



Soldiers assigned to Task Force 1-35 Armor, 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Combat Team, 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division, make their way down road as canal burns in Tahwillia, Iraq, July 30, 2008 (U.S. Army/David J. Marshall)

# Where Rumsfeld Got It Right

## Making a Case for In-Progress Reviews

By Anthony Dunkin

Combatant commanders (CCDRs) are responsible for the development of campaign and contingency plans as directed by the Guidance for the Employment of the Force (GEF) and the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP). Together, these documents translate national strategic direction and guidance from the President to CCDRs via the Secretary of Defense (SecDef) and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, respectively. CCDRs

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exercise combatant command (CCMD) authority, which provides the full legal authority to perform functions of command over all assigned forces. Inherent in CCMD is the authority to designate objectives and direction over all aspects of military operations.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning*, states, “[the] supported CCDR has primary responsibility for all aspects of a task assigned by the GEF, the JSCP, or other joint operation planning directives.”<sup>2</sup> These legal and doctrinal mandates place the CCDR within an extraordinary position of authority and responsibility

to craft plans that meet the policy endstates of the Nation. Accordingly, CCDRs and their staffs must build plans through a structured and predictable process that remains flexible and responsive while also integrating inter-agency and multinational capabilities.

The Adaptive Planning and Execution (APEX) process is the current mandated framework that CCDRs use to translate strategic guidance into operational plans.<sup>3</sup> Secretary Donald Rumsfeld created APEX in 2005 as a response to a poorly crafted Operation *Iraqi Freedom* (OIF) invasion plan labeled Operation Plan (OPLAN) 1003. The plan was the product of a

flawed system, hereafter referred to as closed-circuit planning. The closed-circuit model earned a reputation for generating stale, inflexible, and ineffective plans with inadequately linked tactical actions and strategic ends. Furthermore, closed-circuit planning consistently lacked sufficient integration of interagency and coalition partners. Consequently, in his Adaptive Planning Roadmap, Secretary Rumsfeld deemed In-Progress Reviews (IPRs) as critical to the efficacy of the APEX.<sup>4</sup> IPRs provided the collaborative environment Rumsfeld envisioned to create relevant and executable plans that ensured strategic alignment. IPRs were intended to afford CCDRs deliberate interaction with the SecDef throughout the formulation of a plan.<sup>5</sup>

However, an inspection of strategic planning documents from 2008 to 2015 revealed that this vision has gone unrealized. Specifically, the documents exposed a trend of increasing numbers of directed plans requiring an IPR and corresponding growing levels of detail in those plans. Concurrently, strategic guidance successively reduced the amount of SecDef participation in those same reviews. In other words, the overall numbers of required IPRs were increasing, and the level of detail for plans requiring an IPR was increasing. Simultaneously, the SecDef chaired fewer and fewer of the collaborative sessions.<sup>6</sup> IPRs grew more numerous than in previous years, yet their utility was decreasing in parallel with the level of supervision therein. The unsettling trend was completely reversed in January 2016, when CCDRs were directed to continue planning without a single IPR.<sup>7</sup> IPRs had grown so numerous and had so little real value that they were eliminated altogether.

Presently, CCDRs face the overreaction to these described trends: a return to the antiquated, closed-circuit system. In this system, CCMD staffs are producing end-to-end plans without input or comment from the SecDef, preventing them from aligning their actions with strategic guidance. Moreover, interagency collaboration is perceived as a burden to staffs and is on a glide path to being ignored altogether. These trends represent

a regression in the U.S. military's ability to plan, shape, and respond to events around the world. The contemporary global operating environment is showing no sign of becoming less complex. The increasing capabilities of our adversaries, the current transnational threats, and the rising occurrences of cyber attacks suggest that collaborative planning is more essential than ever.<sup>8</sup> The need to produce more relevant and adaptive plans to respond to the growing number of campaign activities and their related contingencies has never been more critical. The SecDef is in the unique position to inform and shape operational planning with strategic guidance. Thus, the Secretary should personally reinvigorate the IPR process, specifically mandating an IPR for all top priority plans. Through this reinvigoration, the SecDef will ensure military plans are appropriate for the contemporary environment, are strategically aligned, and incorporate interagency capabilities.

