



Marketing Framework in Support of Non-Lethal Fires

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The purpose of this paper is to put forth an alternative or augment to conventional military planning processes when incorporating non-lethal fires, effects and targeting. The tactical units of the joint force are now infused with many non-lethal ‘enablers’ and coordinating agencies with which to influence the battlespace. However, this augmentation does not come with the additional planning frameworks that can assist the commander and his staff to integrate and synchronize the additional tools and capabilities. Several planning concepts from corporate America may be able to assist.

In 2004 the Secretary of Defense developed a 6 phase concept for fighting the Long War¹. Four of the six phases involve primarily non-lethal activities, and 2 of these are likely to require a commitment of U.S. ground forces. Stabilization and the enablement of civil authority, phases 4 and 5 respectively, involve engagement with numerous hostile and non-hostile actors by tactical units. It will be brigades, battalions, and companies of the joint force that will plan and execute much of Phase 4 and 5 operations. They will do this by integrating non-lethal military enablers such as engineers, Civil Affairs, and Psychological Operation Teams. They will also need to coordinate with interagency teams such as Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) and US

Agency for International Development (US AID), as well as non-government organizations (NGOs). Battalions will also shape the perceptions of various host nation actors by their own organic operations.

There are numerous techniques and procedures documented for the accurate and timely incorporation of lethal fires. From fire support plans, to execution matrices and targeting board mechanics, the services are masters of integrating lethal fires. However, the planning frameworks for our tactical units to conduct non-lethal fires and targeting are limited. Recently published field manuals such as Stability Operations (FM 3-07), Counterinsurgency Operations (FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5), and the Army’s new Operations

Continuum of Military Operations

Phase 0: Shape the Environment. This phase involves those joint, interagency and multinational activities conducted on an ongoing, routine basis to assure or solidify friendly relationships and alliances and/or deter potential adversaries.

Phase 1: Deter the Enemy. This phase focuses on deterring specific opponents by demonstrating the capability and resolve to apply force in pursuit of U.S. interests.

Phase 2: Seize the Initiative. Hostilities commence during this phase.

Phase 3: Dominate the Enemy.

Phase 4: Stabilize the Environment.

Phase 5: Enable Civil Authority.

(FM 3-0) manual reference non-lethal fires as critical components to planning and executing operations; however, there is little in way of prescriptive help. There are doctrinal publications

¹ *Send in the Marines* (Quantico: United States Marine Corps, 2008), 8.

pertaining to Information Operations (FM 3-13 and JP 3-13) and Non-Lethal targeting but these publications are focused on Division and higher level units where there are dedicated staff's for non-lethal fires and effects. In addition to the lack of tools at the tactical level we also lack much of the joint or service specific doctrinal language to communicate what 'non-lethal' or 'non-kinetic' fires and targeting are, and how they are suppose to affect the battlespace. We seem to try to shoehorn non-lethal efforts into lethal fires language.

The U.S. Army / Marine Corps Counterinsurgency manual and the Army's Stability Operations manual stress the importance of designing campaigns along logical lines of operations (LLOs) when "positional reference to enemy forces has little relevance".² LLO based campaign design is an excellent tool for the security and stability tasks required during Phase 4 and 5 operations. The multi-dimensional components of the non-lethal LLOs identified lend themselves to alternative planning frameworks. Civil affairs projects, economic development, information operations, and so on all must account for a thinking 'audience' or market for our non-lethal efforts. Every action conducted has second and third order effects on the enemy, populace, host nation institutions and coalition partners. These causal relationships provide an ideal opportunity for using marketing frameworks to plan and execute components of the non-lethal efforts of battalions and brigades of the joint force.

Our counterinsurgency manual has a very good description of how to integrate information operations into a campaign design³. Leveraging the concepts of IO, engagements, and LLOs with marketing planning concepts that are more focused on non-lethal, economic and politically oriented activities may be worth the effort to incorporate into the brigade's or battalion's planning toolkit.

Marketing

Marketing is the task of creating, promoting, and delivering goods and services to consumers and business⁴. As consumers of products we often only associate marketing with the act of communicating to the customer through advertising and salespeople. We think of car salesmen, telemarketers, internet and magazine advertisements and junk mail as the domain of marketers. However product promotion is only one important tactical aspect of marketing. Behind the advertisement or sales pitch is a well synchronized fully developed marketing plan that incorporates strategic, operational and tactical considerations for successfully competing in the marketplace (see the table below).

