



**Calhoun: The NPS Institutional Archive**  
**DSpace Repository**

---

Center for Homeland Defense and Security (CHDS)

Homeland Security Affairs (Journal)

---

2021-12

## Senior Military Leadership in Domestic Operations: An Exploratory Study

Denny, William A.

Monterey, California. Naval Postgraduate School, Center for Homeland Defense and Security

---

Denny, William, A. Senior Military Leadership in Domestic Operations: An Exploratory Study. *Homeland Security Affairs* 17, Article 2 (April 2021) [www.hsaj.org/articles16927](http://www.hsaj.org/articles16927).  
<http://hdl.handle.net/10945/70508>

---

The copyright of all articles published in *Homeland Security Affairs* rests with the author[s] of the articles. Any commercial use of *Homeland Security Affairs* or the articles published herein is expressly prohibited without the written consent of the copyright holder. Anyone can copy, distribute, or reuse these articles as long as the author and original source are properly cited.

*Downloaded from NPS Archive: Calhoun*



Calhoun is the Naval Postgraduate School's public access digital repository for research materials and institutional publications created by the NPS community. Calhoun is named for Professor of Mathematics Guy K. Calhoun, NPS's first appointed -- and published -- scholarly author.

**Dudley Knox Library / Naval Postgraduate School**  
**411 Dyer Road / 1 University Circle**  
**Monterey, California USA 93943**

<http://www.nps.edu/library>



# Senior Military Leadership in Domestic Operations: An Exploratory Study

By William A. Denny



# Abstract

While the vast majority of training, education, and leader development experiences for military officers are related to operations overseas, civil support operations are conducted in a radically different environment. This article reports on an exploratory study on how senior military leaders perceive leadership during a crisis-disaster response in the U.S. Homeland, and the developmental experiences and activities they believe support effective leadership during highly complex civil support operations. Using a qualitative, grounded theory approach, I collected data through semi-structured interviews of senior National Guard officers who had led complex crisis-disaster response operations. This study resulted in proposed theoretical models identifying key competencies for senior military leadership in domestic operations, along with essential contributors to effectiveness. These models can assist in the development of senior military officers for leadership in civil-support operations and may be applicable to leadership in civilian response organizations, resulting in more effective disaster responses. Portions of this article are excerpted from the author's Ph.D. dissertation.

# Suggested Citation

Denny, William, A. "Senior Military Leadership in Domestic Operations: An Exploratory Study." *Homeland Security Affairs* 17, Article 2 (April 2021) [www.hsaj.org/articles16927](http://www.hsaj.org/articles16927) .

# Introduction

During most large-scale disaster responses in the United States, military forces are required to support civil authorities. During large-scale disasters, the Department of Defense (DOD) supplements the resources and efforts of other government agencies<sup>1</sup> with National Guard forces operating under the authority of the governor.<sup>2</sup> Although many military tasks such as providing security, engineering, aviation, and logistical support may be common to those performed overseas, they are executed under very different conditions. Domestic operations, or DOMOPS are performed in the U.S. Homeland under local, state, and federal law.<sup>3</sup> Disaster responses in the United States also receive intense media scrutiny and are also subject to ubiquitous social-media coverage. Most importantly, civil authorities are in charge, with military forces in support. In the U.S. military, the vast majority of training, education, and operational experience is focused on operating overseas in a continuum ranging from military engagement and security cooperation with other nations to major campaigns involving combat.<sup>4</sup> However, three key factors related to DOMOPS suggest that this may be insufficient for preparing senior military officers for large-scale, highly complex civil-support operations. First, military organizations inherently and traditionally follow clear, strong hierarchical frameworks that may not optimally lend themselves to support multi-level, inter-agency, and cross-boundary collaboration<sup>5</sup> inherent in DOMOPS. Second, military leaders spend their formative years in a "take charge" culture, but attempting to make unilateral decisions during a disaster response can upset the balance between civil authority, the private sector, and the military.<sup>6</sup> Finally, because

civilian authorities are in charge and a myriad of other local, state and federal agencies along with nongovernmental organizations are working collaboratively at local, state, and federal levels, DOMOPS require a greater emphasis on *unified action*, or the integration of military operations with other government and nongovernmental entities to achieve *unity of effort*.<sup>7</sup>

This article reports on a study of senior military leadership in civil-support operations. This exploratory study was designed around two major research questions. First, what makes the task of senior military leadership during highly complex civil support operations different from other military contexts? And second, what career experiences contribute to the development of the ability of senior military leaders to exercise judgment during highly complex civil support operations?

It is important to clarify the meaning and role of military leadership during DOMOPS. While civilian authorities are in charge, setting the objectives of the response, military forces remain under a military chain of command. In other words, military leaders lead by exercising command and control of their forces under the overall direction and leadership of civilian authorities.

This article begins with a review of the literature that was used to develop the theoretical propositions for this study. As will be discussed in more detail, I collected data using multiple semi-structured interviews of senior National Guard officers who have led complex crisis-disaster response operations, and used the analysis of these interviews to create theoretical models suggesting seven key competencies required for senior military leadership in DOMOPS, and to identify essential contributors to developing these competencies. The results of this study can be used to inform and improve the professional development of officers to lead military forces in civil-support operations and may also contribute to the development of emergency managers and first responders, ultimately resulting in more effective responses to save lives, mitigate suffering and minimize property loss and damage.

## Background and Literature Review

### Nature of Crisis-Disasters

Although the terms “disaster” and “crisis” are sometimes used together or interchangeably in the literature, they are not synonymous. For the purposes of this study, crisis-disasters are unprecedented situations creating conditions that stress or overwhelm existing response processes and structures. According to Howitt and Leonard, the defining feature is the presence of novelty, due to rarity, scale, or a combination of interacting events that invalidate normal means of response.<sup>8</sup> Although a similar situation may have occurred in another time or place, it is an unprecedented and novel experience from the perspective of the responding organization or affected jurisdiction.<sup>9</sup> Routine emergencies occur relatively frequently and standing processes, structures, and capabilities can be applied or “adapted at the margins.”<sup>10</sup> The presence of novelty, however, may invalidate routine approaches, and responders must quickly improvise to address unanticipated aspects of the emergency.<sup>11</sup>



Novelty is a result of dynamic phenomena that influence leaders, organizations, and their constituents during a crisis-disaster. Pfeifer notes that these include the obvious physical conditions and damage caused by extreme weather or violence, but also include operational factors such as capabilities not being available, a shortage of capacity, or the inability to deliver resources to where they need to be. Additionally, the stress of the crisis creates psychological and cognitive forces that can limit the ability of responders to adapt to unfolding events as well as interpersonal and social factors that may hinder the integration of information. Finally, all disasters are to some degree political, with various levels of government, agencies, response organizations and elected officials pursuing different perspectives, agendas, and priorities.<sup>12</sup>

Figure 1 is a disaster-lifecycle model informed by the work of Prewitt and Weil. The horizontal axis represents time, as organizations transition through preparation, the onset of the emergency, and the adaptive phase.<sup>13</sup> Because disasters have an unknown or very low probability of occurring, the general attitude toward preparedness is complacency, and modest levels of preparation can also mistakenly create a false sense of preparedness.<sup>14</sup> When a crisis occurs, the most important leader task in the emergency phase is to mitigate the threat and reduce disequilibrium to a safe level.<sup>15</sup> James et al. state that leaders must help organizations adjust in the adaptive phase to the “new normal” as well as learn from the event, as crises often create opportunities for adaptive organizational learning.<sup>16</sup>

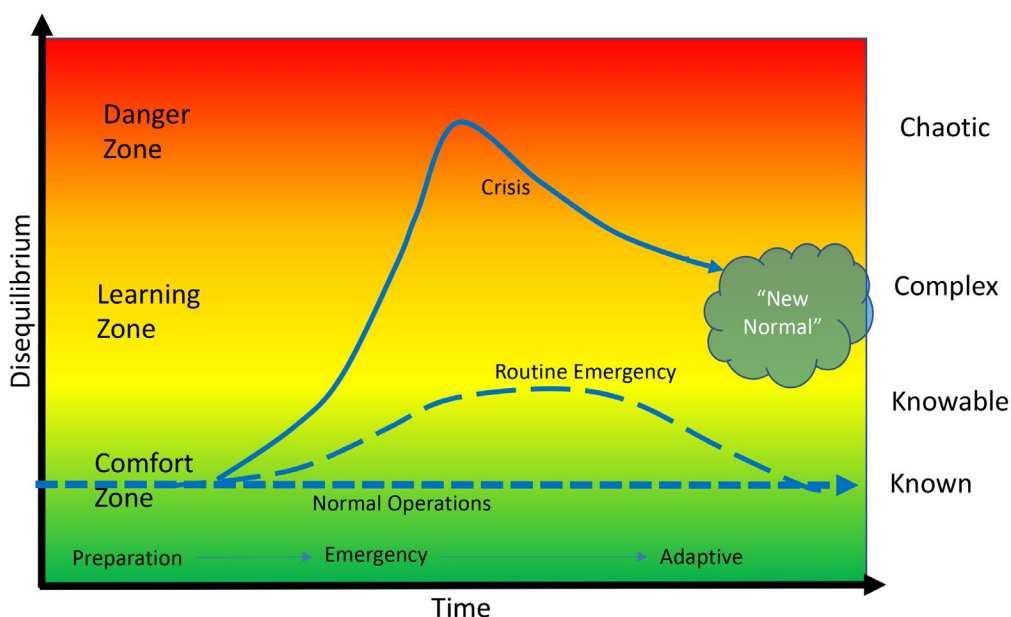


Figure 1 – Disaster Lifecycle Model

The vertical axis of Figure 1 represents disequilibrium resulting from the level of stress affecting the organization.<sup>17</sup> One way of conceptualizing the effect of disequilibrium is by aligning the situational categories of the Cynefin framework<sup>18</sup> along this continuum. The Cynefin framework, developed by Kurtz and Snowden, is considered relevant to leader judgment in both emergency management<sup>19</sup> and military operations,<sup>20</sup> as sensing and decision-making follow different processes in each category. In known situations, cause-and-effect relationships are empirical,

linear, and indisputable, so leaders can sense, categorize, and then respond with a previously defined model such as a standard operating procedure or best practice. Knowable situations are those in which cause-and-effect relationships are less clear, but can be discerned through the application of time, resources, and expert opinion. Although these emergencies involve “known unknowns,” time, resources, and expert opinion can allow leaders to assess the situation. The decision model is to sense, analyze, and then respond.<sup>21</sup>

