

Editor's note

The following article takes up the essential part of the document written by Major General (Ret) Jean-François Durand (especially the 2nd and 3rd parts) dealing with the “After Action Review of the 2nd level CPs during the 1996 - 2006 period” an extract of which (dealing with intelligence) has already been published in the N°18 issue of Héraclès.

The “New Divisional French CP”

A Situation Ten Years Later¹

After numerous evolutions and going through numerous inter-European and world conflicts, **the French division of today continues to fall under the tradition of de Guibert²** by constituting the first combination level where all the operational functions necessary for modern engagements can be found.

In France, since 1996 within the framework of the “re-foundation” of the French Army, a “revolution” has been accomplished. This became necessary due to the evolution of our national strategy and the professionalization of our services. After the staffs of the light divisions of the “Lagarde” type, which in fact were heavy brigades, came the Force HQs (EMF) with the requirement of finding again **an operational level of excellence for this type of command, also called level 2**, which seems to be in favor for the engagement of the forces in the actions assigned today to the military.

The aim of the present article is not to recall the history and why this evolution took place. Here the matter is just to **present the observations made pertaining to two aspects of the present level 2 command**, which is the type of the NATO division: **the operation of a “divisional” CP and the exercise of command at this level**; our reflections are based upon roughly ten years of experience of exercises and research observed by after action analysis teams from the CDES³, which is now the CDEF. And thus we would contribute to the thinking process that will enable the publication in the near future of a doctrine document dealing with command and control.

BY MAJOR GENERAL (RET) JEAN-FRANÇOIS DURAND

Freedom of speech

A few considerations about the level 2 CPs

Imperatives to be fulfilled

The setting up of a **large unit CP**, whatever its level may be⁴, must **take into account a certain number of imperatives**:

- what are the operational functions to be performed?
- what is its rank in the hierarchy (national and multinational) of this command?
- what is the allocated resource (officers, non-commissioned officers, qualifications...)?
- what command and control information system will it be given (with their limits and foreseeable evolutions)?
- which infrastructure should be used (shelters⁵, tents, buildings...)?
- which mobility should be achieved (stability, homothetic step up or sliding)?
- what are the necessary support elements (HQ unit, security)?

The commander's personality

In addition to this the involved **commander's personality must be taken into account**: even if a certain coherence must be looked for in terms of organization, we assume that a CP must **allow a staff to work for the benefit of a commander endowed with an operational responsibility**.

On this point, one must acknowledge that the "rotation" system, involving a switch of the "commander" and of the playing staff during each Guibert exercise, has not eased things. This could be notably observed in the evolution of the divisional CP architecture that were originally conceived along a "scattered" option allowed by the new shelters and that was of interest in a "high intensity" context; then, from 2004 onwards, it became more and more "consolidated" by exploiting what had been observed in "low intensity" overseas operations amongst our allies.

The level 2 CP

The "**Force HQ concept**", enriched by the work carried out by each staff and coordinated by the Land Force Command monitoring committee, has however allowed to find a solution for



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the essential part of these issues. A level 2 CP is an organization encompassing an **“operations center”** (OPS Center) of roughly 280 persons, including more than 180 officers (most of them senior ones) that are using a **network** of the same number of **C3I screens spread in roughly fifty shelters** organized in “functional benches” for the various “divisions” and complemented by **adapted inflatable tents**, allowing the permanent command and control of the force. To complete the CP, must be added its **headquarters formation** (reinforced HQ Bn), a small **signals battalion** and some **protection elements** in coherence with the threats faced in the deployment area; this constitutes a “mobile village” gathering 700 to 900 persons.

Therefore, in terms of personnel, the OPS center is manned with officers and non-commissioned officers who are coming from the **“leader” Force HQ** reinforced by those coming from another Force HQ, and operational reinforcements that have been if possible earmarked and trained to work at this level. One must be careful to organize the staffing and the work of shifts that can be equal (“high intensity” combat - 24/24) or unequal (crisis engagement).

It is deployed on a **location close to an infrastructure** allowing accommodation with **several functional areas**: OPS center on shelters per say, CP of the possible combat support unit operating centers, field of antennas, life support area. It is supported by a Headquarters battalion of roughly 200 persons, responsible for usual general support and immediate security and it must be able to call upon a protection unit if its setting up area is not entirely secure.

