Effects-Based Approaches and Australia's Security: Headed for the 'Too Hard Basket'?

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A Gap in Our Thinking

The dominant theme of most writing about strategy is its concern with the application of military force for political purposes. For example, Colin S. Gray's excellent study, *Modern Strategy*, rarely considers how elements of national power—other than military elements—are used to achieve national objectives.[1] Similarly, Michael Evans' recent, thought-provoking study of Australian 'strategic culture' reminds us that Australian's conceive their security almost entirely in terms of defence and the use of military force.[2] Others have pointed to the need to integrate national power into a strategy, but even classical thinking on 'grand strategy' focuses on the way 'economic resources and (the) man-power of nations' are used to support military action.[3]

The gap in thinking about the application of national power—where military power is but one component and one tool among many—to achieve political objectives is one that has been addressed, in part and in a foundational way, by the papers on effects-based strategy (EBS) and effects-based operations (EBO) in this edition of *Security Challenges*.[4] These papers have described and applied effects-based concepts in different ways. Some such as Babbage, Smith, Forestier and Stephens have considered effects-based approaches as strategy; others such Ho, Lazarus and Kelly and Kilcullen have looked more specifically at the application of 'effects' in conventional and asymmetric conflict; while Waters and Nicholson have considered the driving force that information provides to EBO and the ability to operate in the 'cognitive domain'. There are some important differences between them, particularly in the way concepts are addressed, but all are focused on finding a way to use national power in a more integrated and effective manner

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[1] C S Gray, *Modern Strategy*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1999.
[2] M Evans, *The Tyranny of Dissonance: Australia's Strategic Culture and Way of War 1901-2005*, Land Warfare Studies Centre Study Paper 306, 2005.
[3] B H Liddell Hart, *Strategy* (2nd revised edition), Praeger, New York, 1954/1967, p. 336.
[4] This paper will refer to an 'effects-based approach' in the most part, unless a distinction between EBO and EBS helps to make the context of the point clearer.

against the type of threats that Australia is likely to face in the foreseeable future.

It is also worth remembering that the Department of Defence has been working to articulate EBO as its operational concept too. Since the first mention of EBO in *Force 2020*, Defence has generally followed a two track approach: the first, following the US Joint Forces Command line on EBO in a military context, and the second, less developed path of considering a national effects-based approach to security. The progress is, however, slow: and this reflects the difficulty of describing the concept and reconciling differences such as those displayed in the earlier essays. The speed of development also reflects some much-needed scepticism about whether EBO (and the related concept of Network Centric Warfare, or NCW) could deliver on the promises of some proponents.[5]

That such differences exist reflects the nascent stage of Australian thinking on this issue, and shows the important work that still needs to be done to take an effects-based approach from concept to capability. We should not underestimate the difficulty of traversing that road; and we should understand that without sound and dedicated effort the effects-based approach will be consigned to the 'too hard basket'—a place that others might call the garbage can.

This paper outlines some implications for Australia that arise from two main issues that have arisen in the preceding essays. The first section will distil a range of conceptual issues into implications for developing a 'strategic philosophy' for Australia, which has already been described as a National Effects-Based Approach, or NEBA, by the Department of Defence. This section will also identify a range of implications for strategic planning that must, ultimately, require some more fundamental changes to the way Australian government approaches the task of promoting national security. The second section will then ask whether the related concept of NCW can be applied to the strategic level in a manner where it could support the development of the NEBA. The paper will conclude with a recommendation that the Australian Government, probably led by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, should undertake further study to consider whether an effects-based approach to securing national objectives would provide more options to government.

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[5] For example, see the paper by Brigadier Justin Kelly and Lieutenant Colonel David Kilcullen, in this issue; and D J Reid, R Giffens, G Goodman and W Johnston, 'All that Glistens: Is NCW really scientific?', *Defence and Security Analysis*, vol. 21, no. 4, December 2005.

From Concept to a 'Strategic Philosophy'

THERE IS SOMETHING 'NEW' HERE

This collection of essays about effects-based approaches provides a new way of thinking about how to secure political goals through the application of national power.[6] I call this a 'new' way deliberately, recognising that a number of contributors to this edition have stressed that thinking in terms of effects is not new. In supporting this view of continuity, Ross Babbage, Alan Stephens and Peter Nicholson all focus on the enduring principles of strategy and lessons from history to show how leaders who have thought in terms of effects; while Tony Forestier identifies a strong antecedent in the concept of 'political warfare'. So to borrow Ross Babbage's words: 'the idea of focusing strategic action directly on changing the policy position of the enemy is certainly far from new'.[7] Indeed, such a focus is necessary to create both the logic for conflict and an aim for action.