However, it is the “un-ordered” domains of complexity and chaos created by large scale, novel incidents that are the focus of this study. Complex situations create many interacting causes and effects, but the number of actors and relationships defies the use of categorization techniques. In complex situations, Kurtz and Snowden state that leaders must first probe to make sense, then analyze, decide, and act – stabilizing desired patterns, destabilizing undesired ones, and “seeding the space so that patterns we want are more likely to emerge.”<sup>22</sup>

Chaos is a state beyond the experience of an organization. No cause-and-effect relationships are perceivable, so sense-making cannot be analytical because there are no available concepts to analyze.<sup>23</sup> Adams and Stewart note that breakdowns in equilibrium trigger a collapse in sense-making as “organizations realize that the available forms of understanding the crisis do not aptly apply to the uniqueness of the current event.”<sup>24</sup> Chaotic systems are turbulent, but there is no time to wait for patterns to emerge. The decision model, according to Kurtz and Snowden, is to act, sense, and respond.<sup>25</sup>

## Military Framework for Crisis-Disaster Response

The *National Response Framework* (NRF), along with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the Incident Command System (ICS), provides the foundational framework for disaster response in the United States. The NRF is intended to be “scalable, flexible, and adaptable,” and can be implemented either fully or partially, depending on the incident.<sup>26</sup> It also aligns key roles and responsibilities. For large-scale disasters, the Department of Defense (DOD) supplements the resources and efforts of other government agencies in support of local, state, nongovernmental entity and private sector efforts.<sup>27</sup> Under the authority of the Secretary of Defense, DOD assets “may be committed when requested by another federal agency and approved by the Secretary of Defense or when directed by the President.”<sup>28</sup> Operational coordination and employment of DoD forces in the United States and its territories is normally led by U.S. Northern Command, except for Hawaii and the Pacific island territories, where it is headed by U.S. Pacific Command.<sup>29</sup>

Military forces can provide DOMOPS in two forms. *Defense Support of Civil Authorities* (DSCA) is provided by federal military forces, DOD civilians, contract personnel, or other assets, and National Guard forces in Title 32 or Title 10 status, in response to a request from civil authorities for domestic emergencies, law enforcement support, or other domestic activities.<sup>30</sup> *National Guard Civil Support* (NGCS) is “support provided by the National Guard of the several

states while in state active duty (SAD) or Title 32 duty status to civil authorities for domestic emergencies, and for designated law enforcement and other activities.”<sup>31</sup> Under the authority of the Governor, National Guard forces can be employed in response to domestic incidents.<sup>32</sup> State adjutant generals (TAGs) are responsible for collaborating with National Guard Bureau (NGB) and other TAGs to “identify support requirements and synchronize capabilities”<sup>33</sup> but there is no command relationship between states and NGB.

During the response to Hurricane Katrina in 2005, over 54,000 National Guardsmen performed NGCS and over 20,000 Title 10 personnel conducted DSCA. According to Schumacher, these capabilities were coordinated through several chains of command, leading to duplication of effort, failure to gain a common operating picture, and other shortcomings. In response, the concept of *Dual Status Commander* (DSC), which had been successfully used for planned events such as political conventions and major sporting events, was adopted as the usual and customary means of command and control for military forces during a domestic disaster response.<sup>34</sup> A DSC is a commissioned officer of the Regular Army or Air Force or a federally recognized National Guard officer authorized by the Secretary of Defense, with the consent of the state governor, to operate simultaneously under federal and state chains of command. In other words, the DSC acts in either a state or federal capacity, giving or relaying orders from the federal chain of command to federal military forces or from the state chain of command to state military forces.<sup>35</sup>

Except under extraordinary circumstances, the U.S. military is always in support of other government departments or agencies.<sup>36</sup> Thus in DOMOPS, senior military leaders must simultaneously maintain unity of command, with military forces “under a single responsible commander who has the requisite authority to direct and employ those forces in pursuit of a common purpose” while also facilitating unity of effort, or the “coordination and cooperation toward common objectives, even if the participants are not necessarily part of the same command or organization.”<sup>37</sup> Uhr warns that this can generate a paradox “when a leader within one organization at the same time has to be a collaborator in a heterogeneous societal context.”<sup>38</sup>

## Judgment: Sensemaking and Decisionmaking

Sense-making and decision-making are, according to Hadley et al., the “two core behaviors that are critical for effective crisis leadership,” and crisis leaders must perform both tasks “under tremendous psychological and physical demands.”<sup>39</sup> Boin et al. describe sense-making as “collecting and processing information” to understand what is going on.<sup>40</sup> In sense-making, leaders create a cognitive structure for understanding and responding to change events. Howitt and Leonard warn that emergent crises, which in the initial stages resemble routine emergencies, pose special challenges for sense-making in terms of recognizing novelty.<sup>41</sup> In novel situations, experience may offer no guidance, or, as Boin and Renaud suggest, even misguidance.<sup>42</sup> Sense-making reduces stress, clarifies causes and goals, and provides a basis for integrating action among multiple parties. According to Mumford et al., sense-making is not a solution in itself, but it develops a cognitive model for understanding the problem.<sup>43</sup>

Decision making, according to Boin et al., involves “making critical calls” and “orchestrating a coherent response to implement those decisions.”<sup>44</sup> As Higgins and Freedman state, the most critical activity during crises is deciding what to do next,<sup>45</sup> which is not easy due to the high consequences, presence of dilemmas, need to place others in harm’s way or to reallocate scarce, critical resources, and the uncertainty of the issues.<sup>46</sup> Leaders must recognize strategic inflection points, described by Tichy and Bennis as “moments when fundamental changes are occurring” to “act swiftly and decisively.”<sup>47</sup> Klein notes that a wait-and-see approach “can disengage people and create a passive, lazy stance” and “make people slaves to the flow of information” and encourage “organizations to impose bureaucratic procedures for collecting and sorting data instead of helping people engage in anticipatory thinking.”<sup>48</sup> Often the ‘most-worst’ outcome is the failure to act,” since, according to Alison et al., “more is missed by not doing than not knowing.”<sup>49</sup>

Scholarly literature suggests that together, sense-making and decision-making constitute judgment, as they are interrelated, begin immediately during a disaster response, and continually reoccur throughout the response, informing pre-crisis preparation as well as meaning making, accountability and learning. Judgment is, according to Tichy and Bennis, a process, and leader success depends upon management of the process, “not just the single moment when a decision is made.”<sup>50</sup>

Leaders exercise judgment based on facts and logic, but also use intuition and emotion. According to Pfeifer, emergency responders combine quick intuition with knowledge and experience in order to adapt to changing situations.<sup>51</sup> Intuition reflects experiences, and as Klein notes, is “sensitive to context and nuance, letting us read situations and also read other people.”<sup>52</sup> Intuition that is “well-honed and informed by experience” can, according to Useem et al., improve decision-making under stress.<sup>53</sup> Shotter and Tsoukas note that emotions shape judgment through the mood of the situation, that “draws out affective responses on the part of the actor.”<sup>54</sup> Emotional attunement indicates to us what matters, and a sense of anxiety may indicate, as Vogus et al. suggest, the “need to reconsider and revise our understandings.”<sup>55</sup>

According to Steigenberger, stress from time pressure, ethically challenged or high-stakes decisions, high workload or physical danger is substantially higher in disaster-relief operations than routine management activities.<sup>56</sup> Hale et al. note that a little stress can provide focus, but that high stress can “impede decision-making through decision-making rigidity, diminished tolerance for ambiguity, and increased rate of error.”<sup>57</sup> While under stress, crisis managers may seek out information that corroborates their thinking while ignoring information that contradicts it, according to Boin et al.<sup>58</sup> Stress also hinders the ability to gain and sustain situational awareness in complex environments, and causes decision makers to be reactive versus forward-looking and to overlook small clues. Stress and anxiety can also lead to constrictive controlling behaviors, a reduced ability to communicate, and decision paralysis.<sup>59</sup>



# Leadership Style

Crisis emergencies require adaptive leadership for two basic reasons. First, as Hannah et al. suggest, adaptive leaders operate more effectively in rapidly changing environments and what constitutes effective leadership will vary over the stages of preparation, response, and recovery.<sup>60</sup> Second, according to Uhl-Bien and Marion, leadership shifts from person to person according to task needs and the emotional states of groups.<sup>61</sup>

Transformational leadership is positively related to value congruence, which can strengthen leader-follower relationships.<sup>62</sup> However, during a disaster response, a more direct, transactional leadership style may be more in line with follower expectations as well as the public.<sup>63</sup> Despite being in many ways opposite, Canton notes that both leadership styles may both be appropriate. For example, leaders conducting pre-disaster planning may possess limited authority to compel external stakeholders to participate, requiring a more persuasive, collaborative form of leadership. However, during the execution of the response, authority relationships often change to allow and require leaders to be more directive.<sup>64</sup>

While the expectation is that leaders take charge and provide clear direction during a crisis, Boin and t' Hart point out that in reality, "crisis operations are multiorganizational, trans-jurisdictional, polycentric response networks"<sup>65</sup> composed of many organizations whose representatives see the world differently. Effective collaborative networks possess the flexibility, innovative capacity, and efficiency that, according to Weber and Khademian, "enable participants to accomplish something collectively that could not be accomplished individually."<sup>66</sup> Although collaborative processes may be slower than individual decision-making, Rasio and Lundstrom suggest that in the end they may be quicker, in that failure from authoritative strategies often precedes collaboration.<sup>67</sup>

Delegating decision-making authority can be effective for coping with time pressure, feedback delay, and complexity, but it is rarely employed spontaneously, and while under pressure decision-makers may be even more reluctant to cede control.<sup>68</sup> Centralized coordination and decision-making can support development of a common operating picture and resource deployment but can also create information and coordination bottlenecks.<sup>69</sup> Conversely, decentralization can limit some problems but it can also hinder unified action. Therefore, as Boin et al. point out, strategic leaders must identify and withhold the critical decisions that they alone are capable of making.<sup>70</sup>

# Leader Development

Military leader development, according to Wong et al., is a continuous, progressive, career-long process intended to increase a leader's knowledge, skills, and abilities through experience in operational assignments, formal training and education, and self-development.<sup>71</sup> In this sense, military leader development is quite similar to that of most civilian professions. However, unlike many other professions, the armed forces do not bring in senior leaders from the outside. Moreover, as Day et al. point out, few if any other professions expect their employees to take the lives of others or to sacrifice their own lives as part of the job.<sup>72</sup>

Most leadership development occurs through on-the-job experience as an individual integrates the experience of increasingly complex situations.<sup>73</sup> Experiences and skills acquired through practical exposure help develop routines that enable performance under pressure,<sup>74</sup> and can enhance interpersonal skills by allowing individuals to experiment with various ways of influence, working with people from diverse backgrounds and in contexts for which they have no direct authority.<sup>75</sup>

Leader training and education, as noted by DeRue and Wellman, can accelerate the process of learning from experience.<sup>76</sup> For example, participation in disaster response training and exercises provides a means for developing skills and decision-making, as well as opportunities to work with and learn from other organizations. It exposes participants to their expected roles and duties as part of the response plan. Steigenberger suggests that exercises also foster professional relationships and allow for the evaluation and refinement of plans.<sup>77</sup>

Self-development is, according to Reichard et al., “a self-directed process where leaders initiate, monitor and evaluate their own leader development instead of relying on the organization to construct a plan for them.”<sup>78</sup> Boyce et al. describe self-development as the “third avenue of leader development.”<sup>79</sup> It is a personal responsibility, with individuals being largely responsible for their own personal growth and in seeking out developmental opportunities.

