

Learning from the Past: Analysing History to Support UK Defence Policy

Briefing to the Cornwallis Group

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Overview

- *What* is historical analysis?
- *How* is historical analysis used for defence policy?
- *What* historical analysis is used for defence policy
- How is Dstl *improving* historical analysis for defence policy?

Section 1.

WHAT IS HISTORICAL ANALYSIS?

Definition

- The use of mathematical, statistical and other forms of analysis to understand historical engagements, operations, campaigns and conflicts for the purpose of providing impartial analysis and sensitive decision support to policy makers
- Critical to sensible and fully informed policy making

Origins

- 1980s – Falklands War



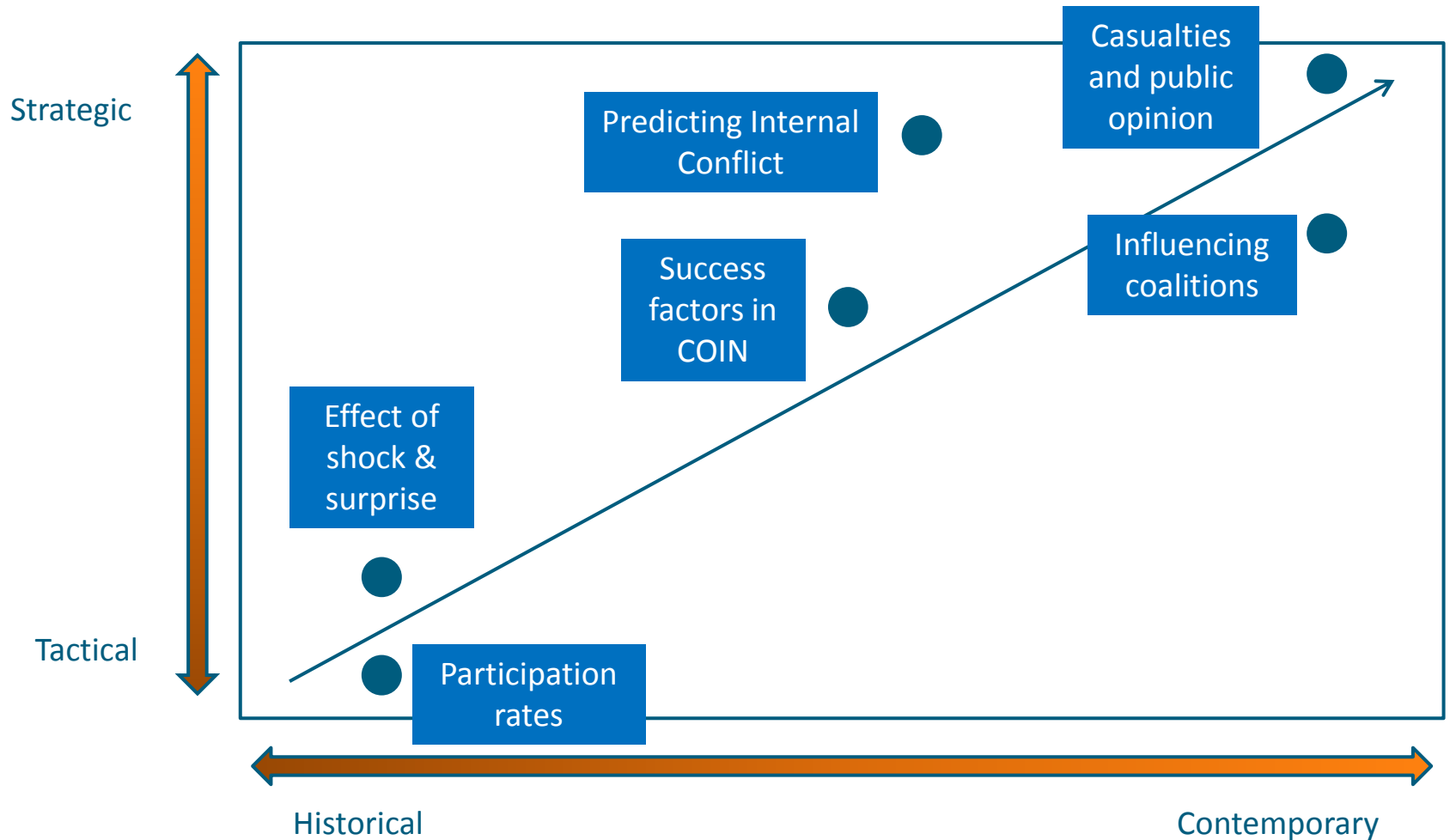
Field trials

vs.

Falklands War

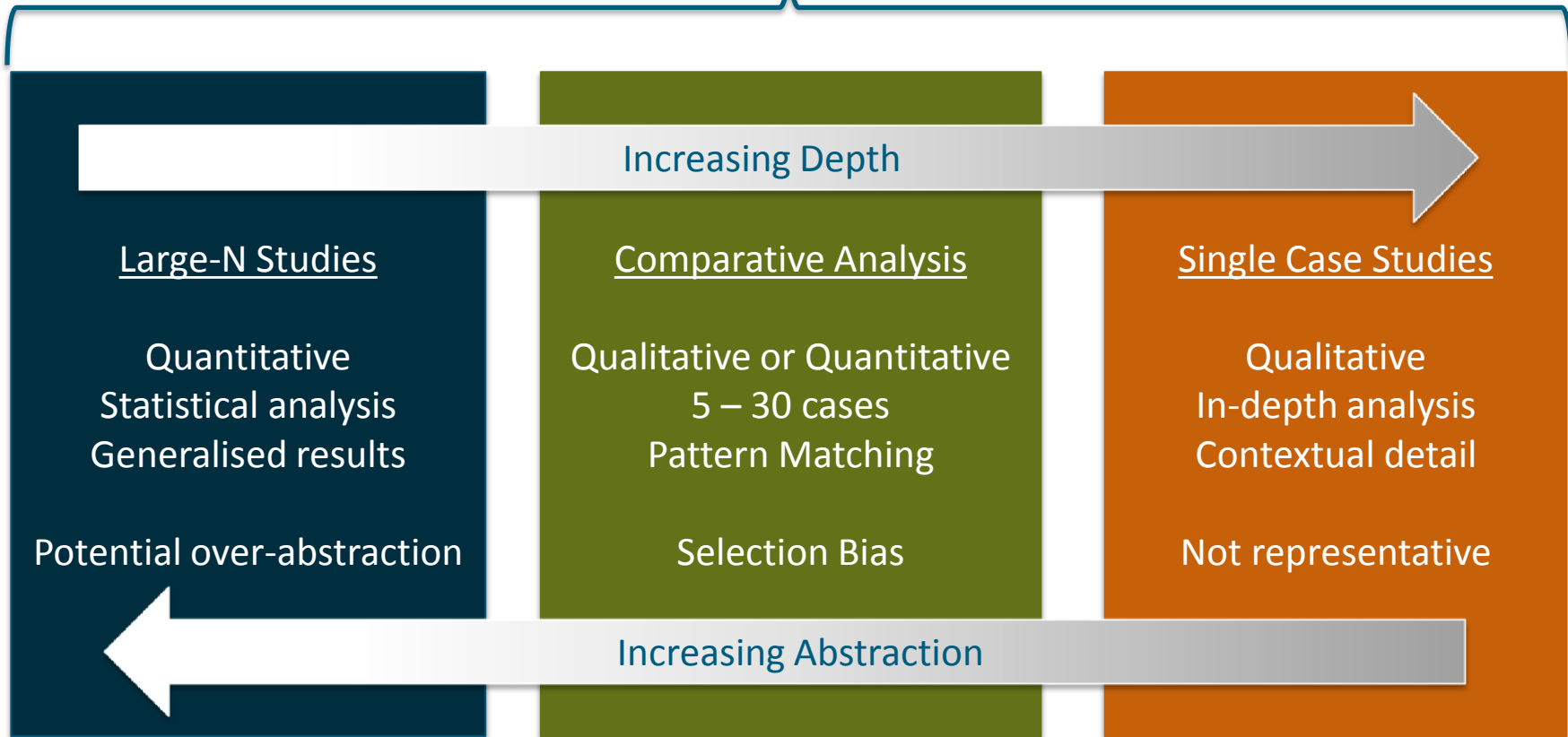
- Combat Psychology Example: soldiers are much braver if they know they're in no real danger

