



Australian
National
University

National Security Studies:

What are the Distinguishing Features?

Ross Babbage

National Security College Occasional Paper
No 3 April 2012

National Security College

A joint initiative of the Commonwealth Government and the Australian National University

National Library of Australia Cataloguing-in-Publication entry

Author: Babbage, Ross [1949]

Title: National Security Studies [electronic resource]: What are the Distinguishing Features? / Ross Babbage.

ISSN: 2200-5269

ISBN: 978-0-9872210-3-2 (ebook : pdf)

Series: National Security College occasional paper: 3.

Subjects: National security--Australia.
Political leadership--Australia.
Australia--Politics and government--21st century.

Other Authors/Contributors:
Australian National University. National Security College.

Dewey Number: 355.033094

Editors: Dr David Connery
Dr Christopher Roberts

Email address: david.connery@anu.edu.au

Published and distributed by:
National Security College
Building 69, 5 Liversidge St
Australian National University, Acton
ACT 0200
T: (02) 6125 6480
E: national.security.college@anu.edu.au
W: <http://nsc.anu.edu.au/>

National Security Studies: What are the Distinguishing Features?

Ross Babbage

National Security College Occasional Paper

No 3 April 2012

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks are due to the senior staff of the National Security College both for their vision for this project and for inviting me to prepare a contribution. I am particularly grateful to Professor Michael L'Estrange and Dr David Connery.

Thanks are also due to Professor Robert Ayson from Victoria University in New Zealand who kindly reviewed an earlier version of this chapter. Nevertheless I remain solely responsible for this chapter's contents.

Ross Babbage

April 2012

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Professor Ross Babbage is currently Managing Director of Strategy International and Founder of The Kokoda Foundation. His career is unusual in that he has held senior positions in the Australian Public Service, in business and in academia.

Professor Babbage has held the positions of Head of Strategic Analysis in the Office of National Assessments and Assistant Secretary, Force Development in the Department of Defence. During the decade of the 1990s he was a senior executive in ADI Limited which, at the time, was Australia's largest defence company. From 2003 to 2004 he served as Head of the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at the Australian National University. Professor Babbage has also served a maximum six year term on the Council of the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London.

Professor Babbage was appointed a Special Advisor to the Minister for Defence during preparation of the 2009 Defence White Paper. He has written eight books and over 30 published articles on aspects of Australian and international security. In February 2011 his study of Australia's future defence needs, *Australia's Strategic Edge in 2030*, was released. He is author of *A Coast Too Long: Defending Australia Beyond the 1990s* (Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1990), *Rethinking Australia's Defence* (University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 1980), *Preparing Australia's Defence for 2020—Transformation or Reform?* (Kokoda Foundation, Canberra, 2005) and *Australia's Future Underwater Operations and System Requirements* (Kokoda Foundation, Canberra, 2007).

Professor Babbage was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in January 2011.

CONTENTS

Overview	1
The Need for National Security Studies	2
The Foundations for National Security Studies	7
The Foundations for National Security Success	11
The Relevance of Companion Intellectual Disciplines	13
What Distinguishes National Security Studies from International Relations and Strategic Studies?	18
The Primary Characteristics of National Security Studies	22

OVERVIEW

National security studies is a relatively new term and a new concept in Australia. Where has it come from? What is the role for it? How does national security studies differ from international relations, strategic studies and other related disciplines? And does it make sense to apply focused intellectual effort to national security studies in the period ahead?

The impetus for national security studies springs in part from the modified security focus of most Western governments, senior officials and researchers in recent years. There is now less concentration on narrow defence policy, foreign policy, aid policy or law enforcement policy. Rather, much more attention is being given in all of these communities to the security challenges that involve them all and to the consequent means and methods of working more effectively together. These cross-disciplinary challenges and requirements are usually described as being national security or, sometimes, international security issues.

This significantly altered focus is particularly obvious in Australia, and it signals that new thinking is required. This article argues that there is a need to recognise the altered demands of the changed security environment; to strengthen understanding of the challenges posed; and to develop, debate and refine new, more holistic whole-of-nation

approaches. In order to do this effectively, strategic thinkers and policy makers need to look beyond the more narrow domains of international relations, strategic studies, political science, economics and other classical disciplines. While these and other traditional schools of thought still have much to contribute, there is a need to develop a new discipline of national security studies.