However, effects-based approaches are subtly different from the conceptions of 'grand strategy' cited earlier, and clearly different from a military-dominant approach as well. The first of these four differences is that effects-based operations are conducted in situations inside and outside conflict. The need to be constantly 'shaping and influencing' a situation—that is, creating effects—to achieve strategic advantage leads to an ongoing requirement for 'operations', albeit operations with different styles and tempo. Next, the military is not always the lead agency for achieving national security and national objectives. Means as diverse as police, the schools system, clandestine operations, cultural attraction and military force could be used to achieve strategic objectives in an effects-based approach.

This change in focus creates the third major difference because it brings a whole range of 'soft power' instruments to the fore. The essence of effects-based thinking is therefore not how a nation can achieve their aims by the use of military force, but in the way information or economic power could be used instead to achieve a similar effect. As Ross Babbage noted in his first hypothetical, the knowledge of secret bank accounts and the ability to manipulate the banking system had the potential to achieve a coercive effect that might be similar to bombing the assets that produced the leader's ill-gotten wealth. Lastly, as David Lazarus reminds us, effects-based thinking is also applicable to domestic security situations where counterterrorism is a particular concern, just as it can be applied to external security challenges.

At present, Australia's strategic policy (or strategy) 'is aimed principally at preventing or terminating coercion or armed attack against Australia and its

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[6] A term used to denote the combined means available to pursue national objectives.
[7] Babbage, *op cit*, p. 22.

interests'.[8] This view is already dated—less than four years after it was published—due largely to the factors Ross Babbage outlined in his paper.[9] The consequences for security of changes bought by these factors have been, among others, an increase in the cross-cutting nature of security challenges; broadened concepts of threats; the increased connection of interests between government, the private sector and the general public; and an increase in the range of means that can be used available to promote those interests.

For instance, I would argue that economic growth and good investment climates no longer concern just the 'big end of town' and their political connections in Australia: a continuation of conditions that promote prosperity and economic stability is an issue that concerns just about every Australian today. Thus the gap between 'elite interests' and 'the greater good' is closing in this respect, while at the same time those interests are being threatened by more than just military challenges—to name a few, from the risk of depressed stock values due to terrorist threats, increases to the price of oil due to political instability, and risks to health and productivity from potential pandemics.

As a result, we should also expect the Australian Government to continue the move away from a purely military and reactive approach to national security toward one that seeks to re-shape conditions to favour Australia's interests. The basis for how this can be done, I would contend, should be developed from the ideas contained in this edition. What is needed now, however, is to go from the concept of EBO to an approach toward achieving national objectives that incorporates effects-based thinking.

TOWARDS A NATIONAL EFFECTS-BASED APPROACH

Before we make this step, it is worth considering the main requirements of any potential 'strategic philosophy' for Australia. The first is for a philosophy (or more simply, a shared way of thinking) that coordinates national power to achieve the Government's intent. This must be more than just coordination by 'deconfliction', since it is clear through the theory described by Ed Smith that actions, and their effects, are cumulative.

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[8] Australian Defence Force, *ADDP-D Foundations of Military Doctrine*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, 2002, paragraph 2.15.

[9] Babbage, *op* cit, pp. 22-3. Part of the reason for the need, and ability, to employ a new approach can be found in contemporary socio-technological conditions. Of the many recent innovations, aspects of information and communications technology that have created a global finance system, shared (sometimes widely shared) views of 'entertainment', have combined with other economic and social interconnectedness to create new opportunities for pressure. Reach, in both its physical and cognitive senses, also provides opportunities to influence far-off situations. And democracy and social change—particularly fragmentation within most societies that produces groups with different interests—also creates points of pressure that might not have existed fifty or sixty years ago.

Secondly, a viable strategic philosophy must recognise that both military and non-military elements of national power are always being applied—to different degrees—to further Australia's interests. This means the philosophy must be applicable through all situations, particularly those outside conflict. This creates an ongoing need to plan, manage and assess the effectiveness of operations and their contribution to national objectives.

