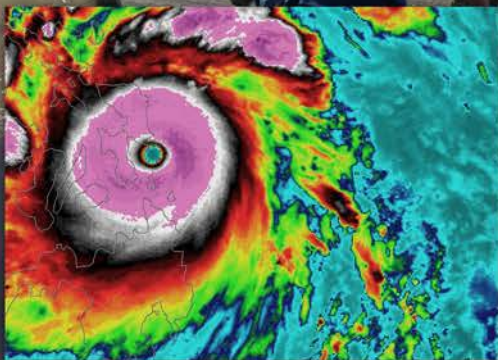




An Inside Look into USPACOM Response to

# SUPER TYPHOON HAIYAN

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**On the cover:**

More than two million homes were destroyed or damaged after Typhoon Haiyan ripped across the central Philippines; U.S. Marine Lance Cpl. Leah Anderson carries a bag of supplies alongside Filipino civilians during relief operations Nov. 15. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Paolo Bayas); a satellite image of Typhoon Haiyan as it sweeps across the Philippines.



***“Super Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda)  
brought out the best of the Filipino people.”***

Dean and Captain Gloria Jumamil-Mercado, Ph.D., MNSA,  
Commander of Naval Force Eastern Visayas Reserve, who led  
the relief efforts of the Eastern Visayas Region including Tacloban

## Executive Summary

Many humanitarian and military leaders noted that civil-military coordination during the Haiyan response in November-December 2013 was some of the best they had seen. The United States Agency for International Development Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA), the Department of Defense (DOD) United States Pacific Command (USPACOM) forces, and the US Embassy, Philippines demonstrated clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities as evidenced by their effective coordination. The United States Government (USG) response entities provided assistance reflecting their unique capabilities appropriately scaled throughout the response phase.

The USAID/OFDA Disaster Assessment Response Team (DART) team coordinated with the humanitarian community. The team validated and transmitted requests for military assistance to the DOD responders on the ground. With the exception of a few days of water production in Tacloban, DOD mostly focused on large-scale operations using their unique capabilities to deliver “wholesale” transportation and logistics support. USAID/OFDA was one of the first donors to the World Food Program (WFP), enabling its role as the lead coordinator of the United Nations (UN) logistics and emergency telecommunications clusters and co-lead of the food security cluster with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization.

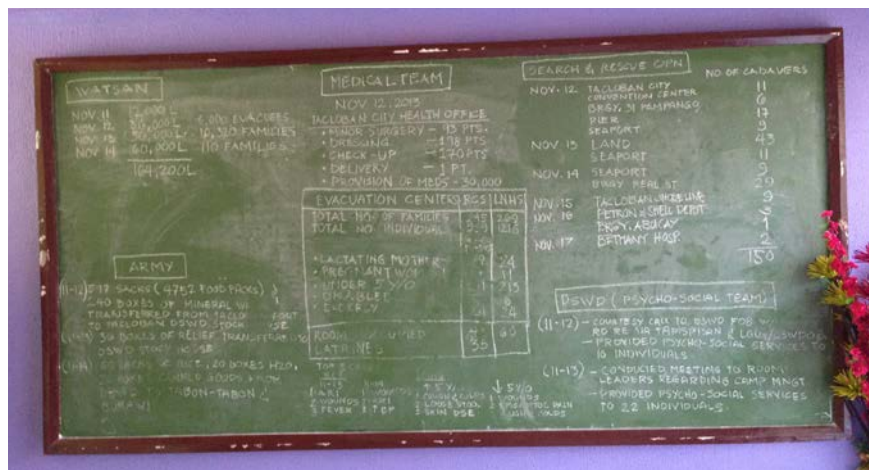
Several communication avenues for the responders

and the affected were utilized, providing many alternative ways to coordinate while major communication infrastructures were down. Mainstream media, social media, and citizen journalism played a significant role in informing responders of the appropriate courses of action for the employment of USG resources. Key lessons learned from previous disasters improved the speed and quality of overall US interagency coordination. Most notably, personnel with previous disaster response experience who had personal connections with other major players in the relief efforts considerably expedited interagency and transnational relief efforts. The informal professional networks among relief workers built during common training and exercises

greatly facilitated the trust needed for effective and efficient cooperation, particularly in the early response phase.

Many noted the impressive demonstration of Haiyan lessons learned put into action in the recent response to Typhoon Hagupit that began as Category 5 before weakening into Category 3 when it hit

the Philippines in December 2014. The resiliency of the Filipino spirit continues to impress domestic and foreign media. The commitment of foreign assisting actors who came to the aid of the Philippines in Haiyan clearly demonstrated the increasingly globalized nature of disaster response. In the coming years, the challenge remains to find more innovative ways to increase investment in disaster preparedness and to better integrate and leverage local capabilities and capacities with international response.



