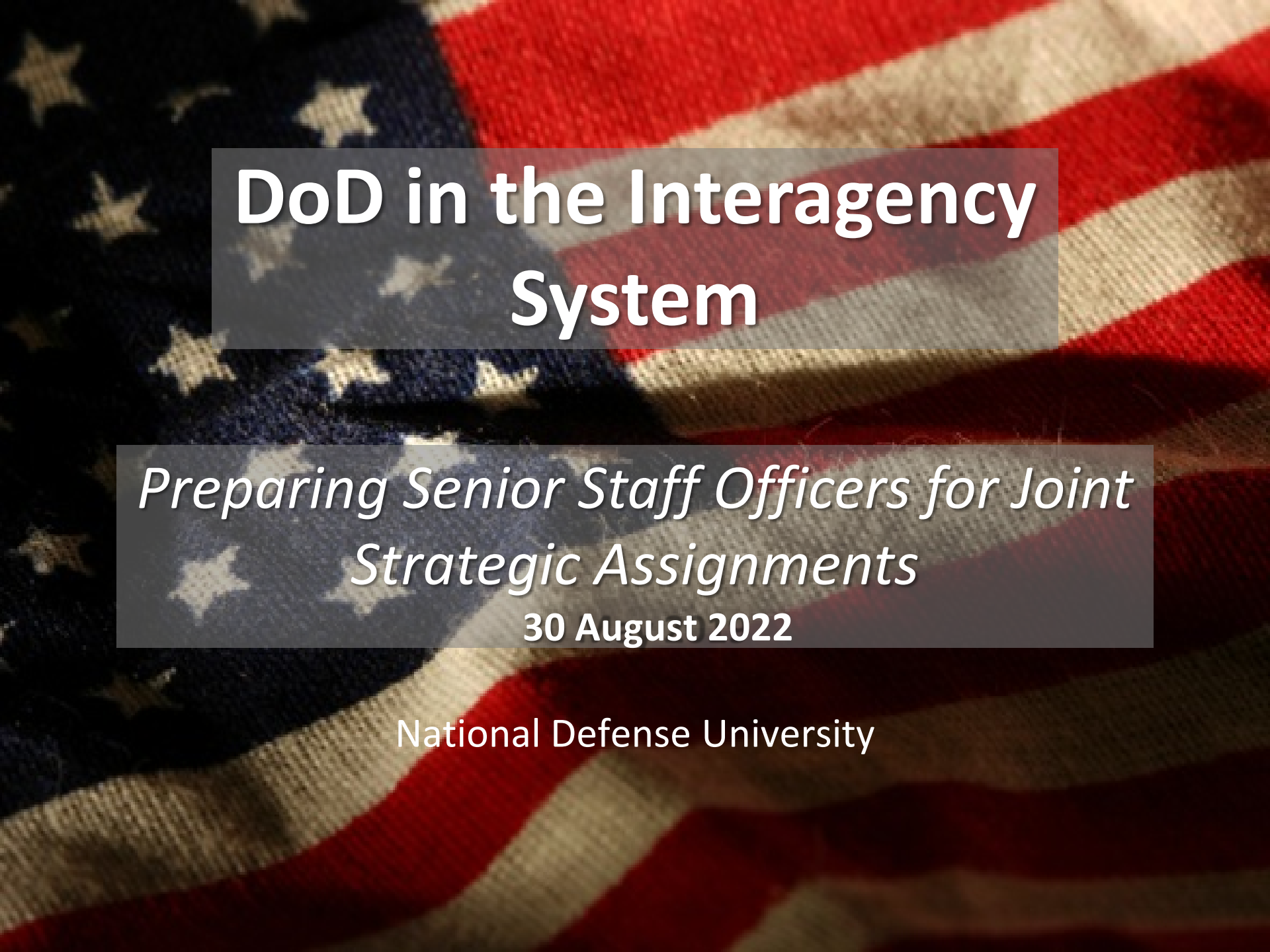


The background of the slide is a close-up, slightly blurred image of the American flag, showing the stars and stripes in a diagonal orientation.

