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Document created: 1 September 2007

[Air & Space Power Journal - Fall 2007](#)

A Rescue Force for the World

Adapting Airpower to the Realities of the Long War

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Editorial Abstract: Despite an unquestionable abundance of talent and capabilities, the Air Force rescue community has long been plagued by organizational instability, an unclear purpose, and a significant amount of both internal and external professional frustration. The authors advocate redefining the community’s core thinking and missions to promote what it does best—fostering stability, economic growth, and freedom in locations beset with isolation and hopelessness—as solutions to these problems.

The Quadrennial Defense Review Report begins with a simple statement: “The United States is a nation engaged in what will be a long war.”¹ With that understated introduction to the lexicon, the contest known as the long war is now prompting significant change across every instrument of national power. That is especially true within the Department of Defense (DOD), and the Air Force rescue community is not immune.

As Air Force rescue assesses its ability to contribute to the nation’s efforts in the long war, one should note that people have debated the question of its overall relevance for many years. Over time, the rescue community has wandered down several paths that it hoped would demonstrate a military utility that matches its substantial capabilities, but none have led to lasting success—the endurance of the debate offers proof enough of that. One could describe the options pursued (simultaneously) by the community as “too limited” (restricting rescue forces solely to support the air component), “too broad” (literally claiming a doctrinal responsibility to rescue anyone, anywhere in the world, and at any time), or “too much” (attempting to demonstrate offensive and special-operations capabilities and, in so doing, pushing the imperatives of recovering air-component personnel to the periphery of its focus). This has resulted in organizational instability, a sustained lack of clarity of purpose, and a significant amount of professional frustration within and about Air Force rescue. To be sure, the community has an abundance of talent and raw capabilities. But rescue has lacked a vision for the future that not only remains true to its Air Force origins and doctrinal responsibilities but also provides venues to continually exploit its unique capabilities.

The potential for that sort of future exists, but rescue will need to change its thinking in order to achieve it. Instead of trying to be something it is not, rescue should focus on what it does best and apply those capabilities to the long war’s most pressing requirement—winning the global ideological conflict between the isolation and sense of helplessness that breed terrorism on the one hand and a vision of shared interests and interdependency that fosters stability, economic growth, and freedom on the other. The benevolent core of the Air Force’s rescue mission has direct relevance to the hearts-and-minds

contest that will ultimately determine the long war's outcome. Success in that contest lies at the very center of US strategy for defeating global jihadism, and, between periods of peak demand for its conventional wartime mission, rescue's capabilities can make a significant, airpower-centered Air Force contribution to that success.

The rescue community should build a brighter, more stable future for itself by maintaining conventional air-component combat search and rescue (CSAR) capabilities as its first priority. Subordinate only to that, rescue should exploit its unique abilities by initiating and maintaining a program for a continuous series of targeted, highly visible engagements designed to deliver life, health, and goodwill to remote but strategically important locations around the world. It should strive to establish itself as something unique within the DOD—a globally capable enterprise recognized for its expeditionary use of airpower to conduct “white hat” engagements and known worldwide for its compassionate acts. In short, it should become a rescue force for the world.

With a unity of purpose defined in those terms, rescue can create strategic-level effects that it never could have attained via the well-worn paths it has trod for the last 15 years. The remainder of this article substantiates those points, describes what the Air Force's rescue force could become, and explains why that is important to the Air Force's rescue community, the service itself, and victory in the long war.

Groping for a Vision

After a little more than 15 years of work, the Air Force should feel satisfied with the CSAR capability that it has built. Starting from almost nothing in 1989, it activated multiple squadrons and associated support organizations in the continental United States (CONUS) and around the world, fielded about 100 HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters, organized effective staffs, modernized employment concepts that had remained unchanged since Vietnam, built an improved capability for HC-130s, fostered development of pararescue capabilities by categorizing and managing them as a weapon system, and much more. The steady stream of improvements continued even as the rescue community endured the programmatic and leadership turmoil caused by five changes in major-command ownership since 1989. One should also note that all of this occurred while the Air Force's small community of rescue professionals maintained a forward-deployed presence in Southwest Asia that has stood watch over the lives and safety of every service's war fighters in that region during every hour of every day since 1993.