Next, Australia needs a way of thinking about strategy that is flexible enough to analyse changes in the strategic environment (which may result from initiatives by other actors, or as responses to Australia's actions) and develop effective options to promote Australia's interests. This means people who design and implement strategy must be able to transition from contingency planning or predominantly non-military plans to preparations for a specific (new) operation; and be able to sustain that operation for a considerable period of time. While one would not wish to prophesise about permanent war, no one should expect quick victories all the time.

Lastly, the strategy must be supported by a persistent, secure, reliable and responsive information environment. This information environment will need to link the right stakeholders together so that Australia can make best use of the information it already holds.

The basis for this new approach, which has been articulated in the Australian Defence Force's (ADF) *Force 2020*, *Future Warfighting Concept*,[10] and *Effects Based Operations Discussion Paper*, is a 'National Effects Based Approach' (NEBA), which

> represents an emerging concept which synchronises all elements of national power to secure national security goals. This ensures that the most appropriate means, or combination of means, is employed. NEBA enables the shaping of the strategic environment by focusing on the effects generated by inter-dependent elements of national power and not the means of delivery of that power. To contribute to the achievement of national security goals, the ADF must coordinate its efforts with the other components of national power.[11]

This approach appears to be well suited to reconceptualising strategy to the demands of today. However, creating the NEBA would require significant changes to the way Australia develops detailed plans to protect its interests. Some of these changes include:

- a view that Australia applies national power through a plan, rather than policies, that moves through different stages;

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[10] Department of Defence, *Force 2020*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, 2002; Department of Defence, *Future Warfighting Concept*, Policy Guidance and Analysis Division, Canberra, 2003.
[11] Directorate of Future Warfighting, *Effects Based Operations Concept Paper,* 2005.

- closer interaction between strategic planners who represent different elements of national power, rather than committees where members represent different departments;
- moving operations planning from the 'crisis management' model toward an ongoing process of shaping the environment toward favourable outcomes;
- an ability for intelligence, policy and operational communities to work more closely together when developing and amending operations plans – including deliberate plans and contingency plans;
- close cooperation through the implementation/execution phases;
- an ability to share information with non-government organisations (NGO) involved in stability or humanitarian operations, and private companies such as those involved in critical infrastructure protection and physical security roles;
- clearer information on the probable and actual consequences of the actions of Australian and other relevant actors; and
- an increased focus on the social and psychological aspects of conflict.

That recent operations within Australia and overseas show the early signs of change in this direction is an overwhelmingly positive development. For instance, the national effort to mount the Sydney Olympics clearly required considerable coordination between the Commonwealth Government, State governments and the private sector because, on the security side, it involved a non-military lead that employed significant ADF and commercial security assets. The establishment of a 'Trusted Information Sharing Network' on critical infrastructure and the 'Government-Business Advisory Group on National Security' are further examples of progress, since they demonstrate how the responsibility for national security is being reconceived to recognise the importance of industry for protecting networked infrastructure.

The national effects-based approach and the changes required to achieve it have important implications for planning at the strategic level. Firstly, the interface between the 'national security community' of departments, agencies (and potentially private enterprise) will need to be tight, secure, easy to manage, more inclusive and less time-consuming than at present.

The model for this type of planning might be found in the 'task force' concept that has been used for Iraq conflict of 2003 and the Douglas Wood kidnapping of 2005. The task force model has strengths such as the ability to aggregate its participants' knowledge and provide a smoother mechanism for these people to reach into the collective knowledge of their Departments. Task forces also tend to become tight knit groups in a short period of time, particularly where the participants want to cooperate, as they develop their own norms and shared sense of mission. However, task forces have the disadvantages of being *ad hoc*, and so take time to 'gel'. An additional weakness is that individuals assigned to task forces often remain beholden

to their departments and agencies for their next promotion, or at least for good references. Once private agencies are introduced to this mix, other problems such as commercial confidentiality and perceptions of bias will also come rapidly to the fore.

Secondly, the whole-of-government planning system must cope with concurrent activities, long-term operations and periodic changes to planning teams (as experts from outside Government are added to assist with planning, and as people 'rotate' through postings). As a result, the system's adaptability must be supported by a conceptually and architecturally adaptable information system and a training and education program.

