiding “mission creep”

In short, a number of factors contribute to the issues and situations that lead to “mission creep”. Putting aside the question as to what are “appropriate” tasks, the key issue is the simple fact that military operations are not static. Mission change occurs either because tasks change or the endstate changes. In essence, tasks change because the situation is different than expected or the situation changes in an unexpected way.

This view of mission change suggests that policy-makers and military planners should explicitly state every assumption for a mission and that every one of these assumptions should have an information requirement. If (or when) information calls into question an assumption, this should prompt an evaluation of the mission, force, and tasks. If tasks are at issue, then the forces deserve examination. If end-state is the concern, a full review of the operation (including the force) could be in order.

To understand and manage the issues related to “mission creep,” the key element is to ensure the consistency of political goals and objectives with the realities on the ground; to ensure the consistency of military activities with political goals and guidance.

The following three situations seem to be the most dangerous and create the greatest risk:

- Changes in policy do not lead to reviews of force structure and/or tasks;
- Shifting environments and actions on the ground do not lead to reviews of policy;
- Decisions about force structure, tasks, missions, and/or policy are not made in relation to the true purpose of a military operation and are divorced from the realities on the ground.

This suggests that the true path to avoid “mission creep” (understood as unwanted or misunderstood dangerous mission changes) is a continuous effort to tie policy goals, policy guidance, force planning, and tasks together.

Introduction¹

“Mission Creep” has become a code-word phrase in the 1990s even though the phenomena that underlie “mission creep” are not entirely new. Since the end of the Cold War, changing concepts of defense roles and military missions have brought the concerns into greater prominence and led to a political and military hypersensitivity to the phrase “mission creep”. For at least the past five years, this amorphous term has influenced the policy, operational, and tactical approaches to U.S. military operations. The use of the term “mission creep” seems to stifle debate rather than elucidate issues surrounding military operations.

This research memorandum attempts to illuminate the issues surrounding “mission creep” to improve the level of debate surrounding military operations and tasks within these operations. This memorandum examines the concept of “Mission Creep” and suggests some alternatives for the term and the issues that these definitions imply. The NATO operations in Bosnia- Herzegovina will serve, in particular, as a basis for this discussion.

Avoiding mission creep was a priority during the planning for and execution of NATO operation Joint Endeavor (20 Dec 95 – 20 Dec 96) in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In his operational order, the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, specified that the Implementation Force (IFOR) should “Avoid mission creep.”² The commander of

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1. CNA analysts Richard Brody, C. Michael Cornforth, Jonathan Dworken, John Nelson, and Marvin Pokrant have all provided insightful comments at various stages of this work. The author retains full responsibility for any faults that remain.
 2. P 301740Z SEP 95 FM SACEUR, “SACEUR Initial Strategic Guidance for Peace Implementation,” 301740Z Sep 95. In OPLAN 10405, JOINT ENDEAVOUR, SACEUR wrote in the commander’s intent that “my intent is to prevent mission creep.”

NATO's southern region (CINCSOUTH) and IFOR commander wrote in his OPLAN for IFOR operations: "Mission Creep is to be resisted."³ The phrase appeared in many other forms through IFOR operations, with commands frequently reacting to events on the ground by raising "the threat of mission creep" as a reason not to undertake an action or as a potential outcome of events on the ground.⁴ In other cases, commands had to defend their actions or concepts "despite the threat of mission creep."⁵ All of this discussion of mission creep, however, existed without any common, NATO or U.S. definition of the term.

The lack of a common understanding led to circumstances where "mission creep" became a trump card that stifled debate and led to decisions not to do some tasks that may be required and fully justified as part of the military mission. Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, key negotiator of the Dayton Accords, has asserted that:

"The military did not like civilian interference "inside" their own affairs. They preferred to be given a limited and clearly defined mission from their civilian colleagues and then decide on their own how to carry it out. In recent years, the military had adopted a politically potent term for assign-

3. This statement is found in the Commander, IFOR (COMIFOR) general concept of operations (OPLAN 40105, DECISIVE ENDEAVOUR).
4. See, for example, discussions in: the 092000Z Feb 96 SHAPE INTSUM; ARRC REAR 042213Z JAN96; MODUK, "Former Yugoslavia: Weekly Intelligence Assessment as at 181000Z JAN 96," 181015Z Jan 96; IFOR CJ-3 memo to SHAPE ADIO, "D+30 Compliance with Dayton Peace Agreement, IFOR CJ-3/6021, 21 January 1996. The author also heard the words "mission creep" used in this vein multiple times while with NATO forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina in October and December 1996, and March and April 1997.
5. For example, "The flooding in Mostar and concern about the Mostar dam has prompted us to initiate a review of civil disaster preparedness in order to develop a working knowledge of capabilities and weaknesses. Whilst we must avoid mission creep, the experience of some in this theatre shows that it is prudent for us to have knowledge of potential problem areas and, if called upon to do so, what the military could offer in terms of immediate life saving assistance." (ARRC REAR, 282230Z DEC 95 message)

ments they felt were too broad: "mission creep." This was a powerful pejorative, conjuring up images of quagmire. But it was never clearly defined, only invoked, and always in a negative sense, used only to kill someone else's proposal."⁶

The critical tension that has extended from before, through, and after IFOR is the question of where legitimate support to civilian agencies and legitimate involvement in the civil sector ended and where "mission creep" began. This dividing line was fought over in many staff discussions, around negotiating tables, and in the press (pushing, in many cases, for a greater NATO military involvement in the non-military aspects of the war-to-peace transition). "Mission creep" was an often evoked term reflective of this tension.

This research memorandum places the term "mission creep" under a microscope. It first reviews nine different conceptions of mission creep, looking at the implications derived from the definition. As one component of this confusion, the memorandum distinguishes between "task" and "mission", a potentially critical differentiation for understanding "mission creep".

Following this analysis, the memorandum briefly examines other issues of confusion when discussing mission creep. Causing confusion, for example, is an unclear differentiation between tasks and mission. Related to this problem are attempts to differentiate between "military" and "civilian" missions. Rather than conceiving of a situation like Bosnia requiring multiple "mission", a more appropriate view might be that Bosnia requires (and is) an international "civil-military mission." Such a civil-military mission is composed of different tasks and responsibilities split and shared between different organizations.

The following section outlines an alternative conceptual framework to the concepts of mission change. This four-category approach form a framework for understanding when mission change is appropriate or, conversely, when it might lead to a dangerous situation.

6. Richard Holbrooke, *To End a War*, New York, Random House, 1998, page 216.

The memorandum concludes with some thoughts as how to control “mission change” to reduce the likelihood of dangerous problems and thus diminish the power that the confused term “mission creep” has over debates on the use of U.S. military forces.

Nine conceptions of “Mission Creep”

Numerous “mission creep” concepts exist and were used in discussions about operations in Bosnia. These differing concepts have, in most cases, significantly different implications. These concepts of what mission creep entails seem to fall into nine distinct types.

1. Unplanned for tasks
2. Unanticipated or unintended tasks
3. Untrained for tasks
4. Nation-building tasks
5. Activities due to outside demands
6. Undesired extension of mandate
7. Activities outside political guidance
8. Entanglement into unending missions; quagmire
9. Adding functions without reviewing force capabilities

This section reviews each concept in turn, provides an example of mission creep defined in this context, and discusses the implications of each definition. (Table 1 summarizes this discussion in tabular form. Appendix A provides further examples of use of the term mission creep.)

Unplanned-for tasks

“The ability of the mission to move beyond its initial parameters.” Foreign Military Studies Office, US Army⁷

Under this conception, if policy makers and planners could not anticipate or chose not to deal with all issues prior to deployment, undertaking any form of new activity would lead the force into “mission creep”.

Interpreting mission creep this way has several serious implications. Perhaps most seriously, this suggests that planners (and policy-makers) should have a complete understanding and knowledge of the situation that a force might face and, with that perfect situational awareness, then have the ability (and resources) to plan for all eventualities. Absent such situational awareness and absent this planning, any movement of a mission (and its tasks) into elements not envisioned prior to force deployment should be considered mission creep.

At its very core, this conception is in direct opposition to a key assertion of military professionals, that flexibility is (or should be) a core competency of military forces.

Unanticipated or unintended tasks

“A danger ... that you go in for one set of purposes ... but events ... lead into a different action.” Former Foreign Secretary, United Kingdom⁸

In this conception, “events ... lead into a different action” that are in conflict with the original “set of purposes.” This conception again assumes perfect knowledge before arrival on the ground so that all

7. Timothy L. Thomas, *United Nations Crisis Management in Bosnia: Problems and Recommendations*, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, US Army Foreign Military Studies Office, 19 December 1994.

8. Douglas Hurd quoted in Robert Block, “Mass return to Rwanda puts UN peace mission in doubt,” *The (London) Sunday Times*, 17 November 1996, p. 21.

tasks for the force should be pre-identified because it is “events” that will drive the operation to a new set of purposes. This is a somewhat passive definition, since mission creep becomes, in essence, a reaction to outside events; i.e., events on the ground drive change in mission and tasking. In other words, this assumes that the correct approach was chosen originally and it is only events (on any level) outside the operation’s control that change the nature or character of an operation.

Untrained for tasks

“When people got loaded with tasks for which they were not prepared.” “NATO official”⁹

This way of looking at “mission creep” suggests several things: first, that the problem is external in origin (someone or something else adds tasks); and, second, that the key issue is what people are prepared for confronting. Using the term “prepared” raises another complication, since prepared could refer to equipment, training, psychological preparation, and/or planning warning.