Despite those (and many more) significant achievements, Air Force rescue continues to grope for a defining purpose—one that matches its capabilities and is larger than simply sitting alert in anticipation of a fighter pilot having a bad day. When combined with the absence of a long-term vision for rescue within the community, the search for greater venues for performance manifests itself in a myriad of intra-community conflicts that defy consensus and resolution. Most of those conflicts involve pursuit of some new capability offered without context for how or why it would fit in with the rest. Without such context, the capability itself becomes the vision. The eventual arrival of replacements for the HH-60G and HC-130 will only compound the problem since their improved capabilities will simply trigger a flurry of new initiatives designed to “get rescue to the fight.” But they will emerge, as before, without some goal in mind. Which fight? When? For what strategic purpose? Those basic questions do not receive the thoughtful analysis they deserve. Instead, the pursuit of more military relevancy continues in 100 different directions.

Within that persistent, conceptual haze, rescue has produced an entire generation of operators for whom the very concept of Air Force rescue has no intellectual underpinning and no common theoretical reference point. Without that, there can be no articulation of a path toward some coherent goal that will provide an enduring benefit to the Air Force and DOD—and no way for rescue professionals to envision

a future worth creating.

Containing Disconnectedness

Of course, one must contemplate any future for Air Force rescue in context of the long war, and that reality makes a proper understanding of the nature of the conflict centrally important. Fortunately, the West's understanding of the origins of terrorism has improved significantly since 11 September 2001. Although a detailed discussion of that subject lies well beyond the scope of this article, we now recognize that terrorism is primarily rooted in climates of intractable political alienation, injustice, and perceived helplessness.² In that context, the *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* makes the important acknowledgment that “the War on Terror is a different kind of war.”³ As described in the *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, the primary difference is that “in the short run, the fight involves using military force. . . . In the long run, winning the war on terror means winning the battle of ideas.”⁴ This daunting challenge will require the creatively applied effects of every instrument of our national power if we wish to succeed.

Winning that ideological battle—the contest for hearts and minds—will mean routine and frequent engagement in the weak and failing states that stretch from North Africa to the Philippines and from Central Asia to Central Africa, as well as in the world's ungoverned spaces such as the vast Sahel in Africa.⁵ They are “regions plagued by politically repressive regimes, widespread poverty and disease, routine mass murder, and—most important—the chronic conflicts that incubate the next generation of global terrorists.”⁶ Strategist Thomas Barnett collectively describes these regions as “the least connected to the global economy [representing] . . . the limits of the spread of globalization . . . where the connectivity of the global economy ha[s]n't generated stability, and development, and growth, and peace, and clear rule sets, and democracies. This is where the disconnected people are, and on that basis—no surprise—that's where the terrorists come from.”⁷

Barnett calls the combined space occupied by those regions the “non-integrat[ed] gap” (a convenient term that we shall adopt here for its brevity), and he categorizes the enemy we face there in a nontraditional way. Instead of targeting a bloc of hostile nations, rogue nation-states, or even individual rogue leaders, we should recognize our enemy for what it really is—the “disconnectedness” that defines the gap.⁸ Barnett is not out on an intellectual limb; this condition is the very basis for much of our current national-security strategy. So in that context, a simple metric becomes available for basic assessment of any action we contemplate taking inside the gap (military or otherwise): will it tend to decrease disconnectedness? Certainly, we will sometimes require a range of forceful military actions to create the necessary conditions, but decreasing disconnectedness really means winning the ideological battle, which, in turn, means success in the long war. Granted, conventional military action is an important part of that huge effort, but from a strategic point of view, kinetic operations are only a trailing indicator that preventive engagement efforts have failed. Instead, military force will frequently represent a necessary step *backward* that we will occasionally take in order to move the next necessary two steps forward.