General leader efficacy is likely to be a potential contributor to crisis leader efficacy, although, as noted by Hadley et al., it may not guarantee that a successful leader during normal times will be able to competently exercise judgment under crisis conditions. One strong indicator of crisis leadership efficacy is a learning goal orientation, as individuals with high learning goal orientations will be better equipped to acquire skills and will be less likely to see mistakes as threats or to withdraw in the face of adversity. Specific experiences that contribute to crisis-leadership efficacy include managing a wide span of control and past experience with crises, to include the formal authority to lead. Participation in exercises and the development of response plans likely increases crisis leadership efficacy.<sup>80</sup>

In summary, the literature suggests the following knowledge, skills, and traits are conducive to crisis-disaster leadership:

- Past experience with crises
- Professional relationships developed during planning and exercises
- Exposure to working with people from diverse backgrounds
- Experience managing a wide span of control
- Ability to handle stress and perform under pressure
- Adaptivity and Flexibility
- Collaborative leadership skills
- Willingness to delegate
- Learning goal orientation

# Theoretical Propositions

Several theoretical propositions based on the literature review informed the researcher's approach to this study. First, during chaotic or highly complex civil support operations, senior military leaders and their followers are likely to experience episodes that can overwhelm the organization's sense-making capabilities and require senior leaders to take active measures to reduce disequilibrium. Second, decisions are not made in a singular point in time, nor does sense-making end when a particular decision is made, but sense-making and decision-making is a single iterative process. Third, senior military leaders are challenged by the processes of simultaneously exercising unity of command over military forces and working to achieve unity of effort among collaborative partners. Fourth, the physical, psychological, operational, political, and interpersonal/social factors inherent in crisis-disasters combine to challenge sense-making, to include joint sense-making in collaborative contexts.

Propositions Five, Six and Seven are related to judgment calls made under extreme pressure. Proposition Five posits that senior military leaders sometimes make judgment calls that violate established rules, procedures, and norms to deal with novel, time-sensitive decisions. Similarly, Proposition Six suggests that management by discovery, as described by Klein,<sup>81</sup> rather than waiting for goal clarity is a viable strategy, particularly in chaotic contexts. Seven, senior military leaders are likely required to work actively to overcome decision paralysis and decision avoidance during joint sense-making and decision-making.

Propositions Eight and Nine are primarily related to leader development. Proposition Eight suggests that executive leaders, upon reflection, will likely be able to identify developmental experiences that assisted in their ability to lead in crisis-disasters. Similarly, Proposition Nine posits senior military leaders can identify specific contributions to their confidence and willingness to lead.

# Methodology

Data for this study came from individual semi-structured interviews with seven (7) current and former senior National Guard officers who had performed in a senior role (pay grade of O-6 or above) during one or more highly complex civil-support operations between September 2005 through December 2017. A non-random sampling strategy was used to generate situational and geographic heterogeneity. The seven participants led a total of ten (10) disaster responses. Of these responses, five (5) were the result of major hurricanes and three (3) were in response to other severe weather events. The remaining two (2) were "manmade disasters" in metropolitan areas – a major civil disturbance and a terrorist attack.

Interview questions were derived from the theoretical propositions and were focused on the participants' direct experiences in support of civil authorities during the actual disaster response, as well as any previous operational assignments, training, education, or other experiences that they believed contributed to their performance and confidence to lead.

Interviews were conducted one-on-one, with the stream of questions being fluid to generate in-depth personal accounts, explore issues in detail, understand context, and to facilitate understanding of complex issues. A list of interview questions is provided at Appendix A.

A shortcoming of this approach is that the relatively small sample size does not support confident generalizations. However, as this study was exploratory in nature, it is hoped that it will serve as a departure point for broader research.

## Discussion of Findings

This section begins with a discussion of the study's theoretical propositions based on a synthesis of the study's data and the reviewed literature and links this discussion to the two main research questions for this study. In turn, this informs the development of proposed systematic exploratory theoretical frameworks based on the main research questions that identify leadership competencies required for senior military leadership in domestic operations, and the essential inputs for the development of these competencies.

### Theoretical Propositions

***Proposition 1: During chaotic or highly complex civil-support operations, senior military leaders and their followers are likely to experience episodes that can overwhelm the organization's sense-making capabilities and require senior leaders to take active measures to reduce disequilibrium.*** None of the participants reported any instances in which they were personally overwhelmed to the point that their ability to exercise judgment appeared to collapse. However, five (5) participants reported instances in which subordinates or unified action partners lost composure due to the pace and intensity of information flow, became fatigued to the point of being ineffective, or were temporarily overcome by a sudden mission change. In response to these situations, participants reported several ways in which they or other military leaders attempted to help those affected regain their equilibrium by providing perspective and reassurance based on their experiences in other disasters, coaching and mentoring, and detailing military leaders to assist civilian emergency management personnel in getting organized. One participant described this process as "adding leadership."

Data from this study instead suggest that senior military leaders may, through career experiences, develop some resistance to disequilibrium. Military training and experience may also inoculate leaders to stress to some degree, and skills in maintaining situational awareness may support confidence in exercising judgment in ambiguous situations.

***Proposition 2: Senior military leader sense-making and decision-making during a disaster response is a combined, iterative, and non-linear process.*** Three (3) participants stressed the importance of familiarity and reliance on the Military Decision-making Process (MDMP), an iterative planning methodology to understand the situation and mission, develop a course of action, and produce an operation plan or order.<sup>82</sup> One participant emphasized how he believes professional military education (PME) instills disciplined decision-making skills into military officers: "I can't oversell . . . all the military decision-making process schools we went through."



Another participant agreed, noting how the “Military Decision-Making Process becomes ingrained in you” and how it fits the DOMOPS environment: “No one is shooting at you, but it might potentially be a very fluid operation, so you need to be able to make decisions quickly.” A third participant stressed the importance of a “good operations order that lets everybody know what you expect of them.”

***Proposition 3: Senior military leaders are challenged by the processes of simultaneously exercising unity of command over military forces and working to achieve unity of effort among collaborative partners.*** While two (2) participants admitted to being more “comfortable” in contexts where unity of command was paramount, simultaneously exercising unity of command while facilitating unity of effort did not appear to “challenge” any of the participants.

One participant used a pyramid analogy to illustrate the difference between unity of command and unity of effort, describing unity of command as “a big pyramid with one person in charge at the top, and the bulk of the force down at the bottom doing all the good work,” admitting that he was “very comfortable in that environment,” which is “streamlined – who’s in charge, who’s responsible, to get the information, get the tasking and then give the orders to execute.” Conversely, unity of effort involves “flipping this organization upside down – this big pyramid,” where the “focus is to get people who do not work for each other to work together” with the ultimate goal “to make your elected leaders and your emergency managers be as successful as you can in helping them get the mission done.”

All seven (7) participants indicated that unity of effort is optimally established through building relationships with leaders of external partner organizations prior to the incident. As one participant stated, relationships make collaboration “really easy because of the familiarity we have with each other.” While some relationships were fostered over years of collaboration, in other instances leaders were required to develop relationships quickly. One participant described how, coming from out of state, he leveraged existing relationships with in-state National Guard leaders to collaborate more effectively.

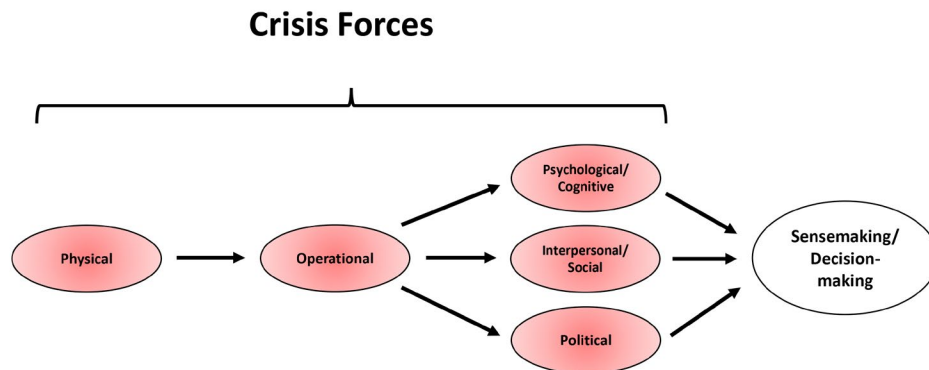
Four (4) participants reported maintaining the military chain of command while emphasizing to subordinate leaders the importance of being responsive to the needs of local civilian leaders, operating somewhere within the continuum of maintaining total tactical control and completely ceding it to civilian responders. One participant stated that “part of the guidance we give them is look, you’re really working for the local political leadership.” Participants described several ways of mitigating the risk of sharing control, to include well-defined missions and guidance framed to allow commanders on the ground to use disciplined initiative.

Three (3) participants discussed how military leaders can manage expectations during pre-planning and development of a well-defined military mission. They also described how much of this was accomplished during routine exercises, rehearsals, and pre-disaster coordination.

***Proposition 4: Physical, psychological, operational, political, and interpersonal/ social factors inherent in crisis-disasters create challenges to joint sense-making.*** Participants identified factors in all five categories of crisis forces identified by Pfeifer<sup>83</sup> that impacted their individual

sense-making as well as those of their subordinate leaders or collaborative partners. Five (5) participants discussed how the physical damage injected novelty and affected their ability to respond. Two (2) discussed how physical damage generated operational factors that injected novelty into the situation, creating second-order psychological (five participants), interpersonal/social (seven participants) or political factors (six participants) that in turn affected sense-making and decision-making. This relationship is depicted in Figure 2.

