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Title of Paper
Modes of National Interaction:
Enabling Coalition Interoperability in the 21st Century

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Modes of National Interaction:
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Abstract

The 21st Century requirement to conduct 'full-spectrum' military operations presents significant technical, organisational and strategic-level challenges to the Australian Defence Force (ADF), not the least of which is coalition interoperability. At a macro-level, many obvious factors shape coalition interoperability including doctrine, legal frameworks, technology, command and control processes, and rank/skill parity. Less obvious, however, are the underlying processes that determine whether such factors will enable or inhibit coalition interoperability in a particular setting. This paper investigates these processes by investigating different 'modes' of interaction open to coalition partners. In this paper, we compare and contrast two such modes - <u>liaison</u> and <u>embeddedness</u> - drawing on the experiences of ADF personnel who served as part of the US-led coalition in the Middle East. Our analysis shows that each mode establishes a context that shapes the identity of the personnel involved and, in turn, their expectations about critical issues such as trust and the exchange of information. By better understanding and exploiting such modes, the ADF will achieve the social and organisational compatibility required for coalition interoperability in the 21st Century.