

# Seminar Series: NATO CIMIC and US Civil Affairs – A Crosswalk Meeting Minutes

**Format:** Expert Talk and Q&A

**Moderators:** Major (OF-3) Ralf Baur, Major (OF-3) Csaba Szabo

**Keynote speaker:** Brigadier General Kelly Dickerson (Deputy Commanding General USAJFKSWCS - Fort Bragg)

**Experts:**

- Major Csaba Szabo (CCOE - Deputy Branch Chief CIC)
- Major Kyle May (USAJFKSWCS - 1st Special Warfare Training Group - 3rd Battalion - Operations Officer - Fort Bragg)
- PhD. Nicholas Krohley (Principal of Frontline Advisory)
- Lieutenant Colonel Stefan Muehlich (CCOE - Branch Chief CIC)

**Audience:** Open to the public. Practitioners, experts, academics, and advanced, students

**Date:** 21 APR 22, 14:30 - 17:00 UTC+2

**Duration:** 150 min

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## Guiding Questions:

- *Different perspectives on NATO CIMIC and US Civil Affairs. Just two sides of the same coin?*
- *A review of the current status of NATO CIMIC and US Civil Affairs in terms of Conceptual Foundation, Doctrines, and Training & Education.*
- *How to enhance the cooperation and interoperability between NATO CIMIC and US Civil Affairs capabilities?*

## Executive Summary:

1. There is a need for common understanding among NATO CIMIC and US CA officers to enhance interoperability within national and allied forces.
2. There are differences between NATO CIMIC and US CA capabilities, but these are either just “semantic”, i.e. temporary misunderstandings, or they are potential points of improvement.
3. Differences in core tasks or core activities, mandates and roles must first be identified to be able to focus more on commonalities and synergies.
4. All participants emphasised the importance of a common doctrine, shared terminology and methods, as well as the need for cooperation between NATO CIMIC and US CA.
5. Existing practices, such as instructor swaps, information sharing, the publication of comparative studies, etc., should be continued and further developed in the future.
6. It would be desirable for all parties involved, and the Alliance as a whole, to have a permanent representative of the United States at the NATO CIMIC COE in The Hague.

**Expert: Major Csaba Szabo (CCOE - Deputy Branch Chief CIC)**

**Title: U.S. Civil Affairs and NATO CIMIC synchronisation project**

- Major Csaba Szabo is the designated Point of Contact (POC) within the CIMIC Community.
- Problem statement: *“NATO has two Civil-Military Cooperation related capabilities, which are operating on the same domain without proper institutionalisation and with a lack of synchronisation and coordination.”*

<b>Challenges and Possible Solutions</b>	
<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Possible Solutions</b>
unequal distribution of capacity: 75% US CA (largely reservists) v. 25% NATO CIMIC (mostly national missions on duty)	NATO CIMIC related capability together
ad hoc nature of planning and execution	institutionalisation of planning, cooperation and execution
operations on a personal relationship basis	formalisation of relations
no facilitation of cross referencing	framework and will for joint publications, comparative studies, etc.

- Why synchronise? – *“We have to know each other before we need each other.”*
  - Benefits: enhanced interoperability for mission effectiveness → doctrine, field manuals, training, exercise, assessment, information exchange, reach back, lessons learned
- The CCOE Synchronisation Project
  - Concept Development: Look out for...
    - 2017 AJP 319
    - 2019 CIMIC Handbook
    - 2022 study paper on comparing US CA and NATO CIMIC doctrines
  - Training & Education: familiarisation of terms, doctrines, etc. needed for common understanding and future interoperability → ongoing process with manifestations already
    - 2020 - NATO CIMIC Familiarisation Course (NCFC) for 457th CA Battalion - on-site
    - 2021 - two iterations of NCFC for HQ Staten Island and 457th CA Battalion - online
    - 2022 - two iterations of NCFC for 21th TSC HQ J9, USMCCMOS - on-site
  - Academia: seminars, lectures, essay competition, joint projects

- Civil Affairs Association (CAA, USA) <> doesn't exist in the NATO CIMIC domain (but cooperation with CAA)
  - Promoting US CA in NATO CIMIC community
  - Smithsonian institute organised AMOT training supported by CIMIC SMEs
  
- Way ahead:
  - Study paper in 2022
  - CCOE NCFE on-site courses
  - Follow-up events in the USA
  