# DoD in the Interagency System

*Preparing Senior Staff Officers for Joint Strategic Assignments*

30 August 2022

National Defense University

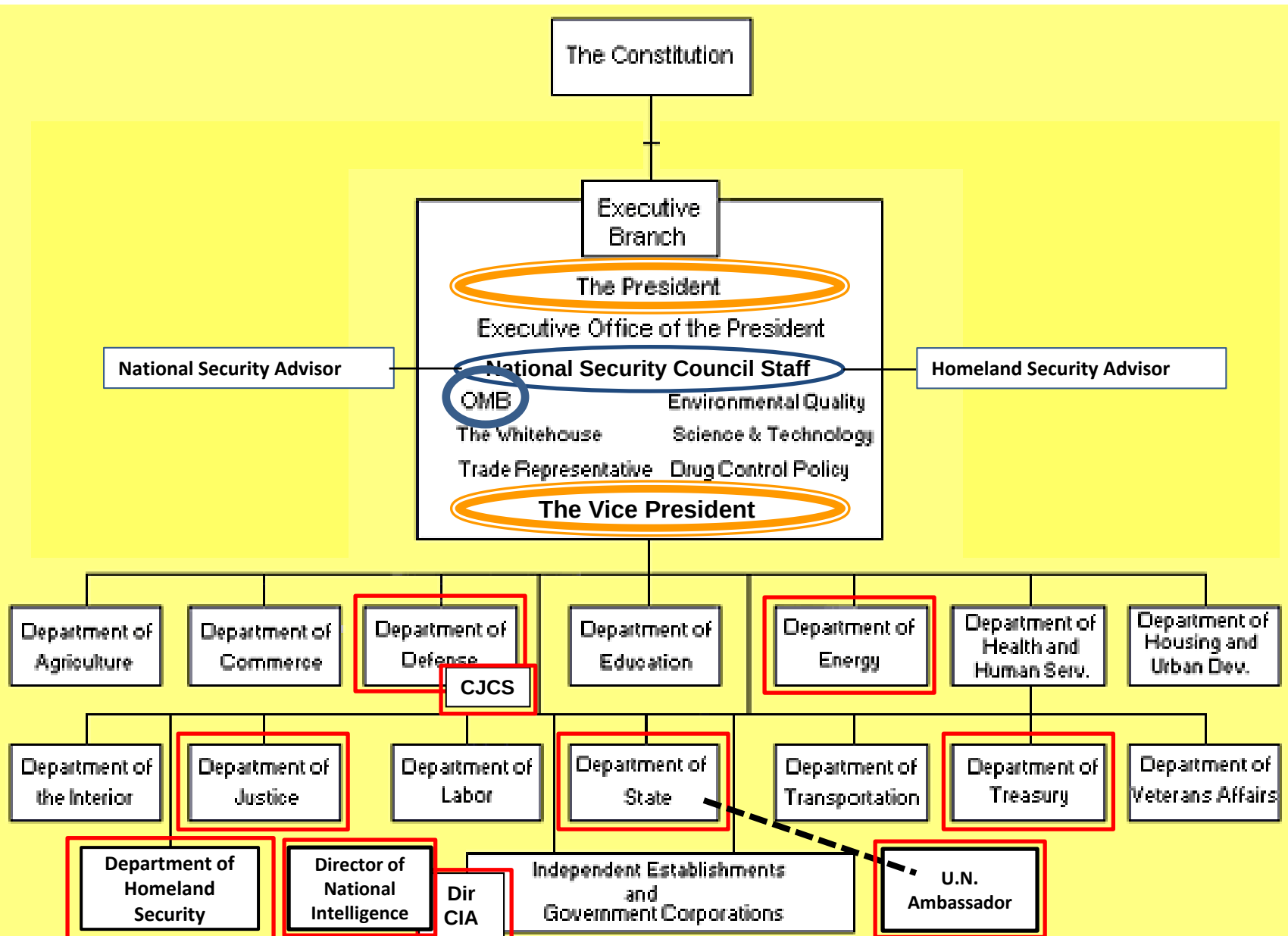
# The Executive Branch

Coordinate, integrate, and employ  
all elements of national power

Diplomatic  
Informational  
Military  
Economic

*Financial (including sanctions)*  
*Intelligence and Covert Action*  
*Legal and Law Enforcement*

# The Executive Branch—Policy Participants



# Elements of the Interagency system

- **Formal policy structures**
  - NSCs
  - Principals Committee
  - Deputies Committee
  - Interagency Policy Committees
  - Working Groups or Sub-IPCs
- **Informal policy mechanisms**
  - President's Daily Brief
  - Small Groups, meetings, and breakfasts
  - Informal networks and relationships
  - Outside influences or visitors
  - One-on-ones

# The National Security Council System

- NSC established in 1947 National Security Act
- Updated by each Administration—and reflects different styles, approaches, and priorities
- Similar processes (although names may change)
- Most current directive: NSPM-4, April 4, 2017
  - NSC – President chairs
  - Principals Committee – NSA chairs (VP *may* attend)
  - Deputies Committee – Deputy NSA chairs
  - Policy Coordinating Committees

# National Security Council



## By Law Members:

- President - chair
- Vice President
- Secretary of State
- Secretary of Defense
- Secretary of Energy
- Secretary of Treasury

*Per nSM-2 February 4, 2021.*

## By Law Advisors:

- Director, National Intelligence
- Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