A chalkboard is used for tracking civil-military relief efforts.

## Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance

The Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DMHA) has prepared this report primarily to educate readers, both civilian and military, on the USG response to Haiyan. CFE-DMHA has had a long history of promoting civil-military coordination and cooperation in DMHA since its establishment in 1994 with a primary focus on pre-crisis theater campaign (Phase 0) activities, as well as providing expert advice and assistance to the Department of Defense.

CFE-DMHA's goal for this publication is three-fold: first, to replace the initial CFE publication titled "Les-

sons from Civil-Military Disaster Management and Humanitarian Response to Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda)" published in December 2013 with this corrected and updated version; second, to provide key takeaways for the Geographic Combatant Commands (GCCs), particularly on civil-military coordination in responding to mega-disasters; third, to provide a glimpse as to how USAID/OFDA-USPACOM coordinate and respond to disasters; and finally, to offer some preliminary insights to encourage further dialogues in the DMHA community on the challenges of responding to various types of mega disasters one year after Operation DAMAYAN.

Debris from Typhoon Haiyan makes reaching remote locations by vehicle nearly impossible.





Within weeks of Typhoon Haiyan striking the Philippines, local citizens do their best to return to a “normal” life.

## Expected Impact of the Paper

Operation DAMAYAN has been widely considered an operational success in terms of efficiency and intra-military communication.<sup>1</sup> The ideas, practices, approaches, force capabilities, organizational redesign, and other lessons that came out of the Haiyan experience could potentially be adapted to other Geographic Combatant Commands (GCC) operational environments and disaster scenarios.

In highlighting these lessons learned and “best practices” in a narrative context, suggestions introduced focus on what to do rather than what not to do in future relief operations. Many of these “lessons” have been noted before in one form or another, but what is different in this report is their application in a catastrophic scenario with US participating in the relief efforts together with 57 other assisting states and 29 foreign militaries. Some of the solutions and insights coming out of Operation DAMAYAN are reflected in the newly revised 2014 Standing USPACOM Foreign Humanitarian Assistance (FHA) Concept of Operations (CONOPS).

## Methodology

A large part of the field interviews conducted for this report occurred over nine days from 22 to 30 November 2013. Field interviews were supplemented by after action reports (AAR) from various civil and military agencies. A mixed methods approach for data collection was undertaken and included: stakeholder interviews, largely through convenient sampling; participant observation; archival research (open-source collection); and media analysis. A critical limitation of the study involves the heavy reliance upon secondary sources and the limited data collection conducted in the affected sites.

## Organization of the Paper

While this report aims at identifying certain lessons learned and practices that worked well in Operation DAMAYAN, it does not follow the standard lessons learned format: observation, discussion, recommendation. Instead, it attempts to be a narrative in basic chronological order highlighting a major lesson or practice that worked well for that particular point in time during the response operations. This “best practice” emerges out of the context of the unfolding events of the Haiyan rapid relief phase. The recommended practice that worked well in DAMAYAN considers multiple perspectives with a specific focus on civil-military operational coordination.

<sup>1</sup><http://startidesnet.wordpress.com/2014/03/18/lessons-learned-vs-lessons-applied-a-comparison-of-operation-tomodachi-and-operation-damayayn/>

## Super Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda)

On 6 November 2013, Haiyan, known locally as Yolanda, became what many described as the strongest storm on record to make landfall.<sup>2</sup> According to the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Haiyan had winds up to 200 mph (320 km/h) with gusts up to 225 mph (360 km/h). Haiyan entered the West Philippine Sea at 0440 on 8 November, maintaining its strength throughout the day as it moved across central Philippines, and only weakening the next day late in the afternoon.<sup>3</sup>

The super typhoon overwhelmed regional capacity at a time when the national government had just faced two major calamities that drained its resources and significantly stressed the in-country supply chain. Haiyan was preceded by major national crises, among the major ones include the civil conflict in Zamboanga and Basilan in Mindanao (September 2013) and the 7.2 magnitude earthquake in Bohol in central Visayas region (October 2013), which lies along the pathway of Haiyan. When Haiyan slammed into the Philippines, many prepositioned stocks were simply depleted.