THE NEED FOR NATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES

Compared to twenty years ago Western societies are now operating in far more complex ways. These new modes of operation involve new communication, data processing and other technologies and business processes that deliver higher levels of system integration and efficiency, but also different levels of interdependency and vulnerability. Within Western societies such as Australia, interactions between government and non-government entities are numerous and almost continuous. Electronic and other forms of communication reach almost everywhere and many arrangements and business deals are concluded with great speed. Similarly, government and private sector operations beyond national borders are continuous and almost seamless. The implications for national and international security planning are substantial.

At the same time, individual households have tended to become less robust and less able to cope with disruption. Most kitchen pantries contain less non-perishable food

than twenty years ago, and fewer contemporary houses have their own vegetable gardens or other sources of food. Most modern households also rely solely upon externally-produced energy and water. Many Australians also now move away from their kinship networks when they seek work, and a greater number live in single-person households. There is evidence that community bonds have also grown weaker over time and, when added to the reduced self-reliance of households, the onset of crises usually generates earlier and larger-scale demands for government support.

These major societal changes have generated new dimensions of vulnerability, accentuated some forms of threat and altered markedly the best means of maintaining community continuity and national security. Major changes are underway in the best means of dealing with challenges as diverse as international terrorism, transnational crime, cyber threats, pandemics, unstable and fragile states, and even severe natural disasters. Many conventional military challenges now also threaten nearly all aspects of societies and require different types of responses.

In consequence, modern security demands require new thinking. Many of the new approaches now needed extend beyond classical boundaries. Contemporary security challenges usually comprise elements that are both foreign and domestic: they involve both state and non-state actors and they engage both the public and private sectors. The narrow definitions and distinctions between, for instance, foreign and defence policies or, alternatively, between national intelligence assessment and law enforcement

that often made sense in the past are being blurred. When striving for clear thinking about future security challenges a broader approach is required.

It is not only the more complex nature of our societies and the altered nature of the security challenges currently before us that demand new thinking. Responding effectively to modern security challenges requires the engagement and involvement of a much wider range of departments and agencies than in the past. Few serious security challenges can now be dealt with by the Department of Defence, the Department of the Attorney General or the Australian Federal Police operating in isolation. There is now normally a need for many portfolios to be involved, and often more than ten. There is also frequently a need to involve state government agencies and usually elements of the private sector as well.

Moreover, some of the agencies and entities which now have important roles to play have little experience of national security thinking, planning and operations. For instance, when attempting to resuscitate the economy of a weak regional country, key roles may need to be played by the Taxation Office, the Treasury, the Department of Finance, as well as the Federal and State departments of Health, Education, Transport, etc. Similarly, when confronting the threat of a pandemic, an equally diverse range of federal and state agencies as well as elements of the private sector will have important roles to play. Classical strategic and conceptual thinking provides a less than optimal framework for addressing these demands.

The broader menu of security challenges not only necessitates the engagement of increasing numbers of departments, agencies and organisations. Meeting and defeating the new challenges requires the marshalling and employment of many new instruments. It is not that most of the traditional instruments of national security have been superseded, but rather that they are not equipped to cope with modern security threats on their own. An obvious case in point is the Australian Defence Force (ADF), which is a highly capable and remarkably adaptable instrument to have available in the national security tool kit. Although some may wish to employ the ADF as a type of 'Swiss Army knife' to meet almost every type security challenge, the reality is that the ADF is ill-suited for some types of operation, such as policing or rebuilding governance in a failed state. Similarly, while Australia's diplomats, the International Deployment Group of the Australian Federal Police, and AusAID possess staff members who are highly capable, they also have their limitations in many contexts. In order to address effectively the challenges posed in a fragile state—by international terrorists, by transnational people smugglers, by cyber attacks, or by most other modern security challenges—a wide range of other instruments need to be mobilised, trained and made available for employment as an integrated team. In short, more parties need to be involved: they need to perform a wider range of functions; many of these functions will be new to them and all participants must learn to operate as part of a single team.

A further complication arising from the new security challenges is that many of the types of tools needed for effective operations are not currently held in Australia by either the federal or state governments. Key instruments for many future national security

operations reside only, or primarily, in the private sector. Among the more obvious cases are the roles of the construction, transport, banking and retail sectors in resuscitating a fragile or a broken state. Similarly, in the case of cyber threats, many more elements of the private sector and the broader community need to be actively engaged in defensive operations. Strategic thinking, organisational frameworks, and operational processes need to be developed in a manner that recognises, mobilises and manages this large and diverse team of players effectively.

