



Defence Academy  
of the United Kingdom

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# Overseeing relations between analyst, practitioner and policy-maker: a meta- view of planning and designing for agility in a complex world

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# Our motivations for thinking and for working more relationally

- MOD CIBM Research Programme
  - Task 8 Planning: Action Research
  - Task 10 C2 Agility (Forms of time; Orders of agility)
- DHCSTC TIN 3.011 Stabilisation Modelling
  - Conditions for stability: changing relationships
- Systems Thinking in Practice courses at DefAc
  - Focus of own problems is on relationships

# Contents

## 1. Where are people, relationally speaking?

- Analysts
- Policy-makers
- Practitioners

## 2. Important Flavours of Complexity

- Social complexity
- Organisational complexity

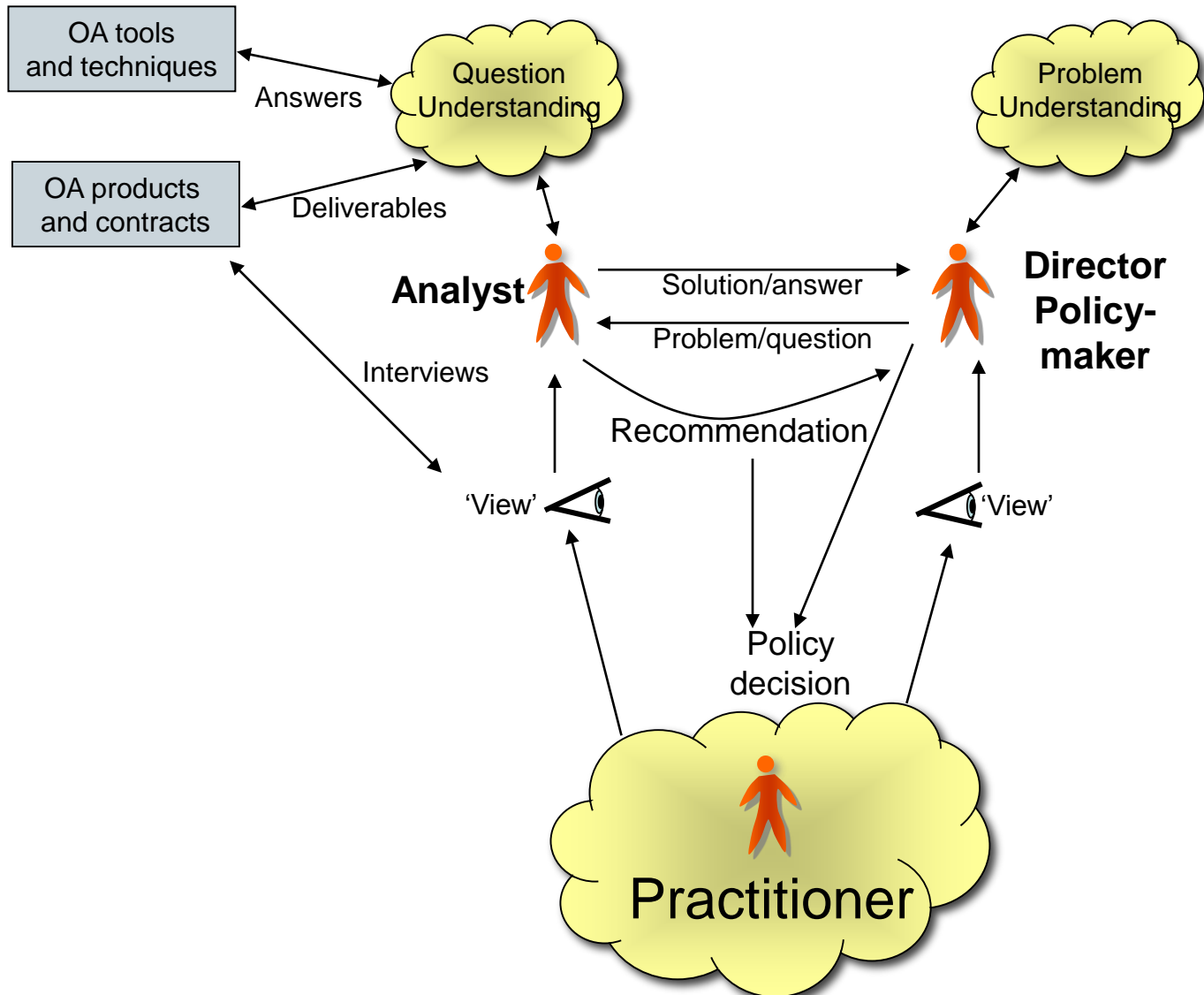
## 3. Orders of Agility

- What is agility with respect to people and their decisions?
- Changing relationships

## 4. Summary question:

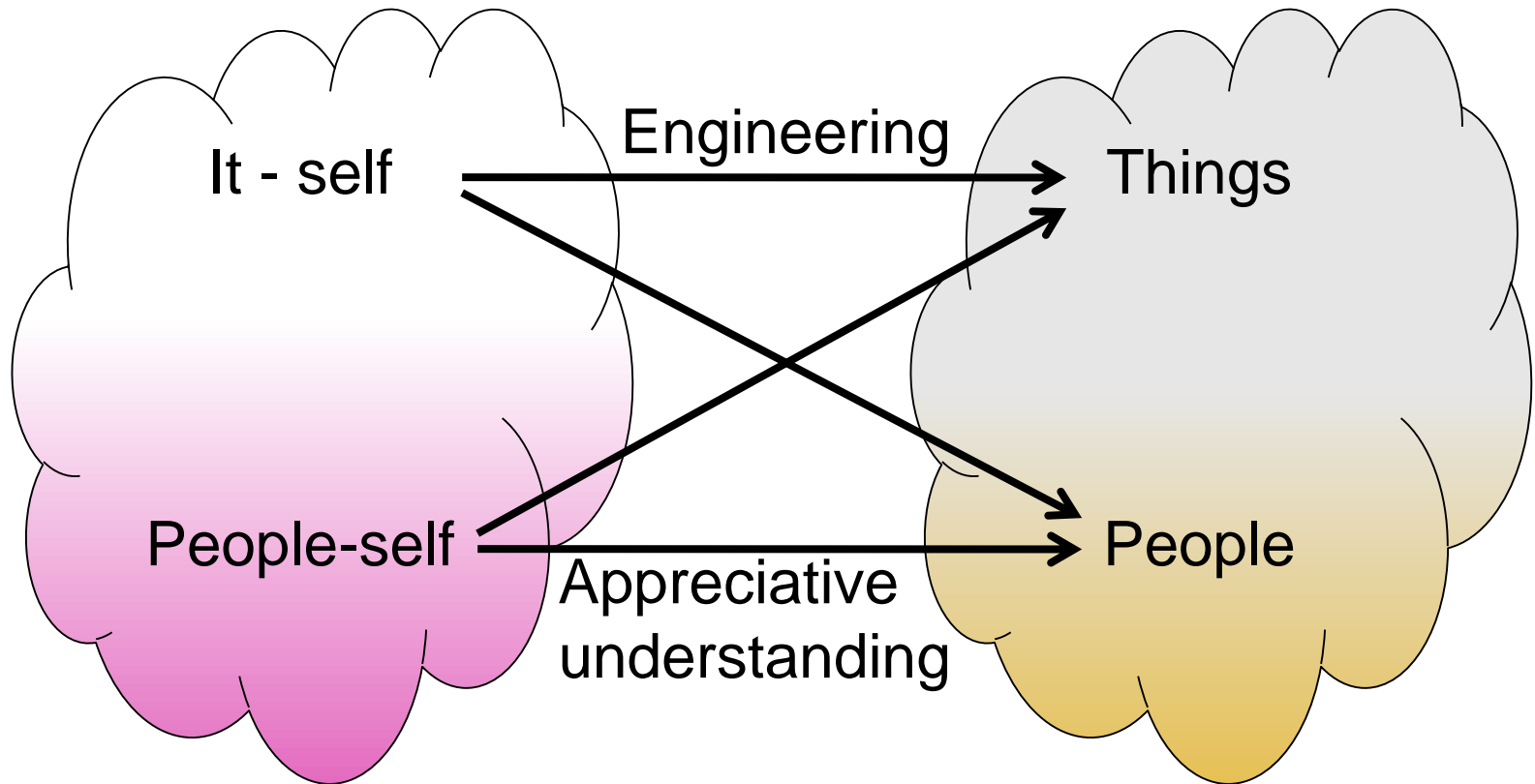
- What does all this mean for operational research analysts?