As of 03 April 2014, the Philippine National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) authorities, a working group of various government agencies, non-government organizations, civil and private sector groups that utilize the United Nation (UN) Cluster Approach in disaster management administered by the Office of Civil Defense under the Department of National Defense, estimated 6,293 individuals reported dead, 28,689 injured and over 4 million displaced. The number of damaged houses totaled to 1,140,332, of which more than half, 550,928 were totally destroyed.<sup>4</sup>

Haiyan affected nine out of the seventeen regions in the Philippines. The storm tracked from the east directly across the Eastern, Central and Western Visayas regions destroying large swathes of territory spread across a number of different islands. Leyte and Samar were hardest hit with 90 percent of the infrastructure destroyed in Leyte's largest urban center, Tacloban City. As of July 2014, USAID estimated 16 million people were affected by Haiyan.<sup>5</sup>

## Overview of the Relief

The Philippines is a collection of more than 7,000 islands separated into 81 provinces in three main geographical divisions: Luzon (North), Visayas (Mid), Mindanao (South). Manila, located in Luzon, was the focal point for central coordination amongst the major responding organizations. The international humanitarian response to the typhoon organized their base operations around Manila with cluster coordination meetings taking place in each of the major cities in areas affected by Haiyan. The US established its Command Operations Center (COC) at Villamor Airbase, home of the Philippine Air Force (PAF) located in Metro Manila. This airbase shares runways with the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Within the USG Strategic Response Framework, USAID/OFDA is assigned as the Lead Federal Agency (LFA) for providing FHA and coordinating USG responses internationally. USAID/OFDA has numerous response options outside DOD to provide immediate support, including money, resources, commodities, deployable humanitarian experts and advisors across the USG. However, the catastrophic impact of Haiyan required far greater capacity and capability than these response options. DOD's unique airlift capabilities in particular became a key enabler in the entire response operations.

Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo (popularly known as Camp Aguinaldo), the military headquarters of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) located in Quezon City, Metro Manila, also hosts the NDRRMC and the Multinational Coordination Center (MNCC) led by the AFP. MNCC provided common situational awareness between the AFP and the assisting foreign militaries, facilitated information sharing, and ensured the efficient use of military support locations, capabilities, and coordination.<sup>6</sup>

Haiyan traversed through the Visayas region, where most of the affected areas lie. Tacloban, located on the island of Leyte, Cebu City on Cebu Island, and Roxas City, on Panay Island were the three other major areas affected by the typhoon that served as principal centers of regional relief efforts. Cebu, located in the Central Visayas, served as the primary logistics hub for the Philippines and other international relief efforts. International donations were processed in the "one-stop shop" inside Cebu's Mactan-Benito Ebuen Air Base then pushed out to affected areas.

<sup>2</sup><http://www.wunderground.com/blog/JeffMasters/comment.html?entrynum=2574>; <https://www.climate.gov/news-features/understanding-climate/2013-state-climate-record-breaking-super-typhoon-haiyan>; <http://blogs.scientificamerican.com/observations/2013/11/12/was-typhoon-haiyan-a-record-storm/>

<sup>3</sup>Data based on the NDRRMC Situation Report 53, 03 April 2014; [http://www.ndrrmc.gov.ph/attachments/article/1329/Effects\\_of\\_Typhoon\\_YOLANDA\\_\(HAIYAN\)\\_SitRep\\_No\\_108\\_03APR2014.pdf](http://www.ndrrmc.gov.ph/attachments/article/1329/Effects_of_Typhoon_YOLANDA_(HAIYAN)_SitRep_No_108_03APR2014.pdf)

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup><http://www.usaid.gov/haiyan/fy14/fs22>

<sup>6</sup>U.S. Pacific Command Foreign Humanitarian Assistance (FHA) Concept of Operations (CONOPS), 19 November 2014.

# Lesson 1: Immediate Request for Assistance and Forward Deployed Assets Saved Lives

Haiyan destroyed critical infrastructure that was essential to support relief operations including airports, seaports, roads, communication systems, power distribution networks (electrical and fuel), and other key resources. Though difficult to calculate with precision, it is likely that the immediate steps taken by the Philippine government and the corresponding USAID-USPACOM decisive actions in the early hours of the response kept morbidity and mortality relatively low despite the catastrophic impact of the storm and the millions of people displaced.

The Philippine government issued a request for humanitarian assistance to the United States government on 9 November (Washington, DC time). USPACOM directed Marine Corps Forces Pacific (MARFORPAC) to lead military relief operations in the Philippines, with 3d Marine Expeditionary Brigade (3d MEB) serving as the tactical mission commander on the ground, and ordered deployment of the USS GEORGE WASHINGTON and elements of Carrier Strike Group 5 (CSG 5) to the Philippines.

On 10 November, within 6 hours of authorization from USPACOM, 3d MEB “suitcase staff” deployed to the Philippines, consisting of Commanding General, G-3, Sergeant Major, Public Affairs Officer, and two communications Marines. Upon arrival, the MEB established the Command Operations Center (COC) at the Villamor Air Base in Manila and immediately began coordination with the AFP, Joint U.S. Military Assistance Group (JUSMAG-P), and USAID/OFDA personnel who had already arrived several days before Haiyan hit.<sup>7</sup> The immediate deployment of the 3d MEB and the resulting civil-military coordination that followed poised the responders proactively upon the presidential declaration of national calamity the next day.