And lastly, the strategic planning system to deliver the NEBA must include the necessary data and displays to help planners visualise the possible consequences of actions during planning. This will include course of action development and wargaming simulations. This last point raises another important question that Ed Smith, Gary Waters and Peter Nicholson highlighted: the importance of Network Centric Warfare to EBO. The question is: can this warfighting concept be applied at the strategic level?

Applying NCW to the NEBA

NCW AS AN ORGANISATIONAL CONCEPT

If we view NCW as an organisational concept—as opposed to a warfighting concept—then it is clear that the ability to operate as a cohesive social and physical network will provide the NEBA with some advantages (and disadvantages) over today's system.

As Ed Smith and Gary Waters explained, NCW is a concept that has emerged from thinking about modern warfare which seeks to improve the ability to fight by ensuring that decision makers have the right information at the right time. This information is passed through a seamless web of sensors (such as radars and satellites), the actors that create effects ('shooters') and the decision makers that give meaning to action. In the NEBA however, those sensors might be Customs or Immigration Officers; 'shooters' might come in the form of police activity, computer network disruption, business deals or intelligence operations; and the decision makers may well include diplomats or (if responding to a pandemic) medical officials.

The ADF has developed a number of premises that support NCW, and examination of these premises—professional mastery, mission command, a robust information grid, shared situational awareness and self-

synchronisation—shows that if the concepts are tailored, all can be applied to support a national effects based approach.[12]

Professional mastery[13] clearly has a place in our thinking about planning at the strategic level. But mastery over what? At the strategic level, professional mastery will require a system of education and training that develops a breadth of knowledge about how to apply national power, and a personnel system that provides opportunities to experience other departments and relevant agencies. Professional mastery will also require an appreciation of the complexity and fluidity of the strategic environment, as well as a respect for the ability of other actors to upset even the best plans. Initiatives to develop professional mastery could include exchanging liaison officers with appropriate departments, or even placing officers from one Department or agency in research or suitable policy positions in other Departments. The personnel development system should also encourage depth by providing opportunities to be involved in whole-of-government planning at a number of different levels. This type of knowledge is often gained through experience gained from real operations or exercises. Education will be essential, and all Departments should encourage their members to study strategy, policy development, regional societies, history and planning methods.

The basic philosophy of mission command[14] continues to appear robust in a national effects-based approach, but that's not to say this type of decentralised command philosophy will be easy to apply. The robustness of mission command comes with its ability to cope with fluidity and complexity, which makes it suited to large organisations that have a wide range of separate parts. However, the desire for a decentralised system is tempered by the ability of lower-level actors to act in ways that have strategic effects; and in ways that might not actually be in accordance with the government's (or commander's) intent.[15] Devolved decision making might not occur in

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[12] The five premises are: (1) Professional mastery is applicable to NCW; (2) Mission command will remain an effective command philosophy into the future; (3) Information and intelligence will be shared if a network is built by connecting engagement systems, sensor systems, and command and control systems; (4) Robust networks will allow the ADF, and supporting agencies, to collaborate more effectively and achieve shared situational awareness; (5) Shared situational awareness will enable self synchronisation, which helps warfighters to adapt to changing circumstances and allows them to (fight) more effectively. See Australian Defence Force, *Enabling Future Warfighting: Network Centric Warfare*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, 2004, Chapter 2. The key terms of these premises are defined below.
[13] Professional mastery is an expression of how individuals apply their skills, knowledge and attitudes to the task at hand (*Enabling Future Warfighting.*, p, 2-2).
[14] Mission command is a decentralised command philosophy whereby commanders focus effort on their objectives and let subordinates determine the best way to achieve those objectives. It stands in contrast to orders-based philosophies where subordinates have little flexibility (*Enabling Future Warfighting.*, p.204).
[15] While this is <u>theoretically</u> impossible within mission command, there will always be room for mistakes and the pursuit of self interest in any human system. For a fuller discussion, see D Lambert and J Scholz, 'A Dialectic for Network Centric Warfare', *Presentation to the 10th*

practice because strategic- and operational-level commanders could have better information than tactical commanders in some circumstances. As a result, devolving responsibility to lower-level commanders could be too risky in such circumstances.

