



THE MAGAZINE OF THE JOINT WARFARE CENTRE

# THE THREE SWORDS

## STAVANGER – NORWAY

KEEPING NATO STRONG – TAKING INNOVATION ONE STEP FURTHER



10 YEARS  
28 ISSUES

# STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

*Opportunity and challenge at a critical time for NATO*

**CONTINUED  
EVOLUTION OF  
HYBRID THREATS**

**NATO DOCTRINE**

**AIR-LAND INTEGRATION**

**PLUS SPECIAL REPORT: JWC'S OLRT TRAINING | EXERCISE TRIDENT JEWEL 15 | OSINT**

NATO  
+  
OTAN



**COVER**

**Image credits:** Fourth by Torbjørn Kjosvold (see explanation on page 90), seventh by ARRC PAO, and eighth by NATO. Image credits for the rest are inside.

**Below:** (Top) Second photograph by Sergeant Mike O'Neill. Third photograph by Marina Dore, NRDC-ITA PAO. (Bottom) Second photograph by MARCOM PAO.



38-63

**Strategic Communications/Matching our adversaries in the Information Age:** The aim is to put information strategy at the heart of all levels of policy, planning and implementation, and ensuring the development of practical and effective strategies that make a real contribution to success. Find out how StratCom is being implemented in NATO today.



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January-May 2015

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ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE**

## FROM THE EDITOR



HAPPY  
10TH  
BIRTHDAY!

## DEAR READER,

First, I would like to share this very special moment with you as the PA team marks The Three Swords magazine's 10th anniversary this year. The magazine was born in 2005 with a very modest 32-page issue (above). Back then, no one imagined that our very own flagship magazine would continue to attract readers for the next 10 years and become highly regarded and valued by an audience far beyond that of the JWC. On this day, we are the proud publishers of 92 pages, making it one of the most comprehensive issues of the The Three Swords to date.

Secondly, I would like to pen this foreword to our editor Ms Inci Kucukaksoy, who has been working tirelessly and with high commitment from the beginning to ensure that our product, which depends on contributions from readers, remains well-crafted and content-accurate.

It goes without saying that our magazine would never have lived to see 10 years if it hadn't been for the work put into "tracking down" the right experts who would be willing to write an article matching the overarching theme of each issue.

And to our contributors: I am certain that each and every reader appreciates how challenging it was for you to find the time to put on your "author hats" and write an article on top of your daily duties. So, a big THANK YOU to all who have contributed to this magazine since 2005.

In marking this anniversary, we wish to showcase the topic of Strategic Communications (StratCom) and help our readers better understand how it plays a key role in exercises and operations. As you read, you will gain deeper insight into how and why using information effects is one of NATO's training priorities.

Again, special thanks go to all our authors since 2005, editors and photographers as well as to our readers, for their precious time. Happy reading!

**Lieutenant Colonel Stefan Kuehling**  
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**Special Thanks:** Lieutenant Colonel Frank Andrews, United States Army, Joint Warfare Centre; Lieutenant Colonel (Rtd.) Rita LePage, Canadian Army, NATO StratCom Centre of Excellence; Lieutenant Colonel Jorge Ortega-Escanero, Spanish Army, HQ SACT JFT. Also ARRC, MARCOM and NRDC-ITA Public Affairs Offices.



## THE THREE SWORDS

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**THE THREE SWORDS** is the Joint Warfare Centre's authorised magazine published two times a year by the Public Affairs Office. It presents a compilation of articles, editorials, opinions, news and general information related to the JWC as well as a variety of key defence and security issues. Opinions expressed in this magazine are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the policies and points of view of NATO. The editor reserves the right to edit or shorten submissions.

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## Major General Reinhard Wolski German Army Commander, Joint Warfare Centre

**S**PRING IS BACK IN JWC. Starting with the Maritime Command (MARCOM) exercise TRIDENT JEWEL 15 (TRJL 15) in March, our intense exercise schedule continues, as we work towards achieving an even more interoperable, agile and prepared NATO Alliance. The highlights for the second quarter of 2015 are the exercise executions of TRIDENT JAGUAR 15 (TRJR 15) for NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Italy (NRDC-ITA) in late April, and Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) in early May.

TRJR 15 is, in fact, a dual exercise which will allow us to train two separate headquarters successively and in accordance with their different Training Objectives. Being the sole provider of the exercise site for TRJR 15, JWC will be the hive of activity during this time. I am pleased to be able to host both headquarters in Stavanger and I am confident that JWC will provide a realistic and state-of-the-art training environment for all staff involved in the exercise.

Looking further ahead to June, our next major effort will be the Scripting and STARTEX Validation Conference for TRIDENT JUNCTURE 15 (TRJE 15), the largest NATO exercise in a decade.

As the Director of the Command Post Exercise (CPX) portion of TRJE 15, I would like to highlight the extremely complicated process of planning for such an exercise, which started more than a year ago, October 2013, to be exact.

Since then, JWC's training teams, doctrine analysts and exercise planners have been fully involved during all phases of this exercise, also during the creation of the exercise training scenario, SOROTAN, by our scenario writers, which you can read more about in the pages to follow.

It would be difficult to look at exercise TRJE 15 without marveling at its complexities. We are all eagerly awaiting its execution this fall. This is simply the first exercise of its kind, and where, for example, 15 non-governmental organizations and international organizations have been invited to participate in the CPX.

All these activities emphasize the increased importance of training and exercises across the Alliance. And indeed, the training focus pays off. It is crucial that we provide training that will enable our forces to think with a global perspective, and be prepared to face the challenges of the twenty-first century.



In February, the NATO PENTA-J Meeting, chaired by Vice Admiral Javier Gonzalez-Huix, Headquarters Supreme Allied Commander Transformation (HQ SACT) Deputy Chief of Staff Joint Force Trainer (DCOS JFT), gave NATO's training providers an opportunity to discuss the most pressing challenges for NATO: Our security environment has changed fundamentally. So, how do we respond accordingly? What is required from each J-Command (Joint Warfare Centre, Joint Force Training Centre and Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned Centre) pre-Warsaw Summit? How can we train on response to unpredictable threats? What are our strengths, and what are our challenges? What will the training for Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) look like?

As SACT said, "the Alliance security environment is more uncertain, more volatile and more complex than it has been in two decades."

Since the current situation demands more from us than ever, we need to take *innovation* one step further in order to create a training programme that will make our forces more rapidly deployable. We ourselves need to improve our strengths as trainers and develop a shared perspective for the coming months and years, as well as create complex scenarios for both Article 5 and non-Article 5 operations.