USPACOM Deployable Joint Task Force Augmentation Cell (DJTFAC) also immediately deployed and played a critical role in organizationally setting up an operational joint HQ, aligning operational design and assessment plans, establishing an operational rhythm with the AFP, OFDA, and UN, and implementing the USPACOM FHA CONOPS. DJTFAC provided joint expertise,

regional and local expertise, and detailed knowledge of USPACOM organization and processes. It provided rapid stand up and execution to pave the way for the establishment of Joint Task Force (JTF-505).<sup>8</sup> Though some GCCs do not have a DJTFAC, it proved an indispensable capability for USPACOM response to Haiyan.

On the same day, 10 November, the Joint Special Operations Task-Force Philippines (JSOTF-P)<sup>9</sup> located in Mindanao, about 600 miles south of the affected region, began conducting aerial surveillance to assess airfields, ports, routes, distress signals, and obtaining information critical for search and rescue operations in the affected areas of Leyte, Samar, and the Western Visayas.<sup>10</sup> JSOTF-P, which performs an “advice and assist role” to Philippine Security Forces throughout the Southern Philippines, sent the first U.S. military personnel to respond. JSOTF-P provided critical needs and damage assessment to the operational plans of the responders.

According to witnesses on the ground, the AFP and the interagency Task Force (TF), despite having lost family members, extricated themselves from the rubble to clear the initial runway, providing the “initial main door” that allowed the entry of the first group of U.S. forces into Tacloban airport. According to Col. Restituto Padilla Jr., Armed Forces of the Philippines Liaison Officer to the U.S. Pacific Command, AFP Vice Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Allan Luga recounted how the AFP and the TF, while less than a hundred strong, “clawed their way back to the airport inch by inch” to assess the conditions for the entry of the responders and relief supplies in Tacloban.

*Upon reaching the airport hours after being drenched, tired, hungry and with minimum of equipment salvaged from the devastation, the AFP and interagency TF mustered the remaining personnel in the airport and linked up with the surviving Philippine Air Force Tactical Operations Group (PAF TOG) contingent (whose camp at the airport grounds was totally destroyed) and began to painstakingly clear the runway.*

<sup>7</sup>United States Marine Corps Operation Damayan After Action Report, 04 MAR 2014.

<sup>8</sup>JTF 505 Lessons Observed – Potential JS j7 GO/FO Level Discussion Topics UNCLASSIFIED//FOUO 20 DEC 2013. Interview with Maj Sean P. Carroll, USMC, Ground/SOF Planner, Deployable Joint Task Force Augmentation Cell (DJTFAC), USPACOM J35 Future Operations, November 2014.

<sup>9</sup>At the request of the Philippine government, JSOTF-P assists and advises the AFP and the Philippine civilian authorities in coordinating and sustaining counterterrorism operations in Mindanao as part of Operation Enduring Freedom.

<sup>10</sup>JSOTF-P’s Support to the Government of the Philippines Typhoon Haiyan Relief Effort 08-22 November 2013, powerpoint presentation, 09 December 2014.



*This effort paved the way for the first PAF C-130 flights that brought the initial interagency and NDRRMC assessment team, medical teams from the AFP and limited medical supplies to the city of Tacloban. Their efforts too became the enablers that allowed for the first group of U.S. forces to arrive there the following day. If not for these men and women whose sacrifices got lost when more prominent responders arrived, none of the follow on and similarly critical activities could have happened.*<sup>11</sup>

The combined Philippine-US efforts resulted in a capability that allowed tactical military forces to provide immediate relief, while the government and humanitarian community organized and prepared capabilities to deploy. On 11 November, Philippine President Benigno Aquino issued Presidential Proclamation No. 682 declaring a state of national calamity, the same day USAID humanitarian relief supplies started arriving into Tacloban, 535 miles south of the COC in Villamor airfield in Manila.

In the initial hours of Haiyan, the U.S. military working alongside AFP counterparts was also able to respond quickly due to the many US pre-positioned assets throughout the region. Military assets based in locations near the Philippines enabled responders to provide rapid provision of life saving assistance in the immediate aftermath of Haiyan made particularly critical when host nation prepositioned goods were exhausted by recent disasters. These forward deployed assets and capabilities allowed for the immediate civil-military coordination needed to establish and execute a rapid response plan with the Philippine government.