² *Counterinsurgency*, FM 3-24/MCWP3-33.5, (Washington: Department of the Army, 2006), 5-3

³ *Ibid*, pg 5-8 to 5-11.

⁴ Phillip Kotler, *Marketing Management* (New York: Prentice Hall, 2000), 3.

Synchronized Marketing Plan			
Strategic	Operational	Tactical	Marketers call this framework the ‘value-delivery sequence’ ⁵ .
Corporate Goals and Objectives	Segmentation	Product Specifications	
Research and Development	Targeting	Pricing	
Budgeting	Positioning	Placement	
		Promotion	

Like warfighting, marketing is an art and a science. In marketing one must create strategies that rest on objective physical specifications and capabilities of the products being sold. Marketing employs sophisticated statistical analysis and research to better understand customer preferences and trends, which are then used to refine and customize products. Marketing is also an art, by which a manager designs a campaign plan and the subordinate tactical plans needed to create and shape a product for the right customer at the right place and time. Like warfighting, marketing takes place in an environment where one competes against a human adversary who is capable of expressing his own will on the competitive landscape.

Unlike “conventional” operations where armies face armies, marketers must deal with multiple competitive threats and a fickle customer set that may quickly take their business elsewhere if preferences are not met. In other words, marketers face a multi-dimensional environment that involves battling the human will of competitors, while attempting to convince people to buy their products. In addition, firms must use both qualitative and quantitative metrics to measure performance and success.

Most marketing scholars divide marketing into “strategic marketing” and “tactical marketing”. Strategic marketing lays out the broad marketing objectives and strategy based on an analysis of the current market situation and opportunities.⁶ It can be analogous to ‘mission analysis’ for a corps level joint force. The firm must have a clear understanding of the competitive landscape and the marketplace in which it wishes to compete. It then must decide how to resource, task organize and gain an operational advantage to be the most successful. A standard planning process as the strategic marketing level is called Segmentation, Targeting, and Positioning (STP).

A market segment is a set of potential customers that are alike in the way they perceive and value the product, in their buying behavior, and in the way they use the product⁷. Market Segmentation is the process by which market segments are then classified. Segmentation can account for a variety of variables. High level categories include:

- Demographic. Family income, age, sex, ethnicity.
- Geographic. Population density, climate, regional specificity, proximity to road networks and transportation hubs.

⁵ Kotler, 85.

⁶ Kotler, 64.

⁷ Raymond Corey, “Marketing Strategy – an Overview”, *Harvard Business School Note 9-500-005*, 3.

- Psychographic. Lifestyle and personality traits. Red state/blue state differences, political or religious affiliation.
- Behavioral. Why customers buy what they buy. Occasions for purchase – special occasions, for everyday use, for work or fun. Perceived benefits from customer perspective – economic value, status, for fun.

One can segment *ad infinitum*, however the practical limit is based on the size of each market segment and how much one can earn within a given segment. Large consumer products companies might identify “dual income, suburban family, with 1-3 children, health conscious” for a new organic convenience meal for kids.

Once the segmentation process is complete, the marketer then targets the specific markets she wants to pursue. Firms will target markets based on their ability to maximize profits and ensure that the market is a fit for the firm’s business model. The targeting decision is critical, because it is from this point that specific tactical plans can then be developed for the purpose of executing the marketing plan.

Once target markets are identified the firm then needs to position the company, product and brand within the market targeted. Before a business decides what advertisements to run on television or the price at which to sell its products, the firm must decide how it wants its products to be perceived in the minds of its targeted customers. Does it want to be thought of as low-cost or high-quality, luxury or economical? The marketing organization can not decide this in a vacuum. If an existing company that already has a market reputation is trying to position something new and outside of its historical space, it will be very difficult to break out of the existing perception of what the company is. Would you think of purchasing a KIA automobile if you were buying a luxury sports car? Do you think of Southwest Airlines or United when looking for a cheap airline ticket? Some firms have been very successful breaking through existing perceptions. For instance, Toyota introduced the Lexus brand for the luxury car market, thus eliminating the compact car stereotype of Japanese cars in the early 1990s.