The complex threats to our security make training even more essential. As NATO's main CPX provider, we have a large and important mission ahead of us. I am fully aware that with it comes the need for all JWC staff to work extra hard, and I would therefore like to thank my community for their energy, dedication and enthusiasm.

In this issue of *The Three Swords*, we discover the successful implementation of Strategic Communications, or StratCom, within NATO. StratCom is more than a trend; it is our fundamental realignment to the globalized, hyper-connected world. In this perspective, StratCom is an enabler of progress and change. Having said that, it is important to understand fully the process from guidance to execution in order to succeed. I highly recommend Mark Laity's article, which explains exactly this. After all, as said in this issue, StratCom is one of the main Training Objectives in NATO's operational level exercises. Enjoy reading!

Sincerely,

*Reinhard Wolski*

# Q & A



## TRAINING, SIMULATION, SCENARIO DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL MEDIA

**M**AJOR GENERAL REINHARD WOLSKI, Commander of the Joint Warfare Centre (JWC) gave to the "Training and Simulation Forum" a phone interview in early March to explain and illustrate the role, success and future of the Centre. "NATO has identified a need for more comprehensive joint training in successive operations," he said, adding: "Our primary goal is to ensure operational readiness, and joint training plays a critical role in facilitating this."

"SOCIAL MEDIA IS A FIXED PART OF THE OPERATIONAL WORLD TODAY. YOU CANNOT SEAL OFF THE OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT ANY MORE."

**(Interview by Tim Mahon, the editor of Training and Simulation Forum) Can you explain JWC's principal functions; its raison d'être?**

— In essence, JWC is NATO's premier collective training facility at the operational level. We are the main provider of Command Post Exercises (CPX) to the Alliance. What this means is that we provide training for the commanders and staffs at the level of joint operational headquarters, which are run by three or four-star General Officers. This training focuses not only on military operations but on the military aspects of a wide range of contingency operations — we support training across the full spectrum; from Article 5 requirements to humanitarian assistance operations. *[Article 5 of the Washington Treaty enshrines the principle of Collective Defence and stipulates that an attack on any member of the Alliance shall be considered an attack on them all: Ed.]*

Training is not our only mission, however. In the entire range of what we do, on a daily basis, we contribute to increased capability

and operational effectiveness. Joint operations are complex and multi-faceted — training is, therefore, an important element of familiarizing commanders with the individual components of an operation and an understanding of the nature of the environment in which those operations are conducted.

**How has the Centre been of assistance to ISAF in Afghanistan?**

— It has really all been about convergence. We have been able to familiarize individuals and entire staffs with the processes involved in successful coalition operations. The result has been an enhanced overall understanding of the complexity of these types of operations and, above all, of the needs of the Afghans themselves. Our direct involvement has now come to an end, and we have handed over ongoing responsibility to the Joint Force Training Centre (JFTC) in Bydgoszcz, Poland. By that time, over 7,000 individuals had benefited from JWC training prior to deployment to

Afghanistan. Speaking from personal experience, I can say the results of this training have been extensive. During my time in Afghanistan, I saw close-up just how well trained these officers are.

**Given budget austerity and all the other macro-level issues affecting NATO forces, how important is joint training? More, or less so, than previously?**

— It has become much more important. The support demanded from ISAF is one aspect certainly, but NATO has identified a need for more comprehensive joint training in successive operations. Our primary goal is to ensure operational readiness, and joint training plays a critical role in facilitating this. The current security and economic climates coupled with a considerably increased use of resources indicate we have to use every means possible to ensure forces are ready for a wide variety of operational scenarios. Joint training at the level we practice it enables us to place



highly realistic scenarios in front of the Training Audience, which encompass air and maritime environments as well as ground. The use of special operations forces is also becoming a more frequent occurrence in the type of threat environments we face, and joint training to familiarize commanders with integrating special forces into larger scale operations is obviously of benefit. The issue is not unique to us, of course. We have a very close relationship with NATO's Centres of Excellence and also with both national and international training centres, where joint training is a daily focus. So, yes, the issue of joint training continues to be an increasingly important one.

#### **How does JWC cater for the evolution of trends in training?**

— We are constantly updating our exercise design and delivery, leveraging current developments in technology and processes, wherever we can. We try to ensure that the scenarios we develop cover the entire spectrum of current and future threats — we have lots of Subject Matter Experts, both military and civilian, to make this happen. We are particularly concerned with ensuring that the trends and doctrines of modern warfare are embedded in these scenarios — for example, both hybrid and cyber warfare are featured in the exercises we provide for the Training Audience. Space is another domain in which we try to ensure that the needs of the commanders are met, in terms of including accurate replication of space-based communications and surveillance assets in the exercise scenarios.

Perhaps the most unique feature of what we are doing at the moment, however, is our "live media" project. This involves the simulation of social media for the command staff — something the Training Audience has turned out to be very keen on. Commanders and their staffs are confronted with information and interventions from "FacePage" and "Chatter" and have to react. This is something that the lower levels of command already seem to be quite familiar with, so the focus here is on ensuring the whole Training Audience recognizes that social media is a fixed part of the operational world today. You cannot seal off the operational environment any more.

[Note: FacePage and Chatter are JWC's own social media simulations, similar to Facebook and Twitter: Ed.]

#### **How important will TRIDENT JUNCTURE 15 be and what role will JWC play in it?**

— The exercise will involve not just NATO member nations but also partner nations and will address the issue of crisis response in a highly complex, operational environment. Scenarios will replicate situations right across the spectrum of both conventional and hybrid warfare. JWC is developing the exercise design and the CAX-based simulation model and will have a strong team supporting the exercise. I will direct the CPX portion in October. This will be followed by a two-week joint Live Exercise (LIVEX) in November. We are strongly engaged in this already — it is a highly complex environment and not only NATO headquarters, but also the various commanders involved all have Training Objectives that need to be integrated. We also have a large number of non-governmental organizations involved and I think I can safely say we are very much looking forward to testing and enhancing NATO's current readiness state.

#### **About "Live, Virtual, Constructive" (LVC): Is there a right balance or does it always depend on circumstances?**

— I think the second half of the question says it: the right balance will always depend on the Training Objectives, among other issues. In training, generally, there is a strong competition between all three elements of the LVC balance and the ideal solution varies from application to application. At JWC, however, we focus on training at the headquarters level: three and four-star General Officers and their staffs across the full spectrum of warfare scenarios. The simulation architecture we use, therefore, is necessarily focused more at the virtual and constructive end of the LVC equation, with a strong emphasis on the latter. That is not to say we do not fully exploit the advantages the synthetic environment can deliver. For instance, weapon systems that have specific applications in a particular scenario may have an effect that strongly influences the way in which we use simulation in that instance. It is also true that in scenarios in which we are "training the trainers", we probably make greater use of simulation. However, it is worth pointing out that from the Training Audience's perspective, the method of delivery is largely irrelevant: they don't see the simulation — they see and react to the results they

are presented with, regardless of the method by which those results are achieved.

