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FIGHTING AGAINST ALLIES:

An Examination of “National Caveats” Within the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Campaign in Afghanistan & their Impact on ISAF Operational Effectiveness 2002-2012

VOLUME I: THESIS

A Doctoral Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
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Dedication

To all the unsung ISAF heroes,
who have fought for freedom against tyranny
in Afghanistan
(2001-2014)

Abstract

During the last twenty years, it has become an increasingly common practice for national governments to impose restrictive “national caveat” rules of engagement on the forces they contribute to multinational security operations. These national caveats have regularly led to security crises within these multinational missions, most notably in Rwanda, Bosnia and Kosovo. However, due to government sensitivity, combined with the highly-classified nature of these national caveat rules, no rigorous academic analysis has ever been conducted on this problematic issue and its effects within international security endeavours. The result has been a large ‘caveat gap’ within academic defence literature.

This thesis is the first in-depth, academic examination of the issue of national caveats and their effects within multinational security operations, and is focused on the multinational NATO-led ISAF campaign in Afghanistan. Drawing from new caveat information, including the revelations contained within the cache of diplomatic cables released by *Wikileaks* in 2010-2011, this research analyses the issue of national caveats within the ISAF operation in order to determine both the extent of the national caveat issue within the ISAF mission, and the impact these caveats have had on overall operational effectiveness within the campaign, over the period of a decade of warfare between 2002-2012.

The research utilises the fundamental military principle of “unity of effort”, essential for attaining operational effectiveness in any multinational operation involving disparate national forces, as an analytical lens to analyse the impact of national caveats on ISAF operational effectiveness. It analyses the impact of government-imposed, politico-military caveats on unity of effort among the ISAF’s security forces conducting security operations within the overarching counter-insurgency (COIN) campaign. ISAF security operations are critical for the success of the ISAF COIN campaign, because basic security is a prerequisite for all other ISAF stability operations to proceed along the other lines of operation. The study analyses: firstly, the *ability* of ISAF security forces to be unified in their tasking, given these caveat restraints; and secondly, the *reality* of unity of effort in practice among these forces, in the course of planning and executing on-the-ground security operations within Afghanistan. The findings are then discussed to assess the impact of national caveats on ISAF unity of effort as a whole over the decade, and subsequently, the overall impact of caveated ISAF forces on operational effectiveness within the NATO-led Afghan mission.

This study found that national caveats continuously constrained approximately a quarter of the entire ISAF force between 2002-2012, regardless of fluctuations in total force numbers over the decade. An extensive range of more than 200 caveats were imposed by various NATO and Partner nation governments on ISAF forces over this time period, which hindered ISAF security operations throughout Afghanistan and led to a resultant loss of time and progress along the critical security line of operation within the campaign. Combat caveats, in particular, seriously compromised the ability of ISAF security forces, including large Lead Nation contingents in the northern and western ISAF sectors, to conduct the full range of operations necessary to protect the Afghan population from insurgents, and to achieve the mission of bringing security and stability to Afghanistan. In addition, these combat caveats have: disunified the ISAF coalition; fractured the NATO alliance; geographically and operationally divided the ISAF operation; and enabled the insurgent Enemy in Afghanistan.

Furthermore, the existence of caveated national contingents within the total ISAF force has not only seriously and fundamentally compromised unity of effort within the mission, but has also had a detrimental impact on the operational effectiveness of the ISAF operation as a whole, characterised by the delayed attainment of mission objectives and an ineffective prosecution of the COIN campaign. Government-imposed national caveat rules of engagement have thereby compromised the multinational ISAF operation for over a decade within the Afghan theatre of war, and jeopardized the operational effectiveness and success of this important multinational security campaign. In conclusion, national caveats are potential guarantors of disunity of effort and operational ineffectiveness within every multinational operation in which they are present.

Acknowledgements

It was in early 2008 that my interest in the issue of diverse and problematic rules of engagement within the NATO-led ISAF operation in Afghanistan first began, while working as a lecturer in International Relations at the International Pacific College (IPC) in Palmerston North, New Zealand. When MAJ Steve Challies of the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) visited the College as a guest speaker, and recounted his experiences with caveat-generated chaos within the NATO KFOR operation in Kosovo, I became even more intrigued and fascinated by this problematic and important issue within international security endeavours. Within months, my career path was quite dramatically altered as I embarked upon a Doctorate on the issue at the nearby Centre for Defence & Security Studies (CDSS) at Massey University. So began a six-year expedition into the uncharted academic territory of national caveats and their impact within the ISAF mission in Afghanistan. In the course of this journey, there have been many people who have provided valuable support and assistance to me along the way, and I would like to take the opportunity to thank them here.

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Table of Contents

<i>Dedication</i>	iii
<i>Abstract</i>	v
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	vii
<i>Table of Contents</i>	ix
<i>List of Figures</i>	xiv
<i>List of Graphs</i>	xvii
<i>List of Tables</i>	xix
<i>Schedule of Personal Communications</i>	xx
<i>Authorisation</i>	xxiii
<i>List of Acronyms</i>	xxv
<i>Guide to the Ranks of Commanding Officers within National Armed Forces</i>	xxviii

VOLUME I: THESIS

Introduction	2
---------------------------	---

SECTION I Conceptual Framework of Research

Chapter 1 – Fundamental Concepts: Multinational Security Operations & the Inviolable

Importance of ‘Unity of Effort’	13
Multinational Operations (MNOs).....	14
Assessing the Benefits and Costs of Multilateral Warfare.....	16
Managing Multinational Complexity – Command & Control (C ²)	19
The Fundamental Principle of ‘Unity of Effort’.....	23
Unity of Effort – Vital for Success in MNOs.....	30
Conclusion.....	33

Chapter 2 – What are Rules of Engagement?