In practical terms, **in order to set up such a CP, it is necessary to regroup the assets coming from two Force HQs (staff and HQ Bn) and to have them significantly reinforced**, especially for the setting up of the *shelters* and the fulfillment of security measures (an issue overlooked during exercises).

The mobility of the level 2 CP

A significant work has been achieved in terms of “CP step up”, although no decision has been taken to know whether this proved really pertinent in operational terms. Indeed it was essential for the teams operating the CIS assets to be able to transfer all the operational data contained in the computer network of the active CP without encountering any loss in data and any disruption in command and control. After a first

successful technical experience in 1999, studies have dealt with the **“step up” capabilities between two identical CPs** (Guibert 2000, 2001, 2002, 2004), then, with the arrival of the “extended LAN technology”, they have dealt with a **“step up” by sliding** and even with the **aggregate construction of a modular CP** (Guibert 2004 et 2005). Technically and tactically these experiences were globally **successful** and one can now say that the specialists in this domain really master this domain at divisional level. What will be said as far as doctrine is concerned and about the frequency and the necessity pertaining to the movements of this type of CPs should not be faced with technical obstacles.

The additions to the main CP

Another point pertains to the **“adjunct” CPs** that are necessary to this type of large unit, which is sometimes responsible for a very wide area of action with or without a responsibility over the “rear area”. One must acknowledge **that this aspect has not been really studied extensively** as the parts of the Land Forces Command generic theme that have been selected to reach the desired operational objectives during the various Guibert exercises have not allowed real studies about these issues.

However, technically speaking, the **“tactical” CPs** (2004) or **“dedicated CP”** (2006) have been set up and we are confident about their operational capabilities. In fact, it is possible today to give the essential of the operational information in real time to the commander or to his deputy up to thirty kilometers away from the main CP, and tomorrow much farther.

Last, one must be aware that a CP is not only a group of staff officers that are reasoning and working with more or less sophisticated CIS assets. It is also a living structure that can be moved as needed in a somewhat hostile environment. This is why a **“life support - protection - general support” structure is necessary** with some specialized personnel in headquarters support and some others ready to deal with the basic security of the various sensitive points that build up this CP.

In conclusion, **the architecture of a “consolidated” CP** as it has appeared since exercise Guibert 2004 **seems to be the most pertinent one** to allow the best possible synergy in terms of staff work in the various possible contexts for the engagement of a division today.

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A level 2 CP must be able to benefit from a certain mobility, notably for security reasons if it is set up in a “high intensity” context, and the necessary delays for a “step up” must not be prohibitive or incoherent with the working horizon of a CP of that level. Conversely, due to the necessary limitation in terms of costly assets (shelters, CIS, screens, etc.) it seems advisable **to favor the “CPs step up” by sliding under extended LAN.**

At the level of the **“tactical” or “dedicated” CP**, even though the requirement is not absolutely demanding for the sake of the sole conduct of operations, since modern CIS allow to command from practically any location, it can be necessary for “political” reasons: the general who commands the division or the operational area must **be able to show his presence in contact of an engaged troop** in a risky or difficult action or in front of local populations or authorities. One must then be able to apportion tasks between the main CP and this light CP.

The experience technically carried out by the Force HQ N°4 during exercise *Joint Sword 2006* seems to be the example to follow, although it is true that the exercise conditions did not allow its validation.

The exercise of level 2 command and control

The commander

In all cases, the division commander who plays the exercise is the **Force HQ commander appointed by the Land Forces Command to become the “nucleus” of the staff that has to be trained.** During the exercise, he will be subordinated to the Land Forces Command (in fact the 1st deputy general) responsible for the operational evaluation on behalf of the French Army Chief of Staff or of a NATO army corps commander (Cf. *Joint Sword 2006*).

His overall responsibility is the **command and control of the allocated troops, generally multinational**, in accordance with several subordinations: OPCOM, OPCON TACOM, TACON. For the Anglo-Saxons we are speaking of **“Command and Control”** which is difficult to translate in French but that really encompasses maneuver planning and conduct with its combat and combat service supports, as well as the administration of an area of action that can have several aspects by itself.