#### **Does JWC directly support non-military training — for instance, for emergency services or for civil disaster planning and preparation?**

— We generally don't do this, except to the extent that we might create some injects in the scenario for the operational commander, depending on the objectives of the Training Audience. Having said that, and bearing in mind that issues such as hybrid warfare and cyber defence are realities in terms of threat evolution, we do have to pay attention to issues that are not directly military-related in order to facilitate a Comprehensive Approach to the exercises we manage. We have to simulate situations that will foster realistic interaction with, for example, non-governmental organizations, in order to make the training lessons persistent and sustainable.

#### **Can you say anything about the volume and scale of the training you provide?**

— Demand for what we do is certainly increasing. For example, in 2014 we passed over 3,000 trainees through the JWC. Since 2003 we have had about 43,000 individuals benefit from our training, and we expect this number to increase up to 49,000 by the end of 2015.

#### **Is there one facility you don't currently have that you wish for?**

— I have to say we are pretty well provided for in terms of facilities. One can always wish for additional resources, but, like everybody else, we have to work within the constraints of circumstances, whether they are budget, manpower or operational necessity. We do work on continually improving the scope and efficiency of what we do and, for example, within the Connected Forces Initiative (CFI), we are working towards networking training centres in order to be able to achieve better interoperability and joint training. This is a complex project and it may be a couple of years before we start to see significant results. In the meantime, we are pretty well equipped to be able to deliver effective and result-oriented training. [CFI is a complex and multi-faceted project with broad support across the Alliance aimed at providing a robust structure to facilitate coherent training, promote interoperability and leverage advances in technology: Ed.] ✦

**Top:** Major General Wolski, Commander JWC, addressing the TRJE 15 MEL/MIL Incident Development Workshop on 20 April.  
**Bottom:** The C-17 deployment of personnel and equipment to Stavanger in support of TRJE 15 Operational Liaison and Reconnaissance Team (OLRT). Photographs by Major Stephen Olsen, JWC PAO.



# TRIDENT *CPX* JUNCTURE



By Captain Méline Archambault  
Canadian Army, Public Affairs Officer  
Canadian Joint Operations Center

Inci Kucukaksoy  
Public Affairs Officer  
Joint Warfare Centre



## "HYBRID IS THE DARK REFLECTION OF OUR COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH."

— JENS STOLTENBERG, NATO SECRETARY GENERAL

# TRIDENT JUNCTURE 2015 COMMAND POST EXERCISE & THE "CANADIAN CONNECTION"

**O**VER the past twelve months, NATO's Joint Warfare Centre (JWC) and the Canadian Joint Operations Command (CJOC) J7 planners have been breaking new ground in the design and planning of an exceptional training event, which will allow the application of the Connected Forces Initiative (CFI) in a manner unprecedented in scope and size for Canada and NATO, alike.

Since the spring of 2014, JWC and CJOC J7 planners have been working hand-in-hand to link and integrate JOINTEX to the NATO flagship exercise, TRIDENT JUNCTURE 2015 (TRJE 15). JOINTEX is the Canadian Armed Forces' (CAF) bi-annual exercise created to ensure that the Canadian military maintains excellence in the modern battlespace. The CAF leadership recognized the significance and value of linking the exercises, as it would offer an outstanding training opportunity for CAF members in a very challenging and technically complex environment.

During the CPX, Canada, as an Alliance member, will demonstrate the CFI construct by participating from Meaford, Ontario, as one of Joint Force Command Brunssum's (JFC Brunssum) Component Commands. They will set their watches to European time, con-

nected to JWC's Exercise Control (EXCON) in Stavanger, Norway, and JFC Brunssum Headquarters' Joint Task Force (JTF) in Zaragoza, Spain, while interacting with an EXCON located in Ottawa, Canada.

The contemporary security environment requires a joint response to common threats, and the CFI brings NATO Allies together to reach a common effect on the ground when required. The ultimate goal of exercises such as TRJE 15 is to validate the CFI as a valuable and impactful tool in the conduct of joint operations. As stated by Commander CJOC, Lieutenant General Jonathan Vance: "Canada is participating enthusiastically in NATO training and bringing Canadian Armed Forces operational expertise to these critical exercises. Our efforts demonstrate not only reinforcement to the Alliance, but also resolve with the Alliance in providing an agile and robust response when and where required."

The CPX portion of TRJE 15 will be directed by German Army Major General Reinhard Wolski, Commander JWC. He echoed Lieutenant General Vance in saying that the exercise will provide a first-class venue for training the NATO Response Force (NRF) together with partner nations and the larger civilian environment and will also demonstrate the Alliance's

capabilities and readiness to provide Collective Defence and Crisis Response in a synthetic and distributed training environment. "Together, we will train and advance our understanding of the traditional threats as well as those within the hybrid spectrum of warfare. TRJE 15 puts the NRF to the largest test ever and it will also allow for the development of a Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) within the NRF and bolster its deterrence and warfighting capabilities," Major General Wolski added.

TRJE 15 is based on the SOROTAN (derived from the Norwegian word for "south", combined with "OTAN", the French translation of "NATO") setting and scenario; created from the ground up by a small team of uniformed officers, civilians and contractor experts from within the JWC, said Romanian Army Lieutenant Colonel Ciprian Murariu, the exercise Deputy OPR (Officer of Primary Responsibility).

In the early stages of design, SOROTAN needed to have the depth, flexibility, and most importantly, the strategic and operationally challenging dilemmas in order to become the preferred baseline choice for future scenario usage, noted Turkish Army Lieutenant Colonel Yavuz Karabulut, Chief Scenario, along with his lead developers, Dr Dusan Marincic and Mr





The Canadian Joint Operations Command team for TRIDENT JUNCTURE 15.

Mark Blaydes. "TRJE 15 exercise delivery and the quality/depth level of SOROTAN setting/scenario might set a new milestone for JWC and NATO," added Lieutenant Colonel Karabulut.

SOROTAN provides a setting that enables an out-of-area, non-Article 5 Crisis Response Operation, showcasing NATO's flexibility in the face of advanced threats and addressing many NATO training priorities simultaneously. While the water conflict and the ensuing regional crisis are the focus of the scenario, SOROTAN also considers the complex interconnected information environment, with its both rewarding and challenging modern communication technologies, as part of its holistic training approach.