Rules of Engagement (ROE): A Definition.....	34
How are ROE Formed for Military Operations?.....	39
The Binding Power of ROE: Enforcement & Punishment.....	45
Conclusion.....	48

Chapter 3 – “National Caveats”

National Caveats.....	50
Caveats: Highly Classified.....	52
Rising Criticism of Caveats.....	56
Instructions for the Use of Force: The Link between ROE & Caveats.....	58
National Commanders: Caveat Mediators.....	65
Conclusion.....	68

Chapter 4 – The Impact of Diverse National Rules of Engagement on Operational Effectiveness within MNOs.....

The Practical Value of ROE: An Assessment.....	69
The Complexity of Disparate ROE within MNOs.....	75
Examples: Negative Caveat Effects within MNOs.....	78
Mitigating the Negative Effects: The Push for ROE Standardisation.....	83
Mitigating the Negative Effects: ‘Good Management’	85
Conclusion.....	87

SECTION II Methodology & Research Context

Chapter 5 – Research Rationale & Methodology: National Caveats & their Impact on the NATO-led ISAF Operation in Afghanistan, 2002-2012.....

Rationale for Research: Caring about Caveats.....	91
Why is Caveat Research Important?.....	92
The ‘Caveat Gap’ in Existing Academic Literature.....	93
How is this Research Original?.....	100
Research Context: Afghanistan.....	102
Research Methodology.....	106
Hypothesis & Aim.....	106
‘Unity of Effort’ as an Analytical Lens.....	107
Key Research Questions.....	107
Method of Research.....	108
Research Phases (2008-2014)	109
Thesis Structure.....	115
Conclusion.....	117

Chapter 6 – The Multinational NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Operation in Afghanistan.....

The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).....	118
Ushering in A New Era in Afghanistan: The Genesis of the ISAF.....	123
The Question of Leadership within the ISAF Mission.....	124
NATO ‘Ownership’ of the Afghan Mission.....	127
NATO’s Operational Plan (OPLAN) for the ISAF Mission.....	132
Following the OPLAN.....	135
Conclusion.....	143

Chapter 7 – The ISAF Counter-Insurgency (COIN) Strategy & Lines of Operation (LOOs).....

From Post-War ‘Nation-Building’ to a COIN Campaign.....	145
ISAF Adopts a COIN Strategy.....	156
Achieving the Mission: ISAF’s <i>Modus Operandi</i>	159
ISAF COIN in Practice: Division of Labour	165
Conclusion.....	172

SECTION III Research Question One: *What is the extent of the ‘caveat problem’ within the NATO-led ISAF multinational mission in Afghanistan?*

Chapter 8 – Fighting against Allies: The Problem of National Caveats within the NATO-led ISAF Operation in Afghanistan, 2002-2012.....

NATO’s Recurring Habit of Caveat Imposition on Operations.....	176
The Grave Problem of National Caveats within the ISAF Operation.....	180
ISAF National Caveats: An Unresolved Issue.....	187
The Abiding Problem of ISAF Caveat-Imposition.....	200
Conclusion.....	201

Chapter 9 – Analysis: Caveat-Free & Caveat-Imposing Numbers & Nations within the ISAF.....

Caveat-Free & Caveat-Imposing TCN Numbers	204
Caveat-Free & Caveat-Imposing TCN Nations	207
Conclusion.....	226

Chapter 10 – Analysis: Caveated ISAF Forces & the Number & Range of Imposed Caveat Restrictions.....

National Caveats: Ham-stringing the ISAF Force.....	229
The Number of Caveat Restrictions within the ISAF.....	236
The Range of Caveat Restrictions within the ISAF Mission.....	247
Conclusion.....	251

SECTION IV Research Question Two: How have ISAF national caveats tangibly impacted on the ISAF's prosecution of security operations within the counter-insurgency (COIN) mission?

Chapter 11 – Tangible Examples: The Effects of ISAF Caveat Imposition on the Security Line of Operation ('SHAPE, CLEAR, HOLD, BUILD').....	254
The Negative Effects of ISAF Caveats on Security Operations.....	255
Tangible Examples: Caveat Effects on ISAF Security Operations.....	259
Caveat Effects: 'SHAPE' (Reconnaissance & Planning)	263
Caveat Effects: 'CLEAR' (Security).....	274
Caveat Effects: 'HOLD' & 'BUILD' (Security & Development).....	280
Conclusion.....	295
Chapter 12 – Degrading Insurgent Capacity: Three Negative Effects on ISAF Combat Operations.....	296
Caveats & Combat Operations.....	296
Effect 1: Diminishing Combat Capability.....	297
Effect 2: Compounding ISAF Under-Resourcing.....	302
Effect 3: Aiding the Enemy.....	307
Conclusion.....	316
Chapter 13 – Inequitable Burden-Sharing within the ISAF Mission.....	318
Unequal Burden-Sharing within the ISAF.....	318
'North' & 'South'.....	320
Disparities in Military Casualties.....	325
Anger, Ultimatums & Early Exits.....	328
The Burden-Sharing Impasse: Three Exacerbating Factors.....	343
Conclusion.....	344

SECTION V Discussion of Research Findings: The Impact of National Caveats on ISAF Operational Effectiveness

