

REVIEW OF STABILISATION AND DEPLOYED CIVIL EFFECTCAPABILITY OPTIONS

A Paper by the Cabinet Office

INTRODUCTION

1. Initial feedback on the Review Team's Interim Report, circulated on 24 July, suggested that a wider range of options for enhancing civil effect capability needed to be spelt out before Ministers could offer a view on the recommended way forward. There is a wide range of permutations, with most delivery mechanisms being scaleable to some degree. This supplementary paper therefore offers four broad options, with further consideration of resource implications. It should be read alongside the Interim Report.

UK COMMITMENTS TO DEVELOPING CIVIL EFFECT CAPABILITY

2. The Prime Minister has said:

We must have civilian experts and professionals ready to deploy quickly to assist failing states and help rebuild countries emerging from conflict... Britain will... make available a 1000-strong UK civilian standby capacity... including police, emergency service professionals, judges and trainers.

3. Multilaterally, as part of the EU Civilian Headline Goal process the UK has indicated that it could potentially make available 475 police and 305 other civilians in priority areas for ESDP missions. The UK commitment represents about 7.5% of the total assessed EU requirement. We also have a Ministerial commitment to provide 10% of election monitors to ODHR election monitoring missions.

MULTILATERAL DEMAND AND ROLE SPECIALISATION

4. The Interim Report highlighted the challenges in pinning down the scale and nature of multilateral demand for civil effect capabilities, and we will not make significant further progress in the timescale of the review. A significant UK commitment to develop enhanced civilian capabilities will, however, help to galvanise other contributions and support the impetus behind both operationalising the Responsibility to Protect and broader international institutional reform. The scale required to have such an impact can only be a matter of judgement (and the commitments we have made so far leave room for interpretation) but whatever we commit to should be credible, deliverable, properly resourced and have the potential to make a significant, positive impact on the ground.

5. We have given only limited consideration to role specialisation and the part this should play in our planning. This reflects the fact that there appears to be little appetite at present, at least among European partners, for

serious discussion of the topic. For the UK, however, it seems fairly clear that we should not seek to develop large scale deployable policing capabilities (i.e. significantly beyond the few hundred officers implied by our Headline Goal commitment) not least because we lack the basic building block of a large, armed, national police force on which to draw. Even here, though, it would clearly be wrong to withdraw from the policing field outright, given the need to have some capacity to call upon to meet urgent national priorities, particularly for deployment with UK armed forces, together with the negative impact that withdrawal from the multilateral policing field would have on other contributors. Indeed, as things stand, there are good arguments for strengthening our ability to deploy police officers. As international contributions and multilateral capabilities develop the UK may need to return to the issue of role specialisation, but at present we see no reason to give this close consideration.

OPTIONSOPTION A – DO NOTHING/CURRENT CAPABILITY

6. We currently deploy around 270 civilian personnel on national and multilateral stabilisation tasks, broken down as follows (all figures approximate and subject to variation week by week, or according to the assumptions applied):

- 50 civil servants
- 80 contractors (of whom up to 40 may have been sourced via our extant database of deployable civilian experts)
- 140 police
- 120 (inc 50 police) on national missions (mainly Iraq and Afghanistan) paid for by Departments or the Stabilisation Aid Fund.
- 150 (inc 90 police) on multilateral (UN, EU or OSCE) peace support operations paid for from the peacekeeping budget.
- Of the 140 police deployed in July 08
 - 56 were serving officers from domestic forces
 - 47 were provided by the MOD police
 - 14 were retired officers recruited via an FCO database
 - 23 were provided by contractors
- The primary tri-departmental funding mechanisms (CPP, SAF, Peacekeeping Budget and Stabilisation Unit programme budget) fund deployed personnel at a cost of £45M in 08/9. Further deployments are funded from Departmental expenditure (FCO and DFID), and from the Reserve (MOD deployments in direct support to operations) but precise data is hard to separately identify. Given, however, that deployment costs can range from £100K-£150K in relatively benign environments to £400K-£800K per person in the most demanding (taking account of security, transport and accommodation), deploying

270 personnel on current operations is estimated to cost £70M-£90M pa

7. The focus for capability development, operational advice and planning is the Stabilisation Unit with a total budget of £8.25M and 35 staff based in the UK. It has quickly acquired considerable expertise in stabilisation and civil effect, and this is being put to effective use including in Helmand, Iraq, Sudan, DRC and other conflict countries, where a number of the unit's personnel are currently deployed. But its resources, role and authority are all limited and as a whole the current cross-Whitehall structure involved in the delivery of civil effect is less well coordinated and more ad hoc than it should be.

8. The Interim Report spelt out further shortcomings in our current capability.

- The absence of an identifiable Civil Service cadre with skills, training, experience and readiness required to support current or likely future national or multilateral commitments.
- Qualitative shortcomings in the Stabilisation Unit's existing database of 800 deployable civilian experts, with sketchy details held and inadequate screening of the majority of individuals on it.
- Limited numbers of domestic police volunteers suitable for deployment (308 rather than 225 quoted in the report, but still a low figure).
- A gap in multilateral civilian capability (in particular against the EU Civilian Headline Goal), leadership and funding, requiring a shared assessment of need, a pooled supply of expertise and improved civilian multilateral structures such as a civilian DPKO or the EU Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability.