"TRJE 15 will demonstrate our strength as the NATO Alliance," said Major General Reinhard Wolski, adding: "As its primary CPX provider, JWC's aim is to prepare NATO for the security challenges, whether it being a cyber-attack, terrorism, a humanitarian mission or an attack on a member nation. And, we do this with our strong team at JWC, and also with our great training partners, such as the Canadian Joint Operations Command. I am looking forward to a very fulfilling and demanding exercise this fall." ✦



Developed by the Joint Warfare Centre, NATO's new fictional training scenario, SOROTAN, will be launched during TRJE 15, the Alliance's largest exercise this year. Unlike the "SKOLKAN" scenario, which presents an Article 5 Collective Defence of a NATO member nation, SOROTAN provides a setting that enables an out-of-area, non-Article 5 Crisis Response Operation to bring a border war to an end before it expands to the entire region. "The catalyst for conflict in the Cerasia region is based upon water," said British Navy Commander Tristan Lovering MBE, JWC's Chief Main Events List and Main Incidents List (MEL/MIL), for TRJE 15.

"With desertification, dry aquifers, riparian disputes and an ever-diminishing resource, Kamon, the aggressor country in the region, refuses international arbitration and invades southwards in order to seize key dams in Lakuta, which was caught ill-prepared to counter the invasion."

Based on SOROTAN, TRJE 15 will certify JFC Brunssum to lead the NATO Response Force (NRF) in 2016; an up to 30,000-strong force of land, air, sea and special force components, ready to deploy on short notice, wherever needed.

SOROTAN was formed on an 18-month cycle, incorporating what NATO identifies as some of the greatest challenges to its member and partner nations. Its use in TRJE 15 was approved by German Army General Hans-Lothar Domröse, Commander JFC Brunssum, in June 2014.

#### On SOROTAN:

"The scenario tests NATO operational level Training Audiences' capabilities to work through the ambiguities that surround hybrid warfare as seen practiced today by various potential NATO competitor nations."  
— Lieutenant Colonel Charles Kurz.

"SOROTAN was made in the spirit of contemporary political science: by introduction of eleven different societies in East Cerasia, the SOROTAN team has developed a dynamic interaction of societal security dimensions that lead into the military conflict. The Training Audience will deal with multi-layered complexity during the Operational Planning Process, and later, during the joint coordination process. Execution of the UN mission in the synthetic environment will challenge doctrine as well as strategic and operational procedures and finally sustainability of staff elements within the HQs. SOROTAN has been an exciting journey through time and space and mindset."  
— Dr Dusan Marincic.

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#### FURTHER READING

For these related stories, visit [www.jwc.nato.int](http://www.jwc.nato.int)  
\* The full article about SOROTAN "SOROTAN will Challenge NATO Against Hybrid Threats", can be found at <http://www.act.nato.int/sorotan-will-challenge-nato-against-hybrid-threats>

## NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg

Speaking at the opening of the annual NATO Transformation Seminar organized by the Atlantic Council and NATO's Allied Command Transformation (ACT) on 25 March 2015 in Washington, D.C., the Secretary General said that the Alliance "is used to the long haul," and that "one of our greatest strengths is our ability to adapt."

**ON THE NEW SECURITY LANDSCAPE:** ACT plays an important role in NATO's continuous adaptation to a changing world. And, in the last year, Russia's annexation of Crimea, its aggressive actions in Ukraine and the rise of violent extremism in North Africa and in the Middle East have really changed our security environment dramatically. These challenges will not go away any time soon. So, we have to be prepared for the unexpected, and stand ready to sustain our efforts for the years to come.

**ON FLEXIBILITY:** NATO is used to the long haul. And, one of our greatest strengths is our ability to adapt. For 40 years, during the Cold War, the challenge was clear and largely predictable. NATO deterred attacks and kept our nations safe, without firing a shot.

Then, for the next 25 years, we went out-of-area.

Together with our partners, we went into combat beyond our borders to manage crises that could threaten us at home. This was a paradigm shift for NATO.

And, now, as we see another major shift in the security landscape, NATO is once again making fundamental changes. Today, we do not have the luxury to choose between Collective Defence and Crisis Management. For the first time in NATO's history, we have to do both, and at the same time.

**ON HYBRID THREATS:** Hybrid is the dark reflection of our Comprehensive Approach.

We use a combination of military and non-military means to stabilize countries. Others use it to destabilize them.

**ON WHAT HAPPENS, IF DETERRENCE FAILS:** NATO Response Force sends a clear signal that if any Ally comes under attack, the entire Alliance will respond swiftly. Then, if deterrence should fail, we must be prepared to act and to defend our Allies. In a crisis, the first responder will be the nation that is targeted. But, NATO must be there to support any national efforts. This is a matter of planning and of political will; and making sure that we complement and reinforce each other. We need to be able to deal with complex evolving hybrid situations, including cyber aggression.

**ON NRF:** We are implementing the biggest re-inforcement of our Collective Defence since the end of the Cold War. We are increasing NATO's presence in our Eastern Allied countries and the readiness of our forces.

The NATO Response Force (NRF) will more than double to up to 30,000 troops. Its centrepiece is the Spearhead Force of 5,000 troops with lead elements ready to move within as little as 48 hours. At the same time, we are setting up command units in six of our Eastern Allies. And this is only the beginning of a great and important adaptation of NATO.


"WE NEED TO DEVELOP A COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF EVENTS AND OUR POTENTIAL ADVERSARIES."

**ON EXERCISES:** We need to be tested through simulations and exercises. There is a particular role here for ACT to test NATO in realistic and time-pressured scenarios.



NATOCHANNEL.TV

[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/NATO](https://www.youtube.com/nato)



COVER STORY

*"Early engagement allows JWC's Observer/Trainers to guide the Training Audience to better utilise NATO Doctrine as a tool for interoperability."*

Exercise NOBLE JUMP marks the first time that high readiness units have physically tested their response to rapid "orders to move" under the new Very High Readiness Joint Task Force framework. The training event marks a learning process that will allow NATO military staffs to identify both successes and shortfalls as the Alliance continues to refine its high readiness capabilities. NATO photograph by Staff Sergeant Andrew Davis, U.S. Air Force.