Chapter 14 – An Assessment: The Impact of ISAF National Caveats on Unity of Effort.....	346
Unity of Effort: A Key Lens for Assessing the Impact of National Caveats on ISAF Operational Effectiveness.....	347
National Caveats & Disunity of Effort within the ISAF Mission.....	349
How Have Caveats created Disunity of Effort within the ISAF?.....	351
Undermining Supporting Structures: 'Unity of Command' & 'Cooperation, Coordination & Consensus'	357
ISAF Caveats: Eroding Unity of Purpose.....	370
Conclusion.....	373
Chapter 15 – Final Assessment: The Impact of National Caveats on ISAF Operational Effectiveness.....	375
Caveats & the Delayed Attainment of Mission Objectives.....	376
Caveats & the Ineffective Prosecution of the ISAF COIN Campaign.....	384
National Caveats & ISAF Operational Effectiveness.....	401
Conclusion.....	404
Conclusion.....	406
Summary of Research Findings.....	406
Implications: The Future Prosecution of Multinational Operations.....	412
Implications: Afghanistan and the Global Campaign against Terror.....	416
Implications: The NATO Collective-Security Organisation.....	419
Implications: Caveats & Future Academic Scholarship.....	429
Concluding Remarks.....	434

VOLUME II: APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – A Case-Study: Disparate ROE within the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR) & the 2004 Kosovo Crisis.....	2
Historical Background	2
Kosovo Force (KFOR): The Multinational Operation in Kosovo.....	5
Disparate ROE & the 2004 Kosovo Riots.....	8
Assessing the Impact of Diverse ROE within KFOR: A Critical Study.....	14
KFOR: The Catalyst for Change?.....	29
APPENDIX 2 – The Evolution of the Caveat Dilemma within the ISAF Mission: Phases I-II.....	30
Phase I: ‘Assessment and Preparation’ (December 2001 – November 2003).....	30
Phase II: ‘Expansion’ (December 2003 – December 2006).....	33
APPENDIX 3 – The Evolution of the Caveat Dilemma within the ISAF Mission: Phases III-V.....	46
Phase III: ‘Stabilisation’ (January 2007 – June 2013).....	46
Phase IV: ‘Transition’ (March 2011 – Present).....	55
Phase V: ‘Redeployment’ (2015).....	61
APPENDIX 4 – Table Displaying the Complete Record of National Caveat Imposition among the ISAF Troop Contributing Nations (TCNs) in Totality, August 2003 – December 2012.....	63
APPENDIX 5 – Table Displaying Caveat-Free & Caveat-Imposing NATO & Partner Nation TCNs within the ISAF Coalition, December 2003-2012.....	68
APPENDIX 6 –	
<u>List 1</u> : Compiled List of the Full Range of Known National Caveats Imposed by ISAF TCNs on National Armed Forces Deployed to ISAF in Afghanistan, 2001-2012.....	76
<u>List 2</u> : Compiled List of the Full Range of Known National Caveats Imposed by OEF Force Contributors on National Armed Forces Deployed to OEF in Afghanistan, 2001-2012.....	95
APPENDIX 7 –	
(a)Table Displaying Known Caveat Categories Imposed by Each ISAF TCN, 2001-2012....	96
(b)Compiled List of Known National Caveats by Category Imposed by ISAF TCNs on National Forces, December 2001 – December 2012.....	100
APPENDIX 8 –	
(a)Table Displaying Known Major Force Units within the ISAF Mission Constrained by National Caveats (2001-2012).....	150
(b)Compiled List of Known National Caveats Imposed on Major Force Units within the ISAF Mission in Afghanistan, 2001-2012.....	153
APPENDIX 9 – Table Displaying Caveat Imposition among Major and Minor Combat Manoeuvre Units (CMUs) within the ISAF Mission, June 2006 – December 2012).....	167
APPENDIX 10 –	
(a)Table Displaying the Caveat-Free or Caveat-Fettered Forces of the 8 Lead Nations, January 2007-December 2012.....	170
(b)List of Known National Caveats Imposed by Lead Nations of Regional Commands on National Forces Deployed to Afghanistan between 2001-2012.....	172

APPENDIX 11 – Burden-Sharing Analysis: Key Factors Contributing to the Severity of the ISAF Mission’s

Burden-Sharing Dilemma.....	194
Factor 1: The High Numbers of Caveat-Imposing NATO and Partner TCNs within the ISAF.....	194
Factor 2: The Disparity of Military Capabilities between Caveat-Free and Caveat-Imposing TCNs.....	202
In Summary.....	213

**APPENDIX 12 – Burden-Sharing Analysis: The Third Contributing Factor – Caveat-Imposition
among the ISAF Mission’s ‘Lead Nations’**

.....	215
ISAF Lead Nations & the Caveat Rift.....	216
Divided Leadership & a Divided Mission	218
Caveat-Imposing, Lead Nation Italy.....	221
Caveat-Imposing Lead Nation France.....	223
ISAF Sea-Change: Italy and France Eliminate Caveats.....	226
Turkey & Germany: Continued Recalcitrance.....	228
Caveat-Imposing Lead Nation Turkey.....	230
Caveat-Imposing Lead Nation Germany	233
In Summary.....	243

ENDNOTES

Volume I: Thesis.....	437
Volume II: Appendices.....	246

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources.....	525
Secondary Sources.....	543

List of Figures

(Diagrams, Maps, Pictures & Charts)