- Summary
  - Intervention is needed.
  - Focus on similarities rather than on differences:
    - Similarities: modus operandi, principles, operational env.
    - Differences: mandate, national interest v. alliance interest
  - US CA and NATO CIMIC could be more effective if they harnessed more synchronised and collaborative approaches.
    - Where are we?
      - No cross referencing
      - Not elaborated, knowledge gap exists
      - No institutionalised cooperation
        - System of requesting information, cooperation, etc.
        - Accreditation
        - Funding
      - No cross-training
      - NCFE as one-sided offer - other side?
    - How to enhance?
      - Cross referencing, intensifying it, institutionalising it
      - Instructor swaps on a regular basis
      - Cross-training more freq
      - Mutual recognition and accredited courses
      - Mutual mission involvement
      - LL sharing
      - Co-writing on relevant topics and reflecting latest developments
      - Permanent US representation at CCOE is essential

**Expert: Major Kyle May (USAJFKSWCS - 1st Special Warfare Training Group - 3rd Battalion - Operations Officer - Fort Bragg)**

**Title: US Civil Affairs and NATO CIMIC Training and Doctrine**

- Core Competencies of US CA:
  - Transitional Governance
  - Civil Knowledge Integration
  - Civil Network Development and Engagement – similar elements of NATO CIMIC Analysis & Assessment Concept
  - Civil-Military Integration – Information Sharing, Collaborative Efforts
- Positive measures already in place
  - Joint mission experience with US and NATO civ-mil practitioners
  - Instructor exchanges for NATO CIMIC courses
- 38S/R Training **Pathway** Modernization
  - Phase I and the Reserve CA Officer course have the most overlap with CIMIC capability
  - No formal training for civ-mil staff integration in the US CA program – US CA benefit significantly from CIMIC Staff Worker Course
- Training **Comparison**
  - 38S/R Phase I : similarities with CIMIC
  - 38S/R Phase II: more focused on elements where US CA and NATO CIMIC diverge
  - Operation SLUSS-TILLER (OST): the US side has in the past and could in the future benefit from NATO CIMIC perspective (3 weeks, 3 times a year)

**US Civil Affairs - CIMIC Concept: Similarities and Differences**  
(Excerpts from PPT Slides)

 <b>US CA- CIMIC Crosswalk (2018 FM 3-57)</b> 	
US CIVIL AFFAIRS OPERATIONS	NATO CIMIC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Civil Affairs Activities (CAA)</b></li> <li>• Civil reconnaissance (CR)</li> <li>• Civil engagement (CE)</li> <li>• Civil information management (CIM)</li> <li>• Civil-military operations center (CMOC)</li> <li>• CAO staff support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil assessment</li> <li>• CIMIC Liaison</li> <li>• CIMIC reporting/Tracking system</li> <li>• (CRTS)</li> <li>• CIMIC Center/ CIMIC Liaison</li> <li>• CIMIC Assets and Staff elements</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Military Government Operations (MGO)</b></li> <li>• Transitional military authority</li> <li>• Support to civil administration (SCA)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehensive Approach</li> <li>• CIMIC functional specialists</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Civil Affairs Supported Activities (CASA)</b></li> <li>• Foreign assistance</li> <li>• Foreign humanitarian assistance (FHA)</li> <li>• Populace and resources control (PRC)</li> <li>• Civil-military engagement (CME)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil Military Interaction (CMI)</li> </ul>

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## US CA- CIMIC Crosswalk (2021 FM 3-57)



### US Civil Affairs Operations

- **Civil Network Development and Engagement**
- Civil reconnaissance (CR)
- Civil engagement (CE)

### NATO CIMIC

- Civil assessment
- CIMIC Liaison

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### • **Civil Knowledge Integration**

- Civil information evaluation
- Establish a Civil-military operations center (CMOC)

- CIMIC Center/ CIMIC Liaison
- CIMIC Analysis and Assessment
- CIMIC reporting/ Tracking system (CRTS)

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### • **Transitional Governance (TG)**

- Transitional military authority
- Support to civil administration (SCA)

- Comprehensive Approach
- CIMIC functional specialists

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### • **Civil Military Integration**

- Civil Military Interaction (CMI)

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**Significant aspects of the conceptual foundation is similar or the same, and many of the terms are synonymous. The two sides have to work on decrypting their vocabularies for each other to reach a common understanding.**

**Expert: PhD. Nicholas Krohley (Principal of Frontline Advisory)**

**Title: NATO CIMIC & US CIVIL AFFAIRS CROSSWALKS: A Shared Value Proposition**

### 1) Core Premises:

- Any operational environment is, at least, 90% civilian.
- Premise 1: CIMIC & CA are made marginal within NATO
  - Neither is viewed as an essential, integral capability
  - Neither is resourced to accomplish their missions
  - Different capabilities – *but in the same boat...*
  - There is no common understanding
- Premise 2: This creates blind spots
  - Our organisations don't know how to look at ~90% of an operational environment.
  - We are blind to key dynamics in the human domain.
  - It is unclear whether or not NATO and the US military are unaware of these blind spots (i.e. they do not fully appreciate the extent to which they do not understand the civil component of the environments in which they operate), or if they are simply not particularly concerned with civil matters.
- Premise 3: Change must come from within
  - CA & CIMIC have to make an evidence-based case for attention & resources
  - This has to be done without substantive additional support, because NATO and the US military are not going to provide additional resources to develop CA or CIMIC.

