Countering Hybrid Warfare

A multinational project to develop conceptual guidance

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What is the MCDC Countering Hybrid Warfare project?

The Multinational Capability Development Campaign (MCDC) enables multinational cooperation in addressing shared capability challenges. The MCDC Countering Hybrid Warfare (CHW) project aims to help national and multinational security and defence decision-makers understand and counter hybrid warfare. The first phase of the project (CHW1) established an understanding of hybrid warfare through three key products.

- An Information Note – *What is Hybrid Warfare?*, which addressed existing concepts of hybrid warfare and established a common language for describing it.
- A handbook – *Understanding Hybrid Warfare*, which established a conceptual and visual model to help understand hybrid warfare.
- Six case study investigations into hybrid warfare.

The second phase of the project (CHW2) provides guidance for countering hybrid warfare through two key products.

- A handbook – *Countering Hybrid Warfare*, which builds on CHW1 to provide conceptual and policy guidance for countering hybrid warfare.
- A series of Information Notes, which provide supporting research and analysis on key ideas and concepts within the handbook.

Countering Hybrid Warfare – a handbook for policy and strategy

The CHW2 handbook aims to inform policy development by providing conceptual guidance for countering hybrid warfare that can be used by any nation or multinational institution facing any form of hybrid aggression. The handbook is based on original research from MCDC nations, including case studies to gain empirical insight and a fictional scenario-based table top exercise and matrix game to help test and refine the concepts.

The CHW1 handbook described hybrid warfare as: the synchronized use of multiple instruments of power tailored to specific vulnerabilities across the full spectrum of societal functions to achieve synergistic effects. The challenge presented by revisionist actors who exploit hybrid warfare affects society, governments and multinational institutions. The CHW2 handbook provides a framework for countering hybrid warfare based on the following components.

- Set realistic strategic goals for countering hybrid warfare.
- Identify appropriate thresholds for taking action.
- Design and implement a strategy based on three pillars: detect hybrid warfare; deter hybrid aggressors; and respond to hybrid attacks.
- Develop the institutional machinery for implementing these measures through national governments and multinational institutions.

An overview of the CHW framework is provided on the reverse of this postcard. Further tools to visualize the role each component plays in countering hybrid warfare are provided throughout the CHW2 handbook.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/countering-hybrid-warfare-project-understanding-hybrid-warfare
https://wss.apan.org/public/MCDCpub/default.aspx

Countering Hybrid Warfare Framework

Set strategic goals:

SG3: Prevent hybrid aggression
SG2: Deter hybrid aggression
SG1: Maintain integrity

↑ Increasingly demanding

Establish thresholds for action

Thresholds may vary according to the type of aggression or vulnerability targeted

Design and implement a strategy based on three components:

Detect

Establish and maintain **hybrid warfare situational awareness**

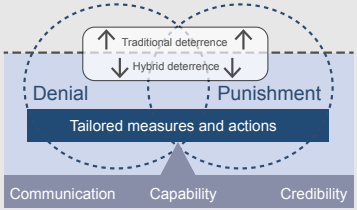
Monitor: known unknowns

Discover: unknown unknowns

Deter

hybrid aggressors

1. Maintain traditional deterrence
2. Establish deterrence thresholds
3. Address the '3Cs' of deterrence: communication/capacity/credibility
4. Balance denial and punishment
5. Tailor deterrence to the adversary



Respond

to hybrid attacks

Policy choices:

Coerce ⟷ Induce
Overt ⟷ Covert
Engage ⟷ Disengage
Inward ⟷ Outward

Key factors:

- National *versus* multinational action?
- Coordination of activity?
- What vulnerability targeted (PMESII)?
- What lever of power (MPECI)?
- Horizontal/vertical escalation?
- Risks of action/inaction?
- Constraints on action?

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