If a new company is trying to establish a position, how does it make itself heard in the cacophony of messages and voices from alternative choices in the marketplace? The critical component is differentiation in the mind of the customer you are targeting. How does my message stand out? Positioning is what a firm does in the mind of its prospective customer to gain attention⁸. Given an environment where individuals are bombard by messages, oftentimes of very similar purpose and content, positioning a product or a firm is more easily said than done. BMW is thought of as luxury performance car as much as Al Qaeda is thought of as a global terrorist organization. Capturing either space requires a lot of persistent and consistent messaging. Action alone does not establish a position, and the same is true with the message. The message and the action are mutually supporting.

Segmentation, targeting and positioning are the core of strategic product marketing. The next step in the marketing planning process is to conduct tactical planning to support the strategic design. This is called creating the ‘marketing mix’ and its components are product, price,

⁸ Jack Trout, *Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind* (New York: McGraw Hill, 2000), 2-3.

placement, and promotion – the “4 Ps” for short. Listed below are brief descriptions of each element of the marketing mix.

- Product – What type? Low cost? High Quality? Custom? Do product features need to be added or modified to support the strategic positioning desired?
- Price – How much will you charge and how? Are you positioned as a high price or low price company?
- Placement - How does the firm get the product to the market? Through a direct sales force, distributors, the internet, etc...
- Promotion - How does the firm get the message it wants to communicate to its target markets? Advertisements, words of mouth, MySpace, sales force, etc...

Upon determining the marketing mix the firm then executes its marketing plan with the supporting efforts of finance, engineering, operations and other functions. One area that deserves more attention because of its potential for crossover utility with military tools is marketing analytics. Entire business school programs are dedicated to the field of analytics. Firms today are able to collect a vast amount of customer data. The data comes from point of sale systems at stores, website click-through data, interviews with customers, third party and open source market intelligence organizations and myriad of other sources. This data is often collected and analyzed for the purposes determining strategies to increase customer acquisition and retention, reduce customer churn and abandonment, and conduct a detailed analysis of what customers buy⁹. These tools can be very powerful, but they operate in an environment where much is known – the converse of a counterinsurgency environment where only very little is known. Nevertheless, some of the concepts of analytics such as data mining and predictive modeling can provide value to the corps level force.

Applicability

The marketing frameworks and planning tools may be informative but how can elements of the joint force apply them to the tactical situation at hand? As stated in the beginning of the paper, the tool sets currently in use for non-lethal planning do not account for the multi dimensional aspects of information engagement, public affairs, combat camera, psychological operations, civil affairs, and so on. What may work best is to incorporate select marketing tools during the mission analysis and course of action development phases of the joint and service specific planning processes. The output of the planning effort will be an Essential (non-lethal) Fire Support Task that planners are already familiar with: Task, Purpose, Method, Endstate (TPME).

During Phase 4 and 5 operations there are numerous actors that must be taken into account when planning for non-lethal fires. The market segmentation process can add value when a staff must identify what groups must be targeted and with what type of effort for a desired effect. Segmentation and targeting have direct relevance to non-lethal fires because brigades and battalions can use the methodology to effectively prioritize where to focus non-lethal fires. The table presented below is a matrix of potential ‘target markets’ for which a unit may want to effect with non-lethal fires.

⁹ Peter Peacock, “Data Mining in Marketing: Part 1”, *Marketing Management* (Winter 1998), 12-13.

Target Markets		
Strategic Markets	Operational Markets	Tactical Markets
U.S. Population	Host nation population	Local population
U.S. Armed Forces	Host Government	Tribal Leaders
Allies	Coalition Partners	Political / Government Leaders
Strategic Adversaries/Competitors (i.e. Russia, China)	Foreign Actors	Security forces
Strategic Enemies (i.e. Iran, Al Qaeda international, etc)	Enemy Forces	Enemy Forces (microsegment into various enemy elements, nationalists, Al Qaeda, criminal elements, etc...)