VOLUME I: THESIS

Figure 1.1	<i>Unity of Effort and Principles of War</i>	26
Figure 1.2	<i>Attaining Unity of Effort in Multinational Operations (MNOs)</i>	27
Figure 1.3	<i>Attaining Unity of Purpose in Multinational Operations (MNOs)</i>	29
Figure 1.4	<i>Attaining Operational Effectiveness in Multinational Operations (MNOs)</i>	30
Figure 1.5	<i>The Overall Picture</i>	31
Figure 2.1	<i>Mandates & Multinational Operations (MNOs)</i>	37
Figure 2.2	<i>National Mandates</i>	38
Figure 2.3	<i>The ROE Formulation Process</i>	39
Figure 2.4	<i>Three Dominant Influences on the ROE Formulation Process</i>	44
Figure 3.1	<i>Mandates, Rules of Engagement (ROE) & National Caveats</i>	65
Figure 4.1	<i>Map of Yugoslavia prior to and following its Fragmentation</i>	80
Figure 4.2	<i>Destruction caused by the Kosovo Riots within the KFOR Operation</i>	81
Figure 6.1	<i>Afghanistan</i>	119
Figure 6.2	<i>ISAF Headquarters</i>	124
Figure 6.3	<i>The ISAF Operation</i>	127
Figure 6.6	<i>NATO Expansion</i>	129
Figure 6.11	<i>The OPLAN for the Geographic Expansion of the ISAF throughout Afghanistan</i> ...	133
Figure 6.12	<i>'Geographic Expansion'</i>	136
Figure 6.13	<i>'Transition'</i>	139
Figure 6.14	<i>In Progress (the Final Tranche of Phase IV)</i>	140
Figure 7.1	<i>Command and Control (C²) in Afghanistan</i>	147
Figure 7.2	<i>Battle for the Population</i>	152
Figure 7.3	<i>COIN Warfare</i>	153
Figure 7.4	<i>The 80/20 COIN Rule</i>	155
Figure 7.5	<i>COIN Strategy of OEF (2003-2005)</i>	157
Figure 7.6	<i>Lines of Operation (LOOs)</i>	163
Figure 7.7	<i>LOO Priority Areas</i>	164
Figure 7.8	<i>The ISAF Chain of Command</i>	166
Figure 8.1	<i>'Coalition of the Impossible'</i>	184

Figure 8.2	<i>NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer</i>	188
Figure 8.3	<i>NATO SACEUR, General Bantz J. Craddock</i>	190
Figure 8.4	<i>The NATO Riga Summit, November 2006</i>	191
Figure 8.5	<i>Frustrated by Caveats (3 COMISAFs)</i>	192
Figure 8.6	<i>Celebrated British Commander, Colonel (COL) Tim Collins</i>	194
Figure 8.7	<i>U.S. Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates</i>	195
Figure 8.8	<i>NATO's Chicago Summit, 2012</i>	199
Figure 11.1	<i>Changing Emphasis in the Conduct of COIN</i>	261
Figure 11.2	<i>Priority Areas for ISAF Security Forces (2008-2014)</i>	262
Figure 11.3	<i>Key Security Tasks for Security Forces</i>	263
Figure 11.4	<i>COMISAF General Dan K. McNeill</i>	265
Figure 11.5	<i>'CAN'T BATS' (Canadian COMISAF Rick Hillier)</i>	271
Figure 11.6	<i>Non-Combat Capable ISAF Combat forces (2006)</i>	275
Figure 11.7	<i>Non-Combat Capable ISAF Combat forces (2006-2008)</i>	277
Figure 11.8	<i>The Ghormach Dispute of 2008 (RC-North)</i>	285
Figure 11.9	<i>Caveated PRT Security Forces (2006)</i>	288
Figure 11.10	<i>Caveated PRT Security Forces (2006-2008)</i>	289
Figure 11.11	<i>German Security Forces Provide No Security (2009)</i>	290
Figure 11.12	<i>Baghlan Province in RC-North (2009-2012)</i>	292
Figure 12.5	<i>Anti-Government Enemy Insurgents (Taliban fighters)</i>	309
Figure 12.6	<i>Alliance Management over the Mission</i>	314
Figure 13.1	<i>Unequal Burden-Sharing</i>	320
Figure 13.2	<i>Lead Nation Forces - 'North' vs 'South'</i>	324
Figure 13.3	<i>Casualty Disproportionality (2009)</i>	326
Figure 13.5	<i>Lead Nation Forces (Photos)</i>	329
Figure 14.1	<i>Unity of Effort - Key to Operational Effectiveness</i>	348
Figure 14.2	<i>No Unity of Effort</i>	351
Figure 14.5	<i>Caveated Lead & Supporting Nations during 'Phase III – Stabilisation'</i>	354
Figure 14.7	<i>Supporting Constructs of Unity of Effort in MNOs</i>	357
Figure 14.8	<i>NATO/ISAF Chain of Command</i>	358
Figure 14.9	<i>Multiple ISAF & National Chains of Command</i>	360
Figure 14.10	<i>Unrest in Herat: Caveated Italian Forces Fail to Intervene</i>	363
Figure 14.11	<i>The 2006 Garmsir Crisis: Caveated Allies Fail to Cooperate</i>	366
Figure 14.12	<i>The Effect of National Caveats on Supporting Constructs</i>	371

Figure 15.1	<i>Compromising Unity of Effort within the ISAF</i>	375
Figure 15.3	<i>The Taliban’s control of RC-South (November 2007)</i>	377
Figure 15.5	<i>RC-South: A ‘No-Go’ Zone for UN personnel (2008)</i>	379
Figure 15.6	<i>Compromising the Timely Attainment of Objectives</i>	384
Figure 15.7	<i>ISAF Under-Resourcing for the Purposes of COIN</i>	388
Figure 15.10	<i>Guarantors of Operational Ineffectiveness</i>	402
Figure 15.11	<i>The ‘Cycle of Caveat Ineffectiveness’</i>	403