The best answer to these challenges to mission command appears to be in accountability and training. Accountability requires people in tactical situations to be acutely aware of how their actions can be seen and interpreted, while those in leadership positions at the strategic level must resist any urge to employ a 'thousand-mile screwdriver' to fix perceived problems. Since data (such as decision-making processes and directives) can be recorded, it should also be possible to identify both who made the decision and why. Future command training and exercises should therefore raise awareness of these issues. This could include placing people in scenarios that test their ability to perform in the strategic environment (in a similar way it is done at the tactical level), and providing debriefs that highlight how and where their actions either support or work against mission command. A person's performance in such exercises (or on operations) could therefore provide a good indicator of their suitability for employment at the strategic level.

The importance of the 'robust information grid' or information infrastructure has received considerable attention in Gary Waters' paper in this volume. One of the main problems of this grid today is that it has been optimised for the internal operations of each Department.[16] This is partly, but perhaps decisively, due to the way departmental budgets are allocated, although there are signs of positive change. For example, the Commonwealth has undertaken a range of initiatives, stemming from 2002 review of information and communications technology by the Management Advisory Committee and including changes such as the creation of a Chief Information Officers Committee, which will become essential building blocks for the future network.

However, if the information grid is to support the national effects based approach, it will need to be focused equally on internal and external links. This focus will need to fall upon broader issues than connectivity, for the most difficult problems will arise when Commonwealth Government agencies need to share information with state governments, non-government

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International Command and Control Research Technology Symposium, MacLean VA, 13-16 June 2005, pp.16-17.
[16] See S Alford, 'Securing the Commonwealth's Infrastructure', presentation to *Security in Government 2003*, available
<http://www.ag.gov.au/agd/WWW/protectivesecurityHome.nsf/Page/Security_In_
Government_Security_in_Government_2003_Conference_Papers> accessed 21 January 2006, slide 4. It is also important to recognise the improvement to connectivity between departments of late. See S Gordon, 'Re-shaping Australian Intelligence', *Security Challenges*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2005, pp. 52-53.

organisations and industry (not contractors) that also have a role in national security. For example, there are many private security companies that play a role in protecting Australian citizens and infrastructure. It is only a matter of time (if that time is not here already) before those contractors demand access to security intelligence and threat assessments. In addition, the 'sensor to shooter' concept that underpins NCW for the warfighter is unlikely to provide the same richness for the diplomat or aid worker. But the main idea – linking the sources of information, decision-makers and the means to act – can be adapted.

Shared situational awareness is critical to NEBA.[17] However, the form situational awareness takes and the information required to create it will be different from that needed for tactical-level warfighting. For instance, shared situational awareness at the national strategic level is not so much about the local and near-term situation, but understanding the broad and long-term implications of actions, and how those actions may have consequences for the nation in terms of the economy, trade, or long-term relationships. This means planners involved in creating a national effects-based approach will rely on shared data bases,[18] briefings, written information and discussions with colleagues to maintain situational awareness.

Creating shared strategic situational awareness will also involve communicating across departmental, intergovernmental and public-private sector divides. Now people who have previously subscribed to different views on major issues, such as the use and utility of force, will need to use a common lexicon and share some similar attitudes once the decision is made on a course of action (or actions). This should not be interpreted as an imperative for having the same ideas about problems or situations. Given the complexity of the strategic environment, diversity of thinking should be encouraged and fostered so that a 'group average' approach to strategy is avoided.

Further, issues of privacy, commercial advantage and 'need to know' must be broached when creating shared situational awareness. Even straight-forward issues such as security clearances are not simple (or cheap), while the importance of reducing the number of people involved in sensitive issues (known as 'compartments') tend to work against efficient planning and information flows. Finding an approach to shared situational awareness, which makes the most of diversity, will require a range of trade-offs and some deft policy work.

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[17] Shared situational awareness develops as people absorb information, collaborate to understand its implications, and then acquire a shred view of the situation at hand (*Enabling Future Warfighting*, p. 2-6).

[18] Especially those containing geospatial, critical infrastructure, preparedness and political information.

Facilitating self-synchronisation[19] is the main objective because the strategic level is so complex that it defies detailed direction. This complexity arises because activities move at different rates at different times, because the volume of work is immense, and because some actions have the clear potential to have adverse impacts in other areas. One example of this last point is the way concessions given to one party may make another party more obstinate in negotiations; another is how prudent military preparations may damage diplomacy because 'mobilisation' appears threatening to the (foreign) party. It is not yet clear how self-synchronisation will be achieved at the strategic level, but the solution is sure to require significant training, cultural change and attention to information security at the least.

