**Long Term Defence Planning**

**Title**

**Agenda**

**Aim**

**Background**

Defence Planning is a very complex area that influences future defence effectiveness and efficiency. Defence planning seeks to ensure that a nation has the necessary forces, assets, facilities and capabilities to fulfil its tasks throughout the full spectrum of its missions.

Long term defence planning is a specific planning discipline that is related to the relatively distant future. It faces a lot of difficulties which are consequences of uncertainties and contingencies of the future. Uncertainties and contingencies are a great challenge for defence planners and political decision makers.

Long term defence planning is a interdisciplinary process that comprises many various activities. Activities are mutually dependent and precise coordination is paramount. The interdisciplinary planning approach requires a strong cooperation among defence planers, military commanders, various specialists, political authorities, etc.

A precisely defined methodology could be a very useful and helpful tool for conducting long term defence planning.

**Definition**

A military organisation is a complex social system which is designed to act in dynamic and unstable conditions. Preconditions of its development and existence are regularity of function and adaptation to environment changes. Management has a key role in fulfilling those preconditions.

There are many definitions of management because various authors define management in different ways. One of the overall definitions is: Management is the process of planning, organising, leading and controlling the work of organisation members and of using all available

organisational resources to reach stated organisational goals.

The definition points out the major characteristics of management:

* Management is a process;
* Key functions of the management process are planning, organising, leading and control;
* A management process is directed to accomplishing predefined goals;
* Managers, as owner of the management process, make decision about allocation and use of organisational resources.

Defence management is in certain areas different from business management. The main characteristics of defence management are:

* Defence goals are mainly defined by the political establishment. Defence managers are only responsible for accomplishing goals;
* The purpose of defence is not profit, but fulfilment of some national and social needs;
* The government provides necessary resources for accomplishing goals, defence managers are supposed to use resources efficient;
* Development and function of defence depend on decisions of a government and other state institutions.

The definition of management pointed out that the first stage of the management process is planning. That is the process of setting objectives and goals, and formulating strategies to meet them. Planning involves the development of a complete set of plans and sub-plans which are

necessary for coordinating and integrating organisational activities.

In the NATO SAS-025 publication, *Handbook on Long Term Defence Planning*, LTDP is defined as

**“a process that investigates possible future operating environments and develops a force structure development plan (SDP) to best adapt the defence organisation to those environments given a host of constraints – including financial ones”.**

This is a relatively detailed definition which points out that the main purpose of long term defence planning is the best adapted defence organisation which would be accomplished by developing the SDP.

Long term defence planning is never just a technical procedure. It is also a highly political process that needs to be discussed in political terms (i.e. good and continuous dialogue must exist between long-term planners and policy makers). At the same time, if care is not taken to ensure objectivity in LTDP, it risks being discussed as just a political tool.

There are three main planning time horizons: long-term, middle-term and short-term. In management theory, short-term planning usually considers a time horizon of 1-2 years, middleterm 2-5 years and long-term 5 years or more.

Long term planning, in Defence and business, has challenged analysts and managers for as long as it has been attempted. Most practitioners agree that it is as much an art as a science.

**Purpose**

Too often short-term views on security have dominated the defence debate, based on snapshot views of the world, and the cost of Defence. The argument is “there is no threat, so why spend?”. As already stated, strategic situations change rapidly whilst the building of defence capabilities and expertise takes time. All strategic defence planning must therefore take the long-term view.

Recent research indicates that many long term plans are never implemented and that others prove to be useless in organizations faced with rapidly changing, difficult to predict, environments. Why then do we need long term planning?

The general answer to the previous question is that the problem is not in planning or plans, but it could be in people who are responsible for their implementation. Plans are not magic wands. Any plan must be accompanied by commitment and action if it is to achieve results.

The general purpose of LTDP is to (re)consider the mission of the Defence and to establish realistic long term goals and objectives consistent with that mission, as well as to define strategies for their fulfilment. Also, LTDP will promote desirable development of the Defence and to avoid unwanted effects.

Defence organizations act in a very complex and unstable environment. Long term defence planning encourages thinking about contingencies and helps the Defence prepare for this. Long term defence planning increases the likelihood of success by providing insights into future risks.