That concept is neither new nor controversial. The terms *humanitarian civic assistance*, *civil affairs*, *theater security cooperation*, *capacity building*, and *foreign internal defense* (FID) all refer to established DOD efforts expressly designed to reduce disconnectedness by forging stronger ties, promoting human rights, improving the image of the United States and the West, increasing stability, and setting conditions that will permit flows of foreign direct investment. The DOD does those things all over the world, every day. In strategic terms, the struggle to build connectivity with failing states represents the *real* central front in the long war. *If we wish to find an enduring future for rescue, we will*

find it there—in the gap, helping our nation and the Western world win the ideological battle.

A Rescue Force for the World

The most direct and useful advice for rescue professionals who make decisions to shape their future would urge them to do what they do best. If an Air Force rescue wing can do anything, it can deploy to austere, remote locations in order to provide hope to desperate people who need it. That's what rescue does when it recovers a fighter pilot, and that's what the community should focus on in a big way during the long war. Rescue should use its capabilities and inherently compassionate mission as both a ticket into the gap and as a nonlethal, even antilethal, weapon in the long war's ideological-political struggle.

With leadership, unity of purpose, and persistence, Air Force rescue could vault itself from its position as tactical-level support player hovering at the periphery of conventional combat operations into a high-visibility position of strategic relevance during the greatest conflict of this generation. It could transform itself into a rescue force for the world. To reach that point, the community must focus on several initiatives.

Maintain Robust Capabilities for Conventional Combat Search and Rescue

Most importantly, rescue must maintain and continually improve its ability to assist isolated personnel in the deep operational environment, and CSAR's mission needs should continue to drive the major acquisition and training efforts of the community.⁹ Nothing else is possible if this part of the contract with the Air Force lapses. True, keeping this task at the center of rescue's consciousness invites accusations that the community is a "one trick pony," capable only of rescuing downed fighter pilots. Those who denigrate that noble mission in such a way are not simply wrong—they fail to comprehend several facts about it.

First, it is a moral duty. Leadership at all levels supports the premise that we have an obligation to war fighters to "bring everybody home." Adm Edmund Giambastiani, vice-chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, describes the reciprocity of that compact when he refers to "the power of a force multiplier as we send our young people into harm's way with the promise that we will not leave them behind."¹⁰ The moral obligation strengthens when one considers that the weight of operational failure during CSAR shifts primarily to those in the worst position to bear it—the people who need rescuing.

Second, CSAR reduces strategic-level risk. By ensuring that rescue forces can reach any part of the operational environment, effective CSAR counters the enemy's ability to transform a tactical-level incident into an event with strategic consequences. Our enemies realize the importance of possessing a captive, and they know that one captive and 30 seconds of video give them a worldwide audience. That scenario not only hurts US efforts by putting pressure on our strategic objectives and by creating significant operational and public-affairs challenges, but also helps the enemy by creating legitimacy, publicity, help in recruiting, and a boost to his financing.

Third, success in that mission means capability for success in many others. The training and integration required to do conventional CSAR create the flexibility that rescue forces use to succeed at a myriad of other types of missions. The classic CSAR mission to recover a downed pilot fuses such capabilities as real-time intelligence analysis and sensor fusion, time-sensitive targeting, net-centric data management, interagency coordination, close air support (CAS) by fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft, ad hoc air refueling, terminal area control, small-team tactics, and battlefield medicine, all at a time and place of the enemy's choosing. For proof that conventional CSAR training produces the most capable force

possible, we need only examine the results of major combat actions during Operation Iraqi Freedom. During those operations, launched from austere, self-supported locations, more than two-thirds of the personnel recovered by Air Force rescue forces came from another component—an outcome made possible because rescue crews had received the best training available.

Fourth, it reduces operational-level risk across the board. If rescue forces are properly organized, trained, and equipped, their response to an isolating event will be neither too small to be effective nor so large that it adversely affects the overall air war. Needlessly retasking the role of a CAS or sensor platform to support a CSAR mission will cause someone to suffer. How will it affect the soldiers and marines who rely on that support for their own effectiveness and survivability? What happens to the high-value target at the receiving end of that package's precision-guided munitions? The presence of a dedicated, professional rescue force and well-rehearsed CSAR command-and-control decision making helps prevent those kinds of mistakes. Further, during a properly executed CSAR mission, supporting assets are at risk only as long as necessary, preventing needless exposure to the enemy and facilitating regeneration of the tasked capabilities.