This conception seems fundamentally at odds with a military emphasis on flexibility in adverse environments. This type of restrictive definition of appropriate roles would not, it seems, ever be applied to a force in a combat environment. For example, would anyone suggest that a soldier should not attempt to use an unfamiliar weapon to defend a position when surprised by an enemy?

9. “NATO official” quoted in “Sarajevo abductions pose dilemma for NATO,” Reuters, 1995, on NANDO.NET, worldwide web: <http://www.nandotimes.com/newsroom/nt/0102abdan1.html>

Nation-building tasks

“when a humanitarian operation begins to take on aspects of nation-building.” US National Defense University¹⁰

“no “mission creep” – from purely military tasks into “nation-building.”” IFOR spokesman¹¹

In some ways, this might be the most problematic way of defining mission creep since it simply uses one buzz-word to define another.¹² In any event, this conception of the “mission creep” will likely aggravate tensions between civilian organizations and military organizations on the ground as, at the core, this assumes away any military role in assisting a nation get back on its feet. This concept of mission creep also points to a related serious problem: the attempt to divorce military roles and responsibilities from civilian roles as if, for the international community as a whole, there can be such a thing as a “military mission”, a “diplomatic mission”, and an “economic mission”, and that these can be entirely divorced from each other with success possible in one and not the others. A more appropriate view would seem to be that there are differing military, political (diplomatic), and economic tools and roles in helping to restore a society to order and the inter-

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10. Institute for National Security Studies, *Strategic Assessment 1995*, Washington, DC, National Defence University, 1995, worldwide web: <http://www.ndu.edu/ndu/inss/sa95/sach0105.html>
 11. Col. John Kirkwood, US Air Force, IFOR Spokesman, Press Briefing, 9 March 1996, Sarajevo Coalition Press Information Centre. Material missing in original.
 12. A full discussion of this other buzzword lies outside the context of this paper. In short, avoidance of nation-building in situations such as Bosnia or Haiti seems to avoid the true international goal: to assist these nations get back on their feet and become stable enough so that an international intervention (military or otherwise) is no longer required and is unlikely (or, at least, less likely) to be required again. For a brief discussion of nation building and nation assistance (the DoD term for the military role in nation building) see: Adam B. Siegel, *The Role of Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations in Humanitarian Assistance Operations*, Alexandria, VA, Center for Naval Analyses, CNA Annotated Briefing 95-85.10, April 1996, pages 28–30.

national community. These tools and operations have to be coordinated and worked together for overall success and there can be no such thing as success for one facet if the overall mission objective is a failure.

While not all “civilian” tasks are *per se* “nation building” in nature, one extremely typical use of mission creep is to describe it as attempting to use military forces to undertake “civilian tasks”. This view of mission creep will likely aggravate the ‘initial start-up’ problem in those situations where civilian agencies might be slower starting execution of tasks on the ground than the military mission (as was the case with Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA) implementation in Bosnia-Herzegovina). At its core, this definition denies that there is a military role in helping reshape a society when this might be the central requirement of the overall mission. To assert that the military does not and should not have a role in restructuring civilian society seems to fly in the face of U.S. military history. The military’s role in the post-WWII restructuring and recovery of Germany and Japan are pertinent examples of military support to and engagement in nation building.

Activities due to outside demands

“limit the tasking of the IFOR by organizations outside the NATO chain of command. Avoid mission creep.”
SACEUR¹³

Rather than directly defining what mission creep is, this concept points to what is perceived as a key driver in causing the problem(s): that outside organizations will place pressure on a force to undertake new or different tasks that are not necessarily related to the mission. It highlights what many perceive to be one of the key problems: that civilian agencies and other organizations look to the military as a bottomless pit of resources to aid their activities. This threat, that other organizations might successfully push for the military to do more than appropriate, is most likely when authorities and responsibilities are unclear.

13. SACEUR, “Initial Strategic Guidance for Peace Implementation,” 301740Z SEP 95, NATO Confidential (material cited is unclassified)

This conception highlights the requirement for a military force (from the commanding officer to the lowest ranking enlisted personnel) to have a conscious understanding of outside pressures and retain a focus on political guidance, the mission derived from that guidance, and the tasks associated with that mission.

Undesired extension of mandate

“Mission Creep” implies extension of our mandate against our will.” CJ-3 Plans, IFOR¹⁴

That mission creep is the undesired extension of mandate is suggestive of some of the major tensions underlying many military officers’ concerns related to mission creep. This conception points to two basic tensions: civilian vs. military (military should control); and, higher headquarters versus the on-scene commander (the on-scene commander should be given the benefit of the doubt and not be second-guessed). Thus, at least once an operation has commenced, the local, on-scene force commander should have the driving influence and control over any potential changes to the mandate (and thus mission). This interpretation reminds one of the apocryphal military commander who suggested to the political leadership that they should simply tell him when the war started and that he would tell them when he had finished it.

In this particular quote, a key issue is the meaning of “our”. Does this refer to NATO as a whole (and, therefore, implies some form of forced political decision by the North Atlantic Council (NAC) to change the mission/mandate)? Or is the reference to the military, in particular the force on the ground? While the CJ-3 might have intended the first, many officers within the IFOR and HQ in Sarajevo clearly believed the second.

14. 3050/JOCPLANS/96 24 February 1996 JPT3/gpw/7271 MEMORANDUM FROM: CJ3 PLANS THRU: CJ-3 COSIFOR TO: COMIFOR SUBJECT: COMIFOR GUIDANCE FOR D+90 THROUGH D+120

Activities outside political guidance

“Where people want me to add things that are not in my mandate.” COMIFOR¹⁵

This conception of mission creep is related to that of “activities due to outside demands” and “the undesired extension of mandate” with one significant exception indicated: if the political guidance (and, thus, mandate) changes, then this is not mission creep. In other words, the “mandate” should have enough clarity for the force commander to understand which tasks are (and are not) appropriate to undertake. This suggests, however, that piecemeal accretion of tasks that might not be related to the mission would be mission creep—political guidance for such additional tasks modifying the mandate should involve explicit changes to that mandate.

This conception suggests several important implications. First, if the political guidance shifts, the military tasks should be reviewed as to whether they are in accord with the new guidance and whether additional tasks are required to achieve the new guidance. Secondly, if there is a change in policy, this requires a change in political guidance that must be clearly communicated to the force commander (and other military commands) in a way that clearly articulates the changed mission for the force. Third, if the mandate changes and tasks are adjusted accordingly, then this is not mission creep. All of this points toward the need for a clear military understanding of political guidance and the need for appropriate political oversight of a mission.

15. Admiral Leighton Smith, USN, COMIFOR and CINCSOUTH, Lecture at the Italian Armed Forces High Military Studies Centre, Rome, 19 April 1996.

Entanglement into unending missions; quagmire

“We are concerned about “mission creep,” the commitments that would drag American soldiers deeper and deeper into the quagmire.” *Los Angeles Times*¹⁶

“Mounting congressional concerns about “mission creep” - that U.S. soldiers are being drawn into more dangerous, open-ended duties.”¹⁷

As in avoiding “nation building”, quagmire introduces yet another buzzword to define the mission-creep buzzword. This definition, again, uses one buzzword to define another.

In essence, defining “mission creep” as engaging forces in “quagmires” suggests that mission creep is equivalent to a failure to define or reach an “end state” (which can be looked on as yet another buzzword). In other words, if the force engages in activities that do not have a definitive finishing point (in time), then the force is engaged in unending responsibilities which thus equates to mission creep.

In a rhetorical response, one could ask whether the Korea commitment is a “quagmire” or whether the US engagement in NATO was a quagmire. Clearly, in neither situation did President Truman deploy U.S. military forces conceiving that they would still be deployed in large numbers 50 years later.

16. “Dayton’s Fading Promises: Threat of U.S. and NATO ‘mission creep’ in Bosnia looms longer,” *Los Angeles Times* (Washington Edition), 29 September 1997, page 10.

17. “Nominee uncertain of Bosnia exit, talks of hunting war criminals,” *Seattle Times*, 10 Sept 97.

Adding functions without reviewing force capabilities

“mission creep, that functions were added to the force successively without parallel enhancements of their size or capacity.” Norwegian Institute for International Affairs¹⁸

This concept points toward the critical importance of reviewing force structure and force policy (for example, rules of engagement and other authority) when changing what the force is tasked to execute or accomplish. This highlights the need for a constant review of force capabilities vs. assigned missions. In other words, this view of mission creep indicates that any change of mission/tasks requires review and might require change of force structure and capabilities.

This definition of mission creep, however, suggests that it is not mission creep if the force structure and capabilities are reviewed and changed with changing tasks. Thus, the events in Somalia in summer and fall 1993 would not fit this definition of mission creep: the force was modified (deployment of special forces elements) to execute the new tasking of hunting down Aideed.

18. “It is commonly argued that the UN operations in the area were marked by what some refer to as mission creep, that functions were added to the force successively without parallel enhancements of their size or capacity. This led to promises that were not kept.” Espen Barth Eide and Per Erik Solli, “From Blue to Green - The Transition from UNPROFOR to IFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina,” Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, 20 December 1995 (<http://www.nupi.no/UN/trans.htm>)

Different concepts exist

Clearly, significantly different concepts exist as to what constitutes “mission creep”. Each interpretation has serious implications. The differences between interpretations is reflected in the differing implications. And, not surprisingly, these differences could lead to misunderstanding and/or misperceptions when “mission creep” enters into the debate over whether and how to employ military force. In most cases of discussion, those using “mission creep” do not define their use of the term thus the implications at issue remain hidden rather than being clarified.