### Current Global Environment

APEX was created to reduce planning timelines and produce better plans. Nevertheless, former and present military planners note "available time" as the primary limiting factor to producing a broad range of plans with branches and sequels under both the closed-circuit and APEX processes.<sup>9</sup> In fact, by 2015, personnel in the system noted that they were more overwhelmed than ever. They pointed to the IPRs as a primary consumer of their time. Careful analysis of classified U.S. strategic planning documents reinforces anecdotal staff officer concerns. For example, since 2011, GEF-directed campaign objectives have increased by 81 percent.<sup>10</sup> Likewise, between 2008 and 2015, the JSCPs reflect an increasing number and level of detail of SecDef-directed IPRs. During a 3-year period, the number of level 4 plans to be briefed in a SecDef IPR increased by 50 percent, and the number of 3T plans increased by 267 percent.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, the lower priority plans that require an IPR to the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy increased

by 263 percent.<sup>12</sup> These statistics show an insatiable demand for civilian leadership to have more options in greater detail. Then, the 2015 JSCP altogether removed the section that directed CCDRs toward specific plans that required an IPR. The document gave no indication that there would be a decrease in total IPRs but inexplicably removed the mechanism for directing which ones should be briefed to whom and to what level of detail. The omission invited ambiguity into an already embattled process. Planners were left to wonder which of their plans was the priority. The situation became increasingly untenable, and as of 2016, CCDRs had received further guidance to continue planning without a single IPR. The JSCP data, taken together with the updated guidance, quite naturally uncover a process that ignores current doctrine and policy, a condition problematic in itself. More importantly, one struggles to identify the opportunities for adaptation and collaboration by eliminating the IPRs from the process.

A synthesis of the data and statements from current and former staff members revealed that the growing number of directed plans (and the IPRs that accompanied them) overwhelmed not only their capabilities but also those of the SecDef and other senior leaders in the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD). CCDRs and the Joint Planning and Execution Community found themselves without a clear solution to maximizing their available time.<sup>13</sup> Decisionmakers elected a misguided approach of eliminating IPRs to balance time constraints. Yet without IPRs, plans are essentially being built under the old closed-circuit model, one that has repeatedly been shown to be similarly time-consuming and ineffective. When IPRs became too time-consuming, the response was to eliminate them entirely, an approach that is too drastic and fails to adequately address the problem. The increases reflected in the GEF and JSCP indeed suggest that IPRs had become too frequent and were, in fact, slowing down the overall process. However, IPRs were once seen as a great success of adaptive planning. As Douglas



Paratroopers with 6<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Engineer Brigade, pull security after exiting UH-60 Black Hawk during exercise Arctic Pegasus near Deadhorse, Alaska, May 2, 2014 (DOD/Edward Eagerton)

Clark found through an adaptive planning (AP) survey conducted in 2008, one respondent noted, “[the] biggest improvement to planning provided by AP is that combatant commands are following a tighter orchestration of IPRs, which gets plans in front of the SecDef quicker and within shorter intervals.”<sup>14</sup> Throughout its evolution, members of the joint planning community supported the use of IPRs. In fact, those in the Joint Planning and Execution Community currently see IPRs as value added to the APEX process.

At the 2015 Joint Faculty Education Conference, presenters reiterated that IPRs for contingency plans “improved integrated planning, increased civil-military dialogue, and accomplished resource-informed planning and assessment.”<sup>15</sup> These assessments showed that IPRs not only improved upon the closed-circuit model but also lie at the heart of APEX successes. Oddly, current practices have removed the heart; the process cannot be expected to survive. The solution lies not in elimination, but in a modification of the original IPR structure. IPRs should endure as a means to assess the strategic environment, address guidance issues, confirm assumptions, discuss the range of options to be explored, address policy or resource issues, address matters that require interagency coordination, discuss executable timelines,

and determine risk levels and their mitigating factors. This dialogue is the linchpin to successful planning. Without this input from strategic decisionmakers, plans are incomplete and irrelevant.

### Strategic Alignment

Those who argue for a return to closed-circuit planning hold that the United States was somehow more dominant in the previous era due to this approach to military planning. All the variables to why the United States was perhaps more or less dominant in any given era are beyond the scope of this article; however, it will address the erroneous perception that closed-circuit planning somehow adds an advantage in the contemporary environment as well as provide evidence that it was similarly unsuited for the contingencies of the past.