VOLUME II: APPENDICES

Figure A1.1	<i>The Dissolution of Yugoslavia</i>	3
Figure A1.2	<i>The Province of Kosovo</i>	6
Figure A1.3	<i>KFOR Command Design (Map of KFOR’s 4 Sectors)</i>	7
Figures A1.4-5	<i>Violence in Kosovo</i>	10
Figures A1.6	<i>Scenes of Destruction</i>	19
Figure A2.1	<i>ISAF’s RC-Capital</i>	31
Figure A2.2	<i>Views over Kabul City</i>	32
Figure A2.3	<i>RC-Capital Badge</i>	33
Figure A2.4	<i>RC-North</i>	34
Figure A2.5	<i>RC-North Badge</i>	35
Figure A2.6	<i>RC-West</i>	35
Figure A2.7	<i>RC-West Badge</i>	36
Figure A2.8	<i>RC-South</i>	39
Figure A2.9	<i>RC-South Badge</i>	41
Figure A2.10	<i>RC-East</i>	42
Figure A2.11	<i>RC-East Badge</i>	43
Figure A3.1	<i>ANA Assessment (September 2010)</i>	52
Figure A3.2	<i>ANP Assessment (September 2010)</i>	53
Figure A12.1	<i>Lead Nations (January 2007- June 2010)</i>	215
Figure A12.6	<i>Lead Nation Divisions Create A Divided Operation</i>	220
Figure A12.15	<i>The Remaining Caveat-Imposing Lead Nations</i>	234

List of Graphs

VOLUME I: THESIS

Graph 6.4	<i>NATO Nations & Partners (August 2003)</i>	128
Graph 6.5	<i>NATO Nations & Partners (March 2004)</i>	128
Graph 6.7	<i>NATO Nations & Partners (July 2008)</i>	130
Graph 6.8	<i>NATO Nations & Partners (July 2009)</i>	130
Graph 6.9	<i>NATO Nations & Partners (July 2010)</i>	131
Graph 6.10	<i>NATO Nations & Partners (July 2011)</i>	131
Graph 9.3	<i>Caveats & the ISAF Coalition (August 2003)</i>	209
Graph 9.4	<i>Caveats & the ISAF Coalition (December 2004)</i>	210
Graph 9.5	<i>Caveats & the ISAF Coalition (December 2006)</i>	213
Graph 9.7	<i>Caveats & the ISAF Coalition (December 2008)</i>	218
Graph 9.8	<i>Caveats & the ISAF Coalition (December 2009)</i>	221
Graph 9.9	<i>Caveats & the ISAF Coalition (December 2012)</i>	226
Graph 10.1	<i>Percentages of Caveated and Caveat-Free Forces within the ISAF (August 2006)</i>	230
Graph 10.2	<i>Percentages of Caveated and Caveat-Free Forces within the ISAF (January 2007)</i>	230
Graph 10.3	<i>Comparing Percentages: Proportion of ISAF Coalition TCNs Imposing Caveats</i>	231
Graph 10.4	<i>Comparing Percentages: Proportion of ISAF Force Constrained by National Caveats</i>	231
Graph 10.7	<i>The Abiding Caveated Quarter of the ISAF Force (February 2008)</i>	235
Graph 10.8	<i>The Abiding Caveated Quarter of the ISAF Force (February 2009)</i>	235
Graph 10.9	<i>The Abiding Caveated Quarter of the ISAF Force (February 2010)</i>	235
Graph 10.10	<i>The Abiding Caveated Quarter of the ISAF Force (January 2012)</i>	235
Graph 10.11	<i>Total Numbers of Declared Caveat Rules within the ISAF Force (2006-2010)</i>	239
Graph 10.12	<i>Comparing Numbers (2006-2010)</i>	240
Graph 10.13	<i>Numbers & Counter-Narcotics Caveats (2006-2008)</i>	241
Graph 10.14	<i>Numbers & Abiding Combat Caveats (2006-2010)</i>	243
Graph 10.15	<i>Categories of ISAF Caveats (2002-2012)</i>	250
Graph 12.2	<i>'Engaged' or 'Stand Aside' Combat Forces</i>	300

Graph 12.3	<i>Engaged Troops by Nation</i>	301
Graph 13.6	<i>Total Coalition Deaths (2001-2007)</i>	332
Graph 13.7	<i>British Casualties (2006-2009)</i>	337
Graph 13.8	<i>Casualties among ANSF forces (2007-2008)</i>	340
Graph 14.4	<i>Caveat-Imposing Lead Nations (2003-2012)</i>	353
Graph 15.2	<i>Increasing Insecurity in Afghanistan (2003-2007)</i>	377
Graph 15.4	<i>Cordesman’s Graph of Insurgent Attacks (2003-2009)</i>	378
Graph 15.8	<i>Afghan Civilian Casualties (2008)</i>	395
Graph 15.9	<i>Losing Hearts and Minds (2004-2009)</i>	400

VOLUME II: APPENDICES

Graph A11.2	<i>Caveat-Imposing & Caveat-Free TCNs (2003-2012)</i>	195
Graph A11.3	<i>Overall Caveat-Imposing & Caveat-Free TCN Percentages</i>	196
Graph A11.4	<i>The NATO Nation Majority (2003)</i>	197
Graph A11.5	<i>The NATO Nation Majority (2012)</i>	197
Graph A11.6	<i>Caveat-Free TCN Numbers (NATO vs Partner Nations)</i>	198
Graph A11.7	<i>Caveat-Imposing TCN Numbers (NATO vs Partner Nations)</i>	198
Graph A11.9	<i>NATO Nation Percentages (2003-2012)</i>	200
Graph A11.11	<i>Partner Nation Percentages (2003-2012)</i>	201
Graph A11.12	<i>ISAF TCNs – The Total Caveat Picture (2003-2012)</i>	202
Graph A12.4	<i>Proportion of Caveat-Imposing NATO Lead Nations (2003)</i>	219
Graph A12.5	<i>Proportion of Caveat-Imposing NATO Lead Nations (2006)</i>	219
Graph A12.9	<i>Proportion of Caveat-Imposing NATO Lead Nations (2009)</i>	229
Graph A12.10	<i>Proportion of Caveat-Imposing NATO Lead Nations (2012)</i>	229
Graphs A12.11-14	<i>9 Years of Caveat Obstinacy (December 2003 – December 2012)</i>	230