Not only are there differing concepts or interpretations of mission creep, but significantly different anxieties seem to drive many of the concerns over “mission creep”. The following section reviews some of these anxieties.

The concerns behind “mission creep”

In addition to differing definitions, the concern over “mission creep” captures many anxieties and has a number of causes. In no small part, “mission creep” concerns derive from fears—both legitimate and questionable fears—that a military force might be misused or events could lead an operation into a more dangerous situation. The following are some of the concerns over “mission creep”:

- Lose focus on what matters: Some fear that diverging from the “military mission” will lead the force and force commander to pay ever greater attention to issues that are of little or lesser importance, taking attention and resources away from dealing with “what matters.” This assumes that initial planning and mission statement captured “what matters” and anything that happens later simply is a distortion of the clarity of thought in the planning phase. (This also is a view of those who do not want the military engaged in “civilian” tasks.)
- Lose focus on security situation: That involvement in the civil-sector arena could lead the force to lose perspective and thus lose focus on “traditional” military responsibilities to maintain a secure environment. This also reflects a concern that involvement in the civil side could put forces, themselves, under a greater security risk.
- Loss of certainty: Many individuals (and organizations) prefer to have certainty and a clear idea of required tasks.¹⁹ Engaging in “non-traditional” or previously not considered tasks creates uncertainty.
- Entanglement: That engaging in additional tasks and missions will create a situation more difficult to withdraw a force on “mission completion” than would occur if the force remains with a limited mandate.

- Assuming costs (fiscal, lives, etc.) for additional tasks: Doing additional tasks and assuming burdens brings costs. Military officers fear that a military force will have to bear these costs without compensation. This can be driven in part by outside organizations that view a military force as “resource rich” in comparison to their organizations and question why the military force cannot do more in “non-traditional” military arenas.
- Fear of “misuse” of military assets by policy-makers, home populations, and military organizations. This ranges from NGOs which believe that the military should not be engaged in certain activities (and believe that the military is a very expensive way to, for example, distribute food), to military officers who decry the impact that humanitarian assistance activities can have on combat readiness.
- Professional distaste by military officers and personnel who do not want to be involved in, for example, “do-gooder” humanitarian tasks or “dirty” law-enforcement (drug interdiction) tasks with risks of corruption. The following common phrase captures this distaste: “I didn’t join the military to hand out food.”

Each of these anxieties drove some of the “mission creep” discussion in relation to NATO operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Combined with the differing interpretations of “mission creep”, the differing anxieties creates a very complex situation in terms of understanding what people mean and fear when discussing mission creep.

19. A potential definition is that mission creep derives from a circumstance where the military moves from a well-defined and (or) achievable mission to an ill-defined and (or) impossible mission. Thus, mission creep implies setting the military force up for failure since the mission becomes unachievable. Following this logic further, some fear that mission creep derives from an effort to blame the military for others’ failures. Such a definition also leads to the loss of certainty as a concern. I am indebted to CNA analyst Marvin Pokrant for this concept.

Mission versus Task

Yet another complication exists, the lack of differentiation between tasks and missions. Examining the U.S. military's joint definitions provides an indication as to why these terms might be confused. "Mission" is defined as follows:

1) The task, together with the purpose, that clearly indicates the action to be taken and the reason therefore. 2) In common usage, especially when applied to lower military units, a duty assigned to an individual or unit; a task. 3) The dispatching of one or more aircraft to accomplish one particular task.²⁰

No definition is provided for task.

A mission can be conceived of as the overall purpose for an operation (or the elements of the operation) while tasks are elements of this mission—actions that must be undertaken to accomplish the mission. Thus, if additional "tasks" are identified as required to accomplish the original mission, this should not be viewed as "mission creep" but rather as "mission" or "task" accretion. That is, the additional tasks do not change the original mission but are required to accomplish that mission.

Taking on additional tasks without a clear concept of how they relate to the original mission does, on the other hand, create the risk of leading the force away from the mission. This means that the "mission" could be changed with a lack of clarity and a lack of decision-maker awareness that this change is occurring.

20. Joint Pub 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, as amended through 15 Apr 1998, page 283 (http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/new_pubs/jp1_02.pdf)

At other times, clearly the issue is a change or potential change to the “mission”. At other times, the issue at hand seems to be more appropriately a discussion of what tasks are required to accomplish a mission. Clarity of mission statement, end state (rather than “end date”), and overall policy objectives can provide commanders a basis for judging whether a task, not included in the original planning, supports the mission objectives even it is not necessarily clearly part of the ‘mandate’.

Military versus Civilian Mission?

A major controversy that has surrounded NATO operations in Bosnia has been the question of where legitimate support to civilian agencies and legitimate involvement in the civil sector ended and where “mission creep” begin.

This issue relates to the problems of differentiating between “tasks” and “mission”. The tensions over “mission creep” into the civilian arena derive, it seems, from a conception that separate “military” and “civilian” (or, political, economic, cultural, humanitarian, development) missions exist in a situation like Bosnia. While perhaps different “missions” exist, in theory all of these “missions” should support an overall objective. Thus, rather than separate missions, a more robust conception might be that a “civil-military mission” exists, with different elements (diplomats, military personnel, and so on) having different roles and tasks in support of the overall objective. With this conception, much of the controversy over “mission creep” thus becomes discussions over shifting the burden of mission-essential tasks between organizations rather than a question of engaging the overall “civil-military mission” in new or inappropriate activities.

An alternative conceptual framework²¹

It seems that policy making and operational decision-making would be enhanced by a more robust definition of mission creep, breaking it down into more meaningful categories. The confusion over “mission creep” results, in no small part, from the problems that the United States and other nations face in adapting to the post-Cold War security environment. While others have acknowledged the problems with the term mission creep,²² to date these discussions have not provided a useful framework for understanding and describing the dimensions of mission change.

General discussions of the problem capture four different categories of mission change, each with its own form of rationale and potential problems. (Appendix B provides a graphic depiction of each of these definitions to help provide a clearer understanding of what each term implies.) The four (presented with brief examples) are:

Task accretion is the general accretion of additional tasks viewed as necessary to achieve the mission’s initial objective. Such changes to the mission’s tasks seem to occur generally “on the ground,” as the “man on the spot” believes necessary. Task accretion occurs on the ground due not to changes in the desired outcome but due to changing perceptions of what is required to achieve the mission’s objectives.

During Operation Provide Comfort in April–May 1991, U.S. Marines (and other military forces) reestablished basic util-

21. This framework builds on: Adam B. Siegel, *Requirements for Humanitarian Assistance and Peace Operations: Insights from Seven Case Studies*, Alexandria, VA, Center for Naval Analyses, February 1995 (Research Memorandum 94-74), pp. 29–33.

22. See, for examples, the section “analytical views of mission creep” in Appendix A.

ity services in northern Iraq to encourage Kurdish refugees to return to the cities. Such actions were not included in the initial tasking nor envisioned during the planning for the movement into northern Iraq, but seemed necessary for achieving the mission's objectives.²³

Mission shift occurs when forces adopt tasks not included in the initial mission which then lead to an expansion of the mission. The key point: a disconnect exists between an on-scene decision to involve the force in additional tasks and political decision-making about the mission's objectives.

In 1993, LtGen Morillon, French Army, flew to Srebrenica in Bosnia-Herzegovina and denounced the Serbian attacks on the city as part of his drive to engage the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in the protection of refugees and other civilians threatened in the war fighting. His actions and the reaction of the Bosnian Muslims to his activities helped create pressure for the UN declaration of safe havens in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The creation of the safe havens fundamentally shifted the character of the UNPROFOR mandate in Bosnia-Herzegovina.²⁴

Mission transition occurs when a mission undergoes an unclear or unstated transition to a new set of objectives. This occurs at higher headquarters and political arenas. Mission transition occurs in an environment of gradual and, perhaps, unclear, unrecognized, or confused modification of objectives and tasks. These changes, therefore, may not get stated explicitly nor lead to a reevaluation of the forces involved and the tasks assigned to these forces.

23. On Provide Comfort, see, for example, Siegel, *Requirements for Humanitarian Assistance and Peace Operations*, CNA RM 94-74, op cit; Lt.Col. Ronald J. Brown, USMCR, *Humanitarian Operations in Northern Iraq, 1991: With Marines in Operation Provide Comfort*, Washington, DC, History and Museums Division, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 1997; and LTC Gordon W. Rudd, US Army, *Operation Provide Comfort*, Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, March 1994.

24. For a discussion of General Morillon's activities in Srebrenica see, for example, Jan Willem Honig and Norbert Both, *Srebrenica: Record of a War Crime*, London, Penguin Books, 1996, pages 85-90.

Although it is harder to provide a clear instance of mission transition, U.S. support to UN Operations in Somalia (UNOSOM) in the summer and fall of 1993 might be in this category. The available record indicates that the Clinton administration was moving toward a new policy in Somalia while the military forces continued operations in pursuit of the objective that was laid down following Somali attacks on UN (and U.S.) forces. If the political leaders had made the transition to a new policy and had changed (or, more accurately, believed they had changed or were changing) the mission's objectives, which seems quite possible based on the available record for September and October 1993, they did not clearly communicate this shift in orders to the military.²⁵

Mission leap occurs when a decision is made to radically change the mission and, therefore, the military's tasks. The key difference is that this represents an explicit choice, whether or not the political or military leadership recognizes the full implications of this decision.

When several NATO nations began relief efforts for Kurdish refugees in Turkey in April 1991, this was to be a short, emergency program. Within days of the operation's start, this had changed to a coalition mission to help Kurds return to their homes in Northern Iraq (including creating safe havens for these Kurds in Northern Iraq). Some NATO nations continued operations with Kurds in Northern Iraq for more than five years and the no-flight enforcement in northern Iraq continues into 1998.