# NATO DOCTRINE

Joint Warfare Centre's  
role in its development

**By Wing Commander Mark Attrill**  
Royal Air Force, Head Doctrine Section  
Joint Capability Integration Division  
Joint Warfare Centre

**IN RECOGNITION** of the changing world, with new and emerging security threats, and the exposure of gaps in Allied Joint Doctrine following a deep analysis of recent NATO operations and exercises, the North Atlantic Council, through its Military Committee (MC), called on the NATO members to renew their emphasis on the analysis and development of NATO Doctrine in order to ensure that it remains relevant. "Doctrine" is a word that is often used in a wide variety of military discussions and debates, whether those conversations take place in the field, during a conference or a workshop, or indeed around the coffee bar. Much has also been written about doctrine, but how many actually understand what it is, how it is applied and more specifically in this forum, what role does the Joint Warfare Centre (JWC) play in helping with its development and application?



**Below:** TRIDENT JAGUAR 15 (ARRC). Photographs by Major Stephen Olsen, JWC PAO.



## Defining "doctrine"

NATO's definition of doctrine, used unaltered by many member states, is: "The fundamental principles by which the military forces guide their actions in support of objectives. It is authoritative, but requires judgement in application." Some nations choose to elaborate further: "Military doctrine is a formal expression of military knowledge and thought (...); it is descriptive rather than prescriptive, requiring judgement in application. It does not establish dogma or provide a checklist of procedures, but is rather an authoritative guide, describing how the army thinks about fighting, not how to fight. As such, it attempts to be definitive enough to guide military activity, yet versatile enough to accommodate a wide variety of situations."<sup>(1)</sup>

Military doctrine is the expression of how military forces contribute to campaigns, major operations, battles and engagements. It is designed to provide a common frame of reference across the military, to assist with the standardization of operations, facilitating readiness by establishing common ways in which to accomplish military tasks. Doctrine links theory, history, experimentation, and practice. Its objective is to foster initiative and creative thinking. Doctrine provides the military with an authoritative body of statements on how military forces conduct operations. For the majority of nations, military doctrine is treated as a guide to action, rather than a lexicon of

hard rules for use by military planners and leaders. As the linkage above shows, doctrine is a natural subject for review and development through the medium of exercises, where NATO seeks to draw lessons from theory, experimentation and practice.

In the recent past, NATO military operations, principally those in the Balkans and in Afghanistan have provided the best vehicle for the development, or indeed, creation of NATO Doctrine, but with the drawdown of NATO influence in both of these theatres of operations, the focus has now turned to NATO exercises to provide the forum for such activity.

## The relationship between doctrine, strategy and other military factors

Doctrine is often confused with strategy, which it is not. NATO's definition of strategy is "presenting the manner in which military power should be developed and applied to achieve national objectives or those of a group of nations."<sup>(2)</sup> Of course, given that NATO is first and foremost a political Alliance, this definition encompasses more than military action alone; military strategy provides the rationale for military operations. Military strategy is often described as the derivation of military aims and objectives from political will. Conversely,

doctrine seeks to answer several questions in order to provide a common conceptual framework for a military organization:

- "Who are we?" — What the military organization perceives itself to be;
- "What do we do?" — What its mission is;
- "How do we do that?" — How the mission is to be carried out;
- "How did we do that in the past?" — How the mission has been carried out in history.

In a similar vein, doctrine is neither operations nor tactics, but serves as a reference point for uniting all three levels of warfare from strategic to tactical. It is, and should be, used extensively at the operational level of command, where many of the questions posed above should be addressed given that one of the major roles and responsibilities of the operational commander and his staff is to interpret strategic direction and guidance, determine the art of the possible and deliver intent to any military force tasked with the execution of an operation.

## HQ SACT's responsibilities for doctrine development

As has been stated, in the wake of ISAF operations and to support the Alliance's ongoing transformational activities, the Military Committee (MC) has directed that NATO needs to rediscover doctrine, which is broadly defined





as the 45 operational level Allied Joint Publications (AJP). SACT's Terms of Reference currently direct him to maintain the Bi-SC lead for enhancing NATO interoperability and standardization initiatives, including doctrine development. Acknowledging this responsibility, SACT has stated that improving doctrine coherence is one of his highest priorities, and has re-developed a strategy to improve the output and relevance of NATO Doctrine, which will be delivered through the Allied Joint Operations Doctrine Working Group on behalf of the MC's Joint Standardization Board.

The NATO Standardization Office, located at NATO HQ Brussels, remains the MC's lead agency for the development, coordination and assessment of operational standardization in which doctrine plays an important role. The Joint Standardization Board, therefore, remains the highest authority within the NATO Doctrine "hierarchy".

The NATO Allied Joint Operations Doctrine Working Group is largely comprised of national representatives, normally drawn from national doctrine development centres, who are complemented by invited Partnership for Peace (PfP) nations' representatives and other members of the NATO Doctrine Community of Interest (COI) including those from the Centres of Excellence and the so-called "Triple J" (Joint Warfare Centre, JWC; Joint

Force Training Centre, JFTC; and Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned Centre, JALLC).

The doctrine COI, through the auspices of the Allied Joint Operations Doctrine Working Group meets twice a year in the spring and autumn to discuss a wide range of doctrine-related subjects, which now includes a renewed emphasis on doctrine development and how it can be facilitated through new initiatives.

As SACT is seeking to establish Bi-SC structures and processes that will provide coherence between lessons learned, concepts, analyses, operations, exercises and doctrine development in order to support NATO's Connected Forces Initiative (CFI), it is clear that the ACO-sponsored and ACT-scheduled NATO exercise programme provides an extremely useful vehicle with which to bring this work together. Given the key role that JWC performs on behalf of SACT in the design, delivery and analysis of exercises, it is clear that we have a major part to play in the doctrine development process.

In fact, MC 510 clearly states that in addition to our operational level training outputs, the JWC "supports NATO Concept Development, Experimentation, Lessons Learned and Doctrine Development processes"<sup>(3)</sup> and it is these requirements that underpin JWC's contribution to the Alliance's transformational activities and widens our remit beyond that of

a training provider to encompass our role as a warfare centre.

There can be little doubt that the loss of NATO's ability to conduct doctrine development through the medium of actual operations, particularly in the analysis of new or evolving doctrine is significant. However, the exercise environment does offer some distinct advantages. First and foremost, through its operational level exercises, JWC offers NATO a safe and controlled environment in which to evaluate extant, heavily revised and new AJP. Our ambitious Programme of Work, which encompasses the delivery of exercises to both of the Joint Force Commands, together with those HQs and formations that make up the new NATO Force Structure, also provides us with a unique opportunity to accelerate the development of doctrine through the rapid turnaround of lessons learned or the identification of doctrinal voids. This is especially important as NATO wrestles with the emergence of new doctrinal requirements to tackle new threats such as those posed by cyber, hybrid warfare and Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD), or potential initiatives like Battlespace Management, for which NATO Doctrine is either non-existent or, woefully, inadequate. The complexity of some of these topics underlines the scale of effort that needs to be applied to educate and guide the NATO community.