As discussed under Proposition 1, none (0) of the participants reported any instances in which they were personally overcome by stress of a crisis but described ways they added leadership to help others regain equilibrium. The primary interpersonal/social factor discussed by participants was the importance of relationships. Six (6) participants related how they had established relationships through decades of training, exercises, and actual disaster responses with interagency partners, elected officials, and other military leaders that enabled them to effectively collaborate. The remaining participant discussed his deliberate efforts in developing relationships during the months prior to the response he led.



**Figure 2** – Effect of Crisis Forces on Sense-making and Decision-making

Four (4) participants discussed strategic messaging as a political factor, and they understood this as being primarily the responsibility of civilian political leadership, with the military in support. Another political factor discussed by three (3) participants was the “political calculus” that governors must consider. One (1) participant noted how it is relatively easy to bring the military in to support local civilian authorities, but often hard to get them released, as local and county officials enjoy having a “workforce” available. Conversely, two (2) participants warned that too much recovery accomplished by the military or other government agencies could mean less paying work for the private sector.

**Proposition 5: Senior military leaders sometimes make judgment calls to deal with novel, time-sensitive decisions that violate established rules, procedures, and norms.** Four (4) participants noted instances where they or leaders of other response organizations either broke or ignored rules, procedures, and norms to deal with novel, urgent situations. As depicted in Figure 3, these decisions ranged from being merely counterintuitive to legally debatable, entailing various levels of risk of media criticism, being relieved, or even legal consequences. However, participants believed these risks necessary and acceptable to save lives and property or to protect members of the response organization.

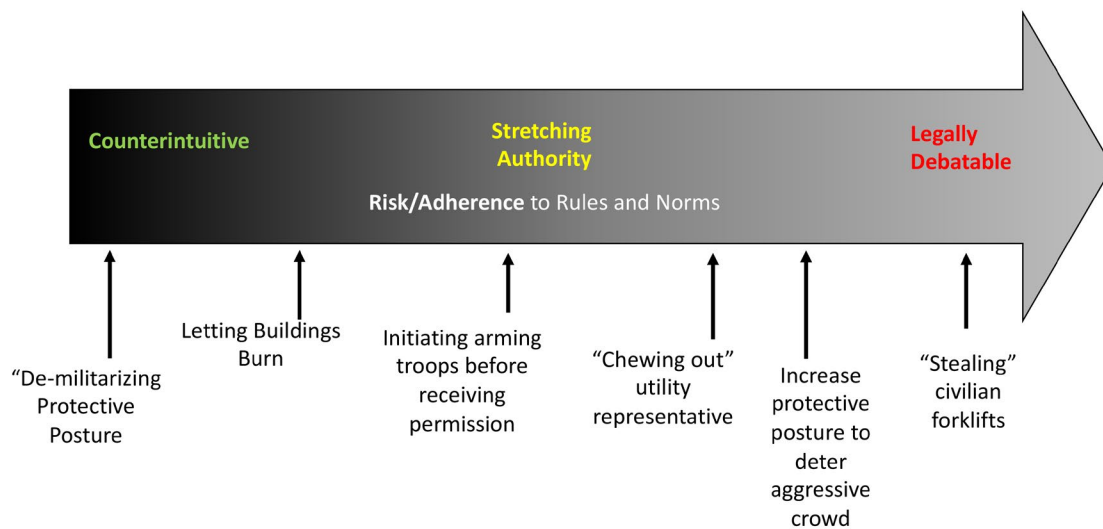


Figure 3 – Violations of Rules and Norms to deal with Novelty

One (1) participant described how firefighters allowed buildings to burn, believing attempting to fight the fires would place fire service personnel at risk of being harmed by demonstrators, in turn requiring a police response that would incite further violence. During this same response National Guard leaders, rather than dictating a protective posture (body armor, helmets, and carrying rifles), allowed commanders at the street level to determine the uniform and gear required at their respective checkpoints based on the local situation. Although this entailed some physical risk to soldiers, the participant believed it deescalated tensions by “demilitarizing” their appearance. Conversely, one (1) participant took the opposite approach by increasing his soldiers’ protective posture in response to some members in a group of displaced citizens becoming aggressive toward Guardsmen.

Three (3) participants also reported several examples in which they stretched their authority to respond to novelty. One participant, who wanted his soldiers to be armed while assisting uniformed police, began distributing weapons and ammunition before receiving official permission from state authorities. Another reported using “strong language” with an official from an advocacy group for private-sector employees who was demanding special security before they began work. Perhaps the most extreme instance was related by a participant who had finally received food and water for evacuees after several days’ delay, but with no way to unload the trucks:

“And so, I sent my recon element out and said go find me some damn forklifts. And they went down behind [location redacted] and there were like 50 forklifts that were locked up . . . And I told them break off the locks, I don’t care what you do, get those things running . . . Did I break the law? Probably so. Did it help us keep people with water and food? Yes. But I know there were a lot of people that when we did that looking at me and going ‘what are you doing?’”

**Proposition 6: Management by discovery rather than waiting for goal clarity is a viable strategy for chaotic or highly complex contexts.** Although data from this study was insufficient to fully address this proposition, three (3) participants did relate how they were compelled to innovate in the face of novel problems and ill-matched capabilities. This sometimes involved leveraging expert knowledge from within the organization or from a collaborative partner. They also reported how leaders at the lowest levels of the response would develop local, innovative procedures to performing tasks that would make their work less labor intensive and provide for a more efficient delivery of resources. Examples included organizing fuel distribution points to accommodate both cars and walk-up customers and using a fire-brigade method to move supplies up multiple flights of stairs. Conversely, participants discussed having to resort to labor intensive methods such as unloading planes by hand due to lack of equipment, or using messengers when communications were inoperable.

One (1) participant recalled several instances in which he and his staff developed innovative approaches to solving problems. For example, when the governor ordered a military police cordon for a large neighborhood, the participant instead partnered with local police chiefs and developed a system of barriers and unarmed troops with a small number of police officers in support. This solution leveraged local knowledge<sup>84</sup> and also preserved the limited number of military police available for other duties.

**Proposition 7: During highly complex DSCA operations, senior military leaders are likely required to work actively to overcome decision paralysis and decision avoidance during joint sense-making and decision-making.** While acknowledging some impacts of psychological and cognitive factors, none (0) of the participants reported any instance of decision avoidance. However, all participants (7) identified several tools and techniques adapted from overseas operations that were built into their civil-support responses to assist decision makers in responding to novelty, along with use of the MDMP as a model for disciplined sense-making and decision-making.

**Proposition 8: Senior military leaders, upon reflection, will likely be able to identify developmental experiences that assisted in their ability to lead in crisis-disasters.** The data confirm the importance of operational DOMOPS experience at multiple echelons, but also identify the importance of other developmental opportunities that leaders believe contributed to their effectiveness.

Participation in actual DOMOPS responses provided seminal experiences that shaped participants' performance as senior military leaders within this context. Six (6) participants described involvement in civil-support operations over multiple decades. Experience at various levels and in different duty positions was considered important. As summarized by one of the more experienced participants: "years of handling and being involved in hurricane responses . . . gave me the ability to experience it from different areas and at different levels and with different responsibilities."



Participants discussed several ways in which their past DOMOPS experiences improved their effectiveness as senior military leaders in a domestic response. Six (6) participants indicated that experiences at lower echelons provided perspective, enabling participants to better understand issues that subordinate leaders would be dealing with, allowing them to frame orders and guidance more effectively. Experience also provided better understanding of how collaborative partners planned and operated. One participant described participating annually in “briefings and meeting with various senior leaders that would be part of the state’s overall response,” while another credited “consistent training and coordination with the incident command system, from the highest to the lowest levels throughout the state.” Experiences from previous disaster responses enabled senior military leaders to provide a steadying presence to less experienced leaders, to include elected officials, reassuring them that response efforts would lead to improved conditions. One participant, whose first experience in hurricane response was as a “young captain,” stated that this initial experience taught him the lesson that “all disasters are local, and you have to really pay attention to local leadership.” Another described his first tornado response as a “young captain” in his hometown: “we went out, we were going to fix everything. Well, you find out really quick you’re not supposed to be out there doing that.”

The specific term “local knowledge,” or knowledge produced in a particular setting through practice or occupation,<sup>85</sup> was not used by any of the participants. However, data provided by all seven (7) participants indicate that senior military leaders rely on a broad but often tacit familiarity with geographical details (7), political dynamics (5), or economic (3) and social (3) nuances of states and regions, along with working knowledge of local and state disaster response plans and capabilities (4). Study data suggest that local knowledge is normally developed through career-long involvement through response operations, training, and exercises. One participant’s comments capture the essence of local knowledge:

“You have to fully understand all the emergency response plans that are in effect for your state, be familiar with the key people . . . I would never assume to go to another state and just walk in the door and be a dual status commander because I have no idea how their emergency management programs work.”

All seven (7) participants described how their experience emphasized the importance of building external relationships to ensure unity of effort, usually over time through participation in planning, exercises, and actual response operations. Although both overseas and DOMOPS require balancing unity of command and unity of effort, the data suggest that, for senior military leaders, more emphasis is necessary in domestic contexts because the military is in support. Relationships also facilitated understanding of partner needs and served as the basis for individual and organizational trust.

As for DOMOPS education, participants discussed United States Northern Command’s (USNORTHCOM) Joint Task Force Commander’s Course and Dual Status Commander Orientation Course (DSCOC) as providing critical information as to authorities and complex reporting chains associated with dual-status command. Most participants also mentioned Incident Command System (ICS) courses offered by FEMA as important for understanding how to interface with civilian response organizations under NIMS. All seven (7) participants at some point compared

or contrasted their experiences with others. Three (3) participants specifically noted how training courses conducted by USNORTHCOM and others include professional discussion of past disaster responses as part of the curriculum. These discussions offered insights from peers who had led crisis-disaster responses.

Because highly complex disaster responses are fortunately rare, training, exercises, and rehearsals serve as necessary proxies for operational experience. Six (6) participants had been involved in exercises and rehearsals with interagency partners throughout their National Guard careers. These influenced personal effectiveness through the establishment of professional relationships with civilian emergency managers and members of the response community, along with an understanding of how disaster response works in their respective state. Although one participant declared that “nothing takes away from experience,” they also noted that “hopefully we don’t have to experience it on a live level,” and can instead gain experience through exercises and rehearsals. Another stated that interagency disaster response exercises provided him “the experience of responding to . . . a lot of injects and a lot of moving parts,” as well as a venue to develop relationships with interagency partners and to get to know subordinate commanders.”