That missions change and that the tasks required to achieve a mission might evolve are simply facts. Denying this reality simply causes more problems. The above four categories of "mission change" provide a basis for more clarity in discussing issues related to how and why the tasks undertaken by a military force might change during an operation. These definitions form a framework for understanding when such mission change might be leading down a dangerous path.

25. On this period see, for example, John L. Hirsch and Robert B. Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope: Reflections on Peacemaking and Peacekeeping*, Washington, DC, U.S. Institute of Peace, 1995, pp 115-148.

It seems clear that task accretion, mission shift, mission transition and mission leap are part of the conduct of peace operations. In fact, many operations (such as IFOR) face all of these (at least as possibilities), some or all at the same time.²⁶ Rather than simply decrying the problem of “mission creep” or vowing that a force will not conduct mission creep, this approach to mission change allows a focus on the real problems generally lumped together in the phrase “mission creep.”

Task accretion and mission shift refer to “bottom-up” situations; on-the-ground actions and factors drive any change. Mission transition and mission leap are “top-down”; decisions away from the scene lead to some form of mission change.

As conceived here, task accretion and mission leap are inevitable elements of operations, representing conscious decisions either on the scene or at higher headquarters to modify or drastically change the mission’s parameters. Task accretion and mission leap capture conscious decision-making to deal with the simple realities that not everything can be foreseen before commencing operation and that situations are not static and, therefore, responses to situations cannot always remain static.

The most serious problems can arise with mission shift and transition. In both cases, disconnects between policy and military operations occur. In both cases, a lack of clarity as to the desired end state will likely be an aggravating factor. Clear policy guidance and intense interaction between the engaged force and higher headquarters are necessary to avoid missteps associated with mission shift and transition.

26. Thus, the four ways to conceive of mission change could easily be expanded to provide additional categories. For example, a combined Mission Shift / Mission Transition environment could be called Mission Split, when both the policy goals and on-the-ground actions are diverging from the original mission concept at the same time, but in different ways. In a different vein, “explicit transition” could refer to the situation where the mission undergoes a gradual, but clearly stated change of objectives. (I am indebted to CNA analyst Richard Brody, CNA, for the concept of “explicit transition”.)

Conclusion

Operation Joint Endeavor was burdened by a lack of common understanding of “mission creep” as a critical term that affected policy-making, planning, and execution. “Mission creep” was used by policy makers, defense officials, military officers, and journalists as a pejorative term that often hampered discussion of critical issues even though no common understanding existed as to what the words truly meant.

This is by no means isolated to the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In discussions of operations or potential operations from Haiti to Rwanda to Kosovo, the term “Mission Creep” has proven to be an unclear concept that remains a powerful term that stifles discussion. In the end, its use often seems an attempt to avoid undertaking necessary actions or even to preempt the inevitable.

Rather than continuing to use this amorphous and pejorative phrase, the focus should turn to defining long-term objectives for the use of military force and assuring that the tasks a military force undertakes are in accord with those long-term objectives.

In short, a number of factors contribute to the issues and situations that lead to “mission creep”. Putting aside the question as to whether the issue is attempting to force the military to undertake inappropriate (civilian) tasks, the key issue is the simple fact that military operations are not static. Mission change occurs either because tasks change or the endstate changes. In essence, tasks change because the situation is different than expected or it changes in an unexpected way.

This view of mission change suggests that policy-makers and military planners should explicitly state every assumption for a mission and that every one of these assumptions should have an information requirement. Thus, no military plan should be considered complete

unless every assumption is directly associated with some means to verify that the assumption is (or remains) valid.

If (or when) new information calls into question an assumption, this should prompt an evaluation of the mission, force, and tasks. If tasks are at issue, then the forces deserve examination. If endstate is the concern, a full review of the operation (including the force) could be in order.

To understand and manage the issues related to “mission creep,” the key element is to ensure the consistency of political goals and objectives with the realities on the ground; to ensure the consistency of military activities with political goals and guidance. This requires a commitment to clearly identify mission objectives. While the political leadership and military commands should engage in a constant dialogue to ensure consistency between political objectives and military activities, this becomes critical when the nature and character of the operation changes.

The following three situations seem the most dangerous and create the greatest risk:

- Changes in policy do not lead to reviews of force structure and/or tasks;
- Shifting environments and actions on the ground do not lead to reviews of policy;
- Decisions about force structure, tasks, missions, and/or policy are not made in relation to the true purpose of a military operation and are divorced from the realities on the ground.

This type of focus—tying policy goals, policy guidance, force planning, and tasks together—on an operation typically happens most seriously at the onset. Later on, this type of review does not always occur as an operation extends or as marginal changes in guidance are given, thus increasing the possibility that policy objectives and operational realities will become divorced from each other.

In recognition of the potential dangers of evolving or changing tasks and missions, the civilian and military participants in decision-making

about and execution of military operations should vigilantly maintain an evaluation of missions and tasks at all levels of command. The participants (both military and civilian) must not lose sight and understanding of the relationship between the military operations (tasks) and political goals (mission). Every member in the chain of decision-making (both civilian and military) should share a common understanding as to why, for example, a private on the ground did (or, as importantly, did not) undertake a task. Without such a common understanding, a military operation will risk becoming divorced from long-term political objectives and, thus, seem to be headed toward potential failure. This is the true risk — that an operation might inadvertently head toward failure due to a lack of understanding as to the relationship between actions on the ground and long-term objectives.

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Appendix A: Mission Creep Quotes

The following pages provide additional examples of discussion of “mission creep”. First, quotations are provided for the nine categories delineated in the main text. Following these, the quotations provide a sense of the discussion of mission creep in journalist, policy, military, and analytical circles with a section of quotes related to Bosnia; U.S. military concepts on avoiding mission creep; Uphold Democracy in Haiti; analytical views of mission creep; and some other relevant mission creep quotes.

Unplanned for tasks

“Threat of mission creep, that is the ability of the mission to move beyond its initial parameters.” U.S. Army Foreign Military Studies Office²⁷

“What is known as ‘mission creep,’ the tendency for the specific mission to change or escalate over time.” U.S. Army, Training and Doctrine Command²⁸

“‘mission creep’ (the expansion of a force's mission from its originally intended one) ...given the large number of actors involved in the decision-making process, there will almost inevitably be some political ambiguity, resulting in changing political and military goals as the situation develops. Consequently, ‘mission creep ... may result as the objectives and desired end state evolve.’”²⁹

27. Timothy L. Thomas, *United Nations Crisis Management in Bosnia: Problems and Recommendations*, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, U.S. Army Foreign Military Studies Office, 19 December 1994

28. Training Requirements for Stability Operations, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, worldwide web: <http://205.130.63/ootw.htm>

29. Thomas J. Marshall and Donald C. Snedeker, *Military Forces in Preventive Diplomacy*, Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), Vol. 1, 4 April 1994, p. 13.

“Bosnia was a classic case of what is known in UN operations as mission creep: a force goes in to do one thing and inexorably ends up doing something else.” Martin Bell, BBC journalist³⁰

“Interest creep describes situations in which original national interests in resolving a crisis or conflict—that determine political objectives or the ends sought by American leaders—widen in the absence of conscious decision making. ... Mission creep is its military counterpart and occurs when the Armed Forces take on broader missions than initially planned.”³¹

Unanticipated or unintended tasks

“In order for the U.S. to avoid “mission creep” – the unintended and unanticipated acceptance of new missions and new mandates – it must stick to a comprehensive and clearly articulated strategy that lays out military objectives and a clear exit strategy. President Clinton stated in his national address that the mission in Bosnia would be clear, limited, and achievable. For that to be true, clearly defined and easily measurable military criteria must be identified at all levels of the military effort: strategic, operational, and tactical. The prospects and costs of achieving these criteria also must be clearly stated.” The Heritage Foundation³²

“There is a danger, now called mission creep, that you go in for one set of purposes which may be very clearly defined – but events which you can’t predict lead you into a different action. Of course, to some degree this is inevitable.” Douglas Hurd, former Foreign Secretary, United Kingdom³³

Untrained for tasks

“When we started planning for this [Bosnia], all of the allies insisted that the mandate for the force should be clearly and narrowly

30. Martin Bell, *In Harm's Way*, London, Penguin Books, 1996, page 187.

31. Anne Dixon, “The Whats and Whys of Colations,” *Joint Forces Quarterly*, 1993.

32. John Hillen, “Questioning the Bosnia Peace Plan,” *Backgrounder* # 1062, The Heritage Foundation. November 30, 1995

33. Quoted in Robert Block, “Mass return to Rwanda puts UN peace mission in doubt,” *The (London) Sunday Times*, 17 November 1996, page 21

defined,” said one NATO official. “We wanted at all costs to avoid the sort of ‘mission creep’ you saw in Somalia, when people got loaded with tasks for which they were not prepared. The result was disastrous.”³⁴

Nation-building tasks

“Mission creep ... happens when a humanitarian operation begins to take on aspects of nation-building.”³⁵

U.S. National Defense University

“Same pattern has been repeated: early success in achieving narrowly defined goals followed by catastrophe and withdrawal when “mission creep” led to ambitious attempts at reconstructing disordered states and societies. ... The lessons of these adventures [Lebanon, Somalia, Haiti] in OOTW [Operations Other Than War] are clear. The U.S. and its allies might succeed, as long as success is defined in the narrowest possible terms—the separation of hostile forces by neutral peacekeepers.”³⁶

“There will be no “mission creep” – from purely military tasks into “nation-building.” ... We have successfully and will successfully in the future resist mission creep. However, we have received refined guidance from NATO recently which reflects the increasing importance of tasks in what might be seen as the civil sector. And that guidance does not preclude the acceptance, on a case-by-case basis, of non-entangling, limited, and cost-effective [...] are definitely masters of our own destiny. We will examine each request on [a] case-by-case basis. ... we are prepared to become involved in limited non-entangling extension of military mission to assist the civil mission.” IFOR Spokesman³⁷

34. “Sarajevo abductions pose dilemma for NATO,” Reuters, 1995, on NANDO.NET, worldwide web: <http://www.nandotimes.com/newsroom/nt/0102abdanl.html>

35. Institute for National Security Studies, Strategic Assessment 1995, Washington, DC, National Defense University, 1995, worldwide web: <http://www.ndu.edu/ndu/inss/sa95/sach0105.html>

36. Michael Lind, “Beirut to Bosnia,” *The New Republic*, 18 December 1995, page 20.

37. Col. John Kirkwood, US Air Force, IFOR Spokesman, Press Briefing, 9 March 1996, Sarajevo Coalition Press Information Center. Material missing in original.