Of note, the enemy is only one of the audiences that may be the target of our marketing efforts. In practical application a Battalion may further refine its “target markets” and identify different tribes or various insurgent groups each as their own ‘market’. In marketing this is called “micro-segmentation”. One wants to avoid segmenting for the sake of an academic exercise. Rather one would microsegment if there was some critical difference in the markets that would effect how one wanted non-lethal fires to effect the given market. For instance, would a psychological operations campaign impact two tribes differently because of some past history or religious affiliation? During the planning phase tactical units must take time to understand who the various stakeholders of the area are, and what there needs and wants may be during phase 4 and 5 operations. The unit does not need to deliver on ‘needs and wants’, but it is important to understand what they are so the commander can think through the implications of a given non-lethal effort.

Positioning of the joint force will primarily be an operational or strategic level task. The joint forces’ ability to position itself within the mind of the various target markets will be impacted by the existing perception the various audiences have of the United States and our presence in the host nation. Positioning is oftentimes a long-term investment that will often occur before, during, and after the actual campaign on the ground (Phase 0 and Phase 1). Despite the challenge of likely prejudice in future operating environments, and the necessity of tactical units to oftentimes destroy and kill before stability operations commence, the force must make continuous efforts to reinforce the position sought as part of the larger operational and strategic goals. It requires an understanding of what qualities the given target markets value.

Large companies face a similar challenge. Companies such as Disney and Ford must invest a lot of energy and money when trying to expand into a new market with a new product. This is because the market already thinks of a firm based on its existing position. For instance, Disney does not release “R” rated films under its name; rather it used a subsidiary, Touchstone Pictures, for more adult oriented content. Disney does this to protect its very strong brand position in the minds of consumers, associating Disney with family and children oriented motion pictures, theme parks, and so on.

When firms attempt to carve out a position with their customers it is important that the position is: important, distinctive, superior and preemptive¹⁰. The firm must craft a position that is of perceived value to the customers it wants to target, but must do so relative to competitors and the positions they already occupy in the marketplace. The joint force must also consider these attributes vis a vis the target audience and the various hostile and non-hostile actors competing for a position in the mind of the target market. The joint force faces the added complexity of attempting to understand the second and third order effects of various positioning strategies which will be discussed later in the paper.

One way of thinking through the positioning process is to identify a series of continuums that identify a range of perceptions for the various targets. The pairings shown in the table below are just several of many combinations that the joint force might want to position itself against relative to its audience. Mission analysis would determine what attributes the force would focus on. The force must measure itself based on the host nation's cultural priorities, not on ours. For instance, trust and sincerity might not be as important as strength and cleverness. In addition, the force must remember that the target markets are not just measuring the force alone, they are perceiving the forces position relative to others fighting for attention and position in the same market.

Range of Perceptions Examples		
Strong		Weak
Liberator		Occupier
Professional		Amateur
Just		Unjust
Clever		Sincere
Long Term Commitment		Short Term Commitment

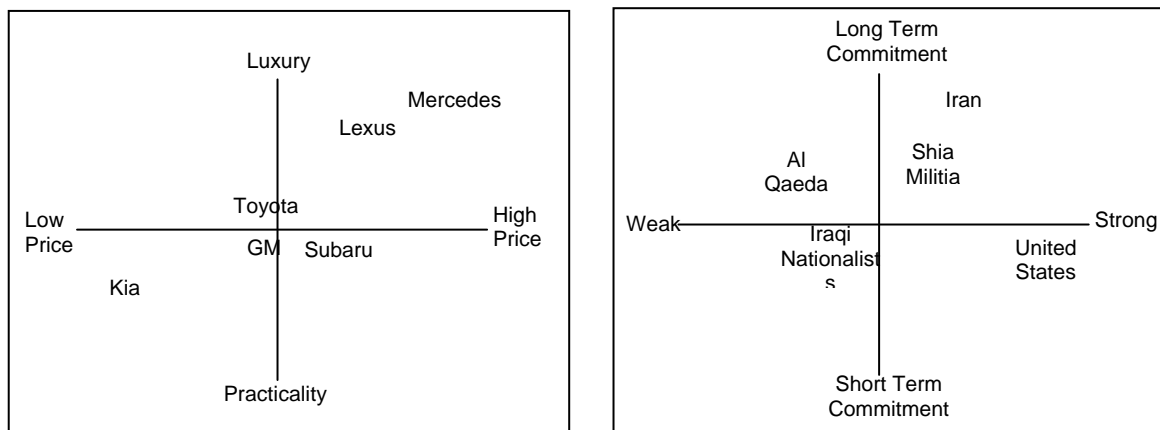
In other words, the population is measuring coalition forces against enemy elements, and possibly the host nation government. This adds complexity to the problem because one quickly finds that taking one position for the benefit of an audience may be a disadvantage with another. For instance, one could argue that it is important for the enemy and the population to believe that U.S. forces are committed to a long term involvement with security affairs of a country. To some elements of the population, the force's long term commitment may be the incentive they need to begin cooperating and providing local intelligence on enemy activity. To other elements, it may signal an occupation and a desire to resist.