Although military training and education is designed primarily to prepare military leaders for contexts other than DOMOPS, participants discussed how they could apply the knowledge and skills to a civil support context. All seven (7) participants used military terminology and doctrinal concepts normally associated with overseas operations during the interviews. One noted that “the actual execution is different when you’re overseas deployed,” the use of standard operating procedures and reporting requirements “mirrored a lot of what we did overseas,” and that “conceptually that process works the same.” Another participant provided a specific example of how his organization adopted the phase line concept from warfighting operations to track storms.

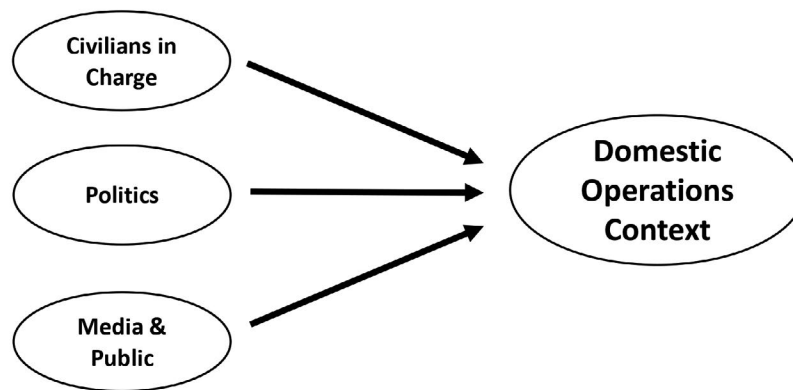
***Proposition 9: Senior military leaders can identify specific contributions to their confidence to lead and willingness to do so in relation to highly complex disaster responses.*** All seven (7) participants identified operational experience as most important in building both effectiveness and confidence, although training and education were also discussed. As one participant concluded: “at whatever level somebody might find themselves, if we have confidence in our abilities and the training and experiences, we should be fine.” Along with individual experience, two (2) participants also discussed the importance of the collective experience of the organization as contributing to their personal confidence. One participant remarked that he “went into [the storm response] with a . . . fair amount of confidence in the ability of the National Guard to respond to a disaster.”

## Research Questions

***Research question 1: What makes the task of senior military leadership during highly complex civil support operations different from leadership in other military contexts?***

Data from this study indicate that contextual differences between civil support and other military operations are rooted in the fundamental principle that civilian leaders are in charge, along with the political dynamics and media and public scrutiny inherent with operating in

the Homeland. Military activity in American communities is in itself novel – U.S. citizens are not accustomed to seeing soldiers patrolling their streets – and the presence of news media and omnipresent social media create a level of media and public scrutiny uncommon in other military contexts, which compels commanders to take greater care in everything they say, write, or do. These three characteristics, as illustrated in Figure 4, result in a context that generates unique requirements for senior military leadership in domestic operations.



### The Domestic Operations Context

Figure 4 – The Domestic Operations Context

During civil support operations, military leaders adapt many of the processes, tools and products that support sense-making and decision-making used in warfighting and taught in professional military education courses. Standard operating procedures (SOPs), reporting formats, and operational terminology can also be applied, in modified forms, to DOMOPS. Command of military forces remains within military channels, and wartime staff structures remain generally in place. However, during DOMOPs, most military organizations operate within a continuum of maintaining total tactical control and ceding it to civilian responders, using normal military command structures to maintain unity of command to respond to unanticipated conditions, new missions, or emerging requests from civilian leaders.

Data from participants indicate the importance of establishing relationships with external partners and utilizing local knowledge in civil-support operations. Relationships that facilitate unity of effort are largely set prior to the incident with leaders of external partner organizations through consistent, frequent interaction. These are critical for establishing trust and for understanding partner needs. Although pre-established relationships are optimal, data from this study indicate that they can also be developed quickly with deliberate, focused effort. Local knowledge fills gaps and provides pragmatic insights. When combined with expert knowledge, it creates better understanding of the challenges being faced and the options to deal with them.<sup>86</sup> As with relationships, local knowledge is normally developed through long-term involvement in response exercises, training, and operations but when necessary can also be leveraged from others.

Finally, data suggest that senior leaders should seek to portray and model a less directive and unidirectional leadership style than in other contexts, especially when collaborating with external partners. The proliferation of news media and omnipresent social media also imply that military leaders must be more circumspect and prudent in public statements as well as in oral and written communications.

**Research question 2: What career experiences contribute to the development of the ability of senior military leaders to exercise judgment during highly complex civil-support operations?**

As depicted in Figure 5, data from this study suggest that DOMOPS education, general military education and experience, and DOMOPS operational experience, training, and exercises are all essential contributors to the ability of senior military leaders to exercise judgment effectively during highly complex civil-support operations.

DOMOPS education provides an orientation to legal, fiscal, and regulatory guidance and authorities, providing the requisite technical knowledge to manage information and handle reporting requirements properly. Understanding authorities and reporting requirements also supports unity of effort by providing regulatory parameters for sharing control. Professional discussion of past disaster responses informs adaptation of military concepts to DOMOPS and leadership style.

DOMOPS Experience	Perspective from Various Echelons
	Local Knowledge
	External Relationships
DOMOPS Education	Authorities & Reporting
	Familiarity with ICS and NIMS
	Lessons Learned
DOMOPS Training and Exercises	Proxy for Operational Experience
	Familiarity with State/Local Response Plans
General Military Experience, Training & Education	Stress Inoculation
	Disciplined Decision Making
	Operational Concepts & Terminology

Figure 5 – Sources of Developmental Experience

Although designed primarily to prepare military leaders for contexts other than DOMOPS, military training and education contribute foundationally to senior leader judgment during highly complex civil-support operations. Familiarity with standard military operational concepts provides baseline knowledge with which to adapt them to domestic use. Stress inoculation provided through military training and operational experience can support leveraging relationships and portraying an optimal crisis leadership style.



Data from this study suggest that by performing in multiple assignments at increasingly higher echelons, military leaders gain experience in applying military operational concepts to DOMOPS, initiating relationships, and building local knowledge. But since major disasters are very rare, DOMOPS training and exercises serve as necessary proxies for operational experience. Exercises also expose participants to their expected roles and duties and provide a means to foster relationships and build familiarity with state and local emergency response agencies' plans and processes.

## Exploratory Theoretical Frameworks

Through integration of the study data and reviewed literature, I will now offer exploratory theoretical frameworks for each research question to inform current practice as well as future research. Together, these models illustrate how the DOMOPS operational context generates the requirement for senior military leaders to develop competencies for highly complex disaster responses, and how these competencies may be developed.

### Theoretical Framework 1: Key Competencies for Senior Military Leadership in DOMOPS

These key aspects of the DOMOPS environment, combined with the forces<sup>87</sup> of a crisis-disaster generate the need for senior military officers to possess seven (7) key competencies. Six of these – Modifying Military Concepts to DOMOPS, Fostering Unity of Effort, Leveraging Relationships, Integrating Local Knowledge, Maintaining Mission Focus, and Adjusting Leadership Style – are essential for supporting the seventh and central crisis-disaster leadership competency – Responding to Novelty. Although these bear similarities to “generic” technical and interpersonal competencies for military leaders at the strategic level,<sup>88</sup> the intent is to apply more granularity to context. Figure 6 portrays this theoretical model graphically.

Senior military leaders modify military concepts to the domestic operations context by synthesizing their conventional military knowledge with their DOMOPS training and experience to adapt the processes, tools, and products used in warfighting for use in the Homeland. Data from this study indicate that proficiency in operational art as practiced in combat operations and knowledge of the DOMOPS context are both essential contributors to this competency – each inform the other. Conventional military operational concepts are a departure point but must be adapted to the more restrictive domestic environment.<sup>89</sup> Moreover, some terminology common in military operations against enemy forces overseas is inappropriate for domestic use and must be modified.

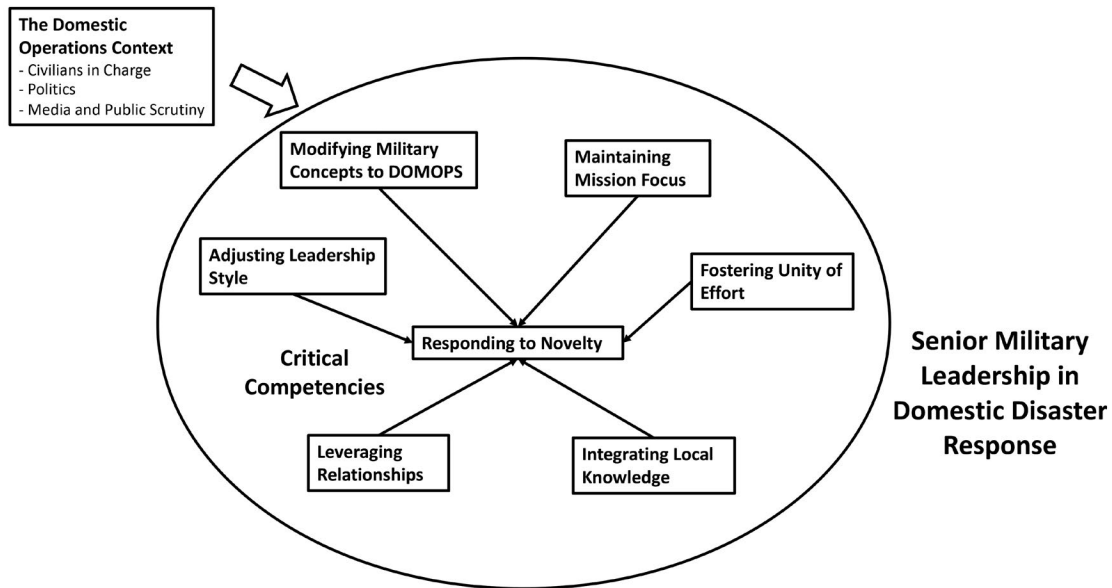


Figure 6 – Theoretical Model – Research Question 1

Mission focus ensures that tasks and commander's intent are understood throughout the military organization. This supports unity of effort by avoiding gaps and duplication of effort. Additionally, negotiating a mission set with unified action partners can mitigate operational risk by assigning military forces to perform tasks for which they are best suited.

Unity of command, one of the principles of war in U.S. joint military doctrine,<sup>90</sup> is paramount for operations overseas, but in the Homeland, with civilians in charge and the military one of many unified action partners, fostering unity of effort is of at least equal importance. To foster unity of effort, military leaders operate within a continuum of maintaining total tactical control and ceding it to civilian responders, using normal military command structures to maintain unity of command to respond to unanticipated conditions, new missions, or emerging requests from civilian leaders. Risks associated with sharing control can be mitigated through well-defined missions, managing expectations during planning, and framing guidance to allow commanders on the ground to use disciplined initiative.