IMPLICATIONS OF NCW AT THE STRATEGIC LEVEL

This discussion of how NCW can be adapted to a national effects-based approach unveils three main implications. The first is that social and information networks are essential to creating the trust, understanding and indeed data essential to the NEBA. This makes taking a 'networked' approach to organisation both logical and worthwhile, although considerable work will be needed to make this relatively simple idea practical.

This gives rise to the second implication, which highlights the role of selection, education and career development for people involved in delivering the NEBA. There are a number of initiatives that could be employed here, including grander visions such as creating a specialised college to educate future strategic leaders. However, there is still significant work that needs to be done to evaluate the different options for providing the people needed for future strategic planning.

The third implication relates to improving, in the first instance, information sharing across government. The ability to collect information once and re-use it several times (while still maintaining its context and integrity) will be an important challenge to bringing NCW to the strategic level. On top of the issues of trust and understanding that have been mentioned above, improved information sharing also needs to ensure legislative protections for privacy are maintained, and that agreements to protective information form sensitive commercial and intelligence sources are protected. Working in coalitions will only complicate this issue further.

One way to enhance training and information sharing would be to encourage the development of an 'exercise culture' within—at first—Commonwealth agencies. Unfortunately, most Commonwealth agencies are only staffed to deal with the 'here and now' or real issues. This means that any time to practice working together outside a crisis is perceived to be a luxury. Despite

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[19] Self-synchronisation occurs where separate actors are able to adjust their plans and actions to support each other, without orders form their superior, as a result of a change in the situation.

this, exercises such as the annual multi-jurisdictional counterterrorism exercises, known as *Mercury*, are a step in the right direction. But even here, it has been difficult to gain the full attention of participating agencies and create realistic—and therefore challenging—conditions for the participants. Using the idea of NCW, and also the tools of the connected network, to help foster this culture could be an important, stand-alone step in helping to promote the national effects-based approach.

Conclusion: Saving a Good Idea from the Bin

It would be great to conclude this essay, and this edition of *Security Challenges*, by saying that EBS is ready to be employed today, and that we should throw a vast amount of national treasure into developing a suitable network to support the NEBA. However—and I am sure the other authors who have written for this special edition agree—that much work needs to be done before Australia gets to that stage. This work includes consultative concept development that draws in a range of people from across government and, indeed, the nation. There is no way that EBS will get beyond the 'good idea' stage until people outside Defence think it is worth pursuing and they are willing to allocate some of their scarce resources to helping.

So instead of consigning this concept to the garbage bin of 'good idea, not in currency',[20] I would recommend that the Australian Government, led by the National Security Division of the Department of Prime Minster and Cabinet, undertake a study of the way Australia has achieved its national objectives over the past decade. While such a study would certainly acknowledge the good work and success of the recent past, the study team should not accept that what worked well yesterday will necessarily be effective in the future.

This review should ask two basic questions. The first question could ask whether Australia would have used other options to achieving its objectives if it employed an effects-based approach. In developing this answer, the study team would firstly need to go beyond a simple review of 'surface' results, and examine the full costs and benefits of recent national security policy initiatives. It would then need to take the effects-based approach beyond the current military focus, and consider the full range of 'tools' that are available to government. Then the real work would begin, as the next step would involve an examination of the legal, structural, cultural, ideational and material barriers to creating a whole-of-government and effects-based approach to national security. Answering this question would take Australia a

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[20] David Schmidtchen of the Land Warfare Studies Centre used a variation of this phrase to describe the current attitude to NCW in the ADF. I think it could just as easily apply to effects-based thinking as well.

long way down the track to developing, and clearing the way to employ, a national effects-based approach.

The second question concerns determining the obstacles to making use of the concept of NCW at the national strategic level. Clearly, there is work to be done in defining what NCW actually means outside its military context, and there are a number of questions—and perhaps dilemmas—that need to be addressed. Some of the most important of these would include questions about employing mission command at the national level, or if and how self-synchronisation could be achieved. There are also important questions to be answered about information overload and cultural change.

This last point is essential because—as Peter Shergold, Secretary of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, noted in 2004—improving the way the Commonwealth government works together is largely about behavioural change. To extend his point, articulating and then teaching people about effects-based approaches, and creating the necessary social and physical networks so they can work together, could well prove to be a major step in promoting change and ensuring a secure future for Australia.

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