The intellectual demands posed by these challenges are considerable. At a minimum there is a need to describe modern security challenges with insight; analyse their requirements accurately; develop appropriate policies and relationships with key players; generate tailored and flexible operational plans; and conduct complex operations so as to deliver desired effects within reasonable timeframes. In addition, there is a need to review and learn from such operations so as to improve future performance. At present, individual senior officials, military and police officers possess detailed experience derived from only two or, at most, three relevant organisations. Now there is a need to foster less stove-piped and much more multi-disciplinary skill and expertise. The strategy development, the planning, and the command and control of many of these types of campaign will be exceedingly complex and require a much wider range of knowledge and a much broader mix of skills than previously thought necessary: new approaches are required.

THE FOUNDATIONS FOR NATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES

In order to progress scholarship and serious analytical work in national security studies there is a need first to establish three essential foundations. The first foundation is a clear statement of what Australia means by national security and national security studies. Some useful steps in this direction were provided in the Australian Government's first National Security Statement in which former Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, stated:

What is meant by national security? Freedom from attack or the threat of attack; the maintenance of our territorial integrity; the maintenance of our political sovereignty; the preservation of hard won freedoms; and the maintenance of our fundamental capacity to advance economic prosperity for all Australians.¹

While this is a useful start, there is a need to further clarify the breadth of the terms 'national security' and 'national security studies'.

The government's statement makes clear that the term 'national security', or national security studies, in the Australian context is not just a synonym for strategic studies, as

¹ The First National Security Statement to the Parliament: Address by the Prime Minister of Australia, The Hon. Kevin Rudd MP, 4 December 2008, (<http://www.pm.gov.au/node/5424>)

is implied in some of the American literature.² Nor does the word 'national' confine the discipline to topics relevant only to a particular country's defence or security policies. Rather, the word 'national' in this context refers to the much wider menu of topics that are relevant to the 'security' of individuals, families, clans, communities or other groups, as well as to the security of nation states. All of these levels of organisation are relevant because security at each level is important to quality security planning by national governments.

Hence, national security studies could be said to focus on all issues relevant to establishing and maintaining freedom from violence and coercion for individuals, families, social groups, organisations and nation states. As such, national security studies encompasses the challenges of inter-state conflict, terrorism, piracy, cyber threats, the restitution of stability following a collapse of social cohesion, and also the protection of communities from serious criminal action and major natural disasters.

If national security studies encompasses all of these levels of concern, how can this discipline best be conceptualised? Perhaps national security studies can be defined most appropriately as:

² See, for example, Stephen M. Walt 'The Renaissance of Security Studies' *International Studies Quarterly* (Vol 35, 1991) pp. 211-39.

Analysis of the means and methods of accessing and applying national and international, government and community resources in creative ways so as to deliver multi-disciplinary effects to achieve clearly defined security outcomes.

The second essential foundation for national security studies inheres in acknowledging the very broad boundaries of this subject area. What sorts of challenges should be considered as central to national security studies and what should not? While the task of identifying these boundaries might appear straight-forward, we should remember that one of the reasons for emergence of this field is that the boundaries of other disciplines—some of which are explored below—suffered reduced coherence or utility in the face of the highly complex multi-disciplinary challenges now before us. Thus problems once considered ‘law enforcement’, ‘development’ or even ‘natural disaster’ challenges are now widely grouped as ‘national security’ challenges and the structures, processes and resources of the state are brought to bear upon them often using an ‘all hazards’ methodology. This may be seen by some to be the nefarious trend described as ‘securitisation’ by Wæver, Buzan and de Wilde.³ However, as discussed above, there are other more plausible drivers of this development, such as the changes to national and international societies, the need to apply resources more effectively and efficiently, and the emergence of wicked problems that characterise many modern crises.

³ O. Wæver, B. Buzan and J. De Wilde *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Lynne Rienner, Boulder, 1998).

So what should be the boundaries of national security studies? The answer is that they need to be drawn to encompass an extraordinarily diverse range of fields. Included should be any discipline or area that may be of material importance as a target in a future crisis or which might have a role to play in martialling a whole-of-nation security response. This may make national security studies exceedingly diverse, demanding and complex, but any other approach would risk over-simplification and losing touch with reality.