## JWC's pivotal role in doctrine development

As NATO's principal exercise facilitator and a centre in unique position in both concept development and capability integration, JWC, therefore, has a pivotal role in doctrine analysis and development — so how is the organization tasked to conduct such work? There are, in effect, two ways in which the JWC can help to deliver doctrine development to the NATO Doctrine COI. ACT maintains that the JWC should be the Command's "primary actor with regards to assessing whether extant joint doctrine needs revision."<sup>(4)</sup>

On those occasions where there is an urgent requirement to analyse emerging or revised doctrine, this translates into the JWC Doctrine Analysis and Development Section being tasked directly by ACT, through the Allied Joint Operational Doctrine Working Group, with undertaking a study through the medium of the exercise phases into a particular doctrine set. The methodology for these tasks is similar in nature to that we use for experimentation and requires the sponsor, normally through ACT and in concert with the JWC, to identify a suitable exercise and insert doctrine development tasks as early into the exercise planning process as possible.

Ideally, this should be during the Exercise Specification (EXSPEC) cycle in order to allow JWC to include such tasks in its own

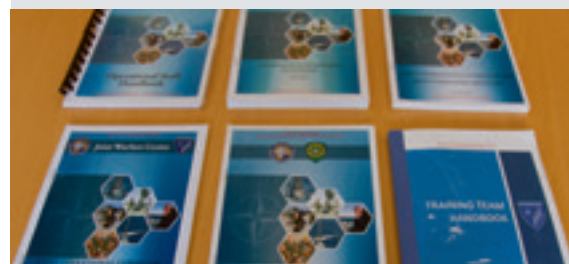
analysis of the exercise requirements prior to the commencement of exercise design.

The sponsor should endeavour to take into account a number of exercise parameters which may include, but are not limited to the nature and scope of the exercise, the Primary Training Audience (PTA), the broad scenario and supporting relationships. There is, for example, no point in introducing a doctrine development task for BMD, if the exercise scenario and setting does not support BMD, or the PTA is unlikely to ever be responsible for such a military task. Whilst the introduction of a doctrine development or analysis task at the EXSPEC stage is advantageous, it is not entirely prescriptive and JWC is always prepared to accept such tasking during early stages of the exercise design process, providing such tasks do not overly interfere with either the existing exercise or Training Objectives.

JWC is also capable of self-generated, direct tasking.<sup>(5)</sup> As such, the Centre will routinely raise doctrine lessons identified (LIs) during its interaction with Training Audiences in the planning and execution phases of the exercises that it hosts. This may include an analysis of extant doctrine or the identification of doctrinal voids, based on a wide range of considerations including a comprehensive knowledge of the PTA, the latest developments in force capabilities or the



## JOINT WARFARE CENTRE HANDBOOKS



No article on Joint Warfare Centre's role in NATO Doctrine Development would really be complete without a few words on the JWC handbooks and the role they play. It must be stressed that these handbooks are not official doctrine per se, but are designed to bridge the gap between doctrine and its practical application at the operational level.

First developed by JWC some years ago as a "ready reckoner" for Observer/Trainers traveling with our Training Teams to participate in the operational planning and execution phases of the NRF exercises, these handbooks proved to be an invaluable resource for translating the theory of doctrine into practical application, covering a wide variety of subjects ranging from the "Effects Based Approach to Operations" to "Joint Time Sensitive Targeting" and "Joint Personnel Recovery".

At some point, these valuable references were discovered by members of the Training Audience, who developed a voracious appetite for them and they have enjoyed a wide circulation amongst staff working in a wide variety of roles in headquarters at the operational level. It must be stressed that they are not designed to replace NATO Doctrine, but to compliment it by providing a quick reference guide.

After a brief hiatus, the JWC has relaunched the series and will publish the first edition of a new handbook, "The Operational Staff Handbook", later this year.

**Below:** Major General Reinhard Wolski and Lieutenant General Mark O. Schissler, Deputy Chairman of the NATO Military Committee, listening to a briefing during exercise TRIDENT JAGUAR 15. Photograph by JWC PAO.





operational planning and execution process, amongst others. As part of the JWC's renewed interaction with the Allied Joint Operational Doctrine Working Group, these doctrine-related LIs are regularly extracted and presented to the members of the working group, many of whom have custodial responsibilities for the NATO AJP. In this way, we help to accelerate the process through which doctrinal inadequacies or voids are identified and reported back to the doctrine COI.

It should be readily apparent that doctrine development, from a JWC perspective, is not an activity restricted to any one entity within the Centre. It remains, very much, a whole headquarters activity in which a large majority of those JWC personnel involved in exercise design and delivery or capability integration have a part to play. As always, our Observer/Trainers (O/Ts) remain at "front of house" since they regularly interact with the PTA through their primary duties. Early engagement allows our O/Ts to guide the TA to better utilise NATO Doctrine as a tool for interoperability and not to see the publications as references to be taken off the bookshelf some days before the exercise. The continued engagement of the O/Ts throughout the delivery of the exercise then provides the optimum medium through which to analyse extant doctrine, assess its continued relevance and help to develop improved joint doctrine or identify voids through our Lessons Identified process.

Our exercise planners and those actively involved in monitoring doctrine development through capability integration should be equally engaged, directly or indirectly, with the wider doctrine COI to ensure that we continue to utilise our comprehensive exercise programme as a vehicle for the further development of doctrine as directed by SACT; all of which underlines our key role as not just a training provider, but as an organization at the heart of NATO's enhancement of its operational capabilities across a broad spectrum. †

#### END NOTES:

- (1) Extract from Canadian Army Doctrine Manual.
- (2) AAP-6(V) NATO Glossary of Terms and Definitions.
- (3) Enclosure 1 to MC 510: Terms of Reference for Commander Joint Warfare Centre.
- (4) ACT Directive 80-38 (Extant).
- (5) Based on anecdotal evidence and JWC internal staff observations.



## NOBLE JUMP

NATO assessed its alert procedures for the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) for the first time during exercise NOBLE JUMP from 7-9 April 2015, which involved over 1,500 personnel from 11 Allied Nations. As such Germany, Poland, Norway, Denmark, Hungary, Lithuania, Croatia, Portugal and Slovenia tested their headquarters' response to alert procedures while the high-readiness units from the Netherlands and Czech Republic physically deployed equipment and troops to airports and railheads.

This activity represents an important milestone as NATO continues to respond to emerging security challenges. The exercise has its origins in last year's Wales Summit, where NATO leaders collectively agreed to establish the VJTF, or the so-called "Spearhead" force. These developments are part of wider enhancements to the NATO Response Force (NRF) in order to address instability on NATO's southern and eastern flanks.