In the marketing world, the pairings in the continuum table are often used together to create perceptual maps of two axis's comprised of 4 quadrants. Companies, brands, or products are then placed on the map based on market research conducted by the firm or an outside agency. The table below shows a possible perceptual map for how consumers perceive car makers based on price and luxury. As a comparison a second perceptual map shows how the Iraqi population may feel about various non-Iraqi government actors based on commitment and strength. These are

¹⁰ Kotler, 298.

examples only, and one must be careful not to arbitrarily choose attributes without a conducting a significant amount of analysis¹¹. In fact this is one of the weaknesses of using a marketing framework in a military planning environment – the requirement for data can overcome the value of the tools. Nevertheless, thinking through perceptual mappings can help planners build and prioritize their non-lethal efforts. For instance, estimating a population’s perception of the position of various actors relative to long term commitment could shape an information campaign that communicates long-term resolve.

Perceptual Map Example



The next step in a marketing plan would be to plan for the “4 Ps” of product, price, placement and promotion. Rather than introduce new planning frameworks at this level, the task-purpose-method-effect (TPME) methodology used for fire support can work quite well here. TPME is familiar to the joint force and effective in succinctly capturing the reasons for a specific non-kinetic effort. The following table is an example of how the “4 P’s” can correspond to the TPME methodology.

¹¹ Robert Dolan, “Perceptual Mapping: A Manager’s Guide”, Case 9-590-121, *Harvard Business School* (July 5, 1990), Pages 1, 2, 10.

“4 P’s” and the TPME			
“4 Ps”	Marketing Plan	Non-Kinetic Fires Plan	TPME Placement
Product	What type? Low cost? High Quality? Custom? Etc	Civil Affairs, Information Engagement, Strategic Communications, Combat Camera, Psychological Operations, PRT Project, etc	Method
Placement	How does the firm get the product to the market? Through a direct sales force, distributors, the internet, etc...	Where and who do you want to effect with the effort.	Task/Purpose
Promotion	How does the firm get the message it wants to communicate to its target markets? Advertisements, words of mouth, MySpace, sales force, etc...	What are the ways you want to wrap IO into the effort? What is the message?	Task/Method
Price	How much will you charge and how?	Effects desired. What do you want to achieve/get in return for the effort.	Effect

It is important to understand how each of the audiences in the battlespace will be effected by the task being performed. The marketing world is not very concerned if a product or message they deliver that is for one audience is not well received by another. The company is focused on reinforcing its position with its target market. If the firm desires to expand into new markets then it will need to decide whether to reposition its existing brand or create a new brand for the purposes of entering the new market. Again think of Toyota introducing Lexus or Disney introducing Touchstone.

The joint force does not have this luxury. It is always concerned with the second and third order effects of its actions and reinforcing information campaigns. For instance, contracts awarded to one tribe, may enflame resentment of another that may then fuel insurgent or criminal activity. The permutations can seem endless for each given attempt to determine the cascade of unintended consequences. To help a small staff with limited market data and to avoid analysis paralysis, planners must go back to their segmentation and targeting conducted during mission analysis. This will allow them to prioritize the concerns of second and third order effects based on target market. To assist with managing this complexity a simple target matrix as shown in the table below can help in understanding the possible effects of a non-lethal task.

Non-Lethal Task Effects	
Task	Award Contract for road construction to Tribe X contractor.
Purpose	Reduce battlefield debris, reinvigorate local economy, empower tribal leadership.
Method	Provide \$250,000 road construction contract to tribe; reinforce with billboards announcing project to populace
Effect	1 mile of road paved, remnants of battlefield debris completely removed, 100 locals employed for 60 days, enemy efforts to alienate tribal leadership from populace disrupted.