Last, one finds the weightiest benefit of a robust CSAR capability in the immeasurable effect on operations yet to be planned and conducted. If the Air Force doesn't focus on recovering its own, how will our senior military leadership change its thinking about acceptable risk? If we allow that capability to atrophy, what other missions won't take place? What possibilities will we fail to exploit because the people carrying out the operation would find themselves at risk with no device to mitigate it? How would those decisions affect the decisions and operations of the other services? What effect would they have on the decisions of policy makers?¹¹

All of the capability and flexibility that put those questions to rest comes from building a force focused on the demanding needs of the air component. Ultimately, when the Air Force builds its one-trick-pony capability to recover downed pilots, it isn't building a chow hall that serves only Air Force people—it is building a set of the most flexible, versatile, and useful capabilities on the battlefield. Building and maintaining robust conventional CSAR capabilities benefits the entire joint force.

Go to the Gap

While maintaining its robust capability to support the air component, rescue should seize every opportunity to exploit its existing capabilities inside the gap as an explicitly white-hat rescue force. After air-component requirements, operations inside the gap should become the central organizing principle of the rescue community. The specific objectives of those operations should call for supporting theater programs designed to forge connectivity between the West and the gap, using rescue's unique brand of airpower and broad array of operational and life-saving skills to benefit its inhabitants in a memorable way, and strengthening the depth and breadth of experience of an inherently expeditionary rescue force. Missions undertaken for those purposes will motivate and inspire the rescue community and demonstrate genuine relevance in the long war. Not least, it will help the Air Force by providing what it seeks—a highly visible representation of the best that airpower has to offer. This is not merely a parochial interest of either the rescue community or Air Force. Instead, it goes to the very core of US strategy for defeating terrorism. Former secretary of defense Donald Rumsfeld put it succinctly when he said, "Extremists know that war and anarchy are their friends—peace and order their enemies. . . . We cannot allow the world to forget that America, though imperfect, is a force for good in the world."¹²

Before any of that can happen, the rescue community and, in turn, the Air Force need to recognize those types of missions as legitimate contributions to the strategic efforts of the nation. Without that realization, Air Force rescue will remain stuck in place. With it, that community can become a frontline

force for beating the enemy's strategy instead of the enemy's army, thereby contributing to the rarest and most sublime kind of military victory.

Disaster Response. The most obvious scenario for employment inside the gap would occur during some sort of natural or humanitarian disaster. If Air Force rescue performs well and consistently, it would soon become every theater's 911 force during those types of crises. Starvation in Ethiopia, floods in Bangladesh, noncombatant evacuation operations in Chad, or earthquake in Iran? Send Air Force rescue. Other services can and will continue to contribute their own unique capabilities to those types of events, and this article certainly does not propose that Air Force rescue would (or should) provide the largest or most persistent force. In many cases, however, an expeditionary Air Force rescue unit may be the first DOD force to arrive on scene and, by exploiting capabilities inherent in its organic airpower, initiate operations in locations or under conditions that other services may find prohibitive.¹³ Participation in those operations would put an unmistakable Air Force presence at ground zero. Over time, rescue's inherent capabilities to rapidly assess changing and chaotic situations, establish order, perform effective command and control, and save lives will be widely recognized by the regional combatant commands and (more importantly) by populations at risk around the world.

