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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 Defence and Strategic Studies at Massey University, Manawatū New Zealand

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2014
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 unchartered 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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<td>NZ’s Experience with Caveated Forces within the ISAF Operation in Afghanistan</td>
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<td>UN Angola Operation, Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC) &amp; Consequences of ROE Non-compliance</td>
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**Interviews**

| **NZDF LTCOL Andrew Shaw,** | **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** |
| **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)** |  |  |  |

| **NZDF MAJ Steve Challies,** | **KFOR National Caveats & the 2004 Kosovo Crisis** | **Centre for Defence & Security Studies (CDSS), Palmerston North, New Zealand.** | **1 Dec. 2009** |
| **Teaching Fellow at CDSS in Tactics (via NZDF Military Studies Institute)** |  |  |  |

| **Senior Italian Military Official** | **ISAF National Caveats, Italian Caveats & German Caveats within the ISAF Operation.** | **Italian Embassy, Washington D.C., United States.** | **25 Aug. 2010** |
| ***Identity Protected*” |  |  |  |

| **U.S. Army LTGEN David W. Barno (Ret’d)** | **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** |
| **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** |  |  |  |
| **NZDF LTCOL Nick Gillard,**  
| Military Adviser at the NZ Embassy, London, and former Chief of Staff at the NZ-led PRT in Bamyan Province, Afghanistan (CRIB 14, 2009) | 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 | New Zealand High Commission, London, United Kingdom. | 1 Sept. 2010 |

**Personal Correspondence**

| **Cathy Downes,**  

| **NZDF LTCOL Justin S. Emerson,**  

| **NZDF MAJ Terrence M. Brown,**  
| NZ Liaison Officer at USCENTCOM Headquarters, Florida, United States (2010) | ISAF Caveats | Correspondence via the New Zealand Embassy, Washington D.C., United States. | 26 Aug. 2010 |

| **NZDF AIRDRE Greg Elliott,**  
| Senior National Representative NZ National Liaison Team at USCENTCOM (2010) & former Commander of the NZ-led ISAF PRT in Bamyan Province, Afghanistan (CRIB 14, 2009) | ISAF National Caveats & the Classified Nature of ROE/Caveats | Correspondence via the New Zealand Embassy, Washington D.C., United States. | 27 Aug. 2010 |
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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

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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
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
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<td>Captain</td>
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<td>CDF</td>
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<td>DDR</td>
<td>Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration</td>
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<td>DPKO</td>
<td>Department for Peacekeeping Operations (UN)</td>
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<td>FOB</td>
<td>Forward Operating Base</td>
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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
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