## Advisor by Presidential Directive:

- Director, CIA

## Members by Presidential Directive:

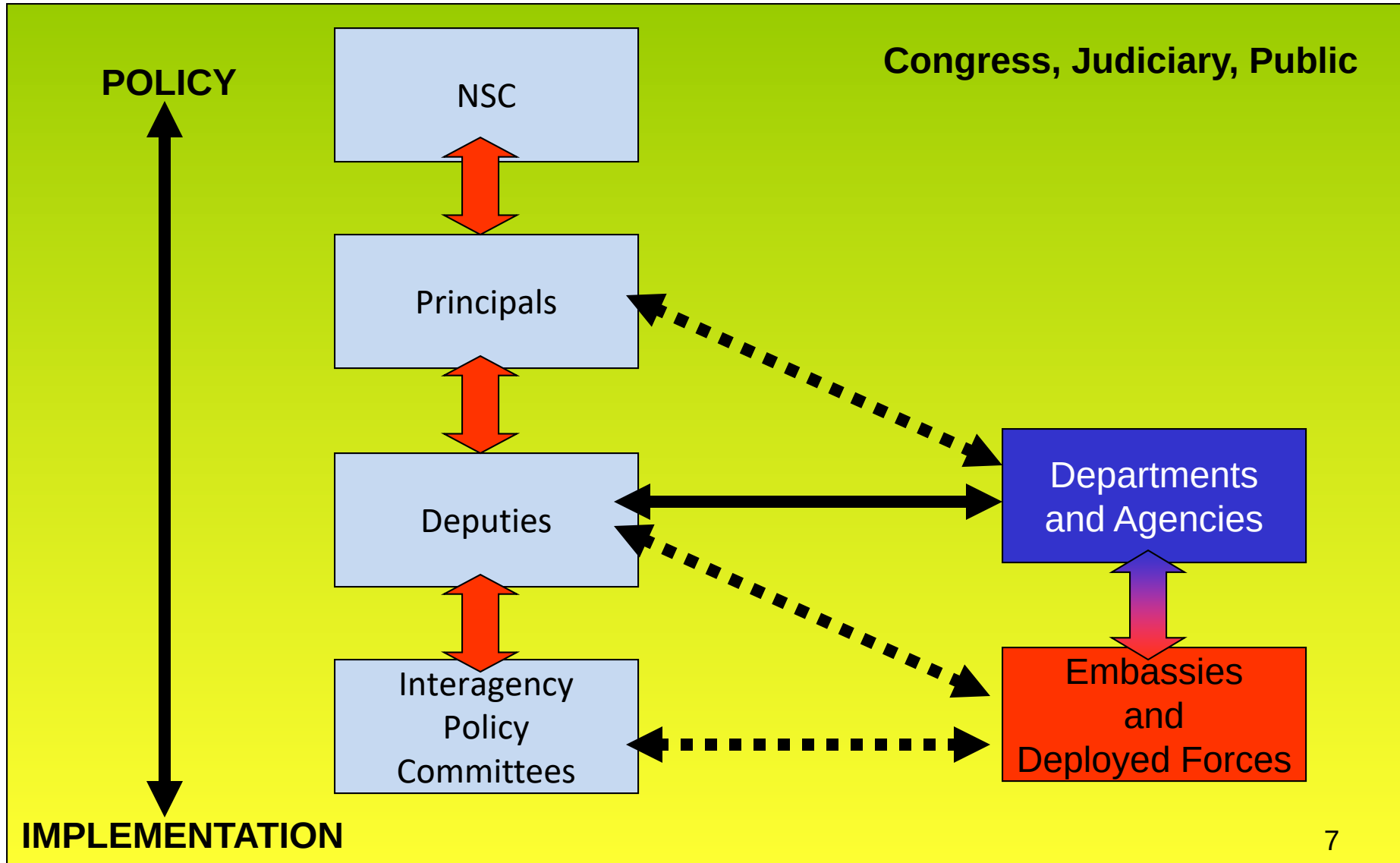
- |                               |                                        |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| • Attorney General (Justice)  | • National Security Advisor (APNSA)    |
| • Secretary Homeland Security | • Director of the Office of S&T Policy |
| • UN Ambassador               | • Administrator, USAID                 |
| • WH Chief of Staff           |                                        |

- Counsel and Deputy  
Counsel to the President

## "Invited Attendees":

- NSC Legal Advisor
- Deputy NSA (Secretary)

