



From Stabilization to Sustainability:
Directing the Change Created by the
Marines Move to Guam

By

James A. Kent
President
James Kent Associates, Inc.

Kevin Preister
Director
Center for Social Ecology and Public Policy

contact information
Trish Malone
PO Box 1214
Kailua Kona, HI USA 96745
808-443-9445
www.jkagroup.com
tmalone@jkagroup.com

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Abstract

Defense Secretary Robert Gates has redesigned the military's approach for use in "zones of chaos" around the world where U.S. forces are involved. Guam is at risk of becoming a zone of chaos because of the scale and nature of present intrusions on the island plus the added risk presented by the impending Marine move from Okinawa to Guam. Guam has become a crossroads in the Pacific and attracts people throughout the region because of the perception that Guam offers jobs and a higher quality of life. More seriously, the Marine move, involving up to 20,000 marines and their families, to date has not offered a realistic or effective mitigation program which would optimize the benefits and minimize the harm from the move. The draft EIS released a few short months ago, does not contain a social component that adequately identifies the impacts or the mitigations. When societies are able to absorb intrusions they can create healthier communities from the change. When change occurs at a fast pace and large scale, and people are not worked with to understand and manage the change, the results can be disastrous for local people and their cultures. This is the current risk of the Marines' move. If the Marines can commit to developing direct relationships with the people, and they take the time to understand citizen issues and resolve them, then local resilience will be increased, local institutions can be made more effective, and dependence on Marine resources can be reduced. There are many examples of successful change programs that can be used as learning points for the Marines as they contemplate the ways in which their presence can bring a benefit to the people of Guam



JAMES KENT ASSOCIATES
Global Cultural Analysts



Zones of Chaos

Defense Secretary Robert Gates has redesigned the military's approach for use in "zones of chaos" around the world where U.S. forces are involved. This emerging doctrine is based on a bottoms-up process for increasing citizen and government capacity to build a society that works within the impacted cultures, rather than trying to impose a pre-designed solution from a top-down, formal process. The global architecture of the future will emerge organically from these day-to-day nation-building and society-building operations at the grassroots level. This shift to a bottoms-up operation was set in motion by National Security Presidential Directive 44 which laid out a framework for reconstruction and stabilization. Mr. Gates' program for security and foreign policy is referred to as "**full spectrum operations**" in various government agencies and think tank circles.¹

The word "stabilization" is stated and implied in these directives and titles. Given the Secretary's declarations, it appears that the movement of Marine Corps units from Okinawa to Guam has the potential to create a *zone of chaos*. To prevent this from happening, it is essential that the Marine leadership commit to understanding and implementing a culturally-based process of stabilization. A citizen-based stabilization effort is the remedy that will prevent massive disruption from occurring. Therefore, on-the-ground preparatory work must immediately be done on a geographic basis within the various Guam cultures, from neighborhood to neighborhood, as well as with the local institutions. This will enable identification of appropriate implementation actions to be implemented within a schedule to stabilize the various communities from the "inside out" so as to mitigate impacts at the most efficient and productive level.

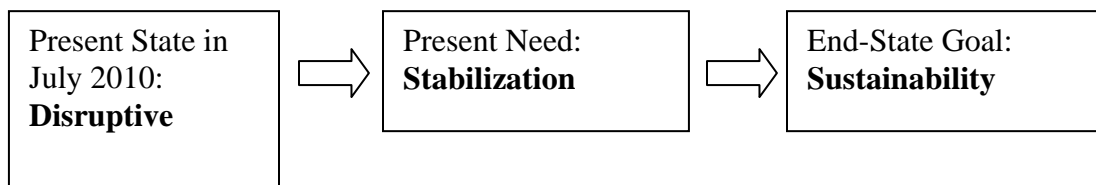
These stabilization programs should have started from the very beginning of the planned transfer of base operations from Okinawa to Guam. For instance, had the Marine Corps been following Secretary Gates' *zone of chaos* community-building approach, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement that came out in November of 2009 would have included the mandatory "Social Component". It did not. That Social Component would have included a situational assessment that identified the social impacts and the issues, and would have included a Social Impact Mitigation Program with sequencing and timelines attached to

¹ Two offices have been created by Directive 44: the *Office of Stability Operations Capabilities* and the *Interagency Management Systems for Reconstruction and Stabilization*.

budgets for implementation. Such a product would have gone a long way toward constituting a stabilization program for Guam.