## **Lesson 2: Centralized Planning and Decentralized Execution Facilitated Coordination**

A “hub and spoke” concept of operations stood up 18 hours after approval from USPACOM to deliver USAID humanitarian supplies from the primary hub at Villamor airfield to Tacloban, Guiuan, Borongan, and Ormoc in Leyte and Samar.<sup>12</sup> U.S. military aircraft enabled USAID/OFDA to conduct the needs and damage assessments required for relief planning and coordination without delay. DOD civil-military coordination primarily focused on airlifting supplies to affected areas for onward distribution.

The first shipment of USAID/OFDA relief commodities arrived in the Philippines on 12 November and U.S. military forces began regular distribution of USAID

commodities on 13 November, five days after the storm made landfall, with assets from the aircraft carrier USS GEORGE WASHINGTON and CSG 5 commencing relief operations on 14 November.

Determining the allocation of resources and use of DOD assets were critical to the relief efforts. Satisfying request for assistance was primarily based on field assessments. Manila served as the main Aerial Port of Debarkation (APOD) for USG efforts due to its focus on “wholesale” support of operations, while the government and humanitarian actors focused on humanitarian assessments, administering medical care, and engaging in direct distribution of relief commodities.

The decision to use Manila as a “hub” avoided burdening the affected areas in the Visayas with internal logistics needs and freed up space for humanitarian actors to operate in the affected areas. Personnel in Manila, composed of US, Filipino, and international humanitarian personnel, made frequent visits to affected areas. Responding organizations and coordination mechanisms in the affected areas were somewhat slow in setting up due to the magnitude of the devastation, necessitating coordination in Manila.

Missions were cleared in Manila by the OFDA Mission Tasking Matrix (MITAM). Forces and assets returned to base in Luzon at the end of each day to receive orders the following day. The President of the Philippines assumed direct control of the relief operations, at one point based directly out of Tacloban for several days, but largely operated out of Manila for the large period of the response.

## **Lesson 3: Direct Planning to Ensure Command and Control is Part of COA Analysis**

USPACOM ordered the activation of Joint Task Force-505 (JTF-505) on 16 November to lead the tactical mission, replacing the 3d MEB. LtGen. John E. Wissler, Commander, III MEF, assumed command of JTF-505, which established operations on 18 November in the Philippines (III MEF is the parent command of the 3d MEB) and reached full operational capability on 20 November. JTF-505 led U.S. military relief operations until the JTF was disestablished on 1 December.

JTF-505 and other supporting U.S. military efforts both on-ground and afloat totaled more than 13,400 military personnel, 66 aircraft and 12 naval vessels, which delivered more than 2,495 tons of relief supplies and evacuated over 21,000 people. Over 1,300 flights were completed in support of the relief effort, delivering goods and services to approximately 450 sites.<sup>13</sup>

After six days of full operational capability, JTF-505

<sup>11</sup>Col Restituto Padilla Jr PAF(GSC), Armed Forces of the Philippines Liaison Officer to the U.S. Pacific Command, HPACOM, January 8, 2013.

<sup>12</sup>United States Marine Corps Operation DAMAYAN After Action Report, 04 MAR 2014.

<sup>13</sup><http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R43309.pdf>

presented a Transition Confirmation Briefing to Commander, USPACOM on 26 November, which stated “unique DOD capabilities are no longer required” and recommended mission transition by 1) observing relief operations with U.S. Navy and Marine Corps amphibious forces in an “operational reserve” role, able to react to any sudden emergent requirements, and 2) disestablishing the JTF and releasing all major U.S. forces for redeployment by 1 December.

According to OCHA Situation Report No. 13, relief operations scaled up substantially, especially in Tacloban City, with access and logistics dramatically improving by 19 November.<sup>14</sup> All Tacloban residents had access to clean drinking water by this time, and hygiene kits began reaching various municipalities. In Cebu, less cargo was arriving daily and fewer people were requesting transport. After MITAM requirements were satisfied, the U.S. military response to this disaster was nearly complete.

JTF and USAID/OFDA leaders recognized that the emergency phase of relief operations terminated on or about 26 November. While there was quite a large multinational military effort, U.S. military forces limited their effort to the emergency phase, with U.S. command and control largely conducted out of Manila. Other foreign militaries arrived later and focused a large amount of effort on what could be considered the recovery and rehabilitation stages of the operation with a major focus of all activities in the mission area.

By the time JTF-505 fully activated for this crisis, almost all USAID/OFDA requested U.S. military assistance had been delivered. The JTF supported requirements established in one final OFDA MITAM to deliver relief commodities. Some key considerations in the JTF-505 AAR included suggestions on ways to improve agility and effectiveness in manning, equipping, training, and readiness.