"NATO military planners have been working tirelessly to enhance NRF and implement the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force. Today, our progress is manifested in the rapid deployments we see happening in locations across the Alliance," said General Philip Breedlove, Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR). "These measures are defensive, but are a clear indication that our Alliance has the capability and will to respond to emerging security challenges on our southern and eastern flanks," he added.

For the last several months, NATO has been developing the concepts behind the VJTF and established an interim force early in 2015.

Exercise NOBLE JUMP marks the first time that high-readiness units have physically tested their response to rapid "orders to move" under the new VJTF framework. The training event marks a learning process that will allow NATO military staff to identify both successes and shortfalls as the Alliance continues to refine its high readiness capabilities. "Moving military units at short notice is a highly complex process that requires careful planning and constant refinement and practice to maintain capability," said Colonel Mariusz Lewicki, the head military planner for the VJTF at SHAPE. "We have had a very good start this week, but much work remains and we will continue exercising these concepts throughout 2015 and 2016," he noted.

Increasingly complex exercises, trials, and evaluations will be conducted in order to develop, refine and implement the VJTF concept into the framework of the Readiness Action Plan and the NATO Response Force. Examples of future training activities include Phase II of Exercise NOBLE JUMP, 9-20 June 2015, where units assigned to the VJTF will deploy to the Zagan Military Training Area in western Poland, as well as exercise TRIDENT JUNCTURE 2015 in Italy, Spain and Portugal from 21 October to 6 November 2015.

[NATO SHAPE Public Affairs Office](#)





*We will ensure that NATO is able to effectively address the specific challenges posed by hybrid warfare threats, where a wide range of overt and covert military, paramilitary, and civilian measures are employed in a highly integrated design.” — from the NATO Wales Summit Declaration<sup>(1)</sup>*

## COVER STORY

# CONTINUED EVOLUTION OF HYBRID THREATS

## The Russian Hybrid Threat Construct and the Need for Innovation

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**Editor's Note:** The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the U.S. Department of the Army, the U.S. Department of Defense, NATO, or any of their agencies.

**Left, middle:** Lviv, Ukraine, 30 December 2014. Armed forces of Ukraine. Military and armoured vehicles at the International Center for Peacemaking and Safety before transferring into zone of military conflict. Photograph by Drop of Light/Shutterstock.com. **Bottom:** Russian soldiers, 4 March 2014, in Perevalne, Crimea, Ukraine. On 28 February 2014, Russian military forces invaded Crimea peninsula. Photograph by photo.ua/Shutterstock.com.

**T**HE NORTH Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) currently faces a new, but familiar foe. Waging hybrid warfare to defeat hybrid threats is not a new phenomenon. History is abound with examples in which the weak employed different, hybrid ways and means to achieve their desired end state and defeat the strong.<sup>(2)</sup> However, deterring and defeating future hybrid threats still poses a significant and daunting challenge for NATO. In the future, hybrid threats will continue to evolve as more lethal and precise weaponry becomes readily available to information age guerillas, funded with capital from global criminal activities. Additionally, the current hybrid threat construct that the Russians are employing on the plains of Eastern Europe represents a particularly ominous example of things to come. In this case, it is the strong, Rus-

sia, employing an unprecedented degree of hybrid ways and means against the weak or weaker state (Ukraine) to coerce and compel it to submit to Russia's will. Traditional hybrid threats focus on the blending of various capabilities at the tactical and operational levels of warfare. Russia, however, is now employing not only the military Instrument of Power (IOP) of the modern state, but also the economic, informational, and diplomatic IOPs in its hybrid threat construct to exacerbate an already complex problem for NATO.<sup>(3)</sup>

When faced with quandary of deterring, and if required, defeating this Russian version of a hybrid threat, NATO will have to adjust its thinking and its approach to achieve success. As future conflict continues to transition into thinking men's wars, in a race to out-think and out-learn an adaptive adversary, NATO will have to adapt as well. In this evolved conflict, finding





**"In this evolved conflict, finding novel ways to link military capabilities amongst all NATO members together with ongoing diplomatic, economic, and informational efforts, holds the key to success."** Photograph by NATO.

novel ways to link military capabilities amongst all NATO members together with ongoing diplomatic, economic, and informational efforts, holds the key to success. However, how can NATO enable operational level change throughout the inter-governmental military Alliance in order to confront the complexity of an evolving Russian hybrid threat? Developing a culture of innovation throughout the force will help set and maintain the conditions required for successful transformation to occur in NATO.

Throughout history, militaries that successfully developed new approaches to problems when preparing for the next war fostered a culture of innovation that permeated throughout the whole force. The institutionalization of learning organizations full of warrior-scholars could be one way to cultivate this throughout NATO. Another way could be the development of a hybrid mindset, or a hybrid way of thinking. A hybrid mindset focuses on the interaction of four mental characteristics — understanding strategic context, a holistic approach to operations, a focus on potential opportunities, and embracing the natural complexity of the operational environment — to develop innovative approaches to create desired operational en-

vironments. Before further elaborating on these potential ways to deter, and if required, defeat the Russian hybrid threat, it is important to explore contemporary research on the concept of hybrid threats. Knowledge of the evolution of the hybrid threats will facilitate a better understanding of the Russian hybrid threat construct and their actions in Ukraine.

**As future conflict continues to transition into thinking men's wars, in a race to out-think and out-learn an adaptive adversary, NATO will have to adapt as well.**

UNITED STATES (U.S.) Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 3-0 currently defines a hybrid threat as, "the diverse and dynamic combination of regular forces, irregular forces, terrorist forces, criminal elements, or a combination of these forces and elements all unified to achieve mutually benefitting effects."<sup>(4)</sup> Furthermore, the NATO Capstone Concept characterizes hybrid threats as "those posed by adversaries, with the ability to simultaneously employ

conventional and non-conventional means adaptively in pursuit of their objectives."<sup>(5)</sup> Both of these definitions align with Frank Hoffman's vision of hybrid warfare, which is also the most predominantly accepted military and academic conceptualization of the subject. Hoffman, a retired U.S. Marine officer and a Senior Research Fellow with the Institute for National Strategic Studies at the National Defense University, theorized, "hybrid wars incorporate a range of different modes of warfare, including conventional capabilities, irregular tactics and formations, terrorist acts including indiscriminate violence and coercion, and criminal disorder."<sup>(6)</sup> Although all three of these definitions are thorough explanations of a hybrid threat and hybrid warfare, is there more to the Russian construct than just the simultaneous employment of forces and forms of warfare at the tactical level? A more expansive review of contemporary literature with a focus towards the Russian model indicates, yes.

