

“Strategic level is the most challenging area in modern warfare.”

Inci Kucukaksoy, JWC PAO

MAJOR ALLISON GILLAM, an Australian officer, has participated in numerous NATO operations and exercises spanning her career. As a Captain, she deployed in the role of Australian liaison officer to Task Force Uruzgan, which was part of the NATO Multinational Reconstruction Task Force in Afghanistan. While overseeing her duties here, she witnessed tangible changes, which were a glimmer of light in the ongoing fight; Uruzgan was not a one-dimensional war zone. Economic and social development was alive and flourishing. On one occasion, Afghan women invited her to have tea with them following a routine vehicle check.

“The locals were known to be non-permissive a year before my assignment. But now I was able to play peekaboo with the kids. There were more cars on the roads, and women were seen in public,” she said reflecting on her time in Afghanistan.



Major Allison Gillam

Continuing her work with NATO she took part in many multinational training events following her redeployment from Afghanistan, including the ARRC-led ARCADE FUSION in 2014, and later TRIDENT JAGUAR 2017 (TRJR17). During TRJR17, Major Gillam acted as the Opposing Forces (OPFOR) Staff Officer within a multinational team of JWC-led Exercise Control (EXCON) organization.

“Predominantly, throughout the exercise together with my French and Italian colleagues we’ve been required to respond to requests for information from both the Training Audience (TA) and also from other EXCON elements, to provide clarity on scenario injects and ensure that the TA received accurate information and figures when it came to attrition of enemy forces. We also produced additional

injects or context to previous serials to ensure a realistic scenario was maintained for the duration of the exercise.”

25 Nations participated in the exercise from both NATO and Partner Nations, including Australia from beyond the Euro-Atlantic area. Major Gillam said the JWC conducted operational level training exceedingly well, a very challenging area of expertise in modern warfare. “One of the benefits of working with the JWC was an opportunity to gain exposure to corps and strategic level operations within the NATO and EU context. An opportunity rarely afforded while working in Australia,” she added.

Major Gillam said one of the most important elements in TRIDENT JAGUAR 2017, apart from NATO’s goal of maintaining a high state of readiness at all times, was the opportunity to engage with Allies. “I’ve been very fortunate to have an opportunity to work with NATO both in Afghanistan, as had many other Australians, and then again on exercises such as this one. I had a fantastic experience here, working with some phenomenal and brilliantly intelligent people. It was also an outstanding networking opportunity, and an opportunity to catch up with people I had deployed with in Afghanistan,” she said. ✦



The OPFOR Cell