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Fusion Centres in Selected Countries

BUILDING A SAFE AND RESILIENT CANADA

Maritime Domain Awareness is the effective understanding of anything associated with the maritime domain that could impact the security, safety, economy, or environment of Canada.

Preventing terrorists from attacking at or from the sea and from crossing maritime borders has become a major concern for European, North American and Southeast Asian governments. This takes into account the many chokepoints of global maritime trade, and includes areas such as the Malacca Straits, Suez Canal, Straits of Hormuz, the Bab el-Mandeb passage, Panama Canal, the German Bight, Strait of Gibraltar and the English Channel. Protection of sea lines of communication, international harbours, and the safe passage of global maritime trade through these maritime trade chokepoints is vital.

Many of these challenges are not exclusively of a military nature, and neither military nor a combination of civilian capabilities alone can deliver effective maritime surveillance. Maintaining maritime security requires strong and enduring partnerships between civilian and military authorities. This is the *raison d'être* for maritime security information fusion centres: strengthening security in regions, by building common coherent maritime situation pictures and acting as a maritime information hub.

This discussion paper is based on an annotated bibliography using open source, academic and grey literature focusing on fusion centres for intelligence and information sharing. An annotated bibliography is included as a separate section and provides an assessment of one hundred twenty-four documents and thirteen website references. The paper does not, however, refer to all maritime security and information sharing initiatives under development. The paper used explicit search criteria, limiting possible hidden biases and assumptions, and enabling replication of the research by others.

The paper focuses on the governance of maritime security fusion centres that have been established in Australia, the European Union (EU), New Zealand (NZ), Singapore, the United Kingdom (UK), and the United States (US). Their experience is compared with the Canadian situation, by looking at the governance, roles and responsibilities, and their effectiveness. The influence of the United Nations (UN) specialized agencies of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), as well as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) efforts in maritime security is also examined.

Each regime shares a number of common characteristics, such as taking an intelligence-led and risk-based approach to its operations. Integration of information is based on interagency cooperation, and strong dependence on inter-regional and international cooperation. Each regime faces challenges relating to governance, information sharing, legal and performance issues. Each of these challenges is considered in the context of the maritime security information sharing centres in each regime.

Six enablers of maritime domain awareness become apparent from the review of these governance regimes: consolidated legal and policy strategies; information sharing; data and information standards; surveillance and technology; commercial interests; and inter-organizational relationships. Those enablers face three obstacles that take the form of legal, policy and security-related issues. When such obstacles are present, they affect the governance and effectiveness of the maritime security fusion centre.

Findings of the *9/11 Commission Report* indicate that the biggest impediment to 'connecting the dots' was the resistance to information sharing between jurisdictions and within jurisdictions, and

recommended a whole-of-government approach to information sharing. Certain countries took note of the lesson learned, and have set the requirement of common information sharing environment by statute. Maritime security fusion centres are governed by these statutes.

In the aftermath of 9/11, the expansion of international law to address maritime terrorism reflects the US objective of getting all international organizations to review their existing legal and technical measures to prevent terrorism acts. Such efforts were directed at the IMO to prevent potential terrorist acts against ships at sea and in port, as well as improve security on board ship and ashore in accordance with the US National Strategy for Maritime Security (September 2005).¹

Similar to Canada, all six governments are members of the IMO and the ICAO, each government is committed to implementing certain legal requirements adopted by those specialized UN agencies, including standards associated with the chosen mode of transport when moving passengers and cargo internationally as well as the provision of security requirements for ship and port facilities to counter potential threats of terrorism. Given economic realities, governments are pressed to avoid duplication of spending and efforts and it is a continuing challenge to undertake a wide array of tasks within limited resources. This has led to the need to create economies of scale wherever possible and has resulted in countries embracing the trend towards 'joint task forces' and whole-of-government approaches.

Since 9/11, a large number of countries globally have realized that their safety and economic security depends on the secure use of the world's oceans. Maritime security depends on the ability to build a comprehensive awareness of maritime activity, (i.e., achieve Maritime Domain Awareness). Many of the threats in the maritime domain, such as terrorism, piracy and organized crime are global in scope; these problems cannot be addressed by any single state. Multinational collaboration is necessary to develop collaborative maritime domain awareness.

This paper reviews the governance of maritime

security fusion centres that were established as part of the strategy to enhance maritime security at the national, regional and global levels. Many technological developments, such as intercontinental network connections from satellite systems, over-the-horizon radar, and near-shore and harbour acoustics have been incorporated into most countries' layered approach to increase security. The governmental and military organizations reviewed already possess valuable data for inputs into the shared maritime situational awareness, but are unable to capture all of the necessary data alone. It is only through the sharing of information between all stakeholders, such as relevant domestic departments, UN-specialized agencies of the ICAO and IMO, that the real value-added behind these maritime security fusion centres is realized.

Each regime has certain features that may be of interest to the Canadian maritime security centres. Whether it considers using the task force approach similar to that of Australia, or follows a step-wise approach use towards interoperability as pursued by the European Union, any governance decision taken should ensure accountability, identify roles and responsibilities of the maritime security operation centre personnel, and be transparent. Any chosen approach to resolve the information sharing issue should take into account the provisions of the *Privacy Act* and the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the interoperability issues with its partners in maritime security, such as the US and NATO.

Koren, Elaine (2013). *Fusion Centres from Selected Countries*. Ottawa, ON: Public Safety Canada.

¹ United States Government" *The National Strategy for Maritime Security*, September 2005:27:1, [accessed 2013-07-15] from: <http://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=456414>.

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