

## **Spreading the Gospel of Lessons Learned: From the PfP Lessons Learned Working Group to Advanced Distributed Learning**

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In December 1999, the United States Army Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) approached the Partnership for Peace Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes to establish a Lessons Learned Working Group. The need for such a working group was clear. Within the context of the United States Army, through the institution of CALL, lessons learned had grown to encompass a significant body of institutional knowledge, knowledge that contributed significantly to the operational, organizational, and intellectual effectiveness of the Army on a daily basis.

In the countries of the former Warsaw Pact and Soviet Union, the need to learn from their own experience, as well as from a common, shared experience across the Partnership, was perhaps even greater. For the greater part of the 1990s, partner countries had engaged in a variety of collaborative activities and exercises with U.S. and other NATO forces. Many had begun the process of transforming their armed forces and modernizing their institutions and equipment to meet new security challenges and opportunities. The forces of many partner countries participated in contingency operations in Europe and around the world alongside those of NATO, but there existed no mechanism to capture and disseminate what was learned from these experiences across the Partnership. The Lessons Learned Working Group, established by CALL at the Second Annual Conference of the Consortium held in Sofia, Bulgaria, had as its goal the establishment of such a mechanism to collect and disseminate the common experiences of partner nations for the benefit of all.

### **CALL and the U.S. Experience in Lesson-learning**

The United States Army Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) had been in existence for almost fifteen years in December 1999. The Army originally established CALL in response to Congressional concerns that the U.S. Army was not, as an institution, absorbing the lessons learned at the National Training Center (NTC) at Fort Irwin, California. The cornerstone of the “Training Revolution” of the U.S. Army in the post-Vietnam War era, the NTC combined state-of-the-art technology, a training cadre composed of the most experienced and doctrinally proficient officers in the Army, and an onsite, dedicated opposing force (OPFOR) modeled on the Soviet/Warsaw Pact threat then facing the Army. Units trained

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at the NTC in both force-on-force, realistic engagements, with the OPFOR using laser technology, and in live-fire exercises.

Units rotating to the NTC received immediate feedback from observer-controllers from the operations group, feedback that was then used by the unit to tailor future training to correct the deficiencies observed. However, personnel turnover within units meant that the knowledge gained at the NTC was often short-lived and not retained within the body of institutional knowledge of a given unit. Moreover, the Army possessed no mechanism to capture and disseminate the valuable lessons being learned every day by units at the NTC so that the entire force could benefit from these units' experience. As a consequence of these two factors—the turnover in personnel and the lack of a “lessons-learned system”—U.S. Army units often made the very same mistakes from one rotation to the next at the NTC. The Army established CALL to solve the latter deficiency.

Between 1985 and 1989, CALL laid the groundwork of the lessons-learned system in the United States Army. It was only able to execute this remarkable achievement, however, because the Army had begun the process ten years earlier of institutionalizing the “after-action review,” or AAR. Army behavioral scientists designed the AAR to allow the participants in a training exercise or actual operation to discover for themselves what had happened and why, instead of having this told to them by external evaluators or their chain of command. Under the AAR system, exercise observers became “facilitators,” guiding for the participants the process of discovering what the exercise revealed in terms of unit, leader, and soldier performance. By encouraging free discussion, the AAR permitted subordinates to offer constructive criticism of leader decisions in an open forum. The designers of the AAR and the Army leadership felt that by allowing subordinates to express their opinions openly, the AAR gave the commander the “ground truth” about the performance of the unit.

This facet of the AAR precipitated a huge culture shift in the U.S. Army, which had heretofore frowned upon any questioning of leadership decisions, no matter how constructively framed. This culture shift took a while to take hold, but was greatly facilitated by the transformation of the Army from a conscript to an all-volunteer force following the Vietnam War. This is significant within the context of the Partnership for Peace, since the militaries of many of the partner nations are undergoing a similar transformation today.

The Army had fully embraced the AAR culture by the time CALL began its work in 1985. CALL began to collect after-action reviews from the NTC and other select Army exercises. A small team of analysts examined these reports and began to produce lessons-learned publications based on the collective knowledge contained in these reports, which CALL distributed to units across the Army. Since CALL's existence pre-dates the Internet and the widespread availability of computer resources, CALL initially was forced to disseminate its lessons learned via the traditional medium of printed paper and mail distribution. However, CALL

succeeded in its mission of disseminating NTC lessons learned to the force prior to the advent of easily accessible computer networks, a lesson itself for other countries today that might want to establish lessons-learned organizations but perhaps feel that they lack the technologies to make them work. CALL started collecting, analyzing, and disseminating lessons learned long before the personal computer and computer network became the effective knowledge management tools that they are today.