He normally has one year to get prepared to this milestone, essentially in liaison **with the appointed Force HQ in reinforcement** but the pace of real operations notoriously jeopardizes this process and compels to **a full “interoperability”** as important positions such as the **“ACOS”** can sometimes be assigned to officers belonging to this other Force HQ (cf. *Joint Sword 2006*).

The command group

We are here speaking of the **team who is by the side of the commander** (CG standing for commanding general) **and who multiplies his action through his staff**. It is generally composed of the deputy commanding general (DCG), the chief of staff COS, who himself also has a deputy called now the **“DOS - Director of staff”** and three **“ACOS”** (**“Assistant chief of staff”**) who are in charge of supervising and coordinating the tactical and logistical aspects of the staff work. These officers, who are one of a kind each, do not have any **“alter ego”** and are also the **warrants of the uniqueness and permanence of the operational action**.

The general efficiency of the staff was a result of the cohesion of this group and this was demonstrated by the experience of exercises.

The DCG is often employed to ensure the continuity of command and control during the night. But this role is somehow simplistic as he must above all be the first advisor to the CG, and **be ready to take over in case of unavailability** (death or wound) **but also in case of a punctual action of an operational nature** (decentralized action, river crossing ...) **or of a “politico-military” nature** (liaison or negotiation) with a civilian authority or the population. It must be recognized that during exercises these things are not easy to play, especially because most of the Force HQ DCGs do not have a real experience at this level as they were undergoing “training” during the considered time.

The Chief of Staff (COS) was responsible for the technical build up in the garrison of the playing staff, especially for the preparatory exercise that has now become unavoidable and he has all the leverages upon the **“Manning⁶”** as well as upon the exercise. He has significant signature delegations for the orders as well as for the reports. After having been sometimes limited into a simple regulator of the staff work, he seems to have found his place during exercise *Joint Sword 2006* as the **commanding officer of the Main CP in charge of “Control”** whilst the CG keeps his hands over **“Command”**. It may be added that the COS can sometimes be the “spokesman” of the large unit commander as far as communication with the media is concerned.

The deputy Chief of staff, formerly the **“D/COS”** who has now become the **“DOS - Director of staff”**, is responsible for **assisting the COS in the organization and regulation of the CP work** in order to reach the best technical efficiency and the issuance of order and reports in due time. This work, which is somewhat unrewarding, is essential at this level due to the multiplicity of the implemented operational functions and to their reciprocal interactions. He notably supervises the technical cell in charge of the formatting, the forwarding, the reception and the filing of messages. He is also in charge of the practical organization of the work (**“daily cycle, compendium...”**) as well as of internal information, thanks to loud speakers or a telephone network for the staff. It should be noted that this function is somewhat in sync with what the Force HQs have usually been doing in their garrison organization since the adjustments carried out in 2003.

The three assistants COS are the executive assistants of the Chief of Staff. **Each of them heads, and in synergy, one part of the “staff divisions”**: the **“ACOS OPS”** heads the G5, TEC, G35, G3, TOC, G2 Fires/3D and 2D/AGESTER⁷, the **“ACOS C3I”** heads the G6 and the **“ACOS LOG”** heads the G4, G1, G7 and the G “Med”. The G9 (CIMIC) is given to one or the other depending on the prevailing nature of the operation. On the other hand, the functions pertaining to operational communication and psychological operations are directly monitored by the commanding general (there is a daily dedicated meeting).

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The advisors

Around the commander there is a certain number of advisors whose role is very useful but they are very envied as they are in direct contact with the general and deal with their matters without going through the staff filter.

From this standpoint, on top of the political advisors (“*POLAD*”), the legal one (“*LEGAD*”) and maybe a communication one (“*PIO*”) who are unavoidable in present operations, a certain number of “division” heads would like to fulfill these functions: psychological operations, CIMIC, Fire support ...

Today, despite achieved progress in the technical field and the real taking into account of the environmental operational functions in the same way as the always political and legal aspects of a military engagement are taken, it becomes **necessary to clarify this concept**. Indeed, any staff officer can be considered as an expert and an advisor. Identically, the commanding general may collect when he so wishes the advice he wants in the fields he selects.