Target Market	First Order Effect	Second Order Effects				Third Order Effects
		Population	Tribe Y	Security Forces	Enemy	
Tribe X	See Above	Local population influenced to support tribal leadership and report enemy activity in area.	Tribe Y potentially alienated. Feels they are not respected and seeks to discredit tribe x's reconstruction efforts.	Extort tribe X for protection money on job site.	Attempt to intimidate contractors from working on job.	Tribe Y may decide to fund attack on job site, reinforcing enemy efforts.

Language and Doctrine

I do not think that marketing frameworks should be a part of formal doctrine in the armed services. Another ‘system’ is not required. However, I do think there are nuggets of value in marketing frameworks that can be very helpful to planners and commanders in the non-lethal fight. It is surprising that in light of five years of counterinsurgency, where non-lethal efforts are often more decisive in securing the population than are kinetic efforts that we seem ill disposed to wanting to mature the language of non-lethal fires. I only see three possible reasons for the inertia:

- We as a joint force community think the emphasis on non-lethal fires is only temporary. Once we withdrawal from Iraq we will return to an ‘all lethal’ focused force.
- The services have not developed the institutional knowledge to capture best practices, tactics, techniques and procedures for non-lethal fires.
- We think we can ‘wing it’, and our ad hoc development of non-lethal efforts are sufficient.

Lacking a common language, units use many terms that have duplicate or similar meanings. “Non-kinetic”, ‘non-lethal’, “information operations” (not using the exact joint definitions), and “effects” are all examples of terms used that have various meanings to each unit with no

doctrinal definition. In addition, when lacking defined terms for non-lethal efforts the force attempts to shoehorn lethal fires terms in a non-lethal manner. “Combined Arms” is probably the best analogy from the lethal-fires environment that is helpful to synchronizing non-lethal fires. However the term itself is defined by use ‘combat arms’ and not non-lethal type efforts.¹² The term ‘fires’ itself is not the best way to define operations, tasks and effects that are more focused on influencing behavior and perceptions.

As defined in our joint terminology publication, ‘non-lethal’ is only referenced as a type of weapon system designed to “incapacitate personnel, while minimizing fatalities...”¹³. Other publications refer to targeting for both lethal and non-lethal fires, but there is no comprehensive definition. The definition should incorporate the various assets and techniques available to a commander that can have shaping and decisive effects on a target audience that influence, reinforce or deter certain attitudes and perceptions for the purpose of supporting a joint force’s operational or tactical objectives. From a joint definition we can then help shape the discussion that incorporates the non-lethal tasks common to engineering, civil affairs, information operations, combat camera, public affairs, and psychological operations that are expected during phase 4 and 5 operations.

If one spends too much time on language and doctrine, the war will pass by before one lift’s his head up. And I certainly do not advocate picking through each definition to decide what is relevant to lethal or non-lethal fires. However, there should be some common language defined that reinforces the services need to stay engaged with developing non-lethal tactics, techniques and procedures in a holistic manner. This is another area where marketing tools and frameworks can help. The terms of marketing that identify audiences, target markets, positions, market segments, and methods of message and product delivery are all relevant to the non-lethal domain. When putting these marketing terms to use, planners can easily integrate the various non-lethal capabilities into a synchronized plan that uses a marketing plan framework. The commander’s scheme of maneuver is supported with a non-lethal plan that is more clearly described and the desired effects are better communicated.

Summary

The private sector marketing frameworks presented in this paper are by no means a panacea. The tools provided within a marketing framework are designed to support a multi-dimensional environment, and can be used to augment existing planning tools that are more focused on lethal fires which have more linear casual effects.

Joint forces will continue to fight on a distributed battlefield against an asymmetric threat where non-lethal concepts are more important to smaller units. In countries like Iraq and Afghanistan, battalions are responsible for hundreds of square miles of battlespace that cover multiple tribes, religions, political parties, enemy organizations and other defining attributes that create ‘markets’. Commanders and planners should have the advantage of a common set of tools and

¹² *Operationa Terms and Graphics*, FM 100-1-5/MCWP 5-12C, (Washington, United States Marine Corps: 1997), 44.

¹³ *Department of Defense Dictornary of Terms and Definitions*, JP 1-02, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 2006), 373.

language that can assist them in the efforts they will most often use to achieve mission accomplishment during counterinsurgency and stability operations.

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