9. Overall, therefore, current capability does not adequately support existing operational demand on a sustainable basis or our public commitments.

OPTION B – A CIVILIAN STANDBY CAPACITY

10. The interim report recommends that we should aim to establish a UK Civilian Standby Capacity which would include:

- a standing structure able to develop coherent doctrine, systems, procedures, contingency plans, individual and collective training and critically able to contribute fully to strategic decision making and campaign planning from the outset of any operation;
- a screened, trained and capable deployable Civil Service cadre of around 200, from which we would expect to be able to deploy around 50 at any one time;
- a fully resourced database of 800-1000 deployable civilian experts, enabling deployment of 150 at one time (compared to the 80 or so the Stabilisation Unit believe the current database will be able to generate by the end of 2008).

- a Stabilisation Volunteer Network drawing recruits to the DCE database from a wider range of potential sources than we currently do;
- as now, a number of framework agreements to access specific expertise; and
- a civil police cadre able to deploy at least 150 officers from the MOD Police and domestic forces.

11. Such a capability would aim to deliver slightly larger numbers than we currently deploy – up to around 350 overall – but with significantly greater assurance that they would be effective, and with more emphasis on capability development over the long term.

12. The Interim Report set out the range of costs attached to maintenance of standing capabilities and deploying personnel respectively. Standing costs should be relatively modest (around £8-10M in addition to the current Stabilisation Unit budget of £8.25M) but deployment costs for 350 personnel to a range of environments are estimated at £90M-£130M pa.

OPTION C – SCALED UP STANDBY CAPACITY

13. If there was an appetite to go further than Option B, we could first look at how far we could scale up the capabilities it proposes.

- Civil Servants. It might be possible to further expand the numbers of civil servants covered by the cadre, for example if it was developed over time as a specific career option supported by tailored terms and conditions of service. But this is only likely to be a viable career option for a relatively small proportion of the total civil service, and career management of a large cadre of people competing for high quality jobs at home in between demanding tours overseas could have unacceptable negative consequences for the majority outside the cadre. It would be difficult to envisage a cadre of more than about 500 personnel at the outside, deploying around 100 at any one time. We could also consider employing a larger proportion of the cadre on a standing basis, to provide an enhanced rapid response capability (this possibility will be covered in more depth in the final report).
- Deployable Civilian Experts. We do not know how large the pool of potential deployable civilian experts is. It may be that if the resources were available we could simply stretch the current database and framework agreement approaches to generate 2-300 personnel deployed.
- Police. It is possible that larger numbers of civil police could be generated, potentially by increasing MOD Police headcount and/or by making a more determined effort to overcome some of the obstacles associated with recruiting (and releasing) suitable volunteers from domestic forces. We might aim for a capacity to deploy up to 200 simultaneously, though we believe this would be a stretch target. Larger numbers could almost certainly only be generated on an assured basis by moving to a permanent, deployable force.

14 Assuming a standby capability able to deploy 100 civil servants, 250 other civilian experts and 200 police - 550 personnel in total - we would estimate standing costs of £12-16M and deployment costs of £120M-£155M (this assumes that 400 of the personnel would be deployed in lower risk environments, without significant security costs).

OPTION D - LARGE CAPACITY INCLUDING RESERVE CORPS

15. It is possible that there is some more stretch potential in Option C than currently looks likely. But if we sought a capacity to deploy a thousand or more personnel simultaneously we would have to consider a structure similar to the US Civilian Reserve Corps (CRC) model. In UK terms this would essentially be a civilian version of the Volunteer Reserves, offering training, pay when activated and employment protection to those called up. Even if put in place with minimal infrastructure, training commitments and command functions (which would clearly limit its potential utility) a CRC would be substantially more expensive on a standby basis than the arrangements described for other options.

16. A critical driver for the US in establishing a CRC is negative perceptions of the cost-effectiveness of contractors employed on a grand scale, and expending huge resources, in Iraq. The CRC is seen as a mechanism to enable greater government operational control of future stabilisation and reconstruction operations, themselves carried out according to a pattern which the UK would not necessarily regard as effective (or affordable) from a long term development perspective. In UK terms we would be looking less at providing large numbers of personnel to serve under direct UK control and more at a reservoir of relevant professionals who would be available to multilateral missions. In current circumstances it is not easy to project demand for UK personnel for multilateral missions on a scale that would make a CRC a cost-effective delivery mechanism. That said, there is much in the US approach that is comparable to our concept for a civilian standby capacity, particularly in terms of roles and skills requirements, and in the use of a number of delivery mechanisms under an over-arching framework. It is also worth noting that so far the State Department has secured only limited funding for part of its CRC concept (more details of the US CRC are at Annex).