Environmental Impact Statements are directed by Section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) which contains the procedural requirements. Section 102 receives most of the attention from implementing agencies. However, the policy intent of NEPA, as stated in Section 101, is to foster “productive harmony”, a balance between people and nature. Congress directed that the social, economic, and ecological aspects of decision-making be integrated in order to create that balance.² This goal of “productive harmony” has not been documented or included in the planned movement of Marine Corps units. That shortcoming will need to be addressed either in a revisited NEPA process or by correcting it through a management approach that identifies and resolves issues “as they occur” in implementing the movement of the Marine Corps units.

As shown in the figure, in order to move towards sustainability from the present disruptive state, it will be essential to establish a **stabilization** process by focusing on resolving outstanding Guam physical, biological, social and cultural issues already in the system even without the move.



It is impossible to move into sustainability until the uncertainty is taken out of the current system. To assume that sustainability can occur in the physical, biological, social, cultural and economic environments (as required by NEPA) by jumping over the **stabilization** process is a recipe for disaster. **Stabilization** can provide the base from which to grow a sustainable environment. Without first obtaining that stable base, there is no foundation upon which to build a sustainable future. In other words, there is significant chaos already in the system which has removed predictability about events to come among the citizens. When people lose their ability to participate in and predict what will happen to their communities when major events are announced, chaos results. People feel they are rendered powerless, until they rise up and attempt to take back their decision-making authority for their own neighborhoods, communities, and environment.

Preventing more chaos and disruption on Guam is a beginning point for stabilization and growing sustainability. Recognizing this sequence from stabilization to sustainability in an action program is in the direct interest and benefit of the Marine Corps, the people of Guam and our national security.

² Preister, Kevin and James A. Kent, “ Using Social Ecology to Meet the Productive Harmony Intent of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA),” Hastings West-Northwest Journal of Environmental Law and Policy, Volume 7, Issue 3, Spring, Berkeley, CA: Hastings College of the Law, 2001.

Intrusion or Absorption?

There are two opposing action paths that are important to recognize in what is presently happening in Guam. One path is intrusion and disruption, and the second path is absorption and mutual benefit.

1. The intrusion and disruption path poses a potential disaster for the Marines that will build anger and fuel resistance to their presence.
2. The absorption and mutual benefit path is the logical path for the Marines to follow in order to create an environment where the people of Guam and the Marines build capacity to beneficially align their two cultures. The beliefs, traditions, stories and values of each entity are honored in this alternative. .

To the extent that Guam's informal cultural systems and formal institutions can be mobilized to absorb and benefit from the change that the Marine Corps will be creating, that is the degree to which the Marines will experience unparalleled success with the people of Guam.

Intrusive Forces Currently Affecting Guam

It is crucial for the Marines to recognize that they are facing the disruption caused by two intrusions that have taken place prior to the Marine resettlement. Both intrusions have created stress in Guam communities and remain a problem:

1. Immigrants from the outer islands of Micronesia, i.e., the Marshalls, Ponape and Palau have moved to Guam in unrestricted numbers under the provisions of the Compact of Free Association. Guam is viewed as the center of activity in the Pacific, and, there is a shared perception that Guam offers jobs and opportunities for personal and family advancement.
2. Migrants from the Philippines also have been coming in large numbers and are impacting the Chamorro population, as stated in "Tip of the Spear", May 21, 2008, Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

These two ongoing intrusions, especially on Chamorro communities and Guam institutions, do not bode well for an additional intrusion unless direct action is taken on existing conditions.

The incoming Marine Corps units represent a third intrusive force that is arriving at one of the most vulnerable times for the people, institutions and government of Guam. As such, the Marine Corps commanders should anticipate that much of the unresolved issues and emotions created by the Micronesian immigrants and Filipino migrants will be loaded onto its program--adding to its burdens and costs. JKA has long recognized that "Issue Loading" is a normal response that people use when their more immediate issues have gone unresolved.

Understanding issue loading, along with the new issues emerging from the interaction of the three intrusions, will present opportunities for the Marines to develop implementation actions that

lead to a working partnership with the people of Guam. This partnership is needed to prevent disruptive issues from finding a permanent home in this fertile ground. It is the means by which the social and economic benefits of the Marine Corps move can be optimized.

The number of people in this move to Guam is staggering. There will be about 20,000 Marines and dependents that will need to be absorbed by 2014. In addition, construction personnel and crews that will be engaged for several years are estimated at 20,000. Conservatively, that is 40,000 new people impacting a population base of approximately 178,000 in a three to seven-year period. Absorbing 40,000 people in a natural growth process would be disruptive unless it took more than 20 years. As sociologists who have worked with addressing change in local cultures throughout the Pacific Rim, we know there are certain formulas that predict success.