If an “advisory board” is needed at the top of a staff of this level, should it not be limited to the “command group” only complemented by the political and legal advisors and calling upon the necessary experts in the given field when needed?

The TOC³, the “Heart of the CP”

Starting from the “situation - synthesis” cell that has been existing in any staff for a long time and taking into account the achievements of data processing in network allowed by the progressive fielding of the SICF (French CIS) as well as the experiences encountered by our allies (the “*JOCs*” of Anglo-Saxon staffs), it appeared very quickly that a “**control center**” was necessary.

As far as the divisional level is concerned, one must recall that, with the exception of very specific cases, it does not conduct land operations (this is the responsibility of the brigades or of battalion taskforces) but it enables the success of the action by **coordinating the direct support functions** (Combat supports, “*AGESTER*”,...) **the environment ones** (COMOPS, PSYOPS, CIMIC,...) **and the combat service support ones** (all aspects of logistics). Therefore, the essential part of the staff work is carried

out upstream of the ongoing action and, at the TOC level, one has just to be aware of the situation in all the operational functions and “manage” the operation by using appropriate indicators, by updating the indispensable “daily book” and by disseminating *FRAGOs* of a relative limited impact. This body must also be able to give the staff an up-date briefing should the situation require it or upon request of the commanding general. As we have noticed it in several exercises, if the TOC is badly conceived or ill commanded, this can have serious consequences upon the efficiency of the staff work.

From the start of the first exercises Guibert, the “TOC”, which was then called the “CTCO”, raised a problem: must it be a decision center, a meeting room? Do we need a synthesis map on the wall or on a table, no map but a wall of pictures...? Who is responsible for the concatenation necessary for the coherence of orders towards subordinates? Should it be placed under the orders of the “*D/COS*” or of the “*ACOS/OPS*”? What is the place of its head in the hierarchy of the staff? Etc.

The issue is not simple and one can say that all the solutions have been tried and tested during various exercises. **Gradually**, the TOC came out from the *shelters* that were too small to become a **reduced staff** settled in a tent at the CP center. The solution played during *Joint Sword 2006* has demonstrated its pertinence and its flexibility in all types of operations but it is **rather heavy** (roughly fifteen officers with CIS (SICF) screens linked to the private space of their “division of attachment”). One might be afraid of seeing this structure bypass the rest of the staff; although it did not happen, one should be aware that this risk may exist.

The TEC⁹, the “Mind” of the CP

The unfolding of the “tactical reasoning” (implementation of the elaboration method of the operational decision) is performed at staff level by a succession of **multi-disciplinary teams** each one moving on after the previous one to achieve their own tasks of preparation being part of the operational documents, according to the “unifying thread” of the “OPS” connections: “G5-Planning”, “G35-Future operations”, “TOC- Current operations”.

Although level 2 does not really conduct land operations, it is neither responsible for

targeting nor for the “effects” maneuver, which are the prerogatives of the commander of the component (“LCC”) and even more of the operative level (“CJTF”). However, the division remains an involved party of this aspect, especially because it must always control a territorial area of responsibility.

This is why, taking into account the emergence of this issue with the build up of the French Rapid Reaction Corps and the interest of this type of approach, especially for operations in connection with crises, the Force HQ N°4 set up a “TEC” during exercise *Joint Sword 2006*, as **an informal working group with daily meetings**; it was headed by the officer responsible for “targeting”, and linked with the G5 ; it has been considered as essential for the thinking process about the actions that have consequences on the environment of the operation. This first experience should be further confirmed and improvements are possible; but it seems **difficult today for a level 2 CP to do without a body of this nature**, notably because of the undergoing evolution taking place at upper level (“JEC” of the French Rapid Reaction Corps).

The general commanding the division or the operational sector with a level 2 CP is responsible for the **“Command and Control”** for the troops that have been assigned to him but, allowing for exceptions, he **does not personally conduct the land operations**.

With his “command group” and a few competent and close advisors, the **CG employs his staff for the preparation of the tactical actions and for the coordination of combat and combat service supports he employs to mark his effort**. Within the framework of present operations, in order to be able both to anticipate and to monitor the operational action, two main tools, necessarily highly capable, seem to be necessary: a “TOC” and a “TEC”.