A glaring example is the case of OPLAN 1003, the invasion plan for OIF in 2003, and the inspiration for APEX. OPLAN 1003 was developed through the process predating APEX, the Joint Operational Planning and Execution System (JOPES). JOPES, as a closed-circuit system, failed to address the common problems inherent in contingency planning that have existed throughout history. Most notably, the closed-circuit system produced time-consuming contingency plans, bound by their original

assumptions and unresponsive to changes in the strategic environment or shifting policy goals. The plan lacked sufficient time- or risk-based options and included outdated intelligence and assumptions. Additionally, a rewrite of the contingency plan would have taken months; hence, the invasion was executed despite using a highly flawed plan.<sup>16</sup> Clearly, the dialogue between senior civilian leadership and operational military commanders was insufficient during the development of 1003. In this case, as with other closed-circuit plans, the design was too static and lacked any attempt to update assumptions or strategic guidance upon initiation. The exact breakdown of the closed-circuit model lies with the process itself. Closed-circuit models such as JOPES lacked any mandatory function to force preliminary and recurring discussion between senior civilian and military leadership during plan development.<sup>17</sup>

APEX addressed the problem through the use of IPRs, specifically, one scheduled for the completion of mission analysis and before course of action development. At this point in the process, CCDRs took their operational vision and initial assessments of the GEF-directed problem sets into a discussion with the SecDef for approval. The initial IPR represented a critical step early in the process, before the staff began concept

and plan development in earnest. Gaining feedback during the initial IPR provided the flexibility and adaptability envisioned by Secretary Rumsfeld and was the clear distinction from its predecessors. Additionally, it provided the civilian leaders a forum to discuss the multiple options available to them.

Contrast this model with closed-circuit precursors, where civilian leadership did not enter the process until completion of the plan. APEX formalized and mandated civilian influence resulting in a more aligned plan. Plans developed under closed-circuit models often bound civilian leaders to a single option and limited their time to negotiate or apply other elements of national power, as evident during the planning for OIF. Conversely, IPRs facilitated the collaboration necessary to produce campaign and contingency plans with valid political/policy assumptions and explore the range of options sought by civilian leadership. Removing the IPR(s) takes the “adaptive” out of APEX and is simply closed-circuit planning by another name.

Perhaps most importantly, the IPR provided a forum for CCDRs to push back on directed objectives. Specifically, the IPR presented a CCDR with a direct line to the SecDef to share the resource shortcomings and risk of a given plan. The SecDef uses the GEF to assign campaign objectives and contingencies to CCDRs based on an initial set of assumptions and directed resources. By removing the IPR, there is no formal conversation where the CCDR can provide candid feedback about potential disconnects in the acceptable levels of risk or resourcing for the accomplishment of a stated objective. The IPR offers the CCDR the ability to confront strategic misalignment and potentially unrealistic parameters set by civilian leadership. CCDRs who identify that they cannot accomplish their directed objective, given the currently acceptable level of risk, should state it clearly no later than their initial IPR. Additionally, the level of acceptable risk to forces, the ability to respond to simultaneous contingencies, and other global responsibilities directly impact the range of options. CCDRs and

their staffs can produce precise, executable plans once the SecDef validates the CCDR’s balance of risk and objective. So, too, CCDRs can preserve staff hours by not having to rework a plan based on misaligned interpretations of acceptable risk. Moreover, engaging in subsequent IPRs can rapidly modify the plan as the national level of acceptable risk changes over time in a given theater or in response to an emerging problem set.

Then-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin Dempsey’s 2013 letter on Syria to the Senate Armed Services Committee is an applicable example. In his letter, General Dempsey addressed tactical and strategic risk, resource constraints, and interagency coordination. He also provided military options to a given problem set.<sup>18</sup> General Dempsey’s comments represent a model for similar IPR discussions between a CCDR and the SecDef. In no uncertain terms, General Dempsey was pointing out strategic misalignment; IPRs offer the chance for CCDRs to do the same. Without the IPR, CCDRs and their staffs are left to create plans that cannot achieve strategic endstates or, worse, cannot be executed at all.