Activities due to outside demands

“A lack of public understanding of IFOR’s mission and successes can lead to false expectations. These false expectations have the potential to encourage mission creep and may threaten IFOR’s successful mission completion.” IFOR Public Information³⁸

“My intent is to limit the tasking of the IFOR by organizations outside the NATO chain of command. Avoid mission creep.” General Joulwan, SACEUR³⁹

“Mission creep already began last month as peacekeepers dabbled in trying to smooth the rough edges of new population shifts ... These subtle changes came largely as a result of criticism from Western diplomats and the media that NATO commanders were interpreting their mission too strictly.”⁴⁰

Undesired extension of mandate

“Mission Creep” implies extension of our mandate against our will. I will continue to resist it strongly. IFOR will, however, consider requests for specific, limited non-entangling mission expansion, particularly where it is clear to me that cost-effective non-mandated military effort can have disproportionate effects on the likely success of the combined military/civil mission.” CJ-3 Plans, IFOR⁴¹

Activities outside political guidance

“Business of mission creep, where people want me to add things that are not within my mandate. ...” Admiral Leighton Smith, U.S. Navy, COMIFOR⁴²

38. FM HQ IFOR SARAJEVO, 191958Z JUL 96

39. P 301740Z SEP 95 FM SACEUR “Initial Strategic Guidance for Peace Implementation”

40. “NATO’s Bosnia Mission Creeps, Despite Vows,” Christian Science Monitor, 28 March 1996, as cited in Harry Summers, “Mission Creeps,” Washington Times, 11 April 1996, page 15.

41. “COMIFOR Guidance for D+90 through D+120,” Memorandum from: CJ3 Plans Through: CJ-3 COSIFOR To: COMIFOR, 24 February 1996, 3050/JOCPLANS/96, JPT3/gpw/7271

Entanglement into unending missions; quagmire

"We are concerned about "mission creep," the commitments that would drag American soldiers deeper and deeper into the quagmire." *Los Angeles Times*⁴³

"Unexpectedly influencing this mix is the Pentagon's resistance to what it sees as 'mission creep' – the incremental, sometimes invisible process by which a little involvement becomes a major national commitment."⁴⁴

"Mounting congressional concerns about "mission creep" - that U.S. soldiers are being drawn into more dangerous, open-ended duties - did little to imperil President Clinton's nominee to succeed Army Gen. John Shalikashvili." *Seattle Times*⁴⁵

Adding functions without reviewing force capabilities

"It is commonly argued that the UN operations in the area were marked by what some refer to as mission creep, that functions were added to the force successively without parallel enhancements of their size or capacity. This led to promises that were not kept." Norwegian Institute of International Affairs⁴⁶

"Fear of "mission creep" — being asked to undertake new tasks without being given new tools — has made NATO forces in Bosnia so cautious that, far from overreaching themselves, they risk doing too little." *Baltimore Sun*⁴⁷

42. Admiral Leighton Smith, US Navy, Commander, Implementation Force, and Commander, Allied Forces, South, Lecture at the Italian Armed Forces High Military Studies Center, Rome, 19 April 1996.

43. "Dayton's Fading Promises: Threat of U.S. and NATO 'mission creep' in Bosnia looms longer," *Los Angeles Times* (Washington Edition), 29 September 1997, page 10.

44. Pat M. Holt, "In Bosnia, Cautious or Simply Timid?" *Christian Science Monitor*, 1 August 1996, p. 18.

45. "Nominee uncertain of Bosnia exit, talks of hunting war criminals," *Seattle Times*, 10 Sept 97.

46. Espen Barth Eide and Per Erik Solli, "From Blue to Green - The Transition from UNPROFOR to IFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina," 20 December 1995 (<http://www.nupi.no/UN/trans.htm>)

“Our units overseas must have the resources to do the job, and especially they must have this capability when conditions change. Short term missions often become semi-permanent. We've got to re-look at our force structure. Additional missions are often added. We call that mission creep. Again, we've got to look at the force structure. A major new element is introduced like a terrorist threat. Again, we've got to look at how we've structured our forces for this. ... a joint task force that was formed in 1992 to go over there and enforce the UN sanctions on the no-fly, and then expanded to the no-drive zone over southern Iraq. This mission expanded in 1994. But then when we had the bombing of ... we had the previously secure Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the first time with a viable terrorist threat. So you had a mission creep in terms of mission expansion, and then all of a sudden you had a new dimension which was a very, very viable, and a very, very credible terrorist threat.” General Wayne Downing, USA (Ret)⁴⁸

“Mission Creep” used in the Bosnia context

“We share, from the beginning have shared the concern. I wanted to tell you that we worked very, very closely with Sec Christopher, Sec. Holbrooke in Dayton as the peace agreement was being formulated to be sure that these concerns were taken into account. I think, as a consequence, there probably has never been a diplomatic document put together in this peace agreement that has had more input and more consideration from the military and primary in our mind was avoiding the mission creep.” William Perry, Secretary of Defense:⁴⁹

“The military did not like civilian interference “inside” their own affairs. They preferred to be given a limited and clearly defined mission from their civilian colleagues and then decide on their own how to carry it out. In recent years, the military had adopted a politically potent term for assignments they felt were too broad: “mission creep.” This was a powerful pejorative, conjuring up images of quagmire. But it was never clearly defined, only invoked, and always in a negative sense, used only to kill someone else’s proposal.” Ambassador Richard Holbrooke⁵⁰

47. “NATO forces criticized as holding back in Bosnia: Commanders reluctant to undertake new tasks,” *Baltimore Sun*, 27 January 1996, page 7

48. DoD News Briefing, Monday, September 16, 1996

49. Secretary Perry on the Lehrer News Hour, 1 December 1995 (<http://www.pbs.org>)

"The Pentagon resisted any obligation to respond to ... reports of attacks on international civilian personnel ... on the grounds that this would "lead to mission creep and increase force requirements. ... The Pentagon not only rejected any police functions for themselves, but also opposed giving the International Police Task Force (IPTF) a strong mandate and authority to arrest people. This, they said, would constitute the most dangerous form of "mission creep."⁵¹

"It is the strong US preference that the mission be defined in limited and measurable terms in order to ensure the soonest possible withdrawal and to avoid mission creep." US Department of Defense⁵²

"I'm having a little trouble understanding mission-creep when it relates to this from the standpoint of the IFOR tasks are the same as the IFOR tasks have always been. There's no 'creep' in the mission. The mission is exactly the same as it was laid-out by the Dayton Agreement. The tasks have not changed." Lt.Gen. Howell M. Estes, U.S. Air Force, J3, Joint Chiefs of Staff⁵³

"U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Jack Nix, a senior operations officer in the NATO-led force ... told [war crimes] tribunal officials he was against the mine removal effort [at a war crimes site] because it constitutes mission creep—a dangerous expansion of NATO's responsibilities in Bosnia to include police work."⁵⁴

"We are concerned about "mission creep," the commitments that would drag American soldiers deeper and deeper into the quagmire." *Los Angeles Times*⁵⁵

"The Clinton administration and Mr. Holbrooke deserve much credit for negotiating an end to hostilities. They should not press beyond

50. Richard Holbrooke, *To End a War*, New York, Random House, 1998, page 216.

51. Richard Holbrooke, *To End a War*, New York, Random House, 1998, pages 220–221.

52. US public affairs guidance as promulgated in SECDEF Washington DC/ /ATSD:PA/DPL//, Unclassified, 142347Z NOV 95

53. Lt. Gen. Howell M. Estes, US Air Force, J3, Joint Chiefs of Staff, DoD News Briefing, 27 December 1995

54. John Pomfret and Lee Hockstader, "In Bosnia, a War Crimes Impasse: NATO Differences With U.N. Tribunal Mean Few Are Arrested," *The Washington Post*, 9 Dec 1997, p A17.

this by using military force for nation-building, risking a repetition of Somalia. And they should abandon the dangerous argument of equating the future of Bosnia with the future of NATO—which strikes me as a reckless example of mission creep.” Henry Kissinger.⁵⁶

Richard Holbrooke “returned to Washington to warn [Secretary of State Warren] Christopher and his colleagues again that the civilian effort was already dangerously behind schedule. Christopher talked to [National Security Advisory Anthony] Lake and [Secretary of Defense William] Perry. But bureaucratic inertia and the resistance of the military prevented any serious effort to change the behavior of IFOR. Lake was especially wary of pressuring IFOR, arguing in public and private against anything that suggested that the military should engage in ‘nation building,’ a phrase that had been transformed since the sixties from a noble goal to a phrase meaning ‘mission creep.’”⁵⁷

“I don't consider it as mission creep at all. It is very well spelled out. If you go beyond that, it becomes mission creep. Or if you do those things which we've said from the beginning we will not do. For instance, when we were very clear that we will not mount military operations to apprehend indicted war criminals, but that we will only take them into custody if they fall into our hands incident to military operations. It's those things that we need to avoid, and we need to avoid those things that are not spelled out in the agreement as authorities that we have to carry out. Otherwise it isn't mission creep because it's prescribed and addressed in the document.” Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General John Shalikashvili, U.S. Army.⁵⁸

55. “Dayton’s Fading Promises: Threat of U.S. and NATO ‘mission creep’ in Bosnia looms longer,” *Los Angeles Times* (Washington Edition), 29 September 1997, page 10.