Over the course of the late 1980s, CALL expanded its combat training center focus to include the new tactical combat training centers that were inaugurated during those years. In 1987, the Army established the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) at Fort Chaffee, Arkansas (moved to Fort Polk, Louisiana in 1989), focusing on offering the same realistic, state-of-the-art, battle-focused training to airborne and light forces that the NTC provided to armor and heavy mechanized units. In 1989, the U.S. Army Europe opened the Combat Maneuver Training Center at the Hohenfels Training Area in Lower Bavaria, Germany to train the heavy, forward-deployed forces in Europe in the same realistic environment found at NTC. CALL positioned small liaison teams at each of these combat training centers to ensure the continued flow of reports and observations from the training battlefield.

In 1989, the CALL mission was expanded to embrace the collection and dissemination of lessons learned from actual contingency operations. During the Cold War, the Army's combat training centers represented the best continuous source of tactical lessons learned in existence anywhere in the world. However, starting in 1989, the U.S. Army began a long series of combat and peacekeeping deployments that continue to this day. In December 1989, the U.S. Army invaded Panama to oust Manuel Noriega from power and reinstall the legitimate government of that country. CALL sent a team of lessons-learned observers to Panama along with U.S. forces to collect reports on their experiences. Nine months later, when U.S. forces deployed to Saudi Arabia in response to Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait, a CALL team also went to collect observations and lessons learned.

CALL gained several insights about how to conduct lessons-learned collection during actual operations from these first two major deployments. First, CALL learned that it had neither the manpower nor the expertise in-house to field collection teams. Indeed, collection during the Gulf War, the most extensive deployment of U.S. forces since the Vietnam War, required the extensive augmentation of CALL by the Department of the Army, which placed a two-star general in charge of this extensive effort. CALL came to rely generally on the Army centers and schools to provide the needed subject-matter experts to serve as observers.

The second, even greater insight concerned the need to obtain the full support of the unit being observed for the lessons-learned effort. CALL observers during these initial operations were often regarded by commanders in the field as inspec-

tors sent to observe and document shortcomings and mistakes, and some resisted the attachment of CALL observers to their units for this reason. CALL circumvents this problem today by coordinating all observations of a unit made by its observers with that unit's commander and chief of staff. Only "approved" observations, validated by the unit commander, make it into the final report. CALL observers are also "attached" to the units they observe; in essence, they report to and are under the command of that unit's commander. CALL also does not directly publish the observations made during actual operations. Rather, it prepares thematic and derivative publications of analysis made over time. In addition, CALL publications never identify units or individuals involved, particularly if the observations or lessons learned are at all negative in character.

In the aftermath of Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm, the Army leadership increasingly saw the value of making information available to leaders and soldiers electronically, initially in support of military education. In 1991–92, General Frederick M. Franks, Jr., the commander of the U.S. VII Corps during the Gulf War, directed that the lessons learned from that conflict be made available to students at the U.S. Army Command and General College (CGSC). The Combined Arms Center History Office began an extensive project to digitize after-action reports and other Army and joint service records provided directly by units or collected by CALL or other special study groups that had been formed to analyze aspects of that conflict. As the Army deployed to Somalia in 1992–93, Haiti and Rwanda in 1994, and Bosnia in 1995, this effort expanded to become the "Army Knowledge Network," charged with the responsibility for collecting, archiving, and disseminating important documentation from these operations.

In March 1996, the Army Knowledge Network merged with CALL, and its online repository of information became known as the CALL Database. Over the course of the next several years, this unification of the Army Knowledge Network with CALL led to a gradual expansion of the definition of a "lesson learned." Prior to 1996, CALL had either collected lessons actively through observer teams or received draft articles, after-action reports, and other documents passively from soldiers in the field. In other words, CALL drew its lessons learned exclusively from observation-based resources. After merging with AKN, CALL began to provide commanders, staffs, and units with records from prior operations, as well as information drawn from a variety of military, academic, and other online resources. This marked an important and dramatic expansion of CALL's capability to support the Army's operational, educational, training, and doctrine communities. It has also accentuated the importance of online, electronic archiving and dissemination. For example, a water purification SOP archived for one operation can now be downloaded on request from the CALL Database and re-used by the next unit deploying in support of disaster recovery operations.