### 2) How to achieve change without additional resources:

- Thesis 1: CIMIC & CA can raise their profiles by performing **an essential task at a high standard.**
  - Premise 1: As currently resourced/staffed/trained/equipped, CA & CIMIC cannot possibly manage 90% of an operational environment.
  - Premise 2: An evidence-based case is needed to prove CIMIC's value.
  - Solution: Therefore, **prioritisation and simplification** is essential.
    - **Mastering an essential task/function** is the best possible way to make an evidence-based case.
    - If CA and CIMIC are able to execute a core task at a high standard, they will be better positioned to push for additional resources that might enable the delivery of high-calibre support along additional lines of effort.

### 3) What essential task/function to master:

- Thesis 2: Understanding is paramount, and civil reconnaissance/assessment should be the core, defining task of CIMIC and CA.
  - What do we need to know about the civil component, why is it important, and what do we do with the resulting insights?
  - CA & CIMIC need to address this – systematically and at a high standard.
- Solution: Professionalise, educate, develop, provide more compelling products.
  - **Professionalise** the discipline of civil reconnaissance and assessment.
    - Remember, the aim is to understand 90% of the Operational Environment.

- Get out of NATO comfort zone to broaden CIMIC view. Frame civil reconnaissance, frame our way of understanding.
- **Develop** and **share** knowledge about better investigative methods.
  - Think like “explorers”, not as “cartographers.”
  - CIMIC Analysis & Assessment Concept, Structured Analytic Techniques, etc.
- More **compelling** products and deliverables
  - It is vital that CA and CIMIC produce more compelling/exciting products.
  - Both capabilities need a “signature deliverable” that is valued within NATO and the US military.
- All of this can be achieved internally, at a minimal cost.

**Expert: Lieutenant Colonel Stefan Muehlich (CCOE - Branch Chief CIC)**

**Title: CIMIC and CA – Challenges and Chances**

### **1) Joint Function (JF) versus Capability: “Do we need CIMIC?”**

#### **CIMIC is a Joint Function and a Staff Function**

- CIMIC is a Joint Function – we need to communicate this to create the understanding for this, claim the overall responsibility of the leadership for the proper execution of this joint function (commander!) and also claim the contribution of the other staff functions to it but also claim the coordinating role for CIMIC staff elements and troops in it.
- The relevance of CIMIC for successful operations and activities must be emphasised to achieve sufficient resourcing of this Joint Function and the Staff Function..
- CIMIC is not only Joint but needs to cover all Domains. Being aware of the challenges we have in the maritime and air domain we also need to shift our focus to the recent domains and the developments there:
  - **Space** – recent developments indicate that space might be dominated by private enterprises and therefor CIMIC is/ will be the link of the military to stay up to date.
  - **Cyberspace** - cognitive warfare happens in cyberspace and threatens populations especially below the threshold of armed conflict or direct military action – CIMIC plays a decisive but defensive role in this..

### **2) Multinational v. National: What to learn from each other?**

- CA is national: reports to one government and operates in zones of deployment –
  - political, strategic approach – as a direct tool diplomatic power
  - integrated into other state powers → likely more effective
  - expeditionary, proactive: “influence target audiences”, “create effects”
- NATO is much more restricted
  - concerns of national sovereignty
  - especially hampered when and where the threat perception is low
- <> presently, threat perception is on the rise → we expect more willingness for cooperation and sharing
  - NATO CIMIC will be required to look at host-nation populations in Europe
  - concerns: more restrictive than expeditionary deployments, questions about military deployment in peacetime
- US troops in Europe are the decisive contribution to Deterrence and defence in the EURO Atlantic Area
- Therefore, (Host Nation CIMIC– Deployed CA interoperability must be improved as soon as possible.

### **3) Professional - Relevant: We must be proactive.**

- NATO CIMIC should develop and master essential capabilities to fully contribute to military decision-making.
  - This will lead to a greater recognition of CIMIC's role within NATO.
  - Better understanding will likely attract more resources to the CIMIC capability.
- What to develop?
  - develop a capability to understand the civil environment
  - give relevant advice based on proper assessment and enhanced data collection

#### **4) Way ahead: What to do!**

- Think and act in support of a Joint Function : claim responsibility by your leadership within NATO.
- Achieve commander's understanding of CIMIC as a Joint Function and the role of CIMIV assets in its execution.
- Understand limitations - exploit options.
- Develop Analysis & Assessment capability.
- Work for shared understanding.
- Encourage cooperation and synchronisation among NATO CIMIC and US CA staff.