

EFFECTS BASED APPROACH TO OPERATIONS (EBAO) 2008 NRDC-ITA SEMINAR

by B.G. Bruno Bucci
Col. Rupert Robson



INTRODUCTION

Combat Support Division hosted HQ NRDC-ITA's 2008 EBAO Seminar from 19 to 22 February 2008. The aim of the Seminar was to reach a common understanding of the available knowledge and experience of EBAO and its associated concept development across major NATO HQs, civilian organizations and Italian national units. Starting with a series of briefings from the major organisations present, a long list of discussion points for syndicate work sessions demonstrated how this concept is developing inside NATO and how much expertise exists already across the Alliance.

CURRENT SITUATION

The pace of development of the EBAO concept differs markedly from one HQ to the next. At strategic level there appears to be particularly fast progress, attempting to integrate or challenge the comprehensive approach. In general terms it proceeds slowly at tactical level, with the absence of a common approach and a wide disparity between national interpretations. For example, in order for HQ ARRC to preserve the development of this new concept, that HQ has already dismissed the term "effects" from its vocabulary, preferring to speak of "influence". This ensures that a single branch is not seen as responsible for a concept that should be pursued and developed by all areas of the HQ. The recent publication of the EBAO pre-doctrinal handbook has given a helpful start to understanding what EBAO is and how it might be used.

WAY AHEAD

The EBAO concept outlined in the pre-doctrinal handbook is now under scrutiny from the majority of NATO HQs. Most participants at the Seminar foresee a need for more training to implement fully what all agree is a new way of thinking at the operational and tactical levels. Clearer doctrine and procedures will also be key to ensuring common understanding and acceptance across a variety of different HQs. Structures and organisations will also need to take the implementation of EBAO into account at all levels.

CONCLUSION

The 2008 HQ NRDC-ITA EBAO Seminar proved most useful in summarising to a single audience how the implementation of EBAO is progressing. It has been suggested that such a seminar should be made an annual event for the whole of the EBAO community in NATO. All HRF(L)s should be invited to host the Seminar in turn. This would permit the creation of a consolidated EBAO tactical forum where all possible issues regarding the development of the EBAO concept could be discussed.