Those types of large-scale requirements are rare, and even now, at a time when the rescue community must endure a particularly high operations tempo in support of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, plenty of enthusiastic volunteers would go on the road to participate. That was certainly the case when, in March 2000, an HH-60G squadron on its way home from a deployment to Operation Northern Watch in Turkey was rerouted to Mozambique to provide humanitarian assistance after ruinous floods ravaged the country, isolating hundreds of thousands of people. Upon arrival, squadron members flew 240 missions in 17 days and delivered more than 160 tons of humanitarian-relief supplies in an effort still viewed as a significant accomplishment within the HH-60G community.¹⁴

No one should doubt the effectiveness of humanitarian operations in the long war's ideological contest. The response to US humanitarian efforts after the devastating tsunami struck Indonesia in 2004, described by Adm Mike Mullen, chief of naval operations, provides an illuminating example:

I was struck by the results of a nationwide poll conducted two months [after the relief effort]. . . . The poll found that, as a direct result of our humanitarian assistance—and for the first time ever in a Muslim nation—more people favored U.S.-led efforts to fight terrorism than opposed them (40% to 36%). Perhaps more critically, the poll also found that those who opposed U.S. efforts in the war on terror declined by half, from 72% in 2003 to just 36% in 2005. According to the group Terror Free Tomorrow, who commissioned the poll, it was a “stunning turnaround of public opinion” and demonstrates that “U.S. actions can make a significant and immediate difference in eroding the support base for global terrorists.”¹⁵

One detects an implied caution in those results, however. A population ruined by a natural disaster or some other humanitarian crisis will long remember any failure of the United States to respond if it perceives that America had the capacity to do so. Participation in those operations comes with an opportunity cost, but the price of inaction may prove far greater. The world has expectations.

Keep in mind, too, that the enemy also gets a vote in the outcome. On 8 October 2005, a 7.6-magnitude earthquake rocked the Kashmir region, killing 73,000 people and leaving 3 million more homeless. The *London Daily Telegraph* reported from Islamabad that “immediately after the earthquake, the best organised aid relief came from groups such as Pakistan's main radical Islamic party, Jamaat i-Islami, which previously backed the Taliban government of neighbouring Afghanistan. . . . Several Islamist

groups have been praised by normally hostile sectors of the Pakistani media for providing aid relief.”¹⁶

US response to the earthquake was late but not fruitless, and the Pakistanis took note. According to Pakistani doctor Muhammad Farid, “ ‘It has changed our opinion about the United States. . . . Anti-American Muslim clerics were wrong about the American relief workers. . . . They have been accusing all these people of spreading immorality, but these are the people who came to save our lives.’ ”¹⁷ In November of that year, Pakistani newspaper editor Najam Sethi told reporters that the United States “ ‘has had a better profile in Pakistan in the last few weeks than in the last 15 years.’ ”¹⁸ In the words of Admiral Mullen, “these good deeds go far further in delivering the ‘peace and prosperity’ message than any cruise missile ever could.” We were effective inside the gap when “we started showing them a side of American power that wasn’t perceived as frightening, monolithic, or arrogant.”¹⁹ That is what rescue can bring to the table on behalf of the Air Force.

Other Engagement Missions. Although easy to visualize, major disasters and humanitarian-relief events are rare, and we should not consider them the mainstay of an “into the gap” strategy for Air Force rescue. The real benefit will come from repeated, consistent, and short-duration deployments into target countries. Specifically, the core of rescue’s engagement activity will come from preplanned deployments in support of combatant commanders’ theater security-cooperation strategies, designed to achieve predefined objectives. Those objectives should exploit rescue’s greatest strength—its ability to deploy to austere, remote locations to provide hope to desperate people who need it. What would that look like? For starters, rescue personnel can go to Africa, Central America, or Southeast Asia and set up a clinic; pararescuemen can get hands-on experience; and a unit can bring its flight surgeon as well as other medical professionals and stay for a couple of weeks. People who have never seen a doctor in their lives can get a wound treated or a checkup or some simple antibiotics.²⁰ And this should not occur just once—but again and again and again.