The third major foundation of national security studies is the need to identify the stakeholders and key actors. A rise in the number of relevant actors has largely paralleled the growth in the range of security challenges. However, this growth in the number and diversity of key actors also reflects new thinking about the optimal means of dealing with many security challenges. For instance, the owners of critical infrastructure are no longer passive players or somehow separate from many security challenges. Instead, they are seen as critical partners in the effort to protect national prosperity and national security. Similarly, the move towards an 'all hazards' approach to consequence management makes groups who help communities prepare for and recover from disasters important players that complement the government's emergency services. Yet other key players come to the fore when stabilisation operations are required in fragile or fractured communities. In those circumstances comprehensive campaigns undertaken by military and police forces are required that help to create stability while incorporating reconstruction and nation-building efforts using civil servants, engineers, teachers and many other professionals. Actors in this broader

conglomeration will need to find new ways to identify each other, plan together, communicate effectively, and work towards shared goals as an integrated team if they are to be capable of delivering holistic national security effects.

THE FOUNDATIONS FOR NATIONAL SECURITY SUCCESS

With this broad understanding of the foundations of national security studies it is important to consider how this discipline might be applied in practice. What will be needed to routinely design, develop and deliver security services employing world's best practice in this new, more challenging national security environment?

The first core need in striving for national security success is to determine a set of logical priorities for effort. The national security resources of every country are finite and, given the breadth of potential challenges in this field, it is essential that governments derive a clear concept or logic for determining investment priorities. Without such a disciplined approach there would be great scope for misdirected effort and waste. Therefore a clear statement of a nation's national security goals and priorities is a prerequisite for national security success.

The second core need is to build multi-disciplinary skills and expertise across the national security community and into the many other organisations that will be required to play roles in meeting future security challenges. Part of the need here will be to

develop knowledge and understanding of modern security challenges and of the respective roles of all relevant players. Another part of the need will be to develop a culture of flexible teaming and close partnership across organisations in striving to achieve common security goals. It is in the development of these multi-disciplinary understandings and skills and the fostering of a strong multi-agency teaming culture that the Australian National Security College has a central role to play.

The third core requirement is to develop clear doctrine, or a set of core principles, by which Australia plans to conduct future national security operations. Issues to be addressed in this doctrine should include:

- Australia's strategic objectives.
- The key principles that guide Australia's national security operations.
- How resources and capacities are marshalled and organised for national security purposes, including the whole-of-nation one team philosophy.
- The core command and control mechanisms highlighting who is responsible for what.
- How Australia works with local parties and coalition partners.
- A commitment to review performance periodically, learn the lessons of experience and adapt to improve performance over time, etc.

The fourth core requirement is to refine organisational arrangements and procedures so as to optimise total national security performance. Very significant initiatives of this nature were announced in the first National Security Statement with the appointment of the National Security Advisor and the creation of the National Security Group within the

Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. Also announced at that time was the establishment of the strategic policy framework that is designed to set priorities across the national security community, evaluate performance against those priorities, and then allocate or reallocate resources to achieve optimal outcomes. This and associated mechanisms have the potential to help the Australian national security community remain focused on the delivery of optimal total system outcomes.

Finally, there is a need to develop the coherence of national security logic, to create a stronger stream of advanced intellectual thought, and to foster a new depth of applied analytical thinking when considering Australia's future national security challenges. This requires contributions from all relevant departments and organisations, from private sector participants, from think tanks, from academia, and from members of the broader community. It is primarily to means and modes of fostering this new field of national security studies that the remainder of this paper is committed.

THE RELEVANCE OF COMPANION INTELLECTUAL DISCIPLINES

This paper argues that the rise of national security studies does not invalidate or supersede more established intellectual disciplines in considering future security challenges. Rather, national security studies embraces them all and seeks to combine and build on the contributions they make in the interests of achieving superior policy and operational outcomes.

International relations clearly has an important role to play as it focuses on relations between and among states and, more broadly, on the functioning of the international system as a whole. Definitions of international relations and the nature of its boundaries vary, but its principal branches include international political economy, international organisation, foreign policy making, security studies and peace research. This discipline includes substantial bodies of work on the roles of states, inter-governmental organisations, non-government organisations and multinational corporations. As such, international relations potentially has a great deal to offer national security studies, but on its own it is not well placed to address the domestic aspects of national security, nor many of the complex strategic, planning and operational demands of modern national security policy.

Strategic studies has origins in the art of generalship and the very applied challenge of planning and conducting successful military operations and wars. As such, strategic studies could be said to reach back at least as far as Sun Tzu's *Art of War*, dating from the fifth century BC. Many more thinkers and writers followed, especially through Greek and Roman history. Writing in the early 19th century, Carl von Clausewitz made several notable contributions, particularly his tying of military strategy and campaigning directly to the achievement of clear political ends. Indeed, the most frequent definition of strategic studies draws directly on this thinking:

Strategic studies is the research field dealing with procedures through which actors utilize their military assets to achieve given political objectives.⁴

Strategic studies grew strongly as a discipline during the Cold War and contributed substantially to the assessment of the challenges posed during the four and a half decades of superpower confrontation.