Through the employment of the most appropriate C2 option for the Commander and Staff in conjunction with component input, unnecessary transition delay during execution would be minimized.<sup>15</sup> USPACOM opted initially to command its relief operations through a service component command U.S. MARFORPAC instead of directly activating a JTF. Once the establishment of a JTF had been decided, it took several days before adequate command, control, and communications was set up between JTF and HQ USPACOM.

While the various command and control arrangements and the shift between these various arrangements did not negatively affect operations, it did not enable a more rapid response. In mega-disaster scenarios where it is not always immediately clear how long the response phase would last, a key consideration from the Haiyan experience was not whether a JTF should have been established sooner, but rather, to plan for the right course

of action at the onset to ensure the appropriate C2 is employed.

## **Lesson 4: Establishment of the International Coordination Team (ICT) Synchronized Effective International Support Through All Phases of USPACOM Operations.**

The ICT serves as an enabling mechanism for the effective and speedy provision of military capabilities and resources to support international efforts in the USPACOM AOR. Operating from the headquarters in Camp Smith, Hawaii, the ICT meets regularly (Phase 0: Bi-Annually) and ongoing during a crisis situation (Phase 1-5: Minimum Daily) for the purpose of joint planning, sharing information, and creating a synchronized holistic awareness of the theater among USPACOM international military liaisons (LNOs).

While the ICT meetings are open to all staff and strive to be as inclusive as possible, the current 2013-2014 core structure includes: PACOM DJ3 (Chair); Canadian LNO (Deputy-Chair); Japanese LNO; Philippine LNO and Deputy LNO; Australian LNO; UK LNO; representatives from majority of USPACOM directorates such as training, plans, logistics, information technology, finance, operations; OFDA Rep; Foreign Policy Advisor, and All Partners Access Network (APAN) Rep.

Originally stood up in November 2013 in support of Operation DAMAYAN, the ICT serves as a “one-stop-shop” for international LNOs to clarify their roles; help posture international military support appropriately before the urgent formal host nation request for assistance; and avoid potential confusion with the MNCC team during crisis situation. Intended to provide a proactive, strategic, and high level operational perspective, the ICT paves the way for the smooth establishment of the MNCC by alleviating the initial burden of the affected nation to collect, organize, and identify overlaps, gaps, and potential opportunities across the full spectrum of response operations during the critical life-saving rapid response phase.

To be effective, the ICT core members collect and monitor five main aspects of international military-related contributions during crisis: (1) Initial government and military intents vis-à-vis projected support; (2) current capabilities in the region, their locations and their projected duration of stay; (3) capabilities that are planned to be deployed, where, when and for how long; (4) information requirements to better enable deployments and support; and (5) any support required to facilitate movement into the theatre.

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<sup>14</sup>[http://vosocc.unocha.org/Documents/29895\\_ECHOFlash8.pdf](http://vosocc.unocha.org/Documents/29895_ECHOFlash8.pdf)

<sup>15</sup>JTF 505 Lessons Observed – Potential JS J7 GO/FO Level Discussion Topics UNCLASSIFIED//FOUO 20 DEC 2013.

In addition, the ICT also provides a platform for sharing lessons learned and best practices across all partner nations to promote alignment with USPACOM allies and partner militaries particularly before a crisis makes landfall. The ICT also assists in the creation, review, and revision of military response plans, CONOPs, dissemination of relevant operational information, and coordination of sourcing additional military support of strategic theater military requirements.

## Lesson 5: Preplanned Scalable Force Packages Optimize HADR Support

Based on lessons learned from Operation DAMA-YAN, the newly revised and comprehensive Standing 2014 FHA CONOPS discusses in detail the strategic framework, strategy and policy considerations, mission statement, Commander's intent, lines of efforts (LOE), various frameworks for each LOE, staff processes, event flow and decision point descriptions, operational planning team (OPT) processes, transition assessment templates, and other supporting documents.<sup>16</sup>

The USPACOM FHA CONOPS is the authoritative reference for USPACOM FHA operations, actions and activities (OAA). This document builds the strategic and operational construct for planning, preparing, executing, and assessing FHA operations, and will be applied in situations when USG agencies request DOD assistance (e.g., foreign disaster relief (FDR), pandemic and emerging infectious diseases (PEID) and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) accidents). This CONOPS provides:

- a. Prescriptive USPACOM guidance to military commanders performing FHA operations.
- b. A framework to inform partner nations on USPACOM support during FHA operations.
- c. A baseline for the development and conduct of training to prepare USPACOM commanders and forces to execute FHA operations.



Despite the rubble, shoes are washed and let to dry in the sun.

