Assignment 3 Part 3
Peer Feedback for Scenario 9
Ethical Considerations in Autonomous Weapon Systems

Question 1: Are there any situations in which it is appropriate and morally justifiable to use autonomous weapons?

The situations in which it is appropriate and morally justifiable to use autonomous weapons could be complex and multifaceted. It could be in self-defense, a battlefield, some other environments with high risks of sacrifice and so on(Asaro.P 2012, p. #).

When it comes to self-defense, there could be some certain situations where human lives are under immediate threat(Walzer.M 2006, p. #). For example when the police are facing murders with heavy power, they could use autonomous weapons to avoid unnecessary injuries or sacrifice. On the battlefield the troopers could use autonomous weapons to eliminate the risk of sacrificing themselves in attacking military targets when the enemies are significantly more powerful than they are.

On the other hand, some military work may expose them to extreme environments where there is a threat of human fatalities, they could use autonomous weapons to make their missions accomplished.

Question 2: How to attribute responsibility while autonomous weapons leading to civilian casualties?

Government policymakers, military personnel, defense contractors and should be primarily responsible.

a. Policy and Regulatory Responsibility for Government Policymakers

Policymakers play a critical role in these cases, since they are genuinely decision makers to commence autonomous weapon systems. They need to make the whole system deployment obey national and international laws. When there is damage to civilians, they should bear regulatory responsibility. Besides, they have responsibility to implement laws that ensure the safety and security of autonomous systems and accountability measures (Anderson et al. 2013)

b. Command Responsibility for Military Personnel

Military Personnel, especially leaders and commanders, have responsibility to guarantee the systems are in accordance with international humanitarian law (IHL) (Davison 2018). If autonomous weapons result in civilian harm, they have a duty to claim accountability under the principle of command responsibility.

c. Product Liability for Defense Contractors

Defense Contractors and their developers are in charge of designing and testing the systems, therefore they should bear product liability if there is an algorithm flaw or system error leading to tragedy. As product makers, they need to ensure the systems are reliable, accurate and complying with international humanitarian law and other principles of humanity (Abaimov et al. 2020). There should be strict standards for these systems, and the contactors will be accountable for system failures.

Question 3: What is the best way for the military organization to balance the military advantages of autonomous weapon systems with the assurance of public trust in this system?

Factors which are transparent process and accountability and also, strictly followed legal and ethical norms, are essential for the consistency of this autonomous weapon systems and its military advantage and also assuring the trust of the community.

In order to make the public more cautious, the military organization should provide transparency in how the autonomous systems are designed, deployed, and monitored up to an extent which is possible with the military standards, its compliance with the law and steps taken to prevent the misuse.

Engagement in human rights and civil society organizations and international regulatory organizations is really necessary for the Military leaders to discuss the risks and benefits of autonomous weapon system and if this is constantly carried on, many potential devastations from this system can be prevented and improved hence, more public trust is built towards this (Arms control association 2018).

Moreover, sharing trial rounds and reviews with the public on a regular basis can show that autonomous weapon systems are deployed ethically and in accordance with the law.

Furthermore, public consultations allow the general public and relevant organizations to express their concerns and suggestions and the military organization can work with other countries so that the international community would view them as more legitimate and credible if they adopted a multilateral strategy (Etzioni & Etzioni, 2017).

Reference

1. Abaimov, S & Martellini M 2020, ‘Artificial Intelligence in Autonomous Weapon Systems’, in M Martellini & R Trapp (eds), *21st Century Prometheus: Managing CBRN Safety and Security Affected by Cutting-Edge Technologie*, Springer Cham, Switzerland, pp. 141-177.
2. Anderson, K & Waxman, M 2013, ‘Law and Ethics for Autonomous Weapon Systems: Why a Ban Won't Work and How the Laws of War Can’, *American University WCL Research Paper*, 2013-11.
3. Arms control association 2018, *DOCUMENT: Ethics and Autonomous Weapon Systems: An Ethical Basis for Human Control?,* Arms control association, viewed 5 November 2024, <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2018-07/features/document-ethics-and-autonomous-weapon-systems-ethical-basis-human-control#:~:text=The%20fundamental%20ethical%20question%20is,to%20be%20ceded%20to%20machines.>.
4. Asaro, P 2012, ‘On Banning Autonomous Weapon systems: Human rights, automation, and the Dehumanization of Lethal decision-making’, *International Review of the Red Cross*, vol. 94, no. 886, pp. 687–709.
5. Davison, N 2018, *UNODA Occasional Papers, No. 30 November 2017*, pp. 5-18, https://doi.org/10.18356/29a571ba-en.
6. Etzioni, A & Etzioni, O, 2017, ‘Pros and Cons of Autonomous Weapons Systems’, *Military Review,* no.3, pp. 72-80, viewed 28 October 2024, <https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Journals/Military-Review/English-Edition-Archives/May-June-2017/Pros-and-Cons-of-Autonomous-Weapons-Systems/>.
7. Walzer, M 2006, *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations*, 5th edn, Basic Books, New York.