It is important to recognize that:

- a population can absorb a natural growth rate of about 1.4% a year without destroying the receiving society. Guam's current growth rate is 1.365%. This growth rate is not the one Guam anticipates with the coming development.
- a 3% growth rate is the upper limit of managing an intrusion by a force such as this. To absorb the 3%, the receiving society must mobilize and operate intentionally in order to benefit from this number of people arriving on Guam.
- beyond the 3% annual growth, it is phenomenologically impossible to absorb the numbers in the time frame being discussed i.e. between 3 and 7 years. The current expectation for the first few years of growth is between 23% and 40% depending on the sequencing of development.

The impacts from this growth rate, unless consciously and deliberately managed, can destroy the very social, cultural, physical and biological environments that have made Guam a unique bio-social ecosystem. If that occurs, it will also significantly diminish the Marines' ability to function effectively in this critically important forward defense area.

It benefits all sectors to prevent a *zone of chaos* from being created in its own right or creates one in the impacted community systems--the very situation that Defense Secretary Robert Gates is trying to prevent in other theaters. The U. S. Army in Afghanistan is being converted from an "invade-and-capture" a top-down centralized-programming and direction command, to one of "building community," a bottoms-up geographically-diversified, decision-making system involving the people and their culture.

It is anticipated that the Defense Department will adopt the "building community" approach that will spell success for this critical move for the Navy, the Marines, the Air Force and the Guam society?

From Stabilization to Sustainability: Seven Principles to Build the Best Possible End State

Change initiatives which are oriented to fostering sustainability require certain key functions to be in place. As a beginning point, the following are principles to consider for a successful implementation program:

1. People have to be able to articulate their views in a safe venue that allows reflection about how the Marine Corps move will affect them and what the opportunities are to address citizen issues. In our work, we call this the Discovery Process™ whose hallmark is that people are communicated with in their environment, in settings which are comfortable for them.³
2. The EIS and the related policies promulgated to manage the Marine Corps move must integrate social, economic and ecological considerations. The integration of these three factors we now see incorporated into public policy at all levels of society, from global institutions like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, to local governments including city and county ordinances. The Marine Corps effort to date, as the Draft EIS indicates, has simply missed these considerations which increases the cost and impacts of the move and threatens the opportunity to establish long-term sustainability.

In such a framework, the general management question becomes, *“How do we manage the Marine units’ move to Guam in a way that supports the existing cultures of Guam so that individuals are better able to predict, participate in, and control changes in their environment?”* A related question is, *“How can ecological functioning be sustained and enhanced while also fostering social and economic health of the local communities?”*

3. Success depends on early, direct contact between individual citizens and Marine staff, and less on government-to-government relations. While organizational interests are important; they should be balanced with citizen participation and not be allowed to dominate the process.

The Marine Corps unit commanders will want and require collaborative approaches to accomplish a successful relocation to Guam. JKA distinguishes two types of collaboration:

- place-based (informal/cultural) and
- interest groups (formal/technical).

Many agencies are adept at the second type (interest groups), and have the capacity to interact with society in this way. Most agencies are not skilled, nor experienced, with place-based collaboration. While formal meetings can technically satisfy the interest group level of input to the implementation program of the Marines, in and of themselves, this is an insufficient strategy in promoting sustainability. Successful collaboration oriented to sustainability must begin with place-based approaches based on informal

³ Kent, James A., “The Holy Cross Energy Experience: How to Gain Project Approval and be Celebrated by Citizens and Elected Officials,” Electric Energy, A Publication of RMEL, energy utility cooperative, Denver, Colorado, www.rmeh.org, Issue 2, 2006.

networks because that is the social level in which culture is maintained. The organizations and institutions are brought in to lend their expertise and to execute elements of the implementation plan.

4. Citizen issues are identified and responded to at the emerging stage of development, with the goal of preventing emerging issues from reaching the existing or disruptive stages. The goal of the Marines should be to resolve issues directly related to its endeavors. In addition, the more the Corps can be strategic about addressing issues related to community life, the more positive the effects of the Marines' presence will be.
5. Use the issue management process to gradually bring in appropriate institutional responses, thereby strengthening the governmental and agency infrastructure by structuring it around the resolution of citizen issues. The long-term effect of such a process is efficient and effective governance. The more the Marines can strengthen the institutional framework of Guam, strengthened by sound understanding of citizen issues and a commitment to resolve them, the less dependent will the population be on Marine resources.
6. As the Marines become grounded in everyday cultural life on Guam, they will develop direct relationships with the people. Appropriate institutions will be brought in as needed in a supporting function, and the political situation will become less volatile and less susceptible to political maneuvering of extreme voices.
7. As the program advances, it will be helpful to develop indicators for social, economic and ecological health that are relevant to Guam in promoting sustainability. These indicators can be monitored for progress on each of the dimensions, adding transparency and accountability to the Marine program.