List of Tables

VOLUME I: THESIS

Table 6.15	<i>ISAF Troop Contributing Nations (TCNs), December 2012</i>	142
Table 9.1	<i>Total Numbers of Caveat-Free and Caveat-Imposing ISAF NATO & Partner Nations (2003-2012)</i>	204
Table 9.2	<i>Total Caveat-Free and Caveat-Imposing TCN Numbers and Percentages (2003-2012)</i>	206
Table 9.6	<i>Caveat-Free ISAF Nations (2003-2012)</i>	215
Table 10.5	<i>Fettered Force Numbers (2007-2012)</i>	232
Table 10.6	<i>Total Fettered Forces & Percentages (2007-2012)</i>	234
Table 12.1	<i>Caveated Combat Units (2002-2012)</i>	298
Table 12.4	<i>A ‘Dog’s Breakfast’</i>	306
Table 13.4	<i>The Great Divide (Deaths, 2001-2009)</i>	327
Table 14.3	<i>Caveat-Imposing TCNs (2001-2012)</i>	352
Table 14.6	<i>Total Caveated Force Units (2003-2012)</i>	355

VOLUME II: APPENDICES

Table A11.1	<i>Overall TCN Numbers & Percentages (Caveat-Free & Caveat-Imposing TCNs, 2003-2012)</i>	195
Table A11.8	<i>NATO Nation Table (Caveat-Free & Caveat-Imposing, 2003-2012)</i>	199
Table A11.10	<i>Partner Nation Table (Caveat-Free & Caveat-Imposing, 2003-2012)</i>	201
Table A11.13	<i>Puzzling Military Disparities (Caveat-Imposing TCNs)</i>	206
Table A11.14	<i>Puzzling Military Disparities (Caveat-Free TCNs)</i>	212
Table A12.2	<i>Caveats & the ISAF Lead Nations (August 2003 – December 2005)</i>	217
Table A12.3	<i>Caveats & the ISAF Lead Nations (November 2006 – April 2009)</i>	218
Table A12.7	<i>Lead Nation Rotations (RC-Capital & RC-South)</i>	225
Table A12.8	<i>Caveats & the ISAF Lead Nations (June 2009-December 2009)</i>	228

Schedule of Personal Communications

Name	Subject	Place	Date
Personal Communications			
<p>NZDF LTCOL Roger McElwaine, Commander of NZDF Waiouru Military Camp (2009), and former Commander of the NZ-led ISAF PRT in Bamyan Province, Afghanistan (CRIB 10, 2007)</p>	<p>NZ's Experience with Caveated Forces within the ISAF Operation in Afghanistan</p>	<p>Wharerata, Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand.</p>	<p>26 Feb. 2009</p>
<p>Member of New Zealand Security Intelligence Service (NZSIS) *Identity Protected*</p>	<p>ISAF Caveats/Rules of Engagement (ROE)</p>	<p>Wellington, New Zealand.</p>	<p>12 Jun. 2009</p>
<p>NZDF BRIG Roger Mortlock (Ret'd), Senior Lecturer in Command Studies at CDSS (via NZDF Military Studies Institute), & the former UN Operational Commander of UNAVEM II in Angola (1992)</p>	<p>UN Angola Operation, Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC) & Consequences of ROE Non-compliance</p>	<p>Centre for Defence & Security Studies (CDSS), Palmerston North, New Zealand.</p>	<p>3 Nov. 2009</p>
<p>NZDF MAJ Jane Derbyshire, NZDF Teaching Fellow at CDSS in Military Law (via NZDF Military Studies Institute)</p>	<p>LOAC, Customary International Law (CIL), ROE & ROE Enforcement Mechanisms</p>	<p>Centre for Defence & Security Studies (CDSS), Palmerston North, New Zealand.</p>	<p>18 Nov. 2009</p>
<p>NZDF MAJ Josh Wineera, NZDF Teaching Fellow at CDSS in Tactics (via NZDF Military Studies Institute)</p>	<p>I: Command and Control (C²) & C² Operational Environments</p>	<p>Centre for Defence & Security Studies (CDSS), Palmerston North, New Zealand.</p>	<p>27 May 2010</p>

" "	II: C ² within Coalitions & Alliances	Centre for Defence & Security Studies (CDSS), Palmerston North, New Zealand.	17 Jun. 2010
Interviews			
<p>NZDF LTCOL Andrew Shaw, <i>Commanding Officer of NZDF Command & Staff College, Trentham Military Camp in Wellington, & former Liaison Officer at U.S.-led RC-East Headquarters, OEF operation (2005)</i></p>	ISAF Operational Design, ROE Formulation & the Impact of Caveats/ROE in Afghanistan	NZDF Command & Staff College, Trentham Military Camp, Wellington, New Zealand.	23 Nov. 2009
<p>NZDF MAJ Steve Challies, Teaching Fellow at CDSS in Tactics (via NZDF Military Studies Institute)</p>	KFOR National Caveats & the 2004 Kosovo Crisis	Centre for Defence & Security Studies (CDSS), Palmerston North, New Zealand.	1 Dec. 2009
<p>Senior Italian Military Official <i>*Identity Protected*</i></p>	ISAF National Caveats, Italian Caveats & German Caveats within the ISAF Operation.	Italian Embassy, Washington D.C., United States.	25 Aug. 2010
<p>U.S. Army LTGEN David W. Barno (Ret'd) <i>Senior Advisor and Senior Fellow at the Center for a New American Security (CNAS) in Washington D.C., & formerly the Operational Commander of Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan (CFC-A), Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), between 2003-2005</i></p>	ISAF National Caveats, Caveat-related Difficulties posed to the COMISAF & other ISAF Planning & Field Commanders, ISAF Casualty Disparities, the ISAF Burden-Sharing Divide, Caveated Combat Forces, the Value of Caveated Military Forces in Afghanistan	Center for a New American Security (CNAS), Washington D.C., United States.	26 Aug. 2010