The complexity and growth of online resources since the mid-1990s coupled with the complexity of search engine technology, however, has required CALL to

get into the business of “on-the-fly” packaging of information for rapid dissemination to units. Beginning with Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm in 1990–91, CALL also began to “push” information and lessons learned to units. To prepare U.S. troops for war against Iraq, CALL published “Winning in the Desert,” a “how-to” manual designed to instruct soldiers how to survive and fight in the harsh environment of arid Southwest Asia. Since 1991, CALL has continued to push information to the field, often transferring the lessons learned from one unit deployed on a contingency operation directly to the unit scheduled to replace it in deployment. During this time, the electronic transmission of information to units gradually replaced the earlier hard-copy distribution system.

In 1999, CALL took this mission a step further by launching its Knowledge Reachback initiative in conjunction with the Battle Command Training Program (BCTP), which teaches war-fighting to division and corps staffs and Army units designated as the nucleus of Joint Task Forces in times of crisis or emergency. Under the Knowledge Reachback initiative, CALL beefed up its analytical capabilities and now routinely pushes lessons learned, tactics, techniques, procedures, and other knowledge and information to units preparing for, participating in, or returning from operational deployments. CALL analysts conduct research and provide targeted responses to requests for information from the field. They also now routinely train division and corps staff officers in the use of online knowledge and information resources as a part of designated BCTP seminars. And BCTP observer-trainers use CALL’s analytical and research power to reinforce their training points and objectives during seminars and exercises.

### **CALL and the Lessons Learned Working Group**

Since the Gulf War, almost all U.S. Army deployments have been in conjunction with those of its allies and coalition partners. Being responsible for both preparing Army units with the necessary knowledge and information for deployment and capturing their lessons learned in the field, CALL is well aware of the value of understanding the tactics, techniques, and procedures of coalition partners. The global security environment since the end of the Cold War has made the collection of foreign army experience an exceedingly complex challenge. The U.S. Army has found itself working with armies that were either found in the ranks of its enemies or did not even exist in their current form only a few short years earlier.

Understandably, CALL began its collection of foreign army lessons learned within a consortium of some of its oldest and closest allies: the American, British, Canadian, and Australian (ABCA) Armies’ Standardization Program. In 1998, CALL established a variant of the CALL Database called the ABCA Coalition Operations Lessons Learned Database (ABCA COLL). Reports submitted through “gatekeeper” organizations (generally the lessons-learned centers within the member armies) began flowing to the database the same year. The ABCA COLL Database has become an important repository of lessons-learned informa-

tion for the American, British, Canadian, Australian, and New Zealand armies, and it captures and disseminates information for use across the ABCA program that individual, national lessons-learned systems could never collect. For example, the U.S. Army now has access to important Australian lessons learned from East Timor, which it would have never had access to without the important information-sharing initiative of the ABCA COLL Database.

So when a representative of the Partnership for Peace Information Management System (PIMS) approached CALL with the idea of establishing a lessons-learned database for PfP, CALL saw an opportunity to assemble an important body of lessons learned from former Warsaw Pact and Soviet Union partner countries, many of whose armies were already working closely with the U.S. Army in coalition operations in Bosnia and Kosovo.

In December 1999, CALL established, with the consent of the Consortium Secretariat, the Lessons Learned Working Group. Representatives of over nine PfP countries attended the first session of the Lessons Learned Working Group in Sofia. At the meeting, CALL presented its experience in constructing and maintaining lessons-learned databases, and all agreed on the need to establish some kind of database repository to capture lessons being learned by PfP countries in a wide variety of partnership activities. I became the first chairman of the working group, with the current chair of the working group, Col. Dr. Petar Mollov of the Interoperability Faculty of the Bulgarian Rakovski Defense and Staff College, serving as co-chair.

Following the initial meeting, CALL quickly built the infrastructure for a “PfP Lessons Learned Database” (or PfP LL DB), based on its experience in setting up the ABCA COLL Database. By February 2000, CALL had completed a prototype database and had written a guide for creators of lessons learned to instruct contributing organizations from the PfP countries how to input lessons learned into the database. Members of the Bulgarian Rakovski Defense and Staff College and the Romanian National Defense College translated the guide into their respective national languages. The Lessons Learned Working Group approved the prototype PfP LL DB and the user’s guide at the Third Annual Conference of the Consortium in Tallinn, Estonia in June 2000.