Conclusions

A zone of chaos is prevented by assisting the citizens in creating beneficial solutions to their issues and enhancing their quality of life by having them participate with, rather than rejecting and being negatively impacted by, the Marines physical, biological, social and economic presence. This represents the “full spectrum operation” that Secretary of Defense Gates is promoting in the military services.

The Guam relocation, therefore, presents an opportunity for the Marines to carry out the Defense Secretary's mission by creating a value added sustainable environment, one of increased social, cultural and economic benefits for the citizens and the institutions and a learning experience for the Marines with a “bottoms-up” approach that will be successful and can be used in other Marine/Navy environments to prevent zones of chaos.

Change Programs That Work

JKA specializes in building community-based, bottoms-up processes that increase citizen and government capacity to enable communities, cultures and institutions to live and work in harmony with each other. JKA has a track record of working with the Marine Corps in an island setting, successfully dealing with cultures and political structures similar to those that exist in Guam.

Below are two brief overviews of successful projects undertaken by JKA that are very relevant to the situation in Guam. To understand the JKA approach on social impact management and institutional change in addressing the Marine resettlement to Guam the relevant documents are cited.

Marine Corps Base Hawaii (MCBH), Kaneohe, Hawaii

One of JKA's projects with the Marine Core Base Hawaii (MCBH) concerned the amphibious beach landing training at Makua Beach on O`ahu. One of the key issues on the table was the Hawaiian militants and sympathizers who opposed any military presence. They had positioned themselves between the Marine decision makers and the local people of the Hawaiian culture who lived at Waianae, near Makua Beach. General David Bice was the Commander of the MCBH when the Marines faced militants trying to stop the landing training at Makua Beach. JKA was hired to look at the social/cultural issues of significance as part of the Environmental Impact Statement. The Marines were using all of their energy trying to respond to the attacks by the formally organized opposition groups. In order for JKA to carry out their assessment, the team went in underneath the formal groups to talk with the people in the informal networks of the local Hawaiians. These particular networks carried the local issues (not the militant issues) that could be resolved with Marine presence and cooperation. By understanding how these informal networks absorbed intrusions and made decisions, the Marines were positioned to turn the relationship from adversarial to one of community cooperation. Once this was done, the militants realized that they only had standing if they participated, and did just that, taking their lead from the local *kupuna*, the elders of wisdom in the Hawaiian culture.⁴

Culture Based Management Program, Tanguisson Power Plant, Guam

Hawaii Electric International (HEI) in a public/private partnership took over the Tanguisson Power Plant from Guam Power Authority in 1997. After taking over the plant management, HEI found that the formal system of management was not being productive or efficient even though many management and employee positions were staffed by people from the local Chamorro culture. The JKA team was retained to address the management issues that HEI found difficult

⁴James Kent Associates, "Three Reports Related to the Makua Beach Amphibious Training of the U.S. Marine Corps, Support for the Environmental Impact Statement," 1999. Available at: <http://www.jkagroup.com/Docs/MAKUA-BEACH-SUPPORTDOCUMENT.pdf>. Refer also to: Merritt, Lt. Col. Richard O. (USMC (Ret) and Roy Whitehead, Jr. USMC (Ret), "Including the Excluded Population in Marine Corps Environmental Decisions". This is an advisory article published in the Marine Corps Gazette about how JKA carries out its mission with base and station commanders in mind. Available at: Marine Corps Gazette, October 2000 (pages 42 and 43).

to understand. JKA went throughout Guam communities, listening and learning how the social/cultural systems worked, what motivated them, how decisions were made, at the informal network level of their culture. We learned that the culture subtleties vary from one geographic area to another, so that each area must be worked with according to its geographic location on the island. We also learned that formal groups purporting to represent segments of the island population in fact did not. They represented only their own narrow interests but made claims of broader influence. It is very important for the Marine management to recognize this dynamic in order to avoid aligning with groups that have narrow and special interests that benefit the few over the many.

JKA incorporated their descriptions into a Culture Based Management (CBM) program for HEI that moved the management structure from a vertical top-down traditional system, to a horizontal cultural based management system (bottom-up), resulting in increasing production by 75% in a year and a half. HEI's recognition that the horizontal system is in keeping with how citizens of Guam managed their lives in order to create a sense of order allowed them to adjust their pre-disposed hierarchical management style to the cultures way of managing.⁵

⁵ Kent, James A., Eric Casino, "Case Study of the Tanguisson Power Plan, Barrigada, Guam, James Kent Associates, 1997. The document communicates a strategy for working with the grassroots people in order that change can be a contribution to the people of Guam and to the Tanguisson Power Plant. Available at: <http://www.jkagroup.com/DOCS/Tanguisson Master.pdf>