Leaders utilize their knowledge of geographic, political, economic, and social nuances, along with working knowledge of local and state disaster response plans and capabilities (4) to fill gaps and provide pragmatic insights on how best to tailor military operations for a particular state, region, or community. In a DOMOPS context, local knowledge is normally developed through long-term involvement in a particular state or region. However, when operating outside their home area, mindful leaders can leverage the local knowledge of others.

Relationships that facilitate unity of effort are critical for establishing trust and for understanding partner needs. These relationships are established through consistent, frequent interaction. Although pre-established relationships are optimal, they can be developed quickly with deliberate, focused effort.

Data from this study suggest that while operating in a domestic context, senior military leaders seek to portray and model a less directive and unidirectional leadership style than in other contexts, especially when collaborating with external partners. The proliferation of news media and omnipresent social media also imply that military leaders must be more circumspect and prudent in public statements as well as in oral and written communications.

Responding to novelty is the seminal competency for senior leadership in crisis-disasters. The ability to communicate, maintain, and articulate situational awareness through a common operating picture is critical to sense-making, and this study identifies situational awareness as a key factor in reducing cognitive stress. Purposeful framing of guidance and orders to allow subordinate commanders to exercise initiative supports sense-making and decision-making processes that facilitate innovation and reacting to dynamic circumstances. Tools and techniques adapted from overseas operations can also assist decision makers in responding to novelty. Senior military leaders take various actions to “add leadership” to help organizations and individual leaders regain equilibrium. Examples include providing perspective and reassurance based on their experiences in other disasters, tactful coaching and mentoring, and detailing military leaders to assist civilian emergency management personnel in getting organized. While some situations call for adaptation of existing processes, others require leaders to take actions outside of established rules and norms.

## Framework #2: Developing Military Leader Competencies for DOMOPS

DOMOPS education, general military education and experience, and DOMOPS operations experience, training, and exercises are essential contributors to the ability of senior military leaders to exercise judgment effectively during highly complex civil support operations. These are arrayed in the theoretical model in Figure 7 to suggest how critical outcomes of these contributors undergird the six supporting competencies offered under Research Question 1. In turn, these supporting competencies reinforce the central competency – Responding to Novelty.

DOMOPS education provides an orientation to legal, fiscal, and regulatory guidance and authorities, enabling senior military leaders to adapt operational concepts effectively by providing the requisite technical knowledge to manage information and handle reporting requirements properly. Understanding authorities and reporting requirements also supports unity of effort by providing regulatory parameters for sharing control. Professional discussion of past disaster responses informs adaptation of military concepts to DOMOPS and leadership style.

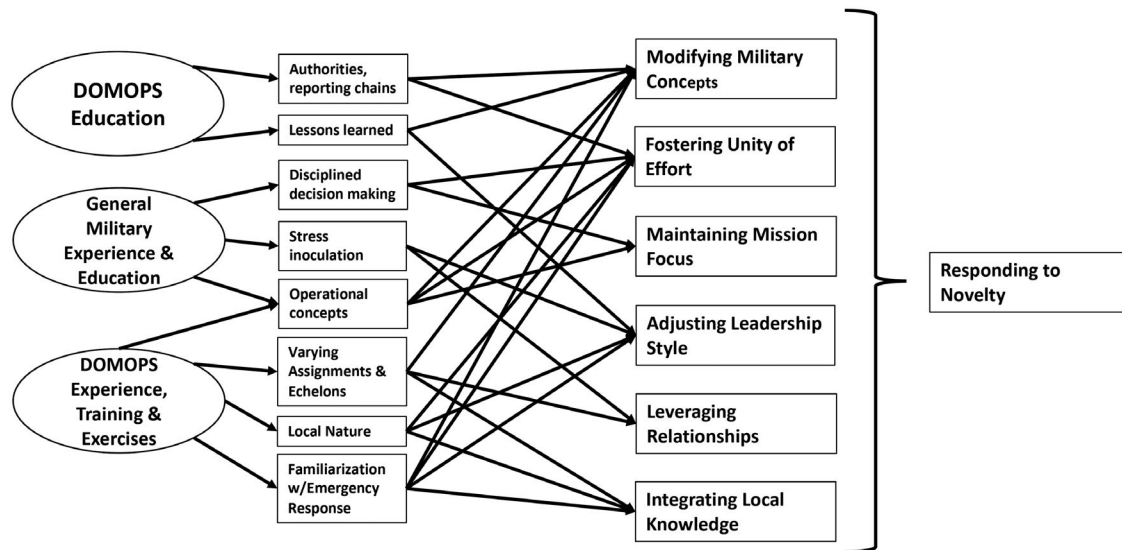


Figure 7 – Theoretical Model – Research Question 2

Although designed primarily to prepare military leaders for contexts other than DOMOPS, military training and education contribute foundationally to senior leader judgment and decision making. Experienced leaders can make adjustments based on context and or time constraints to facilitate rapid, intuitive action, and foster unity of effort by mitigating conflict as well as risk in sharing control. Stress inoculation provided through military training and operational experience can support leveraging relationships and portraying an optimal crisis leadership style.

Through experience in multiple assignments and increasingly higher echelons, military leaders gain experience in applying military operational concepts to DOMOPS, initiating relationships, and building local knowledge. But since major disasters are rare, DOMOPS training and exercises serve as necessary proxies for operational experience and expose participants to their expected roles and duties and provide a means to foster relationships. Familiarity with standard military operational concepts provides baseline knowledge with which to adapt them to domestic use. This expertise supports unity of effort and mission focus through mission assignments suitable for military forces. Local knowledge can assist leaders in adapting their leadership style, in building relationships to foster unity of effort, and in leveraging relationships. DOMOPS experience, especially through assignments at multiple echelons and varying responsibilities, results in familiarity with state and local emergency response agencies' plans and processes, while also providing insights as to how leaders might need to adjust their leadership style.

# Conclusion

The study described in this article contributes to the understanding of senior military leadership in DOMOPS by proposing theoretical models with which to explore the nature of this leadership and how it can be developed. Some implications may be exclusively applicable to senior National Guard and other DOD senior leaders and policymakers. Others, especially those related to concepts such as leadership style, local knowledge, and relationships, may be theoretically valid to leaders of civilian emergency management and other organizations involved in disaster response.

For senior military leaders and policymakers, this study highlights the importance of both DOMOPS and general military experience, training, and education as injects for leader development. It also suggests that DOMOPS leader competencies are optimally grown over an entire career through diverse responsibilities at multiple hierarchies. However, findings also indicate that professional collaborative relationships and local knowledge can be expediently gained or leveraged if necessary. Findings also emphasize the importance of exercises and rehearsals as necessary proxies for actual large-scale responses.

Dialogue with peers and colleagues concerning the findings for this study has generated several additional suggestions for future research. These include assessing the effectiveness of cultural orientations of military personnel prior to deploying into an affected area to mitigate the lack of local knowledge; identifying ways to prepare military leaders to navigate political issues and media engagements; improving situational awareness and knowledge management; and examining the relationships between complexity and leader flexibility. It has been suggested that additional study concerning the concept of unity of effort and how it is perceived by the civilian emergency management enterprise is also warranted.

The current version of the NRF notes the existence of complex supply chains and increasing interdependence of systems vital to sustaining the lives and livelihoods of Americans. This suggests that civil-support operations will become increasingly complex, involving greater numbers and varieties of organizations as part of the response.<sup>91</sup> Political realities will also affect how various organizations work with military leaders and vice versa. American citizens, through media and social media, will have a front-row seat and even a participatory role in the drama. Because of these considerations, senior military leaders will be required to draw on the full depth and width of their experiences and education to develop new competencies to lead civil-support operations effectively and confidently to protect American values, reduce human suffering, and save lives.



## Appendix A: Interview Questions

- How many total years of military service did you have at the time of the operation?
- How much time had you spent with the organization you led during the response?
- What was your military rank at the time of the response?
- How much exposure did you have with civil support operations and planning prior to the actual response?
- Prior to this mission, what type of experience did you have in domestic operations or disaster response?
- How did this experience affect the way you approached your job as a senior military officer during this response?
- How would you describe the stage or stages of the military response at the time you served in a leadership role?
- How long were you involved in the response operation?
- Were you serving as a dual-status commander?
- How would you describe, from your own experiences, the idea of simultaneously exercising unity of command over your own organization, while facilitating unity of effort with partners?
- How would you describe the geographical area of responsibility your organization had during the response?
- What factors or aspects of the disaster affected the ability of you and those you collaborated with to understand what was happening and your ability to make decisions?
- What was different about the sense-making and decision-making process during this disaster response from most other leadership situations you've encountered?
- Can you describe any situations during the disaster response in which you, and perhaps other leaders and members of the organization were overwhelmed by aspects of the disaster to the point that the ability to make sense seemed to collapse? In response, what actions did you take as a leader?
  - What actions did others take that stand out to you now?
  - How did the organization ultimately collect itself and move on?
- Can you describe any decisions or choices you made, either individually or in collaboration with others, that you would have considered ill-advised or too unconventional during normal circumstances?
  - What were the primary factors that led you to this decision?
  - Why did you believe this was necessary?
  - What were the reactions from within the organization or with outside stakeholders to this?
- What experiences, traits, training, or skills do you believe contributed to your leadership performance as well as your willingness and confidence to lead during the disaster response?
- Before we finish, is there anything else you would like to add?

## About the Author

Colonel (Retired) William A. Denny is an adjunct professor for the University of Charleston School of Business and Leadership. He is also a contract instructor in support of U.S. Northern Command, providing training for senior National Guard and Title 10 commanders and staff responsible for large-scale civil support operations. While serving fulltime with the Kentucky National Guard, Dr. Denny held several key senior leadership and staff assignments focusing on civil support and worked with civilian and military leaders at the local, state, FEMA region, and national level to plan and execute domestic operations. Dr. Denny holds his undergraduate degree from Murray State University and a Master of Strategic Studies degree from the U.S. Army War College. Dr. Denny earned his doctorate from the University of Charleston School of Business and Leadership in 2019. He may be reached at [williamdenny@ucwv.edu](mailto:williamdenny@ucwv.edu).

The opinions in this article do not represent those of the government.

The author wishes to thank the referees who helped improve the quality of this work.