17. The Interim Report set out the challenges associated with a UK CRC, including uncertainty about the numbers of people available with relevant skill sets and the need for primary legislation. The resources involved would be significant and, we would assume, additional to those required to deliver either Option B or C, as the CRC could not be a complete replacement for other mechanisms.

18. As set out in the Interim Report, work done for the Stabilisation Unit suggests that a Civilian Reserve Corps that could deploy 100 personnel at any one time would cost at least £2.5M in start-up costs and £10.5M in annual running costs. A CRC of around 2500 people able to deploy 500 personnel at any one time could therefore be expected to cost around £10M in start up

costs and around £40M-£50M in annual running costs (these figures are very rough estimates and need to be treated with caution). It is unlikely that we would contemplate deploying many of these additional personnel to the most demanding environments. Nevertheless, activation of 500 personnel could easily cost £75M per annum, to add to the deployment costs for Option B or C.

RESOURCES

19. Options B and C above suggest relatively modest (in absolute terms) additional standing costs associated with enhanced capabilities, although even these would have to be met from already hard-pressed Departmental resource budgets. Deployment costs would be a more significant issue. The Conflict Prevention Pool, Stabilisation Aid Fund, Stabilisation Unit programme funds and the discretionary Peacekeeping budget for 08/9 together amount to £256M, and between them struggle to meet existing commitments. As noted above we believe we currently spend around £70M-£90M just in deploying people, with £45M of that coming from these pooled funds, the rest from Departmental budgets. We have suggested that the personnel deployment costs of Option B would total £100M-£130M, with Option C at £120M-£155M. None of these deployment costings take account of the other costs of the assistance programmes (presumably expanded or more numerous) with which the additional personnel would be associated. It would make very little sense to develop additional capability beyond levels which we could afford to deploy in the field, and this will raise significant challenges under current funding mechanisms even for Option B.

CONCLUSION

20. The Review Team continues to believe that Option B, essentially the level of ambition recommended in our Interim Report, represents the most appropriate objective in the short term. It implies stretching targets, will demand a focus on quality and cost-effectiveness and requires increases in or reallocation of funding (though arguably relatively modest). Capabilities which would deliver larger numbers of deployed personnel would represent a major commitment of resources in themselves, and we have little objective evidence yet to confirm that the demand is there. But the mechanisms in Option B have stretch potential should it prove necessary and affordable in future. Option D could only be delivered over a timeframe of several years, carries significant, practical, legal, political and resource challenges, and offers capabilities for which the requirement is not yet established. In the right circumstances, however, such a capability could enable us to set the pace in the development of broader multilateral capabilities for more effective civilian responses to crises.

Stabilisation Review Team

5 September 2008

Annex to
Stabilisation Review Capability Options paper
dated 5 Sep 08

US CIVILIAN RESPONSE CORPS

1. The US Civilian Response Corps provides a framework for mobilisation of federal government personnel for stabilisation missions which would:

- Provide a 'just-in-time' surge capability that is trained, flexible, and more cost-effective than maintaining a standing government staff, yet operating with the same level of standardisation and clarity of mission that a standing government staff enjoys;
- Work with other first responders from the government, international partners and host nations;
- Carry out essential tasks, such as conducting assessments; designing, implementing and evaluating programmes; filling local institutional roles; managing contractors; and providing consultation and training to host national leaders to facilitate transition to local control.

2. The State Department envisage the following delivery components:

- Active Response Corps (ARC): 250 full-time positions staffed by federal government employees from a range of departments pre-trained and held at 48 hours to 7 days notice to move for deployments lasting up to six months. Up to 200 of these personnel might be deployed at any one time.
- Standby Response Corps (SRC): 2000 federal government employees at 30 days notice to move for deployments lasting up to six months. 200-500 personnel deployable concurrently.
- Civilian Reserve Corps (CRC - unhelpfully the same acronym as the overarching capability): 2000 experts (including police) drawn from jobs outside the federal government but who become government employees when mobilized. At 30-60 days notice to move and deployable for up to 12 months. Up to 500 personnel deployed concurrently.

3. The State Department has sought resources for training and equipment (including, for example, armoured vehicles) as well as personnel. The FY09 budget request was for \$248M, broken down between:

- ARC & SRC training and equipment - \$75M
- CRC training and equipment - \$87M
- First two months deployment costs - \$63M
- Operating costs for the Washington office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilisation - \$23M

It was assumed that annual running costs thereafter (excluding deployment costs) would be \$131M.

4. We understand that the budget actually secured is for \$75M, with little assurance that this will be renewed beyond September 2009. Nevertheless, the US are setting up the Active and Standby components of the capability, with 100 and 500 personnel respectively.

3. Even at these reduced levels, the standing, ARC component is fairly substantial. The equivalent UK capability is provided by the Stabilisation Unit which as presently configured can draw on its 35 staff at short notice for overseas deployment, perhaps up to a maximum of 15-20 at any one time. The review is considering the case for a more robust standing capability within a defined civil service cadre, but still on a smaller scale than the US.