Long term defence planning also increases understanding of the Defence strengths and weaknesses in facing the changing environment.

Long term defence planning enables careful consideration of defence capabilities that leads to priority-based resource allocation and other decisions. Furthermore, LTDP optimizes defence systems, structures and processes. Also, LTDP establishes a link to long term financial or political challenges (e.g. replacement of aircraft).

A long term defence plan has to be flexible and practical and yet serve as a guide to developing and implementing the next level plans and programs. A long term defence plan also has to enable an evaluation of how those plans and programs are progressing, and allow adjustments when necessary.

**Approaches**

There is no universally accepted method for LTDP. Many of the long term planning methods employed for Defence have been adapted from the commercial sector. Some methods have been specifically developed for defence planning.

Many different analytical approaches have been applied to LTDP over the years. Each of these general approaches originates from a specific perspective on the problem. The NATO Handbook on Long Term Defence Planning pointed out the following approaches:

• **Resource-constrained Planning.** The objective of this planning approach is to provide a viable defence capability that is sustainable within the provided budget. It attempts to maximize defence capability for the funds available.

• **Incremental Planning.** This approach seeks in an evolutionary manner to improve the existing inventory of defence capabilities. Existing capabilities form the foundation of new capabilities. The approach focuses on the assured enhancement of current capabilities and, as such, tends to concentrate on the near-term developments and options.

• **Scenario-based planning.** This approach utilises a representative set of hypothetical situations for the employment of defence forces. The situations are specified in terms of environmental and operational parameters. Defence capability requirements are determined from assessments of the ability to achieve formulated mission objectives.

• **Threat-based planning.** The threat-based approach involves identifying potential adversaries and evaluating their capabilities. Defence capability requirements are based on the criterion of defeating the enemy. Quantitative and qualitative solutions are explored. This was the common planning approach employed during the Cold War. It differs only from scenario-based planning in that humanitarian and other non-threat scenarios are excluded from the scenario set.

• **Capability-based planning.** This approach involves a functional analysis of expected future operations. Defence capabilities are identified based on the mission(s) the forces are given. This is performed in the absence of specific threats or conditions. The outcome of such planning is not concrete weapons systems and manning levels. Instead, this form of planning identifies the tasks to be done and generic capabilities needed to accomplish them.

The defence planning approaches described above have been described as independent methods for clarity. Each method has own advantages and disadvantages. It is rare for defence planning to be conducted using one method exclusively. In practice, long term defence planning is more

commonly conducted employing a combination of these planning approaches.

**Process**

Development of Defence is ideally an ongoing, evolutionary process, led by strategic guidance, pushed by technology advances, constrained by economics and politics, and to some extent, pulled by users’ perceptions of the requirements. The aim is to maintain the necessary defence

capability in an era of reducing public spending and increasing demands for efficiency, accountability and transparency in acquisition processes.

The comparative and content analyses of different models of LTDP indicate that a LTDP process should include the following stages:

1. Political Guidance Analysis

2. Environmental Assessment

3. Mission Analysis

4. Planning Situations Development

5. Capability Requirements Determination

6. Capability Assessment

7. Options Development

8. Solution Selection

This model is recommended because it satisfies the following important criteria:

• It is top-down;

• It gives a clear audit trail;

• It facilitates quantitative analysis;

• It has clearly identifiable sub-processes with defined in- and outputs;

• It has been tested and demonstrated.

**Political Guidance Analysis** is the first stage in the LTDP process. The major inputs are: national interests and goals, national security and defence strategies, roles and importance of allies, friendly nations and international organizations for Defence etc. Political Guidance Analysis includes the following steps:

• Specify defence policy,

• Identify limitations,

• Identify defence missions,

• Identify level of ambitions (LoA) and priorities.

The first step includes detailed examination of the main national security, defence and foreign affair documents in order to realise political intention related to Defence as well as political implication for Defence. The purpose of the second step is to identify political and economical constraints for Defence. The output from the first and second step of Political Guidance Analysis makes the realisation of the third and fourth steps possible. The execution of these steps enables the precise identification of defence missions, the level of ambition as well as priorities.

The second stage in the LTDP process is the **Environmental Assessment**. The major inputs to this stage are national interests against which an environmental assessment will be undertaken to identify the events, issues and trends which may have an impact.