# Elements of the System and Process





**WHSR**  
**Sit Room**  
**WHSR Exec**  
**WHSR Small**  
**EEOB**

***Plus 1s***

***Back bench***

***Overflow***





# The National Security Staff (NSS)

- Approximately 300 persons, most in EEOB
- In practice report to the Assistant to the President National Security Advisor (APNSA) and to Homeland Security Advisor
- Mix of:
  - “permanent” staff (about 30)
  - political appointees and direct hires (varies, but probably about 75)
  - detailees from Departments and Agencies (200 – 225)
- Regional and Functional Directorates
- Three priorities (in order):
  - Staff the President
  - Staff the National Security Advisor and other senior White House officials—provide expert advice
  - Coordinate the Interagency (during crisis and deliberate policy processes) to include the development of integrated strategies

# The Policy Process(es)

- **Deliberate Policy process**
  - APNSA approves process, timing, and agenda
  - Implementation and focus reflect APNSA perspective, style, priorities
  - PCC provides preparation for Deputies or Principals discussions
- **Paper process**
  - Still starts with PCC and PCC-developed or reviewed products
  - Useful for complicated and complex policy decisions, especially those with significant legal considerations
  - Could include review of particular strategies or “play books”
- **Snap or Crisis Action**
  - In Person
  - Telephonic
- **Small Group**
- **Restricted or Restricted Small Group**

# Purpose-driven IPCs

- **Scheduled**
  - Maintain common understanding of ongoing situation/conflict
  - Integrate instruments, identify opportunities, coordinate strategic communications and other actions
- **Emerging Situation**
  - Develop common understanding of situation
  - Review and identify the need for policy changes and adjustments
- **Deliberate Policy or Strategy Development**
- **Policy Implementation, Oversight, or Assessment**
- **Crisis Response**

# IPC Considerations for NSC

- **What do we need to get out of the IPC**
- **Who do we need and want to participate**
  - Co-chair, especially if “equities” of other regions or functional directorates
  - Small Group for focus or sensitivity: EurRussia or WMD, CT
  - EOP (Domestic Policy Council or National Economic Council) and WH or OVP
  - Departments: Assistant Secretary level—check availability of key players
- **How do we want participation**
  - In person (if so, how many seats; typically a plus 1 but more when cross-cutting issues)
  - In person and VTC, embassies or out-stations
  - Classification
- **Agenda and General Flow**
  - Purpose of IPC
  - Review (and validate) approved objectives, especially those with stamp of Principals and President
  - Intel overview: CIA and, if necessary, NSA and NCTC
  - Policy review: State, USUN, Embassies (including strategic communications), USAID
  - Around the horn: WH or other NSC, OSD, Joint Staff, DNI, Treasury, DHS, Energy, OMB
  - Identify consensus areas and points of disagreement
  - Identify next steps: known, anticipated, or recommended
  - Recap: tasks, due outs, suspenses and Summary of Conclusions (preview SOC)

# Some Thoughts for Consideration

- The expectation is that you are the expert
- Participant not spectator
- Reconcile organizational “equities” with national strategies and policies
- Understand and honor suspenses
- Answer the question
- Anticipate the President’s questions:
  - Why are we there?
  - How long will it take, how much will it cost?
  - How different? Why do you think that will succeed? Has it worked?
  - What are the options; how do it faster?
  - Who is helping? Can we get others to do more to share burden and cost?
- More than about winning America’s wars—support policies; timely, effective action
- Understand IA asks of DoD enablers
- Remember it is not your policy
- Need you to *Carry the Message*



# A Meeting of the National Security Council

President Joe Biden discussing the Fall of Kabul with the National Security Council, August 18, 2021







# A Meeting of the National Security Council

March 3, 2014. (Official White House Photo by Pete Souza)





# POLICYMAKING IN PRACTICE

- **DECISIONMAKERS DO NOT AS A RULE APPLY OR ABIDE BY THEORETICAL MODELS OR CONSTRUCTS**
  - AT LEAST, NOT CONSCIOUSLY
- **THEY ACT AND DECIDE BASED ON ...**
  - PRESIDENTIAL GUIDANCE
  - THEIR OWN CORPORATE INTERESTS
  - THEIR PAST EXPERIENCES AND INFLUENCES
  - NORMATIVE PREDISPOSITIONS
  - A COST/BENEFIT CALCULUS
  - ... AND A CLOSE EYE ON LIKELY MEDIA REACTIONS, AND POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES

# THE INTERAGENCY IN PRACTICE

- **COLLABORATIVE**
- **CONSENSUS DRIVEN**
- **CROWDED AGENDA**
- **TIME CONSTRAINED**
- **LIMITED SENIOR LEADER TIME, FOCUS, EXPERTISE**
- **CLASH OF COMPETING, BUREAUCRATIC CULTURES**
- **HIDDEN AGENDAS**
- **POLICY NETWORKS**
- **INFORMATION IS POWER**
- **SUB-OPTIMAL POLICY SOLUTIONS**