Range of Studies



Spectrum of Historical Analysis

The Real World



What data does HA use?

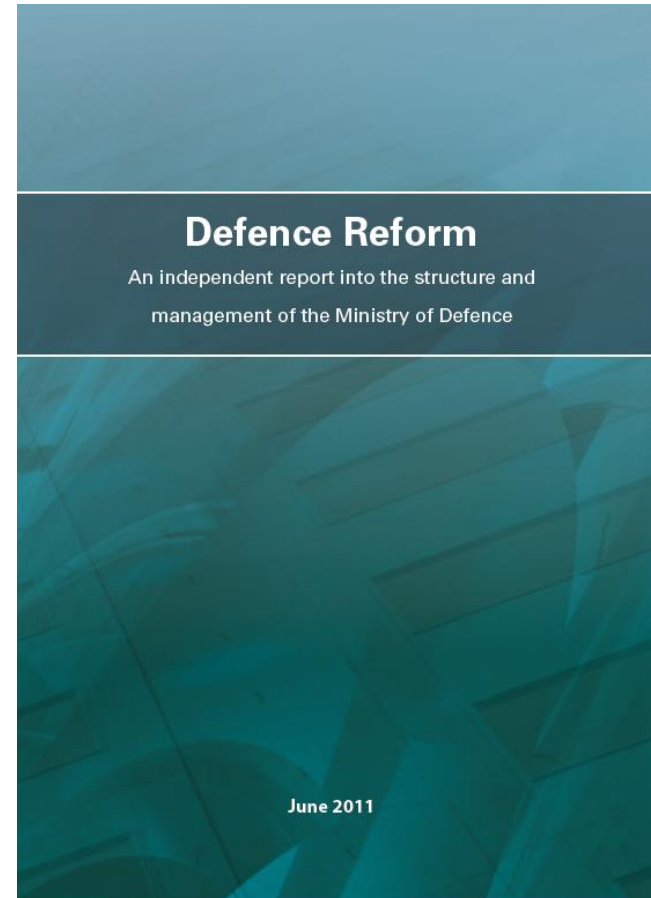
- *Anything that will tell us what we want to know or allow us to infer an acceptable estimate thereof*
- Primary data sources
 - War diaries
 - Post Op Reports
 - Operational Data Sources
- Secondary data sources
 - Official Histories
 - Reference Books
 - Academic Studies

Section 2.