## Lesson 6: Other Tactical Considerations<sup>17</sup>

- Coordination and correspondence during an FHA response should be unclassified as much as possible to maximize information sharing. If one cannot communicate, one cannot coordinate. Operating in the secret internet protocol router network (SIPRNET) resulted in wasted time and effort, delaying shared situational awareness with partners.
- Ensure communications are in place prior to major transition. Prioritize the deployment of equipment as necessary to ensure sufficient communication capability is available to support the anticipated growth of command and control requirements.
- Ensure that the J5 rapidly establishes Joint Planning Groups (JPG) at the onset of operations in order to ensure timely return to Phase 0.
- An assessment framework needs to be extant at the onset of operations. Incorporation of an assessment framework into the FHA CONOPS will help to ensure assessments are possible at the onset of an event.
- Ensure proper process to determine supported valid requirements by the lead federal agency USAID/ OFDA. Confirmation of OFDA requests down to the Service components was initially difficult to obtain. There is a need for a real-time formalized reporting process and format of all OFDA requests, especially during the initial state of operations, in order to better identify which service components will fulfill which requirements. Ensure that the MITAM is ac-

<sup>16</sup>Proposal of the redesigned USPACOM FHA CONOPS led by LtCol Thomas "Whit" Parker, USMC, HQUSPACOM J35, Crisis Response Branch, 19 November 2014.

<sup>17</sup>Extracted from the Joint Lessons Learned Information System at <https://www.jllis.smil.mil>

cessible and can handle the high volume of use from all constituents.

- USPACOM had the appropriate interagency advisors collocated with the Headquarters USPACOM staff; this greatly enhanced USPACOM's unified action during Operation DAMAYAN. Combatant command staffs should ensure their staffs are appropriately staffed with interagency advisors pertinent to their area of operations. Initiate the Situational Awareness Group (SAG) at the earliest point after identification of a major storm system and establish the Operational Planning Team (OPT) at least 24 hours prior to landfall for greater mission analysis and course of action (COA) selection.
- Units and organizations must identify stakeholders and LNO locations at the onset of crisis. LNOs should be emplaced immediately to ensure situational awareness, coordinate operations, and ensure mutual support.
- Develop a simple checklist to determine the capabilities of airfields in the affected area. This checklist can be used to calibrate the appropriate US footprint required.

## Conclusion

Within two weeks, the emergency response phase of the humanitarian crisis was essentially over and the international community and government agencies were coordinating around shelter and livelihoods. While the U.S. military ceased major operations on 26 November, some contributing country military assets continued to stay on the ground in the affected areas supporting the Philippine government recovery efforts. The commitment of assisting actors who came to the aid of the Philippines clearly demonstrated the increasingly globalized nature of mega-disaster response.

Despite the magnitude of the damage and its wide reach across multiple islands, recovery began two weeks after Haiyan's first landfall. This allowed JTF-505 to begin disestablishment. Remaining true to the UNOCHA Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil Defense Assets in Disaster Relief (Oslo Guidelines), DOD assets provided unique capability in the Haiyan response efforts when it was clear that no comparable civilian alternative existed.

When this unique capability was no longer required, DOD began to phase out its operations in coordination with the affected nation. The timeliness of DOD response as the last-in and first-out resort speaks to the importance of mutual training and readiness such as the annual bilateral Philippine-US Balikatan military exercise to allow for combined planning, interoperability, and a speedy and smooth transition of operations.

More than a year had passed since Haiyan made first landfall on 08 November 2013 in Eastern Samar when Typhoon Hagupit (Ruby), the second most intense tropical storm in 2014, threatened the same area. Hagupit intensified to Category 5 on 4 December 2014 before weakening to Category 3 when it made landfall in Eastern Samar. This time, the Philippines applied lessons learned from Haiyan.

While a total of 944,249 families/4,149,484 persons were affected, only 18 deaths were reported.<sup>18</sup> More than one million people evacuated to 3,640 shelters in advance of landfall, an impressive feat in any country.<sup>19</sup> The preparation activities of the local and national government, including the prepositioning of road clearance teams, were applauded by numerous international, governmental and non-governmental experts and officials.

Numerous lessons learned articles on Haiyan have been published, including the AAR exercise led by the NDRRMC in collaboration with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) published on August 5, 2014.<sup>20</sup> Other AARs, such as those published by Plan International,<sup>21</sup> Save the Children,<sup>22</sup> and many other non-governmental and international organizations,<sup>23</sup> also speak to the success of inter-organizational and multi-sectoral collaboration together with local government units as evidenced by the Philippine government readiness for Hagupit.<sup>24</sup>