Strategic studies has an important continuing role to play in addressing the broad range of modern national security challenges. It is well placed to contribute deep thinking on strategy for countering national security threats and it also has a long-established track-record of working to ameliorate or resolve real-life and very practical security challenges. Moreover, strategic studies has sometimes focused not only on international challenges but also on domestic security issues and the demands of planning and conducting complex military campaigns. However, strategic studies has rarely strayed far from the assessment of military or military-related challenges, and its contribution to thinking about the mobilisation and employment of non-military instruments to achieve non-military goals is thin. Hence, strategic studies is clearly highly relevant to many aspects of national security studies but, on its own, it is an inadequate base from which to undertake modern national security studies.

⁴ G Evans and J Newnham *The Penguin Dictionary of International Relations* (Penguin Books, London, 1998), p. 518.

Other classical academic disciplines also have important roles to play within national security studies. For instance, political science provides a very broad intellectual umbrella under which international relations, strategic studies, a great deal of history and many other streams of thought reside. Broader expertise within the realm of political science can contribute numerous insights, including, for instance, a deeper understanding of how key state and non-state decision-makers operate in various security situations. It can also provide useful perspectives on political relationships and modes of political interaction in both advanced and developing societies.

Economics also has a valuable contribution to make on multiple national security issues. For instance, the economics of marshalling government and non-government assets is fundamental to the success of national security operations. Similarly, understanding the economic dynamics of fragile societies is critical to resuscitating their strength. Only through applying quality economic expertise can appropriate remedial measures be defined and implemented.

History also has a valuable contribution to make to national security studies. History can, for instance, inform traditional international rivalries, and it can also assist operational planners to understand and manage local community or clan frictions in fragile communities.

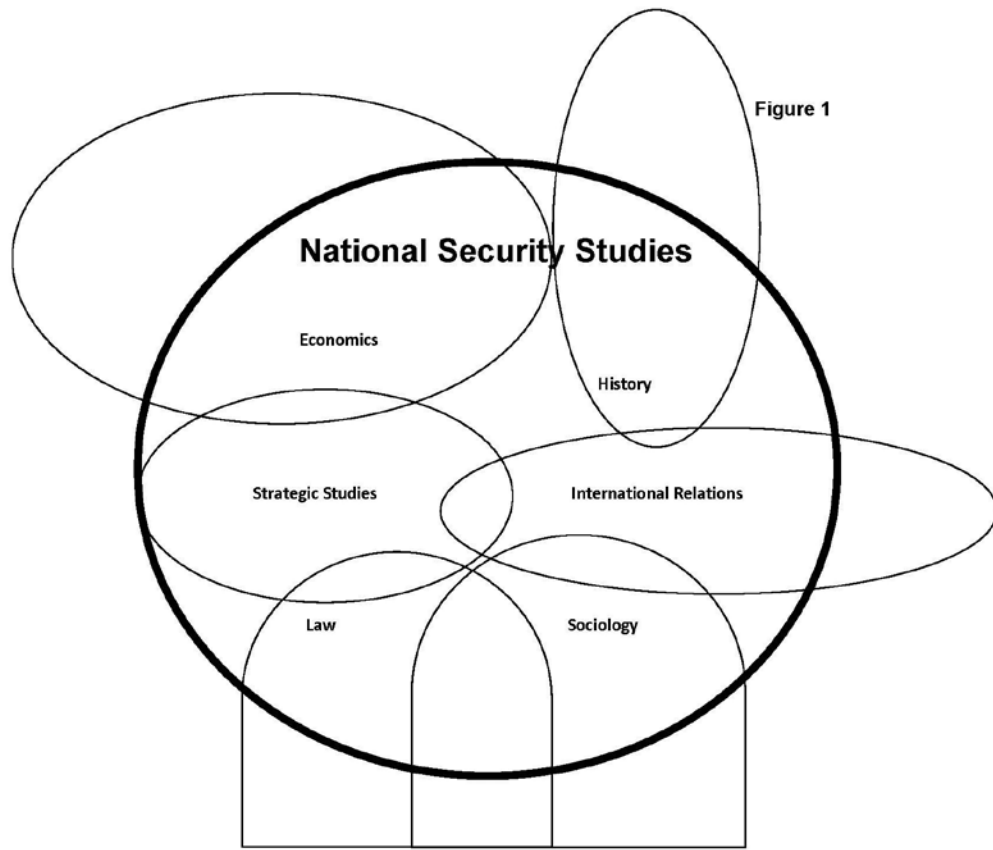
Domestic and international law also have important roles to play. Legal frameworks help to guide and bound many actions, whether one is dealing with intelligence, surveillance

of international criminals, or the application of international maritime law in the event of a serious disaster at sea.