In November 2000, CALL hosted a meeting of the working group at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. The intent of this rigorous meeting was to provide the attendees with in-depth exposure to the methodologies and technologies CALL uses to collect, archive, and disseminate lessons learned and other important knowledge and information. This meeting sowed the seeds of great interest among many of the attendees in founding lessons-learned organizations within their own armed forces—seeds that have borne fruit within a short year-and-a-half of the working group meeting at Fort Leavenworth.

The interoperability faculty of the Bulgarian Rakovski Defense and Staff College moved quickly to provide important medical lessons learned for the PfP LL

DB. In February 2001, CALL placed a series of medical reports online on the PfP LL DB. What was more important was that CALL was able to use these medical reports to support the information and knowledge requirements of the U.S. Third Army staff during the exercise "Able Sentry" in April 2001 as a part of its Knowledge Reachback initiative. The Bulgarian medical reports provided U.S. military planners with a good idea of some of the issues involving the medical treatment of refugees.

The next important meeting of the working group took place in Sofia, Bulgaria, and was hosted by the Interoperability Faculty of the Rakovski Defense and Staff College. During this meeting, the Bulgarian hosts arranged for the demonstration of the lessons-learned project to a large number of civilian agencies, such as the Academy of Sciences, the University of National and World Economy, the State Agency for Civil Protection, and the National Sports Academy. Many of these organizations have subsequently submitted lessons learned for inclusion in the PfP LL DB, or have plans to do so in the immediate future. Another important outcome of this meeting was a proposal by the U.S. Army Europe lessons-learned office to lead a lessons-learned collection effort as part of PfP exercises. Coordination for this mission, important both from the standpoint of collecting valuable lessons for the PfP LL DB and training officers from partner countries in how to conduct a lessons-learned collection effort, is still ongoing.

In December 2001, at the request of the U.S. European Command (USEUCOM), I participated in a CALL "contact team" that provided the Romanian Land Forces Staff with an in-depth overview of the tactics, techniques, procedures, and technologies that it uses to collect, analyze, and disseminate lessons learned to the U.S. Army. Presiding over these sessions were the Romanian Chief of Armor, Brigadier General Constantin Onisor, and the Commandant of the Romanian Land Forces Academy, Brigadier General Nicholae Uscoi. General Uscoi was already very familiar with CALL and the lessons-learned process, having visited CALL during the November 2000 meeting of the Lessons Learned Working Group. In early 2002, the Romanian Army established a center for lessons learned within its Land Forces Headquarters. In April 2002, the Deputy Commander of the Romanian Land Forces, Lieutenant General Eugen Badalan, visited CALL and asked CALL to continue its support as the Romanian Army set up its lessons-learned organization. The Director of CALL, Colonel Michael A. Hiemstra, agreed to continued mentorship of the new Romanian Center for Army Lessons Learned within the context of its involvement with the PfP Consortium.

In May 2002, the Bulgarian Rakovski Defense and Staff College hosted an international seminar entitled "Lessons Learned in Interoperability Training and Education." The Deputy Commandant of the Rakovski Defense and Staff College, Colonel Valery Rachev, presided over the seminar, which included presentations on existing lessons-learned systems in the United States, Romania, and Sweden. At the conclusion of the seminar, the Bulgarian participants, who included senior

representatives from the General Staff and Land Forces Staff, reached the consensus that Bulgaria needed to establish a lessons-learned organization focused at the tactical level of warfare. During the seminar, Colonel Rachev made the key observation that, unless the Bulgarian Army established a lessons-learned capability, it ran the risk of having to accept translated NATO doctrine (i.e., merely replace its current, Soviet-based doctrine with NATO and/or U.S. doctrine) without the benefit of being able to adapt it on the basis of Bulgarian experience and conditions should Bulgaria be admitted into NATO. This represents perhaps a keen “lesson learned” from the Soviet era that is applicable to other partner nations as well.

In June 2002, I returned to Romania to present the topic of lessons learned to the faculty, staff, and students of the Land Forces Academy, the Air Force Academy, and the Infantry Training School. My presentations were received with enthusiasm and intellectual engagement. Most of the institutions mentioned above indicated that they were in the process of implementing reforms that would include the provision for lessons-learned organizations or related activities within their institutions, and this holds great promise for future input to the PfP LL DB.

Later that same month, the Lessons Learned Working Group re-convened at the French *École Militaire* during the Fifth Annual Conference of the Consortium. Several developments important for the future direction of the working group took place at the Paris meeting. First, Colonel Jacques Lechevallier, the director of the newly established French center for lessons learned, attended the meeting and pledged both French input to the PfP LL DB and his future participation in the activities of the working group. It is interesting to note that in his previous assignment Colonel Lechevallier served as the French liaison officer to the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and had received in-depth overview briefings on CALL methods and technologies for collecting, analyzing, and disseminating lessons learned.