56. Henry Kissinger, “An Open-Ended Mission?” *Washington Post*, letter to the editor, 4 Oct 97, p. A20.

57. Richard Holbrooke, *To End a War*, New York, Random House, 1998, page 329.

58. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General John Shalikashvili, U.S. Army, Press Conference at the U.S. Mission to NATO, 23 April 1996. This was in response to a reporter’s question as to whether the General was “worried” about the possibility that supporting civilian agencies in Bosnia could create mission creep. The document referred to is the Dayton Peace Accords.

"The factions have often used non-compliance by the other side as a reason to refuse to comply with another issue ... By doing so, all the parties have the ability to link IFOR military issues to those in the civilian sphere, creating a greater danger of some form of IFOR mission creep." UK Ministry of Defence⁵⁹

"We made a conscious, rational, and logical decision when IFOR was established – we, in NATO – that IFOR would not have as a central mission searching for war criminals through the hills over the next year. The reason we made that decision is because we wanted to learn by some of the mistakes of recent history when American and other forces were deployed overseas in Somalia and in other places. It's referred to as "mission creep," and the Congress wouldn't have supported it. The fact is that our soldiers have a tough job. They have created a 600-mile zone of separation. They are policing that successfully. Our soldiers have brought peace to Bosnia. They have brought now, we hope, a year of peace during which the parties can sort out of their problems. That mission is a very important mission. It's a daunting mission and very difficult to carry out. We've asked our soldiers to do that, and that's their central mission." US Department of State⁶⁰

"any commitment of US troops must come with an unambiguous declaration of their mission. If a mission is defined clearly enough, the thinking goes, military leaders will know when to declare victory and come home. The precept is designed to counter the mission creep US forces experienced in Somalia. In practice, however, there are few tasks more difficult than clearly defining a mission in response to a real-world situation. Bosnia is no exception." *National Journal*⁶¹

"Defense Secretary William Perry, dramatically expanded the role of US troops in Bosnia this weekend, but whether the Clinton administration is engaging in dangerous "mission creep" or strategic "mission evolution" may only become clear in the heat of this summer's presidential campaign. ... Perry's offer will result in intense pressure to involve US troops in nonmilitary tasks — from protecting civilians to providing security for coming elections."⁶²

59. MOD UK, "Former Yugoslavia: Weekly Intelligence Assessment as at 181000Z JAN 96," 181015Z JAN 96

60. Office of the Spokesman, US Department of State, Daily Briefing, Monday, February 12, 1996, Briefer: Nicholas Burns

61. James Kitfield, *National Journal*, "The Pentagon's Plan To Keep US Troops Out Of Harm's Way," 2-3 December 1995 (<http://www.politicsusa.com/PoliticsUSA/news/1202nj02.html.cgi>)

“NATO-led soldiers will go beyond their immediate military mission and try to help civilian organizations bring Bosnia back to normality, alliance officials said yesterday. ... The top officials said the new orders from the North Atlantic Council do not constitute “mission creep” — an expansion of duties for the 60,000 NATO-led forces in Bosnia.”⁶³

“[D]espite the concern over excessive IFOR involvement (“mission creep”) and the effort to limit the military role to the letter of the agreement, the civilian implementation of the peace mandate could not be accomplished without active participation by the military in civilian support organizations.”⁶⁴

“‘Creep’ has several meanings. In Bosnia, all apply. It is a word guaranteed to strike terror into the hearts of U.S. policy-makers. Among the main points in emphasis in meetings with senior White House officials was that the “mission creep” that doomed our Somali intervention to disaster would not be allowed to repeat itself in the Balkans. And at the Pentagon it was explained how the Dayton agreement was specifically structured to prevent such a recurrence. ... Mission creep is an indicator that a shortfall exists elsewhere. In Bosnia it’s the economic subset that is deficient. Keeping the U.S. military there cannot compensate for the reported \$5.1 billion ... necessary to jump-start reconstruction. That, not a perpetual foreign occupation, is the real way to stop the ethnic warfare there.”⁶⁵

“Mission creep happens when the focus of peacekeeping troops strays with extra tasks making them more vulnerable to a calamity which outweighs the value of their mission. U.S. commanders overseeing the NATO mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina know how hard it is to resist mission creep, having failed to do so.”⁶⁶

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62. David Rohde, “US May Be Mired In Bosnia by Aiding War Crime Probes,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 17 January 1996, page 6.
 63. “NATO troops told to help move Bosnia to normality,” *Baltimore Sun*, 9 March 1997, page 8.
 64. Col. John J. Tuozzolo, USAR, “The Challenge of Civil-Military Operations,” *Joint Forces Quarterly*, Summer 1997, page 55.
 65. Harry Summers, “Mission Creeps,” *Washington Times*, 11 April 1996, page 15.
 66. Ernest Blazar, “Inside the Ring: Fighting for Peace,” *Washington Times*, 11 December 1997, page 7.

"The Times has never supported an open-ended American military commitment in Bosnia. We are concerned about "mission creep," the commitments that would drag American soldiers deeper and deeper into the quagmire." *Los Angeles Times*⁶⁷

"We are embarked on an open-ended commitment that will lead us from mission creep to mission leap," said Texas Republican Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, who led the opposition to the troops' original deployment to Bosnia two years ago. Missouri Republican Sen. John Ashcroft of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee said Clinton's announcement "sends a disturbing signal that mission creep is setting in" for the force."⁶⁸

"Mounting congressional concerns about "mission creep" - that U.S. soldiers are being drawn into more dangerous, open-ended duties - did little to imperil President Clinton's nominee to succeed Army Gen. John Shalikashvili."⁶⁹

"Mission Creep' was a popular term about three or four months ago, people were worried about that. I think everybody has recognised now that there is a legitimate series of tasks that can fall to IFOR as the situation develops." LTG Sir Michael Walker, UK Army, Commander, Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (COMARRC), Sarajevo⁷⁰

Military support to civilian agencies "is not mission creep — it's mission." MG William Nash, U.S. Army, commander of MND(N) in 1996⁷¹

"What were the issues that did allow ... operations such as overseeing the transfer of ... radio and police stations [in Serb areas in September 1997]? I would hate to comment. It really is getting into the daily operations of what

67. "Dayton's Fading Promises: Threat of U.S. and NATO 'mission creep' in Bosnia looms larger," *Los Angeles Times* (Washington Edition), 29 September 1997, page 10.

68. Senators Hutchison and Ashcroft on the extension of the SFOR mission, December 1997, as reported in: Steve Holland, "Clinton Extends Troop Presence in Bosnia," Reuters News Service, 18 December 1997 [http://204.71.177.72/headlines/971218/politics/stories/bosnia_6.html]

69. "Nominee uncertain of Bosnia exit, talks of hunting war criminals," *Seattle Times*, 10 Sept 97.

70. LTG Walker quoted in "Interview," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 17 July 1996, p 32.

some of these troops are doing. They *are* being extended into some other areas which they weren't initially intended for. I don't think these forces are turning their backs on some of this, but it's mission creep, which is dangerous and should be avoided. It's mission creep, really." Frederick C. Smith, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, International Security Affairs⁷²

"The new assertiveness carries with it plenty of risk ... Still, the tougher approach has pleased generals on the ground and NATO diplomats in Brussels. Perhaps no one has been more relieved that the thousands of civilian officials in charge of making the Dayton Agreement stick. ... 'If this is the military's dreaded 'mission creep', then we would have all been better off if the creep had started a long time ago,' says Robert Frowik ... Bosnia head of the OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe]."⁷³

U.S. military concepts on avoiding mission creep

"Once forces are committed to a mission, identify the conditions that will provoke a re-assessment of objectives but avoid incremental changes as part of the assessment process — prevent "mission creep." As a rule of thumb, we will not change the mission of an engaged force unless, after consultation with and direction from the highest-level decision makers, we do so in a well-considered and significant way. Ideally, when committing a force, we identify in advance conditions that will cause us to reevaluate our objectives. If we envision transitioning to another mission, e.g., peacekeeping to peace enforcement, we must make a fresh assessment to ensure the force commander is given resources appropriately sized and organized to accomplish his mission as it is changed to reflect new objectives."⁷⁴

71. From comments at the 1997 CJCS peacekeeping seminar, Carlisle Barracks, PA, as quoted in Brad Hayes and Jeffrey Sands, "Non-Traditional Responses to End Wars: Considerations for Policymakers," *Millennium*, vol. 26, no. 3, 1997, page 840.

72. "An interview with Frederick C. Smith," *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*, vol. 22, no. 1, Winter/Spring 1988, p. 43 [Interview conducted 9 October 1997].