<p>NZDF LTCOL Nick Gillard, <i>Military Adviser at the NZ Embassy, London, and former Chief of Staff at the NZ-led PRT in Bamyán Province, Afghanistan (CRIB 14, 2009)</i></p>	<p>ISAF Command Design, the Roles of the various Security Units within the ISAF Mission's Security Line of Operation (LOO), ROE & their Impact on Military Commanders, National Caveats within Multinational Operations (MNOs), ISAF National Caveats</p>	<p>New Zealand High Commission, London, United Kingdom.</p>	<p>1 Sept. 2010</p>
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Personal Correspondence

<p>Cathy Downes, <i>Professor of Information Management at the College of National Defense University (NDU), Washington D.C.</i></p>	<p>ISAF Caveats and Tangible Examples of Negative Effects (via a forwarded email of a caveat-related experience of a U.S. Department of State official in Northern Afghanistan - on condition of original sender's anonymity)</p>	<p>National Defense University (NDU), Washington D.C., United States.</p>	<p>3 Sept. 2009</p>
<p>NZDF LTCOL Justin S. Emerson, <i>Deputy Director of Defence Legal Services, Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force, Wellington</i></p>	<p>NZ involvement in the ISAF Mission in Afghanistan, ROE, International & National Mandates, Mandate Formulation</p>	<p>HQJF Wellington</p>	<p>8 Dec. 2009</p>
<p>NZDF MAJ Terrence M. Brown, <i>NZ Liaison Officer at USCENTCOM Headquarters, Florida, United States (2010)</i></p>	<p>ISAF Caveats</p>	<p>Correspondence via the New Zealand Embassy, Washington D.C., United States.</p>	<p>26 Aug. 2010</p>
<p>NZDF AIRCDRE Greg Elliott, <i>Senior National Representative NZ National Liaison Team at USCENTCOM (2010) & former Commander of the NZ-led ISAF PRT in Bamyán Province, Afghanistan (CRIB 14, 2009)</i></p>	<p>ISAF National Caveats & the Classified Nature of ROE/Caveats</p>	<p>Correspondence via the New Zealand Embassy, Washington D.C., United States.</p>	<p>27 Aug. 2010</p>

Authorisation

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From: DERBYSHIRE JANE, MAJ
Sent: Wednesday, 29 July 2009 11:52 a.m.
To: GRIGGS CHRIS, CDR
Subject: [Permission to use Ops Law manual](#)

Hi Sir,

As you may or may not be aware, I am part of a supervisory panel for a PhD student at Massey. She is doing her doctorate on NATO mandates.

I am writing to ask your permission for her to use the Ops Law Companion. The first page requires DLS approval for anyone outside the NZDF.

I will advise her that some is out of date and needs to be amended. It is just a starting block for her.

Regards

Jane

The information contained in this Internet Email message is intended for the addressee only and may contain privileged information, but not necessarily the official views or opinions of the New Zealand Defence Force. If you are not the intended recipient you must not use, disclose, copy or distribute this message or the information in it. If you have received this message in error, please Email or telephone the sender immediately.

From: GRIGGS CHRIS, CDR
Sent: Wednesday, 29 July 2009 14:12
To: DERBYSHIRE JANE, MAJ
Subject: [RE: Permission to use Ops Law manual](#)

[Hello Jane](#)

[You are delegated authority to decide which parts of the Ops Law Companion may be released to your student, noting that you are not to release any part which is \(or should be\) marked R*STRICTED.](#)

[Regards](#)

C.J. GRIGGS

Commander, RNZN

Deputy Director of Legal Services - Operations Law

Headquarters New Zealand Defence Force

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DTelN 349 7716

From: **DERBYSHIRE JANE, MAJ**

Date: Wed, Jul 29, 2009 at 2:14 PM

Subject: **FW: RE: Permission to use Ops Law manual unclassified**

To: Regeena Kingsley

Hi Regeena,

Here is the authority to use the Ops Law manual - unless it is marked with 'r*stricted'. I don't believe any of it is.

Hopefully it is of some use - albeit probably limited.

Regards

Jane

List of Acronyms

ANA	Afghan National Army
ANP	Afghan National Police
ANSF	Afghan National Security Force
AO	Area of Operations
AOR	Area of Responsibility
AUSCANNZUKUS	Australia, Canada, New Zealand, United Kingdom and United States Command, Control, Communications and Computers (C4) Alliance (also known as the 'Five Eyes' Alliance)
BASIC	British-American Security Information Council
BRIG	Brigadier
C ²	Command and Control
CAPT	Captain
CDF	Chief of Defence Force
CDSS	Center for Defence & Security Studies, Massey University
CENTCOM	Central Command Headquarters (U.S.)
CFC-A	Combined Forces Command – Afghanistan (OEF HQ)
CHOD	Chiefs of Defence (NATO)
CIL	Customary International Law
CIMIC	Civil-Military Cooperation
CIVPOL	Civilian Police (UNMIK Operation)
CMU	Combat Manoeuvre Unit
CN	Counter-Narcotics
CO	Commanding Officer
COIN	Counter-Insurgency
COL	Colonel
COMISAF	Commander of the ISAF
COM-KFOR	Commander of the KFOR
CSTC-A	Combined Security Transition Command Afghanistan
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DPKO	Department for Peacekeeping Operations (UN)
EU	European Union
FOB	Forward Operating Base
FSB	Forward Support Base