## Bibliography

- Adams, Terri M., and Larry D. Stewart. "Chaos Theory and Organizational Crisis: A Theoretical Analysis of the Challenges Faced by the New Orleans Police Department during Hurricane Katrina." *Public Organization Review* 15 (2015): 415-431.
- Alison, Lawrence, Nicola Power, Claudia van den Heuvel, Michael Humann, Marek Palasinski, and Jonathan Crego. "Decision Inertia: Deciding between Least Worst Outcomes in Emergency Responses to Disasters." *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology* 88 (2015): 295-321.
- Boin, Arjen, and Cynthia Renaud. "Orchestrating Joint Sense-making Across Government Levels: Challenges and Requirements for Crisis Leadership." *Journal of Leadership Studies* 7. no. 3 (2013): 41-47.
- Boin, Arjen, Paul 't Hart, Eric Stern and Bengt Sundelius. *The Politics of Crisis Management: Public Leadership under Pressure*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.
- Boin, Arjen, and Paul 't Hart. "Public Leadership in Times of Crisis: Mission Impossible?" *Public Administration Review* 63, no. 5 (September/October 2003): 544-553.
- Boyce, Lisa A., Stephen J. Zaccaro and Michelle Zazanis Wisecarver. "Propensity for Self-development of Leader Attributes: Understanding, Predicting, and Supporting Performance of Leader Development." *Leadership Quarterly* 21 (2010): 159-158.
- Canton, Lucien G. "Disaster Planning and Management: Does One Leadership Style Work for Both?" *Journal of Leadership Studies* 7, no. 3 (2013): 47-50.

- Danielsson, Mats, and Kjell Ohlsson. "Decision Making in Emergency Management: A Survey Study," *International Journal of Cognitive Ergonomics* 3, no. 2 (1999): 91-99.
- Day, David V., Michelle M. Harrison and Stanley M. Halpin. *An Integrative Approach to Leader Development: Connecting Adult Development, Identity and Expertise*. New York: Routledge, 2009.
- DeRue, D. Scott, and Ned Wellman. "Developing Leaders via Experience: The Role of Developmental Challenge, Learning Orientation, and Feedback Availability." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 94, no. 4 (2009): 859-875.
- Gerras, Stephen J. *Strategic Leadership Primer*, 3rd ed. Carlisle, PA: US Army War College, 2010.
- Hadley, Constance Noonan, Todd L. Pittinsky, S. Amy Sommer and Weichen Zhu. "Measuring the Efficacy of Leaders to Assess Information and Make Decisions in a Crisis: The C-LEAD Scale." *Leadership Quarterly* 22 (2011): 633-648.
- Hale, Joanne E., David P. Hale and Ronald E. Dulek, "Decision Processes during Crisis Response: An Exploratory Investigation." *Journal of Managerial Issues* 18, no. 3 (Fall 2006): 301-320.
- Hannah, Sean T., Mary Uhl-Bien, Bruce J. Avolio, and Fabrice L. Cavarretta. "A Framework for Examining Leadership in Extreme Contexts." *Leadership Quarterly* 20 (2009): 897-919.
- Higgins, Guy, and Jennifer Freedman. "Improving Decision Making in Crisis." *Journal of Business Continuity & Emergency Planning* 7, no. 1 (2013): 65-76.
- Howitt, Arnold B., and Herman B. Leonard. *Managing Crises: Responses to Large-Scale Emergencies*. Washington: CQ Press, 2009.
- Innes, Judith E., and David E. Booher. *Planning with Complexity: An Introduction to Collaborative Rationality for Public Policy*. London: Routledge, 2010.
- James, Erika Hayes, Lynn Perry Wooten and Kelly Dushek. "Crisis Management: Informing a New Leadership Research Agenda." *The Academy of Management Annals* 5, no. 1 (June 2011): 455-493.
- Jong, Wouter, Michel L.A. Duckers and Peter G. Van der Velden. "Leadership of Mayors and Governors during Crises: A Systematic Review on Tasks and Effectiveness." *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management* 24, no. 1 (March 2016): 54.
- Klein, Gary. *Streetlights and Shadows: Searching for the Keys to Adaptive Decision Making*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011.
- Kurtz, Cynthia F., and David J. Snowden. "The New Dynamics of Strategy: Sense-Making in a Complex and Complicated World." *IBM Systems Journal* 42, no. 3 (2003): 462-483.

- Matilla, Juha. "Military Knowledge Management: Sense-Making, Decision-Making and Knowledge Creation." *Proceedings of the European Conference on Knowledge Management* (2016): 1053-1063.
- McChrystal, Stanley, Tatum Collins, David Silverman, and Chris Fussell. *Team of Teams: New Rules for Engagement for a Complex World*. New York: Portfolio/Penguin, 2015.
- Mumford, Michael D., Tamara L. Friedrich, Jay J. Caughron and Cristina L. Byrne. "Leader Cognition in Real-world Settings: How do Leaders Think about Crises?" *Leadership Quarterly* 18 (2007): 515-543.
- Niculae, Carmen, Simon French and Emma Carter. "Emergency Management: Does it Have a Sufficiently Comprehensive Understanding of Decision-making, Process and Context?" *Radiation Protection Dosimetry* 109, no. 1-2 (2004): 97-100.
- Pearson, Christine M., and Judith A. Clair. "Reframing Crisis Management." *Academy of Management Review* 15, no. 1, (1998): 59-76.
- Pfiefer, Joseph W. *Crisis Leadership: The Art of Adapting to Extreme Events*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Kennedy School of Government, 2013.
- Prewitt, James E., and Richard Weil. "Organizational Opportunities Endemic in Crisis Leadership." *Journal of Management Policy and Practice* 15, no. 2 (2014): 72-87.
- Raisio, Harri, and Niklas Lundstrom. "Real Leaders Embracing the Paradigm of Complexity." *Emergence: Complexity and Organization* (September (2015): 1-7.
- Reichard, Rebecca J., Dayna O. Walker, Stefanie E. Putter, Eric Middleton and Stefanie K. Johnson. "Believing is Becoming: The Role of Leader Development Efficacy in Leader Self-Development." *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies* 24, no. 2 (2017): 137-156.
- Schumacher, Ludwig J. "Dual-Status Command for No-Notice events: Integrating the Military Response to Domestic Disasters." *Homeland Security Affairs* 7, no. 4 (February 2011): 1-9.
- Shotter, John, and Haridimos Tsoukas. "In Search of Phronesis: Leadership and the Art of Judgment." *Academy of Management Learning & Education* 13, no. 2 (2014): 224-233.
- Steigenberger, Norbert. "Organizing for the Big One: A Review of Case Studies and a Research Agenda for Multi-Agency Disaster Response." *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management* 24, no. 2 (June 2016): 60-72.
- Tichy, Noel M., and Warren G. Bennis. *Judgment: How Winning Leaders Make Great Calls*. New York: Penguin Group, 2007.
- Uhl-Bien, Mary, and Russ Marion. "Complexity Leadership Theory." In *The SAGE Handbook of Leadership*, edited by Alan Bryman, David Collinson, Keith Grint, Brad Jackson and Mary Uhl-Bien. London: Sage Publications, 2011.

- Uhr, Christian. "Leadership Ideals as Barriers for Efficient Collaboration during Emergencies and Disasters." *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management* 25, no. 4 (December 2017): 301-312.
- US Department of the Army. Field Manual 6-0, Commander and Staff Organization and Processes. 2016.
- US Department of Defense. Chief National Guard Bureau Instruction 3000.04, subject: National Guard Bureau Domestic Operations. January 2018.
- . Department of Defense Directive no. 3025.18, subject: Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA). March 19, 2018.
- . DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms. 2017.
- . Joint Publication 1-0, Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States. July 2017.
- . Joint Publication 3-0: Joint Operations. October 2018.
- . Joint Publication 3-28, Defense Support to Civil Authorities. October 2018.
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security, National Response Framework. October 2019.
- U.S. National Guard Bureau, National Guard Domestic Operations. 2008.
- Useem, Michael, James Cook and Larry Sutton. "Developing Leaders for Decision Making under Stress: Wildland Firefighters in the South Canyon Fire and its Aftermath." *Academy of Management Learning & Education* 4, no. 4 (2005): 461-475.
- Vogus, Timothy J., Naomi B. Rothman, Kathleen M. Sutcliffe and Karl E. Weick. "The Affective Foundations of High-reliability Organizing." *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 35 (2014): 592-596.
- Weber, Edward P., and Anne M. Khademian. "Wicked Problems, Knowledge Challenges, and Collaborative Capacity Builders in Network Settings." *Public Administration Review* 68, no. 2 (March-April 2008): 334-339.
- Wong, Leonard, Paul Bliese and Dennis McGurk. "Military Leadership: A Context-Specific Review." *Leadership Quarterly* 14 (2003): 657-692.
- Zhang, Zhe, Jia Ming, and Lihong Gu. "Transformational Leadership in Crisis Situations: Evidence from the People's Republic of China." *International Journal of Human Resource Management* 23, no. 19 (November 2012): 4085-4109.



# Notes

1. US Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 3-28, Defense Support to Civil Authorities*, (Washington, DC, October 2018): II-9.
2. US Department of Defense, *Chief National Guard Bureau Instruction 3000.04, subject: National Guard Bureau Domestic Operations*. (Washington, DC, 24 January 2018): 1.
3. US Department of the Army, *Army Doctrine Publication 3-28*, 1-1.
4. US Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 3-0: Joint Operations* (Washington, DC, October 2018): x.
5. Stanley McChrystal, Tatum Collins, David Silverman, and Chris Fussell, *Team of Teams: New Rules for Engagement for a Complex World* (New York: Portfolio/Penguin, 2015), 34.
6. US Department of the Army, *Army Doctrine Publication 3-28*, 1-2.
7. US Department of the Army, *Army Doctrine Publication 3-28*, vii.
8. Arnold M. Howitt and Herman B. Leonard, *Managing Crises: Responses to Large-Scale Emergencies* (Washington: CQ Press, 2009), 278.
9. *Ibid.*, 5.
10. *Ibid.*, 277.
11. *Ibid.*, 279.
12. Joseph W. Pfeifer, *Crisis Leadership: The Art of Adapting to Extreme Events* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Kennedy School of Government, 2013), 6.
13. James E. Prewitt and Richard Weil, "Organizational Opportunities Endemic in Crisis Leadership," *Journal of Management Policy and Practice* 15, no. 2 (2014): 73.
14. Christine M. Pearson and Judith A. Clair, "Reframing Crisis Management," *Academy of Management Review* 15, no. 1, (1998): 69.
15. Prewitt and Weil, "Organizational Opportunities," 75.
16. Erika Hayes James, Lynn Perry Wooten and Kelly Dushek, "Crisis Management: Informing a New Leadership Research Agenda," *The Academy of Management Annals* 5, no. 1 (June 2011): 473.
17. Prewitt and Weil, "Organizational Opportunities," 73.
18. Cynthia F. Kurtz and David J. Snowden, "The New Dynamics of Strategy: Sense-Making in a Complex and Complicated World," *IBM Systems Journal* 42, no. 3 (2003): 467-470.
19. Carmen Nicolae, Simon French and Emma Carter, "Emergency Management: Does it Have a Sufficiently Comprehensive Understanding of Decision-making, Process and Context?" *Radiation Protection Dosimetry* 109, no. 1-2 (2004): 97-100.
20. Juha Matilla, "Military Knowledge Management: Sense-Making, Decision-Making and Knowledge Creation," *Proceedings of the European Conference on Knowledge Management* (2016): 1053-1062.
21. Kurtz and Snowden, "New Dynamics," 468.
22. *Ibid.*, 469.
23. *Ibid.*, 469.