The Environmental Assessment consists of four steps:

• Gather the necessary information

• Analyse the information

• Identify opportunities, risk and threats

• Develop a sufficient number of strategic situations.

**Mission analysis** is the third stage of the LTDP process. This is mainly a military related activity whose purpose is to identify what should be done in order to achieve determined defence “ends” i.e. defined defence objectives. The main inputs to this stage of the planning process are defence missions and operational concepts.

**“Future Worlds”** are outputs from the second stage of the long term planning process and a very important input to the fourth stage of the planning process. For the purposes of identifying future capability requirements, defence planners develop a suitable number of planning situations or specific scenarios for each of the previously defined “Future Worlds”. Planning situations are outputs from the fourth stage of the LTDP process and represent situations in which the forces might be used.

Besides “Future Worlds”, identified types of future military operations are input for Planning Situations Development as well. The planning situations should correspond to the types of military operations defined in the stage 3.

There is not a common definition of the term **capability**. In “Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System”, published by USA Department of Defence, a capability is defined as the ability to achieve a desired effect under specified standards and conditions through combinations of means and ways to perform a set of tasks. The main capability inputs are: Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and Education, Personnel and Facilities

(DOTMLPF).

**Capability Requirement Determination** is probably the hardest part of the LTDP process and requires a combination of imagination and subject matter expertise. The purpose of this stage is to identify types and quantities of defence capabilities required to accomplish a given task in a given situation. Requirements need to be developed across the same set of time periods for which planning situations have been identified. Capability Requirements should be developed based on:

* identified tasks,
* developed planning situations,
* operational concepts,
* the possible impacts of
* future friendly and threat technology etc.

**Capability Assessment** is a stage that follows Capability Requirements Determination. The purpose of the stage is to assess fulfilment of the previously identified capability requirements.

The Capability Assessment stage involves the following steps:

• Assess applicability of current capabilities;

• Review the list of capability requirements and identify those in which capabilities are short, sufficient, or redundant;

• Where capabilities are short, identify why that is the case and how the shortfall was discovered (e.g., modelling/simulation analyses, lessons learned, after action reviews, exercises etc.);

• Prioritize shortfalls;

• Identify capabilities in which modest investment would create efficiencies and, consequently, generate big savings by obviating the need for costly, now-redundant capabilities of which the Defence could divest;

• Identify Capability Areas – and capabilities, if possible - in which it is possible to accept risk.

The **Options Development** is the seventh stage of the LTDP process. That is a development of possible approaches to solving (or mitigating) the capability gaps identified in the previous stage of the process. Defence planners develop options taking both materiel and non-material solutions into account. The main inputs to this stage are capability gaps and available resources. The output from Options Development is a list of potential requirements and resources based options.

The product of the Options Development stage is a list of options (approaches or combinations of approaches) for filling each individual capability gap. The purpose of the last stage of the LTDP process is to select a suitable solution.

Defence planners very often face situations where the political establishment does not provide the means for overcoming all identified capability gaps.

In that case there are two general approaches:

a) to develop attainable capabilities and fill some gaps;

b) to reject development of some capabilities and accept risk.

Acceptance of risk is not under jurisdiction of defence planners, but belongs to political institutions. However, defence planners are obliged to point out possible risks and consequences.

**Summary**

The modern Defence needs appropriate long term planning. Long term defence planning is a very complex and iterative process of defining long-term defence objectives and a strategy for their fulfilment. The general purpose of LTDP is to (re)consider the mission of the Defence and to establish realistic long term goals and objectives consistent with that mission. Finally, the purpose of LTDP is to define ways for fulfilment of the defence mission.

There is no universally accepted time period associated with long term planning. A reasonable compromise would be to require a time horizon of 10 or more years.

Also, there is no universally accepted method to perform LTDP. Many different analytical approaches have been applied to LTDP over the years. Each approach has own advantages and disadvantages. In practice, LTDP is more commonly conducted employing a combination of many planning approaches.

Long term defence planning is never just a technical procedure. It is also a highly political process that needs to be discussed in political terms (i.e., good and continual dialogue must exist between long-term planners and policy makers). At the same time, if care is not taken to ensure objectivity in LTDP, it risks being dismissed as a politically biased process.