### The Interagency Community

The early integration of interagency planners is equally critical to the development of a strategically aligned plan. Prudent CCDRs formulate their campaign plans, accounting for all the instruments of national power. Correspondingly, sound operational design pursues accomplishment of intermediate military objectives while creating an environment conducive to conflict resolution and is likewise oriented on the desired endstate. IPRs confirm that planners are tracking this intent by gaining interagency guidance from top-level leadership, a principle made clear in JP 5-0:

[IPRs enable] *clarification of the problem, strategic and military end states, military objectives . . . identification and removal of planning obstacles, required supporting and supported activities, guidance on coordination with the interagency and multinational communities, and*

*the resolution of conflicts. Further, IPRs facilitate planning by ensuring that the plan addresses the most current strategic assessments and needs.*<sup>19</sup>

Assuredly, CCDRs who internalize this doctrinal tenet are more successful in environments with shifting strategic conditions and potentially fluid national strategic objectives. IPRs provided the mechanism to ensure internalization was occurring and to the appropriate degree. Conversely, interagency involvement was largely ignored or treated as an afterthought in the closed-circuit model and thus often failed to craft an adaptive plan inclusive of all elements of national power.

The necessity to integrate planners across all agencies and departments is again made clear by the OIF example. When the United States invaded Iraq on March 19, 2003, the strategic objectives were to “disarm Iraq’s Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), end Saddam Hussein’s support of terrorism, and free the Iraqi people.”<sup>20</sup> A mere 2 months later, President George W. Bush announced major combat operations were over, signifying a new phase of the operation. Hence, the strategic objectives shifted to “maintain stability, search for WMDs, find Saddam, rebuild the government . . . and de-Baathify/dissolve the Iraqi Army.”<sup>21</sup> Over the course of the following year, facing a growing insurgency and rising U.S. casualties, General George Casey took command of Multi-National Force–Iraq. He issued a new campaign plan seeking to support the Iraqi government by conducting “full spectrum counter-insurgency operations to isolate and neutralize former regime extremists and foreign terrorists, and organize, train and equip [the] Iraqi security forces.”<sup>22</sup> In 2005, the U.S. National Strategy for Victory again sought to update the strategic endstates by offering the following: “An Iraq that is peaceful, united, stable, democratic, and secure, where Iraqis have the institutions and resources they need to govern themselves justly and provide security for their country.”<sup>23</sup>

This dizzying account clearly illuminates how, within a given theater

of operations, strategic endstates can change significantly in a relatively short time. Furthermore, the diversity of the endstates demanded a requirement to leverage interagency arms to achieve success. The strategic objectives remained fluid, going through no less than four major revisions in a mere 2 years—a point more salient when considering it took 24 months to craft plans in the old closed-circuit system.<sup>24</sup> The CCDR is responsible for the execution of military objectives in support of desired endstates and thus has an obligation to involve those agency planners. A process for rapidly procuring feedback from all agencies and departments is a prerequisite for success to ensure stated objectives are achievable at the outset and to react as objectives change in a time-restricted environment.

CCDRs can begin to address natural frictions between military and interagency planners during their initial IPR with the SecDef. The CCDR should detail his desired level of interagency input and allow potential conflicts to be resolved by agency principals. The likely result is a collaborative process between interagency planners and CCMD staffs that provide a shared understanding of the strategic endstates at the start of a plan and cultivates a lasting relationship capable of surviving plan execution.

### Counterargument and Rebuttal

At the far end of the spectrum are those who argue for a tectonic shift in how the military thinks about strategic planning. Proponents such as Lieutenant Colonel John Price, USAF, argue for strategic thought superseding strategic planning as the U.S. military's "primary discipline."<sup>25</sup> In his 2012 article, Price condemned APEX as a failure to revolutionize military planning. He noted APEX's primary shortfall as the assumption that improvement depended on slight changes in the process rather than a wholesale adoption of strategic thought. He proposed elevating strategic thinking above strategic planning as the military's primary discipline. Critical to his argument is the premise that APEX itself is inflexible and thus

incapable of simplifying the strategic planning process to meet the rapid, flexible demands of the environment.<sup>26</sup> Price was right to point out the inflexibility of APEX, as it existed from 2008 to 2012, as a potential reason for an inability to produce better plans more quickly. However, that reality was more a result of institutional bloat than of a flawed model. In fact, APEX retained flexibility in its original form and with appropriately tailored IPRs. He championed strategic thinking as being able to "generate insight into the present and foresight regarding the future," a condition, he posits, as unattainable due to APEX's reliance on a process.<sup>27</sup> However, APEX IPRs were intended to capture that very spirit of creative and collaborative thought and have proved to result in more viable plans. Price himself acknowledges that "in-progress reviews between combatant commanders and the secretary of defense has [*sic*] enhanced the flow and frequency of plan reviews."<sup>28</sup>