# Where are people relationally speaking?



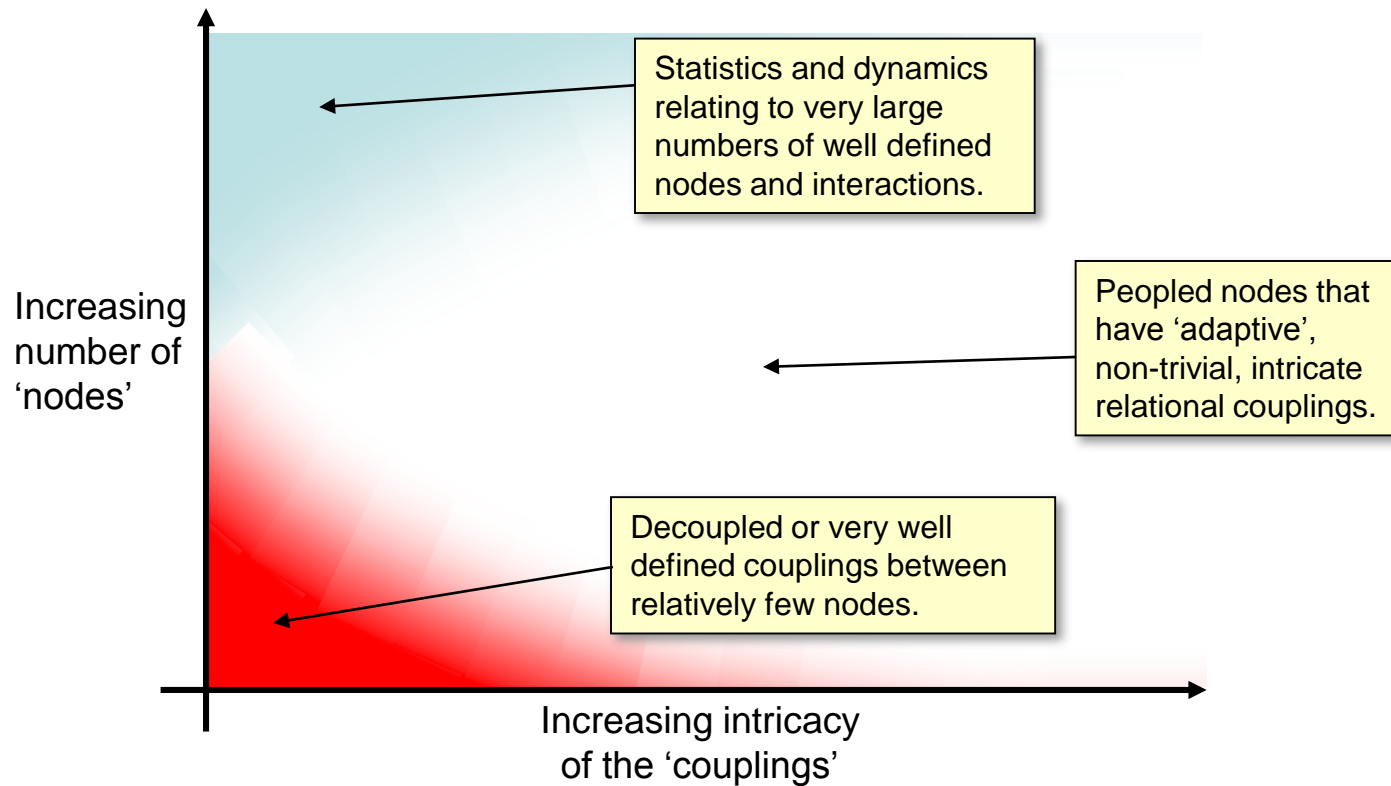
[A Alston]