Sociology and anthropology can also assist with many national security challenges, especially those that occur in developing societies. In many cases the sociological and anthropological insights will vary from valley to valley or community to community depending on whether one is focusing on the Solomon Islands or Afghanistan. However, the fine-grained understanding of community dynamics that experts in these fields can provide may be critical to the success of local operations.

The complex nature of many emerging national security challenges also gives some of the hard sciences important roles to play. For instance, an understanding of information and communications technology is essential when planning cyber security. Various medical disciplines are essential when considering means of managing the threats that pandemic diseases could bring. While none of these scientific disciplines are driven solely by national security concerns, national security planners and practitioners now need at least a basic understanding of their key concepts. They also need good relationships with experts in scientific fields so that they can readily access the greater depth of expertise that will be required in many aspects of planning and crisis management.

A general conceptual model of the relationships between national security studies and other, more classical disciplines is displayed in Figure 1.



WHAT DISTINGUISHES NATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES FROM INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND STRATEGIC STUDIES?

At some risk of over-simplifying the relative characteristics of the disciplines of national security studies, international relations and strategic studies, the following table attempts to summarise some of their key features.

Key Characteristics	National Security Studies	International Relations	Strategic Studies
Driven by need to inform	Yes, almost always. The agenda of	No. While some international	Yes, a considerable amount of strategic

political decisions and actions	national security studies is largely driven by the needs of government and other key decision-makers.	relations research and activity is aimed directly at informing practical government actions, the bulk is not.	studies research and activity is intended to inform and assist practical government decision-making.
Emphasises practice rather than theory	Yes. Almost all work in the field is driven directly by the need to assist practice. Theory has a very modest place in national security studies.	No. The bulk of international relations research tends to emphasise theory and broad concepts of different types. Only modest elements are driven by the needs of government and non-government decision-makers.	Yes. Most strategic studies research and activity is designed to analyse real-life challenges and assist decision-makers. Nevertheless, some conceptual and theoretical work is undertaken, especially on the nature and application of strategy.
Focuses on both international and domestic challenges	Yes. National security studies addresses all international and domestic security issues, often in detail and with a high degree of seamlessness.	No. International relations, by definition, focuses primarily on international entities and the relations between them. Nevertheless, some work has been undertaken on the domestic bases of international relationships.	Generally Not. Strategic studies also tends to focus primarily on the international application of force. However, some strategic studies research has been undertaken on the marshalling of resources within societies, and other parts of the discipline focus on serious violence within societies, such as terrorism.
Focuses primarily on coercion and threats from state actors	No. National security studies certainly addresses threats from state actors but it also considers threats from non-	No. A considerable amount of international relations work addresses security issues from one	Yes, mostly. Most strategic studies research and activity focuses on security issues posed to, or by,

	state actors—such as terrorists and criminals—and from natural and other types of disaster such as earthquakes and pandemics.	aspect or another, though it does not always focus on threats from state and non-state actors. Some addresses the question, whose security? This approach encourages focus on the security challenges of individuals and small groups as well as those of large organisations and states. Very little international relations work focuses on the challenges posed by natural disasters, etc.	states. However, in recent years there has also been considerable work undertaken on the challenges posed by violent non-state actors such as terrorists and pirates. Very little strategic studies work addresses the challenges of natural disasters, particularly those confined within state boundaries.
Focuses on individual and community security as well as national security	Yes. Despite the term 'national security studies' this discipline does attempt to address security issues for individuals and small groups as well as for large organisations and states. Nevertheless, the demands of governments are a crucial shaper.	Yes. Security analyses conducted within the discipline of international relations often address security from non-traditional, small group and individual perspectives.	Not often. As stated above, most analyses conducted within the discipline of strategic studies are state centric or derive directly from state interests.
Focuses on the employment of traditional statecraft and other traditional instruments of state power,	Only partly. National security studies focuses on harnessing and applying effectively the full capacities of a state (or states) in order to deliver	Yes. International relations focuses primarily on the application of the traditional instruments of states and non-state actors.	Yes. Strategic studies also focuses primarily on harnessing and applying the full range of resources needed to apply force. Very little

