Out of Step
Multilateral Police Missions, Culture and Nation-Building

Andrew Goldsmith & Vandra Harris
(Flinders Law School)

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Multilateral police missions

- Complex peace operations – ‘second-generation peace-keeping’
- Sequential / Parallel / Integrated missions (Bah and Jones, 2008)
- “Culture” – the missing ingredient?

The challenge of anarchy

- “The United Nations is an organized anarchy” (Lipson 2007, p. 84)
  - Problematic preferences
  - Unclear technology
  - Fluid participation
- Mission structures vary from ‘a fully integrated hierarchy to a loosely guided swarm’ (Durch 2006, p585)

Methodology

Draws on data from larger study – Policing the Neighbourhood
Qualitative interviews with 64 Australian male and female police officers.
Capturing knowledge that exists among Australian police.
‘narrative accounts rather than … true pictures of reality’ (Denzin and Lincoln 2005).

Communication

Frustrating – but also affects workload and safety
‘hardly spoke any English … they were just someone occupying a chair. Or surfing the net.’ (R30)
‘they spoke Bahasa [Malaysia] and a lot of the younger generation in Timor, they could communicate with them which was a real bonus’ (R14)

Competence

Training standards AND relevant training (civilian policing) important
‘I wouldn’t classify them as police. I’d classify them as security guards or whatever but I wouldn’t classify them as police. It was just a professional – you know, professionalism thing and different – they’ve got different cultures and different ways of doing things.’ (R115)
‘quite competent experienced police but really, what we needed was not necessarily that skill set’ (R114)
**Coordination**

Cultural and organisational differences in policing style could be challenging – and hard to coordinate

‘the Malaysians had their own hierarchy and we had our own hierarchy. As far as I was concerned we did what ours said’ (R12)

‘you’d have trouble accepting that … prayer comes before something that you’ve got to get done police-wise’ (R11)

**Consequences**

Key themes were workload and impact on crisis situations

‘they happily watched but would not have the nous or the common sense to go ‘well let’s go down there and help our brothers out’.‘ (R21)

‘we didn’t really know how our counterparts were going to work. If you go into a situation, a violent situation, you’re hoping that they’re not going to run away or lock themselves in a car’ (R16)

**Improving interoperability**

- Coherence
- Competence
- Cooperation