While strategic thinking may result in deeper understanding of problem sets, it is insufficient for delivering feedback to civilian decisionmakers. The strategic thinking approach can aid planning staffs in creatively identifying potential avenues to achieving intermediate military objectives, yet it falls short of providing civilian leadership with the range of options they desire. Ultimately, strategic thoughts must eventually translate into executable plans; there is no shortcut to a detailed plan with options. Of course, the world does not stop while planning occurs but at some point, the staff must enter into a deliberate approach to producing a detailed plan. Incorporating IPRs is the forcing function that keeps those plans relevant. Proponents of the strategic thinking approach add value to the discussion by increasing the creative and critical thought throughout the development of a plan; however, such thought is most valuable at the beginning stages of a plan and is updated accordingly when a significant change occurs.

Similarly, APEX has a wider range of critics. Detractors note that APEX IPRs are too time-consuming for SecDef

and CCMD staffs responsible for the planning effort. Condemnations go further by indicating that the few IPRs conducted miss the mark as intended by Secretary Rumsfeld.<sup>29</sup> IPRs have expanded from streamlined discussions to presentations of ever-increasing numbers of slides. Staffs who prepare these IPR briefs are overburdened and lose time from actual plan development.<sup>30</sup> Similarly, formal IPRs have invited a growing number of predecisional boards, reviewers, and panels that all have input before the discussion with the SecDef. A once-formal discussion between the CCDR and SecDef now requires a series of "socialization" meetings, IPR prebriefs, and Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) Tanks. Additionally, the requisite read-ahead for those engagements further prolongs and complicates the process.<sup>31</sup> There are also those in favor of off-the-shelf plans. They argue for a formal return to closed-circuit planning and for abandoning APEX altogether.<sup>32</sup> Admittedly, criticisms of APEX and IPRs are not entirely without merit; in fact, the very reality that IPRs are currently not executed in accordance with the joint doctrine and policy is in itself evidence that there is a fault in the method.<sup>33</sup> However, abandoning IPRs altogether would be an error of great consequence. IPRs remain a critical tool for CCDRs to produce relevant, adaptive plans capable of achieving the Nation's desired political endstates.

### Recommendations

The SecDef could address many of APEX's limitations by tailoring IPRs in frequency, scope, and audience. Every top priority plan should have a single IPR (IPR A). IPR A should be conducted at the conclusion of strategic assessment/guidance before concept development, as presented in JP 5-0.<sup>34</sup> Reducing the number of IPRs per plan from four to one would likewise decrease the overall number of IPRs by 75 percent. Such reduction would facilitate adequate dialogue and maintain the vision and intent of APEX while keeping schedules manageable for CCDRs, staffs, and the SecDef.



General Ray Odierno, commanding general, Multi-National Forces–Iraq, and Lieutenant Colonel Joseph McGee, commander of 2-327 Infantry Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade Combat Team, 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division, walk through streets of Samarra on October 29, 2008 (U.S. Army/Kani Ronningen)

In addition to the frequency of IPRs, the IPR format should be addressed. IPR A should be stripped down to its initial purpose with a focus on ensuring correct interpretation of strategic direction, validating assumptions, addressing interagency coordination, and allocating intelligence and resources for a given range of military options. The process should avoid expansive, prepared briefs to the SecDef. The format should be roughly 10 minutes of brief/update to the SecDef, followed by 30 minutes of discussion. The CCMD staffs would provide minimal products (7–10 slides) to aid in the visualization of the issues to be discussed. The SecDef needs to reinforce this vision so as not to allow ambitious staffs to bloat the process. All necessary follow-ups for issues or guidance should be conducted informally between the CCDR and SecDef. The intent is fewer overall IPRs that have to be scheduled and synced with the plan development calendar and thus a reduced amount of read-ahead material and products. This model gives time back to the staffs for

actual plan development and, likewise, provides the SecDef more time to attend his countless obligations.