Those types of efforts in humanitarian civic assistance comprise just one of a host of missions that could serve as the basis for repeated deployments. Unlike the fairly rare occurrence of disaster-relief efforts, combatant commands offer a wide variety of theater-engagement opportunities as part of their theater security-cooperation plans.²¹ Some opportunities, such as deployments for training (DFT), are not primarily humanitarian in nature. A DFT seeks to facilitate training of the deployed unit, but interaction with the host-nation military is inevitable, allowing the United States to engage in direct military-to-military interaction. Because turboprop aircraft and helicopters are common to air forces of gap countries, DFT requests are dominated by interest in deployment of Air Force rescue units. During those visits, the host-nation military sees the professionalism of US forces firsthand and becomes comfortable working with Americans. They also provide an opportunity for the United States to emphasize important concepts such as respect for human rights and civilian control of the military.

The variety of available missions ensures plenty of opportunity to turn a gap-focused strategy into action. Those occasions will continue to expand since the inherently humanitarian and nonthreatening nature of rescue operations will enable rescue to go where no other Air Force unit can go. For example, after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, a rescue exercise involving US and former Soviet states became one of the first tools used to promote direct military-to-military engagement.²² Rescue also served as a tool for engagement with China. Reflecting on those encounters, Gen Paul Hester, Pacific Air Forces commander, said that he’s “still looking for ways . . . for people to come together in a non-threatening way for other nations to do business together.”²³

Why Foreign Internal Defense Is Different. Some individuals may perceive that the course described for rescue is already occurring via the FID mission of the Air Force’s 6th Special Operations Squadron.

FID has a specific meaning, and this squadron exists for a specific purpose—“to assess, train, advise and assist foreign aviation forces in airpower employment, sustainment and force integration.”²⁴ Although it could serve as an outsourced provider of FID activity if tasked, rescue’s best contributions to the ideological contest will come from doing what it does best—helping people. Further, rescue’s ability to go practically anywhere (including countries that do not have an air force) provides an engagement capability when US interests or relations in such countries are not strong enough to establish a FID program.

However, Air Force rescue professionals who set out to organize an expeditionary, gap-centered strategy for their community would do well to note how Air Force Special Operations Command trains its FID personnel and the methods used to organize its engagements. Through years of experience, 6th Special Operations Squadron has defined a template for success that rescue can adapt for its own purposes. Above all, that unit has established an education and training program designed to maximize the effectiveness of its cadre.²⁵ Informed by the FID experience, rescue professionals should create their own curriculum for professional development that augments conventional CSAR training. Language and cultural-awareness training are important starting points, but much remains. For example, the following areas need attention: learning how United Nations (UN) humanitarian or peace-enforcement operations are organized, participating in the UN’s International Search and Rescue Advisory Group, providing advice to US Pacific Command’s Multinational Planning Augmentation Team or the DOD’s Center for Complex Operations, striving to reduce concerns that some nongovernmental organizations may have about working with the US military, learning the unique support requirements of the Red Cross, or figuring out how to communicate with and support the US Agency for International Development, embassies, Doctors without Borders, and many others. These new challenges are abundant and growing. The DOD needs more capacity to help solve them, and the Air Force would like to highlight airpower’s ability to do that kind of work.

We can accomplish none of the preceding in a vacuum. Rescue’s efforts need to become a carefully coordinated part of existing theater-engagement strategies, and each operation must be meticulously planned. We will need time to turn concepts into actionable plans, learn security-cooperation processes, and establish relationships with combatant-command staffs and DOD security-cooperation agencies. We have much work to do, and leaders at all levels need to emphasize its importance to the rescue community, the Air Force, and the nation. If executed properly and managed well, rescue’s efforts inside the gap could become the stuff of legend—representing a force that generates respect, appreciation, and influence among populations with widely disparate backgrounds. Done right, Air Force rescue could become an entity with an image that transcends the DOD, and one can envision the day when even nations hostile to the United States would welcome the arrival of the guardian angels of the US Air Force into their airspace.