FYR Macedonia	The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
HQ	Headquarters
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IFOR	Implementation Force (IFOR)
IJC	Intermediate Joint Command, Kabul (ISAF)
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
ISAF HQ	ISAF Multinational Command Headquarters (Kabul)
JANIB	Joint Afghan-NATO Inteqal Board (ISAF Phase IV – Transition)
JFC	Joint Forces Command, Brunssum (NATO)
KFOR	Kosovo Force (NATO-led and operated)
KLA	Kosovo Liberation Army
KPC	Kosovo Protection Corps
KPS	Kosovo Police Service
LOAC	Law of Armed Conflict
LOO	Line of Operation
LT	Lieutenant
LTCOL	Lieutenant Colonel
LTGEN	Lieutenant General
MAJ	Major
MAJGEN	Major General
MAP	Membership Action Plan (NATO)
MEDEVAC	Medical Evacuation
MLOT	Mobile Liaison Observation Team
MNB	Multinational Brigade (Within the KFOR Operation in Kosovo)
MNF	Multinational Force
MNFC	Multinational Force Commander
MNO	Multinational Operation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTA	Military Technical Agreement
NAC	NATO's North Atlantic Council
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NZDF	New Zealand Defence Force
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan)
OFOF	Orders for Opening Fire
OMLT	Operational Training and Mentor Teams

OPLAN	Operational Plan (NATO)
OPORD	Operations Order
PfP	Partnership for Peace (NATO Programme)
POMLT	Police Operational Training and Mentor Teams
PRT	Provisional Reconstruction Team
PSO	Peace Support Operation
QRF	Quick Reaction Force (a rapid-response unit located in each ISAF sector)
R&D	Reconstruction & Development (ISAF's third LOO post-2006)
RC-Capital	Regional Command Capital (Kabul Province)
RC-East	Regional Command East
RC-North	Regional Command North
RC-South	Regional Command South
RC-West	Regional Command West
R&D	Reconstruction & Development Programmes (ISAF)
RDZ	Regional Development Zone
ROE	Rules of Engagement
ROF	Rules for Opening Fire
RUSI	Royal United Services Institute (RUSI)
SACEUR	Supreme Allied Commander –Europe (NATO)
SAS	Special Air Service (New Zealand Special Forces)
SHAPE	Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, Mons (NATO)
SOFs	Special Operations Forces
SOFA	Status of Forces Agreement
TCN	Troop Contributing Nation (ISAF)
TF	Task Force
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission Afghanistan
UNAMIR	United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda
UNAVEM II	United Nations Angola Verification Mission II
UNMIK	United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
UNPROFOR	United Nations Protection Force (Bosnia, Croatia and Herzegovina)
UNTAET	United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
U.K.	United Kingdom
U.S.	United States

Guide to the Ranks of Commanding Officers within National Armed Forces

<u>NAVY</u>		<u>AIR FORCE</u>		<u>ARMY</u>	
<u>COMMISSIONED OFFICERS</u>					<i>Number of Personnel Under Command</i>
<i>Admiral of Fleet</i>	<i>Marshal of Air Force</i>	<i>Field Marshal</i>	*****	100,000+	
<i>Admiral</i>	<i>Air Chief Marshal</i>	<i>General</i>	****	50,000	(Army)
Vice Admiral (VADM)	Air Marshal (AIRMSHL)	Lieutenant General (LTGEN)	***	20-40,000	(Corps)
Rear Admiral (RADM)	Air Vice Marshal (AVM)	Major General (MAJGEN)	**	10-18,000	(Division)
Commodore (CDRE)	Air Commodore (AIRCDRE)	Brigadier (BRIG)	*	5-10,000	
Captain (CAPT)	Group Captain (GPCAPT)	Colonel (COL)		3-5,000	(Brigade)
Commander (CDR)	Wing Commander (WGCDR)	Lieutenant Colonel (LTCOL)		500-900	(Battalion)
Lieutenant Commander (LT CDR)	Squadron Leader (SQNLDR)	Major (MAJ)		200-500	
Lieutenant (LT)	Flight Lieutenant (FLTLT)	Captain (CAPT)		100-200	(Company)
Sub Lieutenant (SLT)	Flying Officer (FGOFF)	Lieutenant (LT)		30-40	(Platoon)
Ensign (ENS)	Pilot Officer (PLTOFF)	Second Lieutenant (2LT)			
Midshipman (MID)	Officer Cadet (OCDT)	Officer Cadet (OCDT)			

<u>NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS</u>				
Warrant Officer (WO)	Warrant Officer (WO)	Warrant Officer Class 1 (WO1)		
		Warrant Officer Class 2 (WO2)		
Chief Petty Officer (CPO)	Flight Sergeant (F/S)	Staff Sergeant (SSGT)		
Petty Officer (PO)	Sergeant (SGT)	Sergeant (SGT)		36-40 (Platoon)
Leading Rating (L--)	Corporal (CPL)	Corporal (CPL)		10-12 (Section)
Able Rating (A--)	Leading Aircraftsman (LAC)	Lance Corporal (LCPL)		4-6 (Squad)
Ordinary Rating (O--)	Aircraftsman (AC)	Private (PTE)		