IPR A should be formalized between the CCDR and SecDef with all other participants to include the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, Deputy Assistant Secretaries of Defense, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Vice Chairman, and any other Joint Staff members or OSD-designated representatives who would participate in a strictly “monitor” capacity. Their presence, whether in person or virtual, would be to ensure SecDef’s guidance to the CCDR is heard and applied to their plans and offices. The conversation should center exclusively on the CCDR and SecDef. Furthermore, while IPRs should be prioritized, they should not be delegated. With the reduction in overall IPRs per plan, direct SecDef influence into those plans should be mandatory. Subsequently, the GEF and JSCP should reflect the need for SecDef influence on those IPRs.

Finally, the need for predecisional briefs should be left at the discretion of

the CCDR. Overreliance on socializations, prebriefs, and JCS Tanks risks the clarity and fidelity of guidance transmitted from the SecDef to the CCDR. If the CCDR requires assistance gaining the full coordination of the Services or across other commands, he could request a JCS Tank. In the event the CCDR wishes to further develop common perspective, review concepts, or incorporate recommendations, a socialization or prebrief is appropriate.

## Conclusion

APEX without IPRs reverses the vision proposed in 2005 and represents a pendulum swing back toward closed-circuit planning. Closed-circuit planning largely failed to adequately produce plans for recent operations and likewise cannot produce plans tailored to the contemporary environment. APEX, in its original form, sought to meet today’s planning challenges through extensive collaboration and senior leader influence. Perhaps in practice, the complete vision of APEX was unsustainable and unable to meet the specific planning

needs of today's civilian and military leaders. However, the joint planning community has accommodated an overreaction back to the closed-circuit model. The essence of APEX lies with the IPR. The frank, two-way conversation between CCDRs and SecDef provides the necessary collaboration and guidance required for adaptive plans. Strategic planning is the commander's business and, as such, should remain between senior and subordinate. IPRs can only be useful if kept at the appropriate level, appropriate frequency, and appropriate scope. IPRs allow for strategic alignment and interagency collaboration—qualities not found in the century-old closed-circuit system—in the rapidly developing contemporary environment. The SecDef has the power to reinvigorate the IPR process and should do so in accordance with the recommendations contained herein. Consequently, the U.S. military will regain the spirit of APEX, address the concerns of the planning community, and retain the ability to be the world leader in strategic planning. JFQ

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Joint Publication (JP) 1, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States* (Washington, DC: The Joint Staff, 2013), V-2.

<sup>2</sup> JP 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning* (Washington, DC: The Joint Staff, 2011), II-12.

<sup>3</sup> Michael McGauvran, *A Primer for: The JSPS, GEF, JSCP, APEX, and GFM* (Newport, RI: Naval War College, 2015), 11.

<sup>4</sup> *Adaptive Planning Roadmap 2005* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2005).

<sup>5</sup> Michael A. Santacrose, *Joint Strategic and Operational Planning: Planning for Planners* (Lakeland, FL: The Lightning Press, 2014).

<sup>6</sup> *Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan* (JSCP) (Washington, DC: The Joint Staff, 2008, 2011, 2015). Close analysis of the JSCPs from 2008 to 2015 reveals clear trends in numbers of plans requiring In-Progress Reviews (IPRs) across all functional and geographic combatant commands. The trends apply across all levels of detail; however, the author chooses to focus only on the higher level detailed plans as they are the most significant and time consuming.

<sup>7</sup> McGauvran, 15.

<sup>8</sup> "Administration Cybersecurity Efforts 2015," White House Fact Sheet (Washington, DC: The White House, 2015).

<sup>9</sup> McGauvran, 12.

<sup>10</sup> *Guidance for the Employment of the Force* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015). This statistic represents an aggregate increase across a 5-year period. The number of campaign objectives assigned to geographic combatant commanders has increased. Likewise, the number of posture planning priorities has increased. The campaign objective statistic is a primary driver for developing campaign plans and contingency plans; however, posture guidance priorities also add to the planning effort and are a consideration when balancing the factor of time.

<sup>11</sup> Plans are categorized by levels of detail from 1 to 4, with 1 being the lowest level of detail. *Level 3* is a base plan with selected annexes; *3T* is the same but includes Time Phased Force Deployment Data (TPFDD). *Level 4* is a complete plan with all annexes and a detailed TPFDD. These increases are substantial and noteworthy because level 3T and above are far more time consuming to produce. Furthermore, TPFDDs have a short shelf life and require constant updating.

<sup>12</sup> JSCP.

<sup>13</sup> The Joint Planning and Execution Community consists of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, combatant commands (CCMDs), Services, National Guard Bureau, all Joint Staff directorates, and DOD Combat Support Agencies.