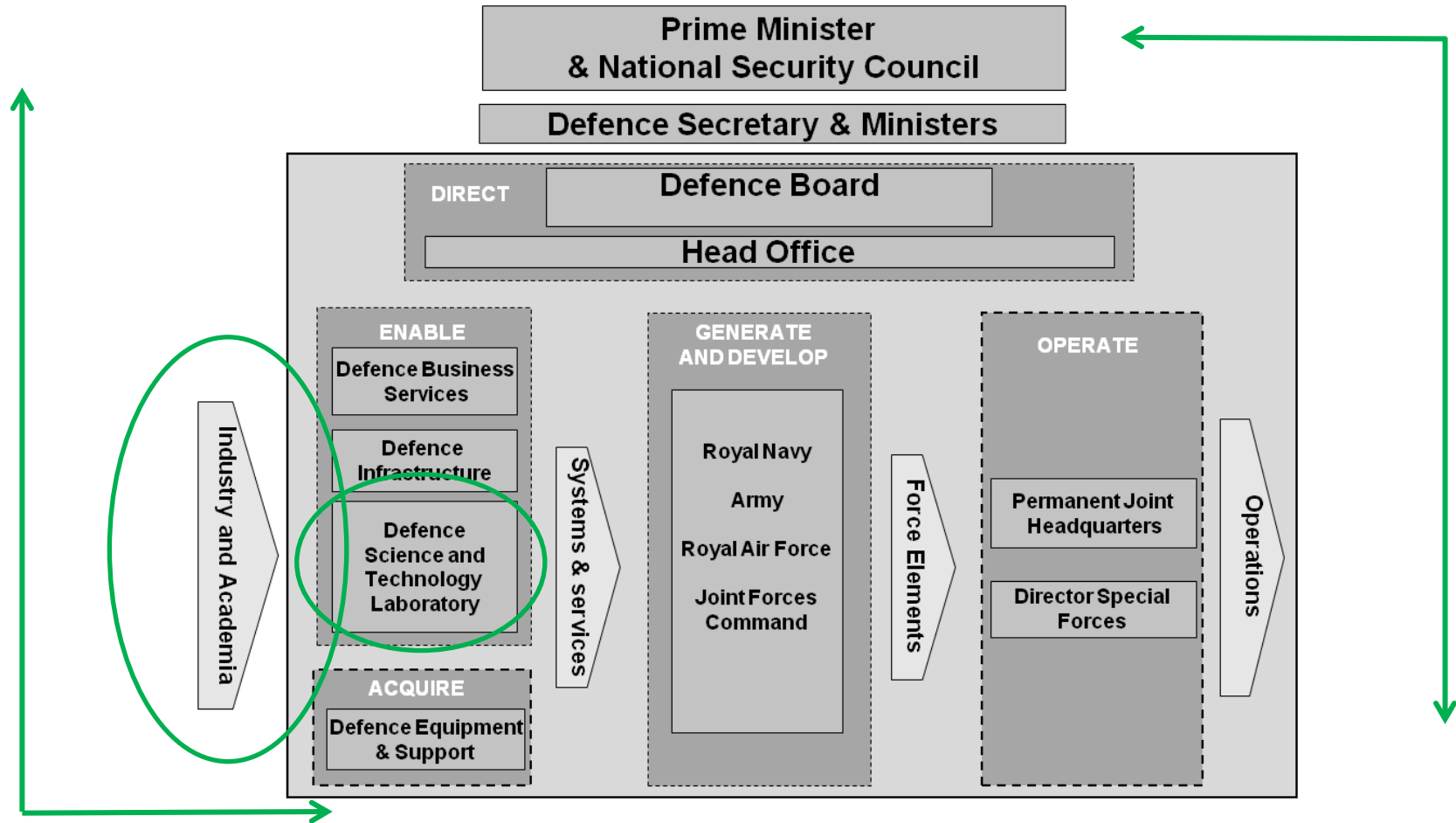
***HOW* IS HISTORICAL ANALYSIS USED FOR DEFENCE POLICY?**

Defence Reform: A Fundamental Review

- Independent
- Reported June 2011
- Proposed new operating model for MOD
- Greater focus on strategic direction and accountability
- Endorsed by the Government and the MOD



Defence Reform: The New Operating Model



Who do we support in MOD?

Non-exhaustive list

Security Policy and Operations

- Advises on the Defence contribution to Government security policy
- Provides military and politico-military advice on operations
- Relations with international security organisations

Permanent Joint Headquarters

- UK Mounting Headquarters
- Plans and executes UK military operations
- Provides military advice in order to achieve UK strategic objectives on operations

Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre

- Assesses the future strategic context
- Provides concepts to guide capability development
- Guides the conduct of operations

Director Strategy

- Leads the Defence contribution to cross-Whitehall strategic planning including the National Security Strategy
- Formulates planning assumptions and scenarios

Section 3.