Second, the Lessons Learned Working Group reinforced its fundamental partnership with PIMS by agreeing to include reports obtained from a new PIMS medical readiness initiative with Georgia and Uzbekistan in the PfP LL DB. In addition to obtaining new information for the PfP LL DB, this new point of collaboration with PIMS holds the promise of getting those partner countries working on the medical readiness project potentially interested in the larger field of lessons learned.

Third, representatives from the Slovak and Austrian armies attending the working group meeting indicated an interest to have me present our CALL experience to key leaders and staff of their general and land forces staffs. Slovakia had long been an active participant in the Lessons Learned Working Group, and Austria had taken part in some of its meetings as well. In addition, the Austrian Military Defense Academy operates an electronic archive using the same software interface as the PfP LL DB. I undertook to coordinate a visit to these two countries in September 2002 with a purpose similar to my earlier activities in Bulgaria



and Romania: to foster the growth of lessons-learned activities and organizations in these countries.

### **Lessons Learned About Lessons Learned in the PfP Context**

The meetings in Bulgaria and Romania solidified in my mind several key “lessons learned” about spreading the gospel of lessons learned to Partnership countries. First, our experience over the past two and a half years of the Lessons Learned Working Group proved fairly conclusively that we were going to get little or no input from partner countries that did not have some sort of formalized national structure charged with lessons-learned collection, analysis, and dissemination. The only exception to this had been the Interoperability Faculty of the Rakovski Defense and Staff College, which has been directly responsible for the primary partner input to the PfP LL DB to this point. The Interoperability Faculty, however, represents perhaps a rather unique organization, with an institutional emphasis on educating Bulgarian officers to function within PfP and ultimately NATO collaborative environments. As a general rule, I concluded that we were not getting a lot of lessons-learned reports from the partner countries because they had no organizations or institutions dedicated to this task.

For countries with no tradition of formalized lesson-learning, or cultures that encouraged learning from mistakes, the process of establishing lessons-learned organizations and activities is a difficult one. So it seemed to me that a second major objective of our Lessons Learned Working Group, and specifically our CALL engagement in the working group, must be to foster the establishment of lessons-learned organizations across the Partnership. If we did not do this, the PfP LL DB would never be populated with significant experience from the partner countries engaged in operations such as Enduring Freedom or KFOR and SFOR in the Balkans, nor would it capture the lessons learned from PfP exercises or the progress of partner nations on vital issues such as defense modernization.

Perhaps more important, however, is the fact that the armed forces of the partner nations would not be able to take advantage of the tremendous power inherent in the lessons-learned process. Lessons learned in the U.S. Army are based on the after-action review system that became standard operating procedure in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The mindset of self-criticism and 360-degree evaluation focused on improving performance in the organization or unit that lies at the core of the AAR is an inherently democratizing force that could be of immense benefit to partner countries trying to integrate their armed forces into U.S. and NATO-led operations and exercises. The immediate military benefits of accurate and immediate feedback, assessment, and linkage to future training programs of the unit that is integral to the AAR process cannot be overestimated. Many U.S. senior military leaders have recognized the AAR as one of the most important developments in the effectiveness of U.S. forces in recent contingency operations. The potential

impact of the introduction of the AAR within the context of many partner nations could be equally, if not more, revolutionary.

The experience of the Lessons Learned Working Group has shown that partner nations require repeated and extended exposure to the principles, methods, products, and benefits of functioning lessons-learned systems in order for lessons learned to even have a chance of taking hold within their militaries. The meetings of the Lessons Learned Working Group have often offered their participants a first look at the lessons-learned systems of the U.S. and other countries. For those countries that have expressed greater interest, I have followed up with in-depth presentations and mentoring to key decision-makers on the general or land forces staff level. Sometimes, these initial visits have been followed up by presentations on lesson-learning to faculty, staff, and students of military schools and academies.

This approach, while time- and labor-intensive, has already borne fruit in the case of Romania, which formed its own lessons-learned center within the land forces headquarters earlier this year. Bulgaria appears ready to follow suit in the near future, and other countries have indicated their desire to learn more about lessons learning and have expressed a willingness to consider establishing lessons-learned activities of their own. Over time, I expect that most, if not all, partner countries will want to establish their own centers for lessons learned, because by doing so they will give their armed forces the ability to learn and retain the institutional knowledge gained from the operational and training experiences of their own forces.