such as military forces	desired effects.		attention is given to the marshalling and application of broader whole-of-nation capabilities.
Aims to apply a very wide range of instruments (whole-of-nation) to deliver defined multi-disciplinary effects	Yes. This is one of the key distinguishing features of national security studies.	No. These matters are virtually never addressed in international relations analyses.	No. This broader range of instruments is rarely discussed in strategic studies research. When it is addressed, it is normally in the context of mobilisation planning for major security crises.
Highly pragmatic, with a strong realist focus	Yes. National security studies encompasses any factor or element that may be relevant to analysis of, or planning for, any type of national security challenge.	No. While realist analyses have a role within international relations, this discipline tends to carry stronger theoretical themes that often take analyses into realms that are of marginal, if any, relevance to national security decision-makers.	Yes. Most strategic studies analyses are driven by practical relevance and practical applications. Nevertheless, there is a strong theoretical framework within strategic studies, and some researchers in the field focus primarily on theoretical issues.
Heavily focused on the generation and delivery of multi-disciplinary effects	Yes. This challenge is at the core of a great deal of the analyses conducted under the mantle of national security studies.	No. International relations analyses address a much wider range of matters concerning parties and behaviour in the international environment. Virtually none of them address this challenge directly.	Only partly. Some strategic studies analyses consider the challenges of planning and conducting campaigns but their emphasis is primarily on the marshalling of military and military-related assets.

In summary, the national security studies agenda encompasses almost all of the issues addressed by strategic studies and a significant proportion of those dealt with by international relations. However, when compared with these other disciplines, national security studies is driven much more strongly by the practical challenges faced by national security decision-makers and by the demands of harnessing and applying a much wider range of instruments in order to achieve focused effects overseas, domestically, or in both types of theatre. As such, national security studies poses unique intellectual challenges, many of which have hitherto attracted little attention.

THE PRIMARY CHARACTERISTICS OF NATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES

It should be clear from the discussion above that national security studies possess some characteristics that are unique and which set work in this field apart both in character and content. Other characteristics may be shared with other disciplines, but are often applied within the national security framework in different ways and to achieve different effects.

Some of the key characteristics of national security studies would appear to be as follows:

Describes and assesses in detail the nature of particular national and international security challenges. This diagnostic task certainly applies to the conventional security challenges that may be posed by the armed forces of potential adversaries; to the capabilities of terrorist organisations; and to major criminal groups, etc. However, in many situations this threat and environmental assessment will require much more detailed analysis than has previously been necessary to support security policy, planning and operations. For instance, when planning resuscitation of an island state following serious inter-communal violence, or following the penetration of major criminal groups, there is need for a much finer-grained understanding of the social and political dynamics within a local community, or several local communities, than would normally be required to support conventional military operations. These kinds of complex emergency situations pose new challenges for intelligence gathering and assessment and place a premium on analysts who understand local environments in great depth. Personal connections with relevant local community leaders can be especially valuable.

Focuses on the achievement of clearly defined political outcomes. The broad political goals of each national security campaign need to be defined clearly and agreed by the national leadership. Any lack of clarity or ambiguity in the expression of political goals can derail or misdirect national security action from the outset. If circumstances change, the stated political goals may need explicit review by the national leadership. Danger lurks when changed

circumstances do not trigger a fundamental review of political goals and mission creep is allowed to drive significant changes to operations.

The expressed goals should almost always identify the achievement of holistic strategic outcomes. Goals will rarely be limited to the statement of a tactical goal, such as the destruction of a ship, the incapacitation of an air base or the capture of a particular criminal. Rather, they will usually be expressed in higher-order strategic language such as the removal of an adversary's military freedom of action in a particular theatre or the destruction of a major criminal organisation and its influence in a particular region. These broadly-expressed goals provide room for the consideration of alternative strategies and alternative operational campaigns.

Identifies and evaluates alternative strategies. In seeking to achieve particular security outcomes, standardised responses will rarely be appropriate. Whether one is considering appropriate responses to cyber attacks, a surge in people smuggling, or a serious dispute with another country over offshore resources, alternative strategies should always be identified and considered carefully. Quality national security actions require more than simply the gathering and application of apparently suitable intelligence and tools. Careful consideration of alternative strategies or game-plans is essential first.