1 1997: setting up of 2 pre-Force HQs. 1999: the first two Force HQs are declared operational.

2 The name “division” appeared in the military vocabulary in the middle of the 18th century, especially in the famous “Essai général de tactique (General essay on tactics)” written by Count de Guibert that will be the reference document for the organization of the victorious armies during the Napoleon period, followed by all the European and American armies.

3 French Army’s Doctrine and higher military education command (which preceded the Force Employment Doctrine Command -CDEF). 4 Level 1 = Army Corps, 2 = DIV, 3 = Combined arms brigade for the large units. For information, levels 4 and 5 are respectively the ones pertaining to the Battalion Taskforce and the company-teams.

5 Or MTS (mobile tactical shelter).

6 Staffing of the CP.

7 AGESTER = organisation of the land space.

8 Tactical operational center.

9 Tactical effect center.

The **new divisional CPs** of the Army, that are called level 2 CPs and are built up from the Force HQs, are today **ready to fulfill their operational responsibility contract** in the joint and multinational framework that is theirs from now on; and these CPs enable the generals commanding the divisions or the forces of that level to assume their command in all the types of actions that are presently assigned to the military.

STABILIZATION STRATEGIC FUNCTION - DECISIVE PHASE "in pictures"



Conception and Conduct of a Stabilization Phase at Interdepartmental Level- p. 20

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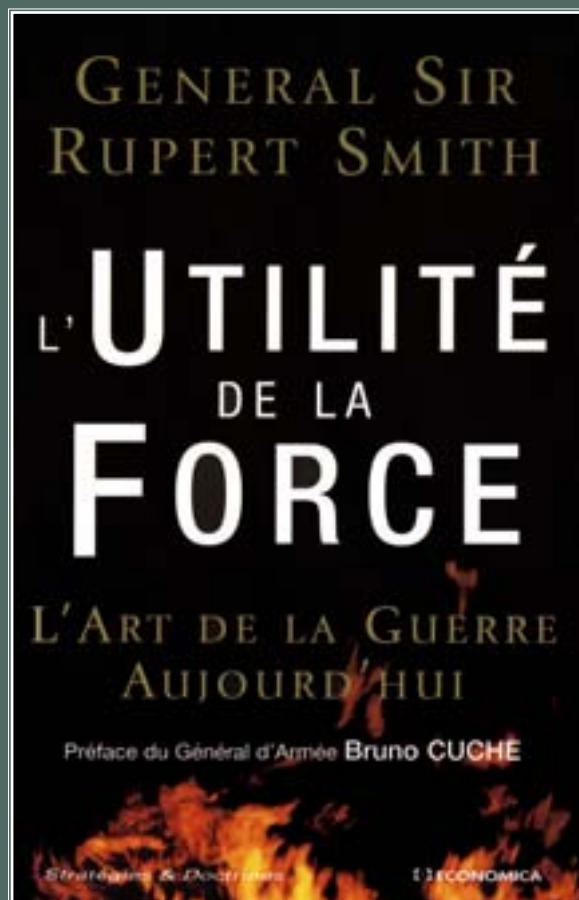
**Operational Communication in Stabilization Operations
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**No Stabilization Phase is like Another...
but All Have the Same Basic Features - p. 85**

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Win Hearts and Minds - p 106



Just out

The Utility of Force

by (British) General Sir Rupert Smith

with a preface by (French) General Bruno Cucé, Army Chief of Staff
Collection : "Stratégie et Doctrine (Strategy and doctrine)" - Economica

Outlining a brilliant picture of the military experience from the Napoleonic era until today's conflicts, this fundamental work brings out the contemporary evolutions in the use of force. It shows why force is working well only if it is... useful. The utility of force provides a very fresh analysis, a new and bold view of the role of the armed forces for crisis management. Built upon history and upon an especially abundant personnel experience, this basic work deeply modifies the vision we may have about conflicts, war and the use of military force nowadays.

General Sir Rupert Smith has been in command of a British division during the Gulf War of 1990-1991, of the United Nations Forces in Bosnia in 1995 and of the Northern Ireland theater from 1996 to 1999. His last assignment was as the Deputy Commander of NATO forces in Europe (DSACEUR), before retirement in 2002. He is one of the most experienced general officer and military thinker of our days.