In suggesting best practices in the Haiyan response, this study aims to provide insights into the effectiveness of the USG response to a mega disaster such as Haiyan. It hopes to inspire other GCC to adapt some of the organizational models and tactical approaches suggested in this study for their particular environments. It also aims to start a dialogue on ways to achieve unity of effort in a complex catastrophic scenario. As a testament to USG partners and allies, the commitment of the US to assist, advice, and stand ready to help its partners is best captured in the words of President Barack Obama, "You know, one of our core principles is when friends are in trouble, America helps."<sup>25</sup>

<sup>18</sup>[http://www.ndrrmc.gov.ph/attachments/article/1356/Sitrep\\_No\\_27\\_re\\_Effects\\_of\\_Typhoon\\_Ruby\\_as\\_of\\_19DEC2014\\_0600H.pdf](http://www.ndrrmc.gov.ph/attachments/article/1356/Sitrep_No_27_re_Effects_of_Typhoon_Ruby_as_of_19DEC2014_0600H.pdf)

<sup>19</sup><http://www.irinnews.org/report/100925/from-haiyan-to-hagupit-what-changed>; [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/08/world/asia/as-typhoon-hagupit-hits-philippines-evacuees-express-relief.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/08/world/asia/as-typhoon-hagupit-hits-philippines-evacuees-express-relief.html?_r=0)

<sup>20</sup><http://www.humanitarianresponse.info/operations/philippines/event/ocha-after-action-review-eastern-samar-guian>

<sup>21</sup><http://plan-international.org/about-plan/resources/news/one-month-on-typhoon-haiyan/>

<sup>22</sup>[http://bitgivefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Typhoon-Haiyan\\_Six-month-Report\\_May-2014.pdf](http://bitgivefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Typhoon-Haiyan_Six-month-Report_May-2014.pdf)

<sup>23</sup><http://www.alnap.org/resource/9736>

<sup>24</sup><http://www.economist.com/node/21635806>; [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/08/world/asia/as-typhoon-hagupit-hits-philippines-evacuees-express-relief.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/08/world/asia/as-typhoon-hagupit-hits-philippines-evacuees-express-relief.html?_r=0)

<sup>25</sup><http://www.usaid.gov/news-information/videos/president-obama-speaks-typhoon-haiyan>

## Abbreviations and Acronyms

<b>3D MEB</b>	Third Marine Expeditionary Brigade	<b>MARFORPAC</b>	U.S. Marine Forces Pacific
<b>AAR</b>	after action report	<b>MDT</b>	Mutual Defense Treaty
<b>AB</b>	Air Base	<b>MITAM</b>	Mission Tasking Matrix
<b>AFP</b>	Armed Forces of the Philippines	<b>MNCC</b>	Multinational Coordination Center
<b>APAN</b>	All Partners Access Network	<b>NDRRMC</b>	Philippines National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council
<b>APOD</b>	Aerial Port of Debarkation	<b>NOAA</b>	U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
<b>C2</b>	command and control	<b>OAA</b>	operations, actions, and activities
<b>CBRN</b>	chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear	<b>OCD</b>	Office of Civil Defense
<b>CSG 5</b>	Carrier Strike Group 5	<b>OFDA</b>	Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance
<b>COC</b>	Command Operations Center	<b>OPT</b>	operational planning team
<b>CONOPS</b>	concept of operations	<b>PAF</b>	Philippine Air Force
<b>CMOC</b>	Civil Military Operations Center	<b>PAF TOG</b>	Philippine Air Force Tactical Operations Groups
<b>DART</b>	Disaster Assessment Response Team	<b>PEID</b>	pandemic and emerging infectious diseases
<b>DJTFACT</b>	Joint Task Force Augmentation Cell	<b>PDRRMS</b>	Philippines Disaster Risk Reduction and Management System
<b>DMHA</b>	Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance	<b>RDRRMC</b>	Regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council
<b>DOD</b>	Department of Defense	<b>SITREP</b>	Situation Report
<b>FDR</b>	foreign disaster relief	<b>SOP</b>	standard operating procedure
<b>FHA</b>	Foreign Humanitarian Assistance	<b>TF</b>	Task Force
<b>GCC</b>	Geographic Combatant Commands	<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>HA/DR</b>	humanitarian assistance and disaster relief	<b>OCHA</b>	[UN] Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>III MEF</b>	Third Marine Expeditionary Force	<b>UNDAC</b>	United Nations Disaster Assessment Coordination
<b>ISR</b>	Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance	<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>JSOTF-P</b>	Joint Special Operations Task-Force Philippines	<b>USG</b>	U.S. Government
<b>JTF</b>	Joint Task Force	<b>USPACOM</b>	United States Pacific Command
<b>JUSMAG</b>	Joint U.S. Military Assistance Group	<b>WFP</b>	World Food Program
<b>LFA</b>	Lead Federal Agency		
<b>LGU</b>	local government units		
<b>LOE</b>	lines of efforts		



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