# Cross-coupled pairs: differentiation and between-ness



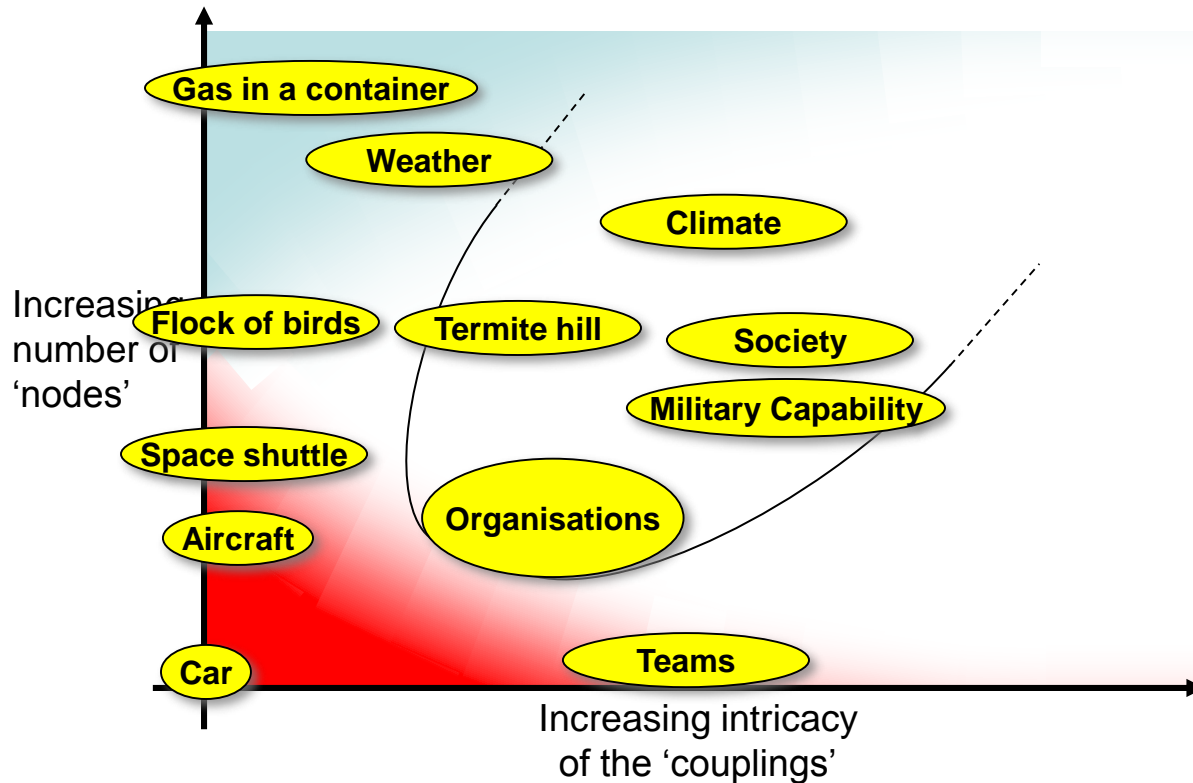
[John Isaacs]