Applies multi-disciplinary doctrine, leadership and expertise. National security studies assumes from the outset that not only are most security challenges multi-disciplinary, but so are the optimum combinations of instruments and resources that need to be applied to achieve Australia's political goals. This means that national security analysts, campaigners and leaderships need to have both an exceptional understanding of the nature of particular security challenges, but also a thorough appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of the wide range of instruments that may need to be marshalled and applied in a coordinated manner.

This is not straight-forward or simple; indeed, at present Australia is yet to develop the type of doctrine, campaign planning, and operational leadership required for these complex operations. An important task for the discipline of national security studies will be to clarify these key functions and to help foster development of the quality doctrine and leadership required to optimise delivery of priority effects.

Draws on a wide range of tools and instruments. It is one thing for national security planners and leaders to understand the value of a wide range of potential instruments, and quite another for arrangements to be put in place for this broad range of tools to be prepared, trained, and accessible when they are needed.

As mentioned earlier in this paper, securing these arrangements will involve the engagement of federal government agencies and staff that have rarely participated before in national security operations. It will require the mobilisation of some key staff members from state and local government agencies, and it will also need arrangements to be put in place for the employment of a very wide range of personnel, skills and equipment that are largely or solely resident in the private sector. All of these people will need appropriate legal and financial protections; they will need some preliminary training, and they will also need to be prepared to operate as part of an integrated whole-of-nation team within a single chain of command. An important advance in these endeavours has been the establishment of the Australian Civilian Corps within the AusAID organisation. A major field for national security studies will be to explore how these and related arrangements can best be developed to deliver optimal operational effects.

Involves the tailoring of organisations and processes to deliver priority effects with efficiency. Another key challenge for national security studies is to research the most efficient and effective means of organising national (and potentially some international) resources in order to meet the range of security challenges Australia may face in the future.

Many key organisations and processes are already in place and are periodically exercised and tested. This is the case, for instance, concerning the responses

of border protection, military and police forces to intrusions into Australia's sea and air space. There are also sophisticated arrangements in place which manage terrorist incidents or major health challenges within Australia, such as pandemics. However, not all of these arrangements are perfect, and planning and preparations for some key contingencies, particularly those that may arise in offshore environments, are less well developed. Particular challenges arise when substantial civil, military and police resources are needed to conduct an extended campaign over several years with frequent operational adaptations required along the way. The best ways of organising and operating with great effect and efficiency deserve early attention in national security research.⁵

Encompasses periodic campaign reviews and evaluations. In almost every case national security campaigns can be improved by learning the lessons from practical experience in the field. Australia's national security studies needs to assume the conduct of periodic reviews of campaign strategy, planning and operations. Australia needs to develop a strong learning and adaptive culture in the national security field if its operations are to become world's best practice.

Addresses means and modes of building community and broader state resilience. The foundational roots of national and community resilience are not

⁵ Many of these issues are discussed with insight in Edwina Thompson *Smart Power: Making Australia's Whole-of-Government Strategy Work in Fragile States and Situations* (Kokoda Paper No.12, Kokoda Foundation, Canberra, April 2010).

fully understood. What are the critical factors in communities that enable them to withstand hardships and sustain extreme and sustained challenges without collapsing physically, socially or psychologically? What are the best means of fostering these key characteristics both in Australia and in priority regional environments? Are there ways in which community weaknesses and fractures can be overcome so as to engender stronger resilience and continuity? These are issues that have so far received very limited research and policy attention.

A key focus for national security studies should be the identification and mapping of the strengths and weaknesses of particular societies and the development of proven strategies to foster community resilience. Clearly if the resilience of societies can be reinforced over time they will be better placed to withstand many of the national security challenges they are likely to face in coming decades.

Derives and refines from experience key principles and concepts to serve as strong foundations for the discipline. A medium-term goal for national security studies should be the development of a clear Australian way of planning and conducting national security operations. How does Australia approach this agenda? What principles and practices are foundational to quality performance in the field? What key questions are essential to address when considering such operations? What are the most critical elements of Australian national security strategy? How does Australia command and control such

operations? How does Australia determine the optimal mix of resources to be applied and how are capabilities switched into and out of relevant theatres? How is progress evaluated and when? And how are lessons learned and processes, procedures and organisations adapted to improve performance over time?

These questions represent a rich agenda for Australian national security research, experimentation and learning. Achieving progress in this work and applying its results will have a substantial impact on Australia's security in the decades ahead. In consequence, this new field of national security studies deserves priority attention.

National Security College
The Australian National University
Acton ACT 0200
T 61 2 6215 6480
E national.security.college@anu.edu.au