***WHAT* HISTORICAL ANALYSIS IS USED FOR DEFENCE POLICY?**

Example: Large-N

- Success Factors in Counterinsurgency
- Inform development of peace support operations models
- Aim: *'to identify success factors associated with security forces or insurgents in counterinsurgency'*
- Provided:
 - 100 possible success factors identified and tested statistically
 - Quantified the payoff from adopting given strategies/capabilities
 - Demonstrated the necessity for modelling the military and the political components of counterinsurgency together
- Impact: Associated models have been used to brief COMISAF

Example: Large-N

- Force Sizing in Counterinsurgency
- Support doctrine development
- Aim: *'to confirm the nature of the relationship between Force Density and the likelihood of security success in Counterinsurgency campaigns'*
- Provided:
 - Statistically robust evidence of positive relationship
 - Assessment of risk for military planners
 - Advice on caveats for usage
- Impact: Changed UK doctrinal approach to strategic force sizing for counterinsurgency

Example: Comparative

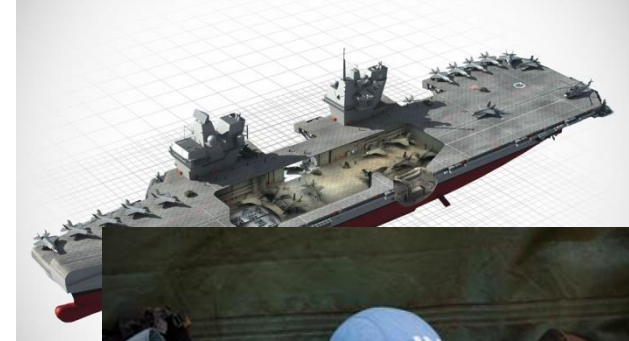
- Characteristics of Non-Combatant Evacuations
- Support doctrine development & operational planning
- Aim: *'to provide an unbiased assessment of the characteristics of Non-Combatant Evacuation Operations'*
- Provided:
 - Description of the population of operations
 - Comparison with standard planning assumptions
 - Myth debunking
- Impact: Improved planning guidelines for Non-Combatant Evacuation Operations at strategic and operational level

Example: Case-study

- Soviet Withdrawal from Afghanistan (1985 – 1992)
- Support ISAF Joint Command plan for transition
- Aim: *‘to provide lessons learned from the Soviet experience that may inform current ISAF drawdown and transition planning’*
- Provided:
 - Timeline of Soviet withdrawal
 - Deep analysis of key lessons for ISAF transition
 - Myth debunking
- Impact: Informed risk assessment for ISAF Transition Plan

Current Research Areas

- Insider Threat
 - Understanding and mitigation
- Capability Sharing
 - Within NATO and the EU
- Peace Support Operations
 - Doctrine development for NATO and UK
- Defence Engagement
 - Policy development and implementation
- Humanitarian Intervention
 - Defining the defence contribution