73. Neil King, Jr, "On the Ground: For NATO Troops in Bosnia, New Role Means a Long Run: Two Years after Dayton, Military Agenda Starts Targeting Civilian Issues," *Wall Street Journal* (Europe), 25 November 1997, p. 1.

"Before committing forces, clearly define political and military objectives that will lead to the desired military and political end state; Once forces are committed to a mission, do not change it incrementally "avoid mission creep;" Define missions and rules of engagement that allow commanders to size the force properly and pursue objectives actively; and Pursue missions which only military forces can accomplish and, once they are accomplished, disengage." U.S. European Command⁷⁵

"The mission must be periodically reviewed to avoid both directed and self-imposed mission creep. ... A thorough mission analysis will help in deterring mission creep and any adverse impact on the actual mission." *Joint Task Force Commander's Handbook for Peace Operations*⁷⁶

Mission Creep and Operation Uphold Democracy, Haiti

"The notion of mission creep. ... Our mission has not changed from the beginning. What has happened is that we have changed our capabilities and adjusted our procedures slightly, consistent with the changed circumstances on the ground, and I don't think you would want us to do any different." General John M. Shalikashvili, U.S. Army, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff⁷⁷

"Citing the Monroe Doctrine to the German and the French, Wilson entered Haiti in 1915 and, in an early example of what is now called "mission creep", American troops remained there until 1934." *The Nation*, Bangkok⁷⁸

"Since troops are policing the streets as they had vowed not to do, some Pentagon officials concede privately that "mission creep" - a term of deep opprobrium since Somalia - has occurred. But General John Shalikashvili, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, does not think so. "Our mission has not changed from the beginning," he

74. HQ EUCOM, *Strategy of Engagement and Preparedness*, Nov 96, Chap. V. USEUCOM STRATEGIC CONCEPTS

75. HQ U.S. European Command, 1 May 1997, "Theater Campaign Plan - Policy," material cited is unclassified.

76. *Joint Task Force Commander's Handbook for Peace Operations*, Feb 1995

77. DoD News Briefing by General John M. Shalikashvili, Chairman, JCS, Tuesday, October 4, 1994.

78. *The Nation*, Bangkok, 16 September 1994.

insists. "We have just changed our capabilities and adjusted our procedures slightly, consistent with the changed circumstances on the ground." Retorts Senate Republican leader Bob Dole: "This is not just mission creep; it's mission leap."⁷⁹

Analytical views of mission creep

"Mission creep refers to the undesirable, gradual, almost imperceptible, changing or escalation of the mission; for example, escalating from securing (humanitarian assistance) HA convoys to disarming the populace. It may be caused by political actions, incidents by any of the parties, or any action which could result in changes of perceptions and attitudes. Education should be the primary method to avoid mission creep. This should include a clear understanding of the mandate, political situation, ROE, and the objectives of the force. This requires a clear understanding of the commander's intent, a mission statement which defines measurable and attainable objectives, and equitable application of resources. Mission creep is a concern at all levels. Every member of the force must always consider the possible political implications of his actions. It will require the entire force to be aware of shifts in attitude or changes in perceptions of the parties involved, which may be a result of or the cause of mission creep. These changes may indicate the need to change operational procedures, security, and force protection measures." U.S. Army-Air Force Center for Low Intensity Conflict⁸⁰

"Two terms frequently heard in national security policy circles—mission creep and exit strategy—underscore the discomfort of the military with peacekeeping missions, humanitarian operations, and armed interventions short of war. The analysis that follows will necessarily conclude that the two concepts, rather than being complementary, are inversely related. The more narrowly defined the military mission in a complex emergency and the more rigorously mission creep is avoided, the more difficult it becomes to design an exit strategy that carries out the political objectives of American foreign policy."⁸¹

79. Bruce Nelan, "Cops for Democracy: The U.S. military tightens its hold to make the country safe for Aristide's return," *Time Magazine*, 17 October 1994

80. Horace Hunter, *TTP for Peace and Humanitarian Assistance Operations in the Former Republic of Yugoslavia*, Army-Air Force Center for Low Intensity Conflict, 15 March 1994

"Mission development, which should be encouraged, must not be confused with 'mission creep' which should not. 'Mission creep' is a term used to describe taking on new tasks beyond the original intent without the necessary prior rigorous analysis, or allocating them without the necessary resources. 'Mission creep' normally results from incoherent political direction. Changes of mission can be erroneously made when the full breadth of implied tasks, particularly those concerned with deep operations, is not properly appreciated in the estimate process."⁸²

"Largely reflecting the Somalia debacle, [three] buzzwords are highly charged but conceptually vacuous, vitiating sensible policy debate about Haiti and elsewhere. Mission Creep: Modifying mandates is prohibited. However, the visceral rejection of task expansion runs counter to common sense and the flexibility required in all military and civilian operations. The prohibition prevents creative and sensible adaptations in the field without reverting to the Security Council or other appropriate political authority. Normally, we would condemn such dysfunctional micro management and those who failed to adapt to changing circumstances. Why not here?"⁸³

"Mission change and adaptation may occur very rapidly on a micro-level during the performance of a specific mission. ... mission creep: the likelihood that the mission expands beyond expectations."⁸⁴

"Operations other than war do not, like more traditional military missions, move either linearly or in a predictable fashion from one set of tasks and objectives to another. In OOTW, military activities may careen from peacekeeping to coercive measures and back to cooper-

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81. Andrew S. Natsios, "Commander's Guidance: A Challenge of Complex Humanitarian Emergencies," *Parameters*, Summer 1996, pp. 50-66.
 82. "Chapter 3: A Conceptual Approach to Peace Operations," *Peace Support Operations* (a British Army publication), Joint Warfare Publication 3-01, 2nd Study Draft (<http://www-jha.sps.cam.ac.uk/a/a423c.htm>)
 83. The other discussed "buzzwords" are "exit strategy" and "nation building." Thomas G. Weiss, "Hostage to Buzzwords," in Robert Maguire, et al, *Haiti Held Hostage: International Responses to the Quest for Nationhood, 1986 to 1996*, Occasional Paper #23, Thomas J. Watson Jr. Institute for International Studies and the United Nations University, 1996, p. 77.
 84. Paul F. Diehl, Daniel Druckman, and James Wall, "International Peacekeeping and Conflict Resolution: A Taxonomic Analysis with Implications," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol 42, no 1, Feb. 98, pp. 38-40.

ative actions. Such rapid shifts can be caused by two very different, but often interactive, phenomena: mission creep and mission swing. In mission creep, new or shifting political guidance requires military operations different from what the intervening force initially planned. ... In mission swing, the mission changes in response to a quick deterioration or improvement of the operational environment that occurs irrespective of the intervening force's presence or efforts. ...” Jennifer Taw, RAND Analyst⁸⁵

“There are two kinds of mission creep: horizontal and vertical. Horizontal mission creep is the unintended engagement of forces in non-military activities such as police work, humanitarian relief and refugee protection. ... vertical creep — unintended escalation in the scale of force used.”⁸⁶

“Mission creep occurs when the mandate is changed in either statement or reality.”⁸⁷

Other comments on mission creep

“If it is true that the less clear the mission the greater the potential for mission creep, then some change can always be expected in operations such as Restore Hope.”⁸⁸

“as U.S. troops were dispatched to Rwanda, there was a mad scramble to disavow any connection with peacekeeping in any form. “There is a concern in several agencies about ‘mission creep,’” a senior Clinton administration official told the *Washington Post* on July 27, “and we want to make sure ... that the mission will not be to keep the peace or help rebuild the nation, it will be humanitarian only.” Two days later, making those comments official, President Clinton said “the sole pur-

85. Jennifer Morrison Taw and John E. Peters, *Operations Other Than War: Implications for the U.S. Army*, Santa Monica, California, Arroyo Center, RAND Corporation, MR-566-A, 1995, p 22.

86. Michael Pugh, “From Mission Cringe to Mission Creep? Some Concluding Remarks,” in Michael Pugh, editor, *The UN, Peace and Force*, London, Frank Cass, 1997, p 192.

87. Bruce B.G. Clarke, “The Political Dimension of Political Action: What Works?” *Military Review*, September-October 1997, p 96.

88. MG S.L. Arnold, USA, and MAJ David T. Stahl, USA, “A Power Projection Army in Operations Other Than War,” *Parameters*, Vol. XXIII, No. 4, Nov 1993, p. 13.

pose [for deploying U.S. troops to Rwanda] is humanitarian relief, not for peacekeeping."⁸⁹

"The [Australian] Battalion Group's mission [in Somalia] was to provide a secure environment for the distribution of humanitarian relief aid in [Humanitarian Relief Sector] HRS Baidoa. There is no doubt that during Operation Solace a degree of what the Americans term mission creep occurred particularly when the Battalion Group became actively involved in nation rebuilding in its HRS. ... It is evident from the above list of CMOT's tasks that "mission creep"—in some cases "mission stretch"—had occurred. In some instances this was by default, in others deliberate decisions were made to widen the scope of operations. The decision to take on tasks outside the original mission reflected the pace at which developments were happening on the ground and UNITAF's and the UN's inability to provide timely advice and policy direction."⁹⁰

"Initially the mission of US service personnel appeared clear: ... However, the mission was subject to constant change, a situation commonly referred to as "mission creep." ('Mission creep' occurs when a military unit takes on a broader mission than initially planned.) Once the implementation of the mission began in earnest, the apparent clarity faded. ... The cause of severe 'mission creep' in Somalia to this day still troubles the National Command Authority (NCA) and its military commanders and planners."⁹¹

"So intent were the Americans on preventing mission creep [in Rwanda] that ultra-caution led to mission shrink."⁹²

"US policy impositions, however, with a fixation on the need to minimize casualties and mission creep, have inhibited the application of that doctrine and the conduct of operations. A policy of no casualties and no mission creep can only serve to hinder the conduct of military

89. Harry G. Summers, "How Clinton Learned From Somalia Episode," *Los Angeles Times*, 15 August 1994

90. LTC D.J. Hurley, RAR, "Operation Solace," *Australian Defense Force Journal*, no. 104, Jan/Feb 94, pp. 29-34.

91. Karen V. Fair, "The Rules of Engagement in Somalia — A Judge Advocate's Primer," *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, vol. 8, no. 1, Spring 1997, pp. 107, 108, 124.