# 'System Space'

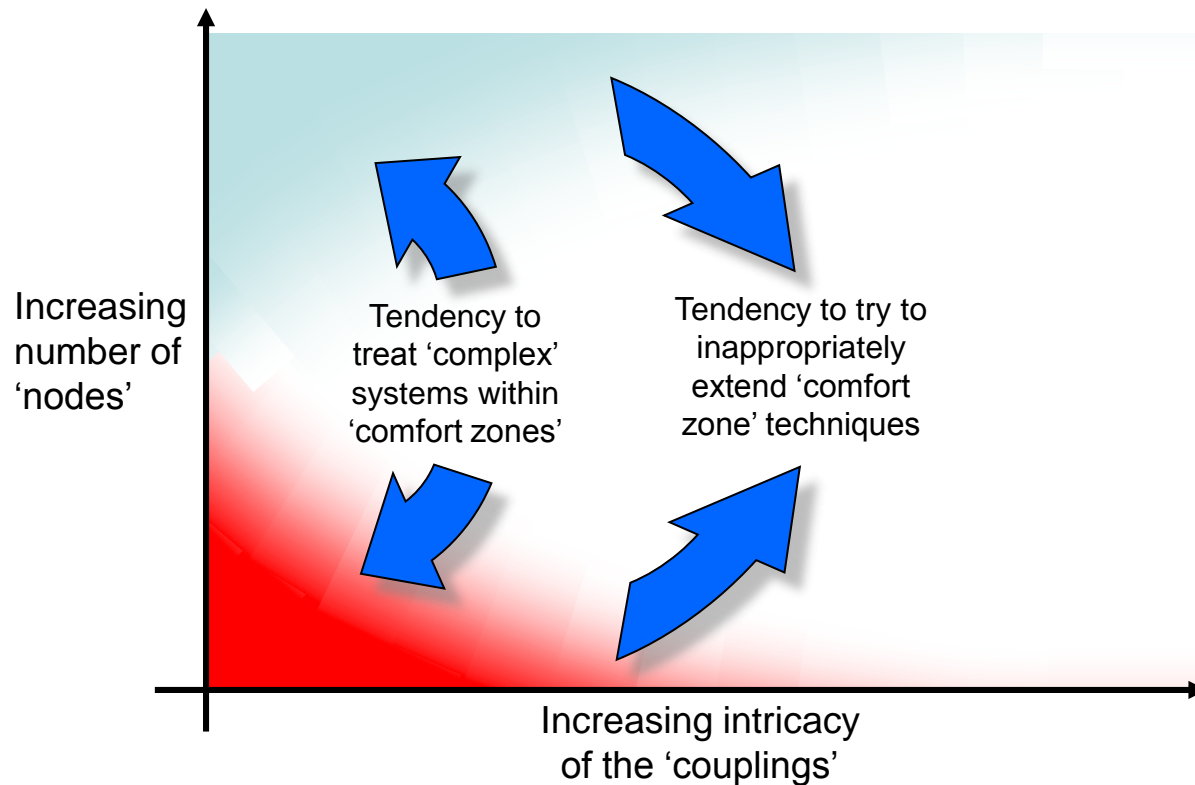


[A Alston]