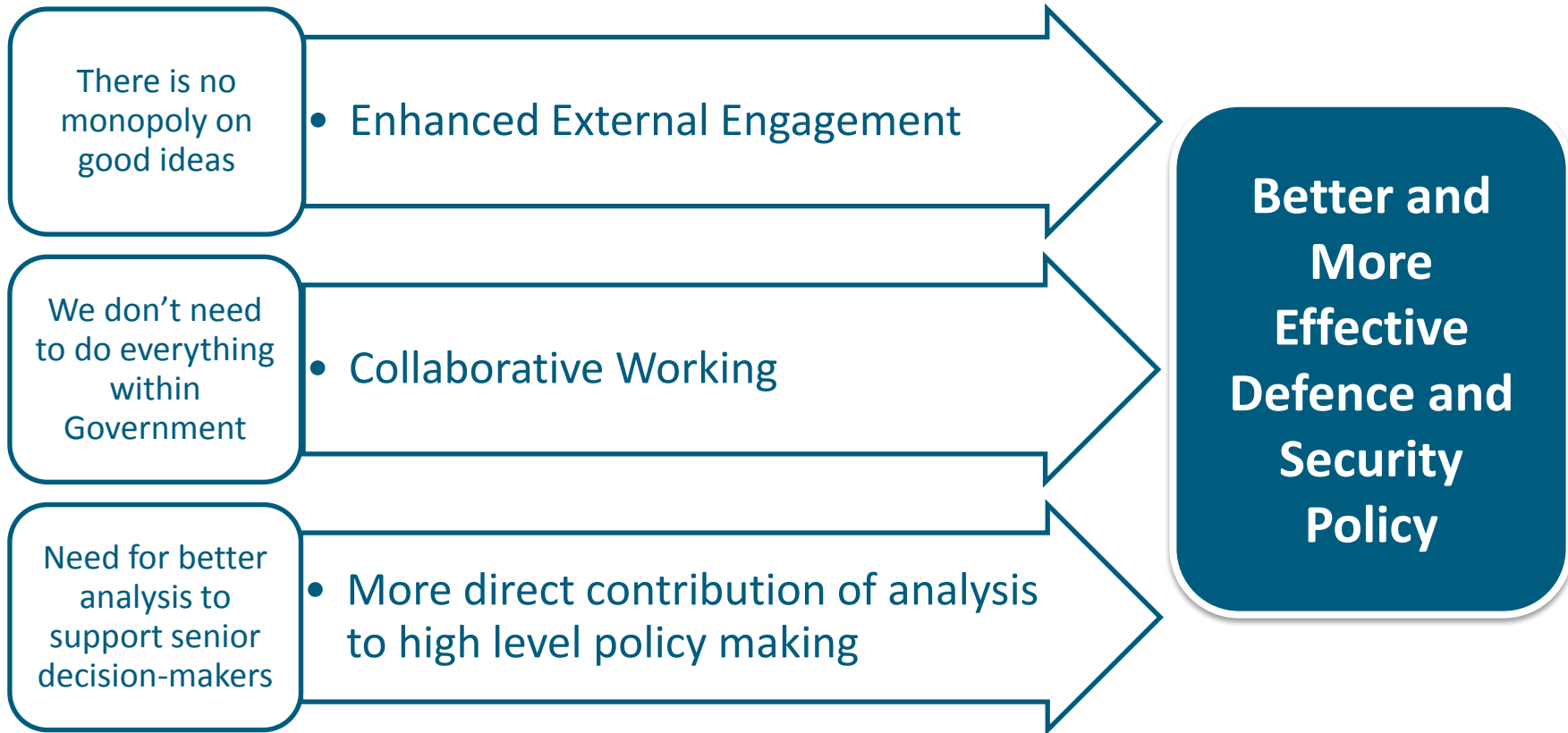
Building Stability
Overseas Strategy

Amongst Others

Section 4.

HOW IS DSTL *IMPROVING* HISTORICAL ANALYSIS FOR DEFENCE POLICY?

What's Changing in Historical Analysis?



The Future of Historical Analysis

- Recognition
 - As a capability not a technique
 - Impact at high levels
- Regeneration
 - Core team currently 3.5 growing to 6 in 2013
- Reorganisation
 - Hub and spoke model
 - Internal community of practice
- Reaching Out
 - Collaborative working
 - Academic engagement
 - Annual symposium

Summary

- Historical analysis supports MOD policy formulation at all levels
- Historical analysis has:
 - a long record of success – 30 years
 - been important in developing understanding of conflict as a system
- Historical analysis is:
 - a capability incorporating a range of techniques
 - changing to be more responsive to requirements

Questions

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