

Experimental simulation in organisational design: Developing a mobile joint command and control concept

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Abstract

Purpose of the present study was to characterise the design process in an ongoing development project (ROLF) and to derive theoretical and methodological implications for task and organisational design. The complexity and dynamics that characterise the course of events in war or in a civilian human relief operation place great demands on command and control. To support the design of new, more efficient staffs, systematic hypothesis driven experimental simulations are suggested as a forceful and dynamic instrument in developing the original concept. The analysis indicates that the way ahead goes over formalisation and goal direction of design activities. Design should focus on the transition between model states. Development should be driven and guided by successive formulation of contrasting hypotheses should be tested in systematically designed simulations.

Introduction

The Swedish Defence Material Administration, the National Defence Research Establishment and the National Defence College have been co-operating since September 1995 in a project called the Mobile Joint Command and Control System 2010 (ROLF). The work aims at describing joint commanders' command and control possibilities from mobile or movable command posts in about 15 years time (Sundin and Friman, 1998).

The dynamics and complexity that characterise the modern war and human relief operations requires a command and control organisation that can process and act upon information in real time.

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Defining Characteristics of the ROLF Staff (Brehmer, 1998)

1. It is small
2. It is mobile
3. It has powerful information support compensating for the small number of staff members