# Example Systems



# Coping strategies





# Might it help to think about agility? What is agility?

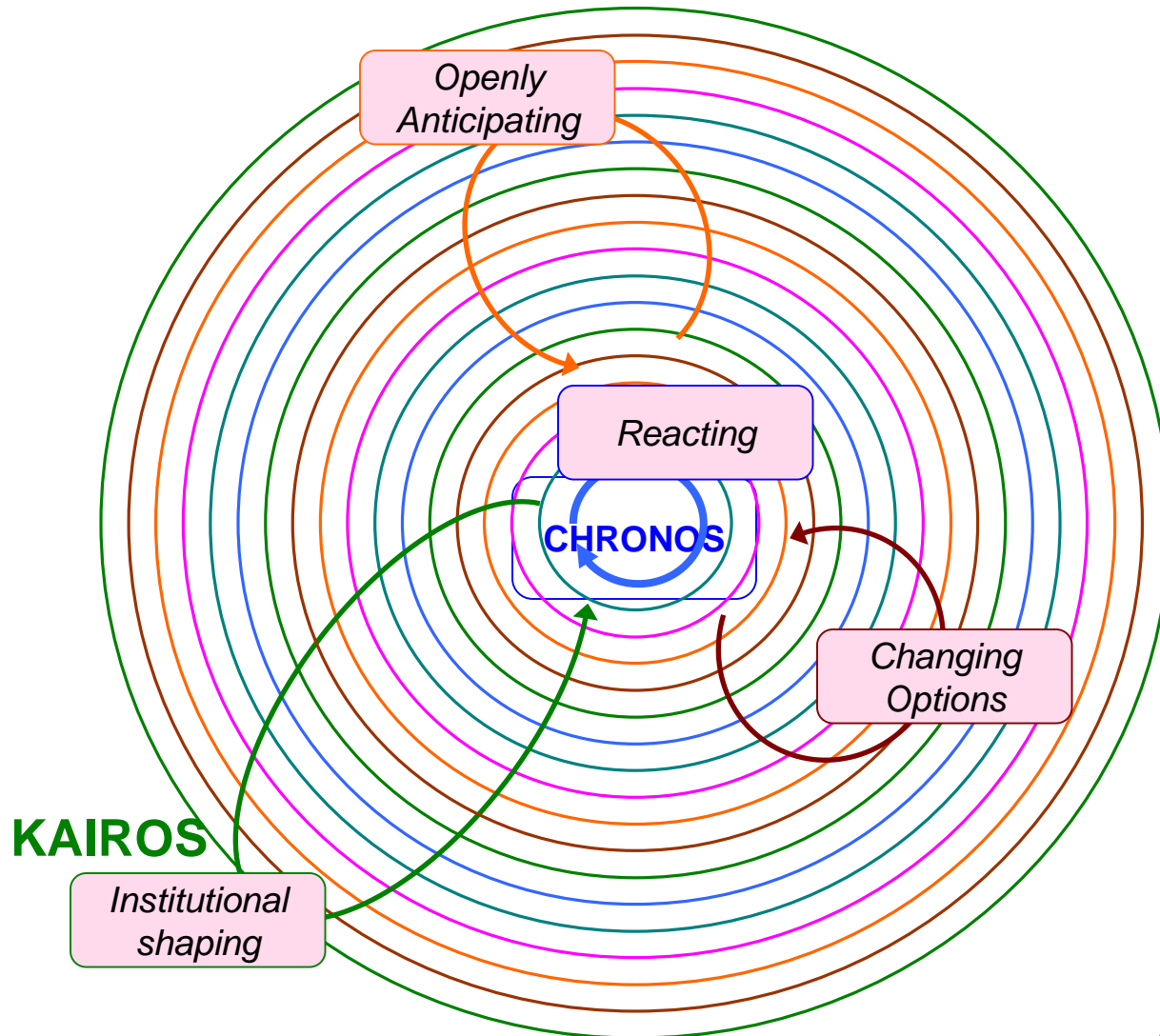
Basically it is about:

- responding
- changing
- adapting
- changing the way we might change....

... and changing the way we might respond,  
adapt, re-organise, transform, ....

How might it help to address questions of  
change.....?

# Forms of time leading to orders of agility



[G Markham]

# Analysis, planning and metaphors

- Machine
- Organism
- Brain
- Culture
- Flux and Transformation
- Political; Psychic Prison
- Instrument of domination

[G Morgan]

What might this all mean for OR?  
Do we have relational 'models'?  
Do we need to change relationships?

- Questions?
- Comments?
- Ideas?

# Principles for shared problem understanding?

“One of the principles evolved by the British was that OR groups should be formed on the request of the commander to assist him in solving his problems, functioning as integral parts of his command and working closely with his military staff and subordinate commanders. Projects were initiated either on request from the commander or, more commonly, by the OR section itself. The OR section chiefs reported directly and only to the commander and normally sat in on staff meetings and conferences. By working in close proximity to the uniformed elements of the command, the OR units gained access to all types of operational information and shared in the informal communications networks.”

*History of Operations Research in the United States Army by Charles R. Shrader*

# References

DHCSTC TIN 3.011 Final Report (to be published Sept 2014)

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- L.Dodd and G. Markham, *Orders of agility and implications for information and decision-making*, International Command and Control Research Technology Symposium, Institute of Defence Analysis, Virginia, June 2013.
- G. Morgan, *Images of Organisation*, Sage 1986.