A Glimpse into the Future

Imagine a future in which Air Force rescue shares its existential focus on robust CSAR capabilities with beneficent engagement inside the gap so that both concepts drive the evolution of training, organization, and operations in the rescue community. Imagine, as a result, the transformation of the Air Force’s one-trick pony into a world-renowned humanitarian force filled with multilingual regional experts who have operated all over the world in support of every imaginable type of contingency operation—a force experienced in working with every conceivable flavor of government and nongovernmental agency as it extends its long track record of audacious, high-visibility, white-hat assistance to desperate and appreciative people. Envision that force based not in two CONUS supersquadrons but in the seam states that link the gap to the rest of the world—places such as Romania, Honduras, South Africa, and Singapore.²⁶ Imagine a future in which Air Force rescue has become the tool of choice for opening

relationships with wary nations and gaining access to parts of the world that would otherwise remain off-limits to the United States. Think also of the opportunity to accumulate a detailed, regionally specific knowledge base that would enhance safe operations should the Air Force or another service need to return. Think of the enduring relationships that could be facilitated when an Air Force rescue unit makes a visit. And think of the value that the captains in those units will bring to the Air Force when they become colonels.

Imagine a future in which Air Force rescue's capabilities transported into the gap are the service's most visible image of airpower's contribution to victory in the ideological contest that defines the long war. With a unifying vision manifested in operations and images known and respected around the world, rescue will do things that nobody else can do and, by doing them, contribute to increasing the West's influence across many of the globe's ungoverned and disconnected spaces. Envision the transformation of rescue into something new and, in the process, its promotion to a position of strategic relevance in the greatest conflict of our generation. Imagine, if you will, a rescue force for the world.

Feedback? [Email the Editor](#)]

Notes

1. *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 6 February 2006), v, [http://www .defenselink.mil/pubs/pdfs/QDR20060203.pdf](http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/pdfs/QDR20060203.pdf).
2. *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: The White House, March 2006), 10, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss/2006/nss2006.pdf>.
3. *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* (Washington, DC: The White House, September 2006), 1, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nsct/2006/nsct2006.pdf>.
4. *National Security Strategy*, 9.
5. The Sahel (from Arabic [sahil], meaning border or coast of the Sahara desert) is the boundary zone in Africa between the Sahara to the north and the more fertile region to the south, known as the Sudan (not to be confused with the country of the same name).
6. Thomas P. M. Barnett, "The Pentagon's New Map," *Esquire*, March 2003, 174, <http://www.thomaspmbarnett .com/published/pentagonsnewmap.htm>.
7. Thomas P. M. Barnett, interview by Harry Kreisler, Institute of International Studies, University of California–Berkeley, 8 March 2005, "Describing the Pentagon's New Map," transcript at <http://globetrotter.berkeley.edu/people5/Barnett/barnett-con0.html>.
8. Ibid.
9. An important first step would involve redefining the boundaries of expectations erased in the latest version of its main doctrine document: Air Force Doctrine Document (AFDD) 2-1.6, *Personnel Recovery Operations*. That volume used to be called *Air Force Doctrine for Combat Search and Rescue* but as of 1 June 2005, it has been entirely rewritten and retitled. Perceiving CSAR as "too limited" in scope, the writers attempt to garner additional operational flexibility by using more terms with more expansive definitions. In the introductory text to AFDD 2-1.6, they attempt to suggest that the new doctrine merely puts CSAR into the larger personnel-recovery context, but this reassurance is

unconvincing. A few pages later, for example, it defines the Air Force “PRO [personnel recovery operations] philosophy” in the following remarkable statement, referenced two more times elsewhere in the document: “Although Airmen may place natural emphasis on the recovery of fellow Airmen, Air Force PRO philosophy is based on the assumption that PRO forces must be prepared to recover any isolated personnel anytime, anyplace” (iii, viii, 3). Think about that for a moment. When the chief of staff of the Air Force talks about the doctrinal requirement for the service to recover its own, he describes it as “absolutely fundamental to the culture of the Air Force” and “an ethical and moral imperative.” Bruce Rolfsen, “The Chief Speaks,” *Air Force Times*, 4 September 2006, <http://www.airforcetimes.com/legacy/new/0-AIRPAPER-2049967.php>. The rescue community’s pursuit of something more meaningful has reduced that moral imperative to a mere “natural emphasis.” That disconnect offers powerful evidence of the lack of a shared vision within the Air Force rescue community.