<sup>14</sup> Douglas K. Clark, "The Path to Finally Realizing the Adaptive Planning Vision of Defense Secretaries Rumsfeld and Gates," Master's thesis, Joint Advanced Warfighting School, 2009, 30, available at <[www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a530068.pdf](http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a530068.pdf)>.

<sup>15</sup> Carl A. Young, "Update to Adaptive Planning, JP 5-0, and an Update on the Plans Review Process," lecture, Joint Faculty Education Conference, Washington, DC, July 1, 2015, slide 5. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) Instruction 1800.01D, "Officer Professional Military Education Policy (OPMEP)," requires the Joint Staff J7 Joint Education Branch to host a Joint Faculty Education Conference (JFEC) every year. The conference's purpose is to "present emerging concepts and other material relevant to maintaining curricula currency to the faculties of the [professional military education] and [joint professional military education] colleges and schools." The JFEC convenes each summer; the Joint Staff J7 invites representatives of the professional military education community. Defense Department representatives' presentations not only focus on the evolving professional body of knowledge but also provide insight into the strategic environment.

<sup>16</sup> Robert M. Klein, "Adaptive Planning: Not Your Great-Grandfather's Schlieffen Plan," *Joint Force Quarterly* 45 (2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2007), 85, available at <<http://ndupress.ndu.edu/portals/68/Documents/jfq/jfq-45.pdf>>.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

<sup>18</sup> Martin E. Dempsey, letter to Senator Carl Levin on the U.S. Military and the Syrian Conflict, July 19, 2013, available at <[www.cfr.org/syria/general-dempseys-letter-senator-levin-us-military-syrian-conflict-july-2013/p31198](http://www.cfr.org/syria/general-dempseys-letter-senator-levin-us-military-syrian-conflict-july-2013/p31198)>.

<sup>19</sup> JP 5-0, I-3-I-4.

<sup>20</sup> Clark, 2.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>22</sup> Donald Wright and Timothy Reese, *On Point II: Transition to the New Campaign* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, June 2008), 177.

<sup>23</sup> George W. Bush, "National Strategy for Victory in Iraq," November 2005, available at <[https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/infocus/iraq/iraq\\_strategy\\_nov2005.html#part1](https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/infocus/iraq/iraq_strategy_nov2005.html#part1)>.

<sup>24</sup> At the time, the Joint Operation Planning and Execution System was the planning process of record and advertised a 24-month timeline to produce plans.

<sup>25</sup> John F. Price, Jr., "The Downfall of Adaptive Planning: Finding a New Approach after a Failed Revolution," *Air & Space Power Journal* 26, no. 2 (March–April 2012), 118–131, available at <[www.au.af.mil/au/afri/aspj/article.asp?id=68](http://www.au.af.mil/au/afri/aspj/article.asp?id=68)>.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 118–131.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 125.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 123–124.

<sup>29</sup> Bob Woodward, *State of Denial: Bush at War, Part III* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006), 36. This passage is key in understanding Donald Rumsfeld's demand for short and pointed discussion with his commanders, a likely driver of the IPR concept.

<sup>30</sup> Interview with former Joint Staff Plans officer, April 22, 2016.

<sup>31</sup> JSCP, 2015. The following is extracted from unclassified portions of the JSCP: "Socializations are formal meetings with the Joint Staff and OSD providing CCMDs the opportunity to socialize plans and develop common perspective regarding the review process. JCS Tanks are held by the CJCS in advance of scheduled SecDef IPRs. The intent of a JCS Tank is to ensure full coordination across the CCMDs and Services and enable the Chairman's compliance with Title X requirements; they are supplemented by Operations Deputies (OpsDepts) Tanks and, 'Paper Tanks.' CCDRs conduct pre-briefs with the Services, Joint Staff, and OSD planners IOT review concepts, discuss ideas, and incorporate recommendations. For plans requiring SecDef IPR, socializations and pre-briefs must take place one month before the IPR."

<sup>32</sup> Interview with former Joint Staff Plans officer, April 22, 2016.

<sup>33</sup> There is a range of doctrinal and policy documents that direct the use of APEX in the joint operational planning process, including JP 5-0 and CJCS Memoranda 3130.03, 3130.01, and 3130.06.

<sup>34</sup> JP 5-0, II-14.