92. R M Connaughton, *Military Support and Protection for Humanitarian Assistance: Rwanda, April-December 1994*, Strategic & Combat Studies Institute Occasional Paper 18, Staff College, Camberly, UK, 1996, p. 61.

operations and impede the achievement of the mission. In the longer term, a policy of no risk taking and no initiative can only detract from the military's functional efficacy."⁹³

"I want to be careful that we not throw the term mission creep around because it has some kind of a negative connotation, as opposed to expansion of a mission, depending on the threat and the situation on the ground." General Shalikashvili, USA, CJCS⁹⁴

"Unfortunately, the narrower the initial mission, the sooner and the faster it will creep."⁹⁵

93. International Security Information Service (<http://www.fhit.org/isis/paper18/lessons.html>)

94. DoD Press Briefing, 16 September 1996

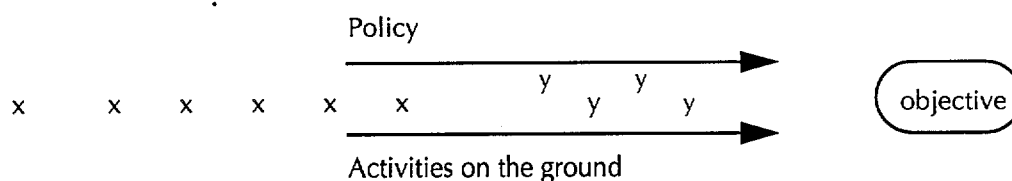
95. Anna Husarska, "A Larger Mission in Bosnia," *Washington Post*, 13 Feb 96, p A19.

Appendix B: A Graphic Portrayal of Task accretion, Mission Shift, Mission Transition, and Mission Leap

To aid understanding of the four-category distinction of the concepts captured by “mission creep,” figures 1–4 present a graphic display of the concepts of task accretion, mission shift, mission transition and mission leap.

Task accretion is the general accretion of additional tasks viewed as necessary to achieve the mission’s initial objective. Task accretion occurs on the ground due not to changes in the desired outcome but due to changing perceptions of what is required to achieve the mission’s objectives.

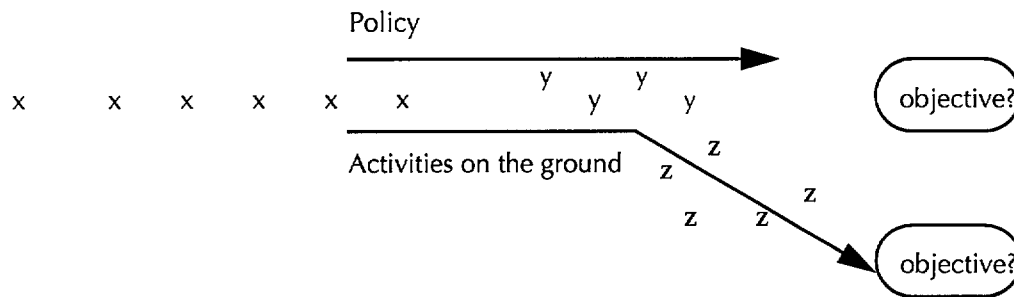
Figure 1. Task accretion^a



a. Task accretion is the situation where additional tasks are identified as required to achieve the desired objective. In this graphic, “x”s represent originally identified tasks under the assigned mission while “y”s indicate additional tasks assumed en route the desired objective.

Mission shift occurs when forces adopt tasks not included in the initial mission which expand the mission. Key to this is the disconnect between the on-scene decision to involve the force in additional tasks and political decision-making about the mission’s objectives.

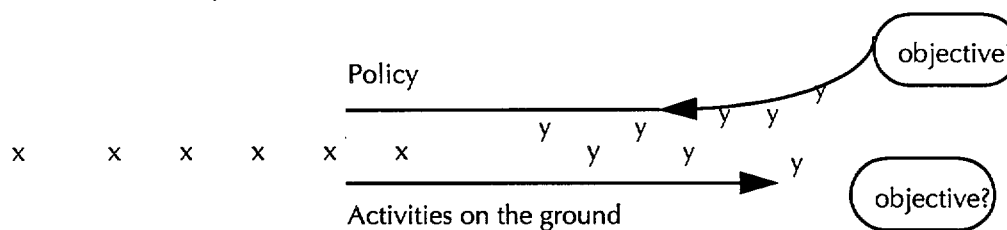
Figure 2. Mission shift^a



a. Mission shift is the situation where the activities on the ground begin to move away from tasks necessary to reach the identified objective. In mission shift, a possibility exists for a disconnect between policy and the activities on the ground. In this graphic, "x"s represent originally identified tasks under the assigned mission, "y"s indicate additional tasks assumed en route the desired objective, and "z"s represented tasks or activities conducted on the ground that lead the operation away (consciously or unconsciously) from the assigned mission objective.

Mission transition results from a changing perception as to the objectives of an operation. In reevaluating an operation's mission, this occurs in higher headquarters and political arenas. Mission transition occurs in an environment of gradual and, perhaps, unclear, unrecognized, or confused modification of objectives and tasks. These changes, therefore, may not get stated explicitly nor lead to a reevaluation of the forces involved and the tasks assigned to these forces.

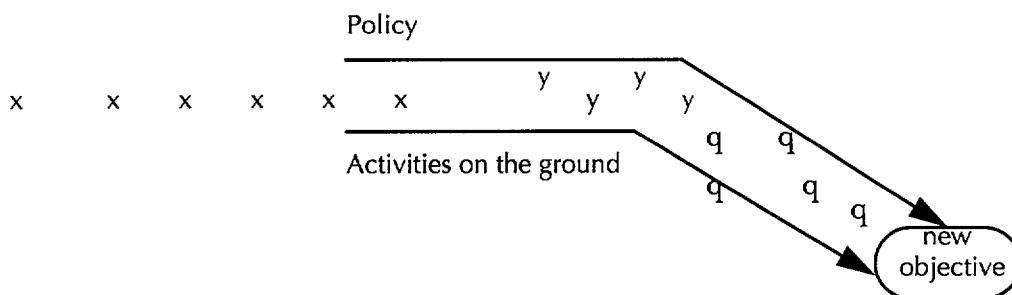
Figure 3. Mission transition^a



a. Mission transition is the situation where policy changes are occurring which imply or require a change in objective but where this transition to a new policy is not clearly communicated to the forces on the ground. In this situation, there is a potential for a disconnect between policy and the operational activities. In this graphic, "x"s represent originally identified tasks under the assigned mission and "y"s indicate additional tasks that may or may not be contributing to the transition to a new objective.

Mission leap results from a decision, whether driven by political reasons or the situation on the ground, to radically change the mission and, therefore, the military's tasks. An important point is that this represents an explicit choice, whether or not the political or military leadership recognizes the full implications of this decision.

Figure 4. Mission leap^a



a. Mission leap is the situation where an explicit choice is made to change policy and the activities on the ground to reflect a new objective. With communication of an explicit change in policy and orders, there is less chance for a disconnect between policy and operations. In this graphic, "x"s represent originally identified tasks under the assigned mission, "y"s indicate additional tasks assumed en route the desired objective, and "q"s represent additional tasks required for the new objective.

Related CNA studies

The following Center for Naval Analyses studies might also be of interest:

Jonathan Dworken, *Improving Marine Coordination with Relief Organizations in Humanitarian Assistance Operations*, April 1996 (Research Memorandum (RM) 95-161.10)

_____, *Rules of Engagement (ROE) for Humanitarian Intervention and Low-Intensity Conflict: Lessons from Restore Hope*, Oct 1993 (RM 93-120)

Jonathan Dworken, Jonathan Moore, and Adam Siegel, *Haiti Demobilization and Reintegration Program: An Evaluation*, Institute for Public Research (IPR), March 1997 (IPR 104)

Edsel D. McGrady and Karen D. Smith, *Haiti and the Future of Warfare*, June 1998 (RM 96-126)

Katherine A.W. McGrady, *The Joint Task Force in Operation Restore Hope*, March 1994 (RM 93-114)

Jeffrey I. Sands, *Blue Hulls: Multinational Naval Cooperation and the United Nations*, July 1993 (RM 93-40)

Adam B. Siegel, *A Chronology of USMC Humanitarian Assistance and Peace Operations*, Sept. 1994 (Information Memorandum 334)

_____, *The Intervention of Haiti*, August 1996 (Professional Paper 539)

_____, *Requirements for Humanitarian Assistance and Peace Operations: Insights from Seven Case Studies*, March 1995 (RM 94-74)

_____, *Who Will Do What With What: Defining U.S. Navy and Marine Corps Roles, Functions, and Missions*, May 1993 (Occasional Paper 116)

George Stewart, Scott M. Fabbri, and Adam B. Siegel, *JTF Operations Since 1983*, July 1994 (RM 94-42)

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