### **Conclusion: The Future of Lessons Learned in the PFP Consortium**

Existing lessons-learned systems and institutions in the United States, Canada, Great Britain, France, and other countries have proven that collection, analysis, and dissemination of lessons learned improve leader, soldier, and unit performance. Lessons-learned institutions make the armed forces they serve “learning organizations.” They serve as agents of change and transformation, influencing the ongoing evolution of doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership, and soldiers to meet current and future missions and challenges. Several partner countries have recognized the revolutionary potential of lessons learned and have taken the initial steps toward establishing lessons-learned institutions and practices in their militaries.

Over the next several years, I expect an exponential growth in the interest in lessons learned across the membership of the PFP Consortium. It will be the challenge and mission of the Lessons Learned Working Group to satisfy that increased interest by presenting interested PFP countries with the collective experience and knowledge of how to do the business of lessons learned—the lessons learned about doing lessons learned, as it were. In the process, the Lessons Learned Working Group hopes that the growing number of lessons-learned institutions and or-

ganizations across the Consortium will contribute some of the knowledge and experience they have gathered from the operations and training of their armed forces to the collective lessons-learned knowledge base of the PfP Consortium, the PfP LL DB.

In the meantime, already existing organizations within the PfP Consortium can begin to make better use of the capabilities of the PfP LL DB that are available to them. The various work and study groups across the Consortium represent a huge body of corporate knowledge of vital importance to the operation of the PfP defense academies and security studies institutes and the defense establishments they serve. All papers, articles, lectures, working group discussions, and other intellectual output of our study and working groups represent important collective knowledge that should become part of the Consortium's knowledge base: the PfP LL DB. While they may be academic in character, their content nonetheless represents knowledge, information, and lessons learned of great importance. These need to be captured in a database that is easily searchable and from which they can be easily and readily retrieved by users across the Consortium.

In the fall of 2002, personnel constraints forced the PfP Consortium Secretariat Working Group to reluctantly disestablish lessons learned as a working group; however, the Secretariat recast the activity as a Consortium "project" to denote its continued importance. Since that time, the former leadership has been working with the Secretariat to explore ways of continuing its progress in the area of lessons learned within the current operational environment. At the Annual Conference of the Consortium held in Berlin, Germany, in June 2003, the Lessons Learned Working Group formally merged with the Advanced Distributed Learning (ADL) Working Group. This action makes sense on a number of levels. First, both lessons learned and ADL share a common purpose and goal of the dissemination of information and knowledge among the partner nations. Second, while in the early stages of its existence ADL focused almost exclusively on the development of online courseware, it appears now ready to pursue the establishment of online "Knowledge Portals" and knowledge repositories, something in which both the Lessons Learned Working Group and CALL have a great deal of experience and expertise. Both CALL and the PfP Lessons Learned Database represent already-existing knowledge repositories that can be leveraged by partner countries through any gateway the ADL Working Group ultimately builds.

The long experience of lessons learned in information and knowledge collection, analysis, and dissemination also represents a serious and important contribution to any knowledge portal project. For this reason, the former leadership of the Lessons Learned Working Group hopes that fostering the establishment of lessons-learned organizations across the nations of the Partnership will become a part of the ADL Working Group's mission. Without such outreach, the PfP will never be able to leverage the knowledge and experience of the majority of partner nations of the former Warsaw Pact and Soviet Union who currently

lack lessons-learned mechanisms and methodologies to capture and disseminate it. Lessons-learned and knowledge repositories will remain a cup half full, filled only with the experience of the United States and Western Europe. And since the countries of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union have been active participants in contingency operations across the globe, from Bosnia and Kosovo to Afghanistan and Iraq, the potential contributions of these partners to a common knowledge base is not in any sense negligible. The experience of the Lessons Learned Working Group, however, has demonstrated that these partners require a great deal of mentoring before they are ready to establish their own information- and knowledge-gathering capabilities regarding ongoing operations and training.

The PfP Consortium already does an outstanding job of fostering and publishing high-quality academic work on defense and security issues at the strategic and policy levels. It now needs to broaden that knowledge base to include tactical and operational knowledge. This, in turn, will both broaden the appeal and applicability of the Consortium's work to the students, faculty, and staffs of the cadet academies, staff and branch schools, and defense academies of its member nations. Working together, the former Lessons Learned Working Group and the ADL Working Group can build a knowledge base that both serves military educational and operational communities across the entire Partnership and accurately reflects the knowledge base they collectively represent.