24. Terri M. Adams and Larry D. Stewart, "Chaos Theory and Organizational Crisis: A Theoretical Analysis of the Challenges Faced by the New Orleans Police Department during Hurricane Katrina," *Public Organization Review* 15 (2015): 417.
25. Kurtz and Snowden, "New Dynamics," 469.
26. US Department of Homeland Security, *National Response Framework* (Washington, DC, October 2019): 2.
27. US Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 3-28*, II-9.
28. US Department of Homeland Security, *National Response Framework*, 36.
29. US Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 3-28*, ix-xiv.
30. US Department of Defense, *Department of Defense Directive no. 3025.18, subject: Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA)* (March 19, 2018): 2.
31. National Guard Bureau, *National Guard Domestic Operations* (Arlington, VA: National Guard Bureau, 2008): 5.
32. US Department of Defense, *Chief National Guard Bureau Instruction 3000.04*, 1.
33. *Ibid.*, A-2.
34. Ludwig J. Schumacher, "Dual-Status Command for No-Notice Events: Integrating the Military Response to Domestic Disasters," *Homeland Security Affairs* 7 no. 4 (February 2011): 2-6.
35. US Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 3-28*, D-1 – D-10.
36. US Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 3-28*, I-9.
37. US Department of Defense, *DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (2017).
38. Christian Uhr, "Leadership Ideals as Barriers for Efficient Collaboration during Emergencies and Disasters." *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management* 25, no. 4 (December 2017): 301.
39. Constance Noonan Hadley, Todd L. Pittinsky, S. Amy Sommer and Weichen Zhu, "Measuring the Efficacy of Leaders to Assess Information and Make Decisions in a Crisis: The C-LEAD Scale," *Leadership Quarterly* 22 (2011): 634.
40. Arjen Boin, Paul 't Hart, Eric Stern and Bengt Sundelius, *The Politics of Crisis Management: Public Leadership under Pressure*. 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 15.
41. Howitt and Leonard, *Managing Crises*, 6.
42. Arjen Boin and Cynthia Renaud, "Orchestrating Joint Sense-making Across Government Levels: Challenges and Requirements for Crisis Leadership," *Journal of Leadership Studies* 7. no. 3 (2013): 44.
43. Michael D. Mumford, Tamara L. Friedrich, Jay J. Caughron and Cristina L. Byrne, "Leader Cognition in Real-world Settings: How do Leaders Think about Crises?" *Leadership Quarterly* 18 (2007): 522.
44. Boin, 't Hart, Stern and Sundelius, *The Politics of Crisis Management*, 15.
45. Guy Higgins and Jennifer Freedman, "Improving Decision Making in Crisis," *Journal of Business Continuity & Emergency Planning* 7, no. 1 (2013): 65.
46. Boin, 't Hart, Stern and Sundelius, *The Politics of Crisis Management*, 51.
47. Noel M. Tichy and Warren G. Bennis, *Judgment: How Winning Leaders Make Great Calls* (New York: Penguin Group, 2007), 30.

48. Gary Klein, *Streetlights and Shadows: Searching for the Keys to Adaptive Decision Making* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011), 163.
49. Lawrence Alison et al., "Decision Inertia: Deciding between Least Worst Outcomes in Emergency Responses to Disasters," *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology* 88 (2015): 297.
50. Tichy and Bennis, *Judgment*, 288.
51. Pfeifer, *Crisis Leadership*, 6.
52. Klein, *Streetlights and Shadows*, 280.
53. Useem, Cook and Sutton, "Developing Leaders," 467.
54. John Shotter and Haridimos Tsoukas, "In Search of Phronesis: Leadership and the Art of Judgment," *Academy of Management Learning & Education* 13, no. 2 (2014): 230.
55. Timothy J. Vogus, Naomi B. Rothman, Kathleen M. Sutcliffe and Karl E. Weick, "The Affective Foundations of High-reliability Organizing," *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 35 (2014): 594.
56. Norbert Steigenberger, "Organizing for the Big One: A Review of Case Studies and a Research Agenda for Multi-Agency Disaster Response," *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management* 24, no. 2 (June 2016): 62.
57. Joanne E. Hale, David P. Hale and Ronald E. Dulek, "Decision Processes during Crisis Response: An Exploratory Investigation," *Journal of Managerial Issues* 18, no. 3 (Fall 2006): 305.
58. Boin, 't Hart, Stern and Sundelius, *The Politics of Crisis Management*, 37.
59. Steigenberger, "Organizing for the Big One," 62.
60. Sean T. Hannah, Mary Uhl-Bien, Bruce J. Avolio, and Fabrice L. Cavarretta, "A Framework for Examining Leadership in Extreme Contexts," *Leadership Quarterly* 20 (2009): 903.
61. Mary Uhl-Bien and Russ Marion, "Complexity Leadership Theory," in *The SAGE Handbook of Leadership*, eds. Alan Bryman, David Collinson, Keith Grint, Brad Jackson and Mary Uhl-Bien (London: Sage Publications, 2011), 470.
62. Zhe Zhang, Jia Ming, and Lihong Gu, "Transformational Leadership in Crisis Situations: Evidence from the People's Republic of China," *International Journal of Human Resource Management* 23, no. 19 (November 2012): 4104.
63. Wouter Jong, Michel L.A. Duckers and Peter G. Van der Velden, "Leadership of Mayors and Governors during Crises: A Systematic Review on Tasks and Effectiveness," *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management* 24, no. 1 (March 2016): 54.
64. Lucien G. Canton, "Disaster Planning and Management: Does One Leadership Style Work for Both?" *Journal of Leadership Studies* 7, no. 3 (2013): 47.
65. Arjen Boin and Paul 't Hart, "Public Leadership in Times of Crisis: Mission Impossible?" *Public Administration Review* 63, no. 5 (September/October 2003): 547.
66. Edward P. Weber and Anne M. Khademian, "Wicked Problems, Knowledge Challenges, and Collaborative Capacity Builders in Network Settings," *Public Administration Review* 68, no. 2 (March-April 2008): 334.
67. Harri Raisio and Niklas Lundstrom, "Real Leaders Embracing the Paradigm of Complexity," *Emergence: Complexity and Organization* (September (2015): 5.
68. Mats Danielsson and Kjell Ohlsson, "Decision Making in Emergency Management: A Survey Study," *International Journal of Cognitive Ergonomics* 3, no. 2 (1999): 96.

69. Steigenberger, "Organizing for the Big One," 64.
70. Boin, 't Hart, Stern and Sundelius, *The Politics of Crisis Management*, 155.
71. Leonard Wong, Paul Bliese and Dennis McGurk, "Military Leadership: A Context-specific Review, *Leadership Quarterly* 14 (2003): 660.
72. David V. Day, Michelle M. Harrison and Stanley M. Halpin, *An Integrative Approach to Leader Development: Connecting Adult Development, Identity and Expertise* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 4.
73. Day, Harrison and Halpin, *An Integrative Approach to Leader Development*, 132-158.
74. Steigenberger, "Organizing for the Big One," 62.
75. D. Scott DeRue and Ned Wellman, "Developing Leaders via Experience: The Role of Developmental Challenge, Learning Orientation, and Feedback Availability," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 94, no. 4 (2009): 860.
76. Michael Useem, James Cook and Larry Sutton, "Developing Leaders for Decision Making under Stress: Wildland Firefighters in the South Canyon Fire and its Aftermath," *Academy of Management Learning & Education* 4, no. 4 (2005): 479.
77. Steigenberger, "Organizing for the Big One," 68.
78. Rebecca J. Reichard, Dayna O. Walker, Stefanie E. Putter, Eric Middleton and Stefanie K. Johnson, "Believing is Becoming: The Role of Leader Development Efficacy in Leader Self-Development," *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies* 24, no. 2 (2017): 137.
79. Lisa A. Boyce, Stephen J. Zaccaro and Michelle Zazanis Wisecarver, "Propensity for Self-development of Leader Attributes: Understanding, Predicting, and Supporting Performance of Leader Development," *Leadership Quarterly* 21 (2010): 159.
80. Hadley, Pittinsky, Sommer and Zhu, "Measuring the Efficacy of Leaders," 635.
81. Klein, *Streetlights and Shadows*, 256.
82. US Department of the Army, Field Manual 6-0, Commander and Staff Organization and Processes (Washington, DC, 2016): 9-1.
83. Pfeifer, *Crisis Leadership*, 6.
84. Weber and Khademian, "Wicked Problems," 339.
85. Ibid., 339.
86. Judith E. Innes and David E. Booher, *Planning with Complexity: An Introduction to Collaborative Rationality for Public Policy* (London: Routledge, 2010), 191-193.
87. Pfeifer, *Crisis Leadership*, 6.
88. Stephen J. Gerras (Ed.), *Strategic Leadership Primer*, 3rd ed. (Carlisle, PA: US Army War College, 2010), 28-34.
89. US Department of the Army, *Army Doctrine Publication 3-28*, 1-1.
90. US Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 1-0, Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States* (Washington, DC, July 2017): I-3.
91. US Department of Homeland Security, *National Response Framework*, ii.

# Copyright

Copyright © 2021 by the author(s). Homeland Security Affairs is an academic journal available free of charge to individuals and institutions. Because the purpose of this publication is the widest possible dissemination of knowledge, copies of this journal and the articles contained herein may be printed or downloaded and redistributed for personal, research or educational purposes free of charge and without permission. Any commercial use of Homeland Security Affairs or the articles published herein is expressly prohibited without the written consent of the copyright holder. The copyright of all articles published in Homeland Security Affairs rests with the author(s) of the article. Homeland Security Affairs is the online journal of the Naval Postgraduate School Center for Homeland Defense and Security (CHDS).

Cover photo by Chris Henry, courtesy of unsplash.com