

POLICY WORKSHOP

PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAMS

WWS-591b

Robert M. Perito, Lecturer

Classroom 10

Friday: 9:00 am to Noon

Email Address: rperito@usip.org

Telephone: 202-246-4238 © 202-429-4173 (o) 301-294-2161 (h)

The Problem

Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) are small, civilian-military units that assist provincial and local governments in Iraq and Afghanistan to govern more effectively and deliver essential services. The first PRTs were established by the US in Afghanistan in 2002. The purpose was to combine representatives of civilian government agencies with US Army Civil Affairs (CA) teams and a force protection unit that would enable civilian agencies and CA teams to operate in insecure areas. Over time, the US established and handed off a number of these units to NATO countries and Coalition partners.

Today, there are 25 PRTs in Afghanistan. All are subordinate to the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). The US leads 12; the remainder is led by one of a dozen other countries. In Iraq, the US inaugurated the first PRT in 2005. In January 2007, President Bush announced the US would increase the number of PRTs to 20 as part of his plan for a “New Way Forward” in Iraq.

Despite the growth in the number of PRTs and the proliferation of sponsoring countries, there is no agreement within the US government or between the US and its allies on what PRTs should accomplish or how they should be staffed and organized. There is no agreement on program goals and measures of effectiveness, so it is difficult to judge how well PRTs have performed.

In Afghanistan, the PRT mission is to extend the authority of the central government into the provinces where warlords have ruled. In Iraq, PRTs aim to strengthen provincial governments to deal with the dominant central government. The US has developed three PRT models. PRTs in Afghanistan are led by the US military and have only three civilian members. The first ten PRTs in Iraq were led by the State Department and were staffed primarily by civilians. New “ePRTs” are embedded in US brigade combat teams in Baghdad neighborhoods and in Anbar Province. They deal with municipal and local officials. NATO and Coalition partners that operate PRTs in Iraq and Afghanistan have adopted a variety of approaches.

Despite the lack of a common concept of operations, agreement on objectives, or much of a track record, the US is planning five additional PRTs for Iraq. PRTs also have been suggested for other stability operations. This policy of expansion without critical evaluation strongly suggests the need for a review of PRT performance, a capturing of best practices and an assessment of whether PRTs offer the best means of achieving US objectives and delivering services. This has not been done by any government agency. It will be done in this course.

The Approach

The workshop will look at the role of PRTs in both Afghanistan and Iraq in promoting governance, development and security, including counterinsurgency. Students will look at the various US models for PRTs, but then branch out to investigate the way US NATO partners and Coalition Allies have organized their PRTs and conducted operations. The Workshop will examine the performance of US and foreign PRTs in the areas of governance, reconstruction and security to evaluate effectiveness, identify best practices and determine whether alternatives might be more effective. The workshop's clients will be the State Department Office of the Coordinator for Iraq and the Iraq Desk, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, Department of Defense. The clients will meet with students during the semester and receive their final report.

The first five weeks of the workshop will be devoted to a review of the organization, role and mission of PRTs in Afghanistan and Iraq. Assigned readings will be consolidated into this part of the workshop. The Workshop will study the US experience with PRTs. Students will also divide into teams to examine the UK, Italian, German and Canadian experiences with the PRT program. During the first five weeks and after fall break, students will be expected to supplement class reading with research and readings to support their individual reports.

During Fall Break, students will visit one or more the European countries that operate PRTs to meet with foreign and defense ministry officials responsible for the PRT program. If conditions permit, one or two students might visit either Afghanistan to meet with American and host country officials and visit a PRT. This will depend, of course, on obtaining all appropriate clearances and receiving assurances that such a visit can be made safely.

Each student will submit an individual, ten-page report on one aspect of PRT operations prior to departing for field research.

In November, one class likely will be devoted to a visit to Washington DC to meet with clients and other U.S. government and military officials concerned with PRTs.

Workshop grades will be based on a group grade for the final project and on grades for individual reports and contributions. The grade for individual contributions will be based on the following factors: presentation of research outlines, preliminary reports, preparations and participation in field research, technical and logistical support and participation in general discussion.

Suggested Summer Reading

Jim Dobbins and Seth Jones, *The Beginner's Guide to Nation-Building*, RAND, Washington DC, 2007

Stewart Patrick and Kaysie Brown, *Greater Than the Sum of its Parts: Assessing Whole of Government Approach to Fragile States*, International Peace Academy, New York, 2007

Dana Priest, *The Mission: Waging War and Keeping Peace with America's Military*, New York, Norton, 2004

Robert Perito, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Iraq*, U.S. Institute of Peace, Special Report, Number 185, March 2007

Robert Perito, *The U.S. Experience with Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan*, U.S. Institute of Peace Special Report, Number 152, October 2005

Course Schedule

September 21: An Introduction to Provincial Reconstruction Teams

Guest Speaker: Michele Parker, former Senior Development Advisor, Commander ISAF Afghanistan, USAID representative PRT Jalalabad

Readings: Provisional Reconstruction Team Playbook
ISAF PRT Handbook for Afghanistan

September 28: Civ-Mil Coordination

Guest Speaker: Larry Sampler, Institute for Defense Analysis

Readings:

Michael Dziedzic and Col Michael Seidl, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams: Military Relations with International and Nongovernmental Organizations in Afghanistan* Special Report No. 147, Washington, DC, USIP Press, August 2005.
<http://www.usip.org/pubs/specialreports/sr147.html>

Shawn Dorman, "Iraq PRTs: Pins on a Map," *Foreign Service Journal*, March 2007, pp. 21-38.

October 5: Nation building, Governance and Reconstruction

Guest Speaker: John Manza, Program Manager, PRT, Nassirya, Iraq

Readings:

Status of Provincial Reconstruction Team Program Expansion in Iraq, SIGIR-07-014 July 25, 2007

Celeste Ward, *The Coalition Provisional Authority's Experience with Governance in Iraq*, U.S. Institute of Peace, Special Report, Number 139, May 2005

Anne Ellen Henderson, *The Coalition Provisional Authority's Experience with Reconstruction in Iraq*, U.S. Institute of Peace, Special Report, Number 138, April 2005

October 12: Security, Peacekeeping, Counter Insurgency

Guest Speaker:

Readings:

Austin Lang, *On Other War: Lessons from Five Decades of RAND Counterinsurgency Research*, RAND, 2006 <http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG482/>

David Kilcullen: "Three Pillars of Counterinsurgency," Remarks delivered at the US Government Counterinsurgency Conference, Washington, DC, September 28, 2006

David Kilcullen, "Twenty-Eight Articles: Fundamentals of Company-level Counterinsurgency" Personal paper

Anthony Cordesman, "The Tenuous case for Strategic patience in Iraq," Center for Strategic and International Studies, August 6, 2006
http://www.csis.org/media/isis/pubs/080607_iraq-strategicpatience.pdf

October 19: The Spectrum of Intervention

Guest Speaker: Ambassador Tim Carney, former Economic Coordinator, US Embassy, Baghdad

Readings:

October 26-November 4

Fall Break / Student Research

November 9

Report on Trip Findings

November 16

Initial Discussion of outline of final report

November 23

Thanksgiving Break

November 30

First draft of paper

December 7

Final draft of paper

December 14

Practice of presentation to client.

December 18

Presentation to client