10. Adm Edmund P. Giambastiani Jr., US Navy, vice-chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (remarks to the Worldwide Personnel Recovery Conference, Washington, DC, 9 January 2007).

11. Operation Enduring Freedom offers an excellent illustration of how the decisions of policy makers can be affected if CSAR is not available. Despite the incredible pressure on the president of the United States to initiate attacks against the Taliban in Afghanistan as soon as possible, the commencement of hostilities was delayed explicitly because CSAR was not yet in place to support aircraft making strikes in northern Afghanistan. Bob Woodward, *Bush at War* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002), 163–64.

12. Donald H. Rumsfeld, “Commentary: A Force for Good,” American Forces Press Service, 11 September 2006, <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/NewsArticle.aspx?ID=787>.

13. Examples of that particular operational advantage were evident during operations after Hurricane Floyd (North Carolina, 1999), floods in Mozambique (2000), and Hurricane Katrina (2005). In a more traditional wartime context, one also sees it in Afghanistan, where Air Force rescue forces frequently conduct personnel-recovery and medical-evacuation missions during periods of extreme darkness when conventional Army helicopters cannot fly.

14. “HH-60G Pave Hawk,” fact sheet, *Air Force Link*, July 2006, <http://www.af.mil/factsheets/factsheet.asp?fsID=107>.

15. Adm Mike Mullen, “What I Believe: Eight Tenets That Guide My Vision for the 21st Century Navy,” United States Naval Institute *Proceedings*, January 2006, 14.

16. Isambard Wilkinson, “Islamist Groups Win Support for Pakistan Quake Aid,” *Telegraph.co.uk*, 11 February 2005, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2005/11/02/wpak02.xml>.

17. David Rohde, *New York Times* reporter, cited in Colin Adams, “Winning Hearts and Minds in Kashmir,” *Religion in the News* 8, no. 3 (Winter 2006), <http://www.trincoll.edu/depts/csrpl/Vol8no3/Winning%20Hearts%20and%20Minds%20in%20Kashmir.htm>.

18. Ibid.

19. Mullen, “What I Believe,” 14.

20. This sort of engagement is not entirely unfamiliar to the pararescue community. For years its

members have enhanced their medical training by participating in civilian-paramedic ride-along programs or by logging required clinical time in civilian medical facilities in the United States.

21. The DOD broadly defines the term *security cooperation* as “interactions with foreign defense establishments to build defense relationships that promote specified US interests, develop allied and friendly military capabilities for self-defense and multinational operations, and provide US forces with peacetime and contingency access to a host nation.” Joint Publication 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, 12 April 2001 (as amended through 1 March 2007), 480, http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/new_pubs/jp1_02.pdf.

22. Daniel L. Haulman, *One Hundred Years of Flight: USAF Chronology of Significant Air and Space Events, 1903–2002* (Maxwell AFB, AL: Air Force History and Museums Program in association with Air University Press, 2003), 143.

23. SSgt Julie Weckerlein, “PACAF Commander Speaks of Enhancing Partnerships,” Air Force Print News, Washington, DC, 26 September 2006, <http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?storyID=123027913>.

24. “6th Special Operations Squadron,” Air Force fact sheet, n.d., <http://www2.hurlburt.af.mil/library/factsheets/factsheet.asp?id=3496>.

25. Lt Col Wray R. Johnson, “Whither Aviation Foreign Internal Defense?” *Airpower Journal* 11, no. 1 (Spring 1997): 79–82, <http://www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil/airchronicles/apj/apj97/spr97/johnson.pdf>.

26. A major outside-CONUS basing strategy is neither unrealistic nor without precedent. Some may recall that the Air Rescue Service used to be a global enterprise with bases in Libya, Saudi Arabia, the Azores, Bermuda, Labrador, Korea, United Kingdom, Japan, Philippines, Spain, and so forth. See Donald D. Little’s *Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service, 1946–1981: An Illustrated Chronology* (Scott AFB, IL: Office of MAC History, Military Airlift Command, 1983).

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