ONE AREA of study focuses on the impact of the concept of hybrid at the strategic level. The research of Nathan Freier, a defense strategist and a former Director of National Security Af-



THE CONCEPT OF  
UNRESTRICTED  
WARFARE IS IN ESSENCE  
A WAR WITHOUT  
LIMITS OR BEYOND  
THE TRADITIONALLY  
ACCEPTED PHYSICAL  
LIMITS OF A WAR.



Photograph by Flight Sergeant C. Artigues (HQ MARCOM).

fairs at the Strategic Studies Institute, outlined challenges and threats to the United States in the post September 11, 2001 security environment. While working as a strategist on the 2005 National Defense Strategy (NDS), Freier developed the concept of a "hybrid norm — the routine state of nature where key aspects of multiple strategic challenges" combined into one.<sup>(7)</sup> This was a marked change from previous thoughts of strategic challenges, which traditionally focused on separate irregular, catastrophic, traditional, and disruptive events instead of the combined interaction of these challenges. Freier continued by arguing that hybrid challenges would evolve in complexity from the melding of irregular challenges (unconventional warfare by state and non-state actors) and catastrophic challenges (weapons of mass destruction), with existing traditional challenges (conventional warfare).<sup>(8)</sup> Freier's concept of the simultaneous merging of irregular and traditional challenges when combined with an updated catastrophic challenge — for example, the potential threat that cyber-attacks pose to economic and energy infrastructure — has distinct implications for the Russian hybrid threat construct.

Another area of contemporary research focuses on the war or battle that transcends beyond the physical realm and into the cognitive realm, which seems most applicable to the current Russian hybrid threat construct. Qiao Liang, a Major General in the People's Liberation Army (PLA) of China, and Wang Xiangsui, a retired PLA officer, devised the concept of "unrestricted warfare" in 1999 as a means by which weaker countries could overcome their military inferiorities in relation to an advanced nation in a high-tech war. The concept of unrestricted warfare is in essence a war without limits or beyond the traditionally accepted physical limits of a war.

Liang and Xiangsui postulated, "The first rule of unrestricted warfare is that there are no rules, with nothing forbidden."<sup>(9)</sup> Additionally, Liang and Xiangsui argued that future conflict would involve connection points between technology, politics, economics, religion, culture, diplomacy, and the military to create endless possibilities and complexity. The crux of this argument, and its implications for Western militaries, is that it expands warfare beyond the cognitive boundaries and dimensions of warfare common to most Western military

thinking. To understand unrestricted warfare, Liang and Xiangsui acknowledged, would require a shift in the minds and thoughts of the Western way of war.<sup>(10)</sup> Victory would not be found on the physical battlefield, a notion that is common to the Western way of war. Instead, "the struggle for victory will take place on a battlefield beyond the battlefield."<sup>(11)</sup> With a broader and better understanding of hybrid threats, a more thorough analysis of the Russian hybrid threat construct can now occur.

#### At the tactical level:

Russia is employing irregular forces and tactics with advanced conventional weapons and elite regular military special operations forces (Spetsnaz) synergistically for a common goal.<sup>(12)</sup> Throughout contested areas in Ukraine, there are consistent reports of "little green men" along with Russian volunteers moving around the battlefield without Russian military insignia or affiliation.<sup>(13)</sup> These fighters are linking up with, and then augmenting, local pro-Russian irregular units and criminal gangs to boost their numbers and capabilities. With increased capability, Spetsnaz can organize these soldiers to execute guerilla type operations to wage an





Joint press point with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and Supreme Allied Commander Europe, General Philip Breedlove, 11 March 2015. Photograph by NATO.

AS NATO PREPARES TO DEVELOP WAYS TO DETER AND POTENTIALLY DEFEAT THE RUSSIAN HYBRID THREAT, INNOVATION WILL HOLD THE KEY TO SUCCESS.

unconventional warfare campaign in order to erode Ukraine's power, influence, and will.

As the conflict protracts and extends in time and space, this unconventional warfare campaign sets the conditions for ethnic Russians to overthrow government control of contested areas within Ukraine.<sup>(14)</sup> Additionally, Russia is employing cyber-attacks against critical Ukrainian communications infrastructure in order to disrupt the flow of their information and allow the Russians to gain intelligence on Ukrainian intent and actions.<sup>(15)</sup> When combined, these actions directly align with ADP 3-0, the NATO Capstone Concept, and Frank Hoffman's definition of a hybrid threat.

### At the operational level:

Russia is linking tactical level actions with information operations in order to achieve an operational level deception. Russia is overtly positioning and repositioning conventional military formations and capabilities along Ukraine's border. Once in position, these armored and mechanized forces are executing feints, demonstrations, and training exercises that divert attention from other operations.<sup>(16)</sup> Simultaneously, Russia is covertly moving more weapons and paramilitary proxies of "little green men" into Ukraine under the cover of humanitarian aid to the ongoing crisis.<sup>(17)</sup> When

combined, these actions create a continuous deception operation preventing exact knowledge of Russian intent and the full disposition of their forces in Ukraine.

As a supporting effort for its ongoing physical deception operations with the movement of heavy conventional forces, Russia is also waging psychological and information operations to help achieve its operational level deception. These operations rally support for the rebel cause and incite violence to compel the public to act when required. Conversely, they can intimidate and coerce the public to inaction, as well.<sup>(18)</sup> When analyzed collectively, these deception, psychological, and information operations create a Russian curtain of ambiguity that obscures reality and hinders a calculated NATO response due to the "fog and friction" of war.<sup>(19)</sup>

These operational level actions, when coupled with tactical level actions, start to align with Liang and Xiangsui's concept of transitioning the battle beyond the battlefield.

### At the strategic level:

Russia is synchronizing all of the IOPs towards a common goal. Russia exploits the information IOP to construct competing strategic narratives that affect multiple audiences. For external and international audiences, Russia employs a

strategic narrative that garners support among international organizations suing for peace in the ongoing crisis. For internal audiences and ethnic Russians in Ukraine, Russia promotes another strategic narrative of nationalism and the oppression of its people in Ukraine to rally and maintain domestic fervor at home.<sup>(20)</sup>

Diplomatically, Russia pursues and agrees to ceasefires and pauses in hostilities by the pro-Russian rebel forces in Ukraine, but not completely for humanitarian reasons. The Russians utilize these ceasefires more as tactical pauses in ongoing operations and opportunities to consolidate, reorganize, and reposition forces to achieve a relative position of advantage for future missions. This diplomatic tactic allows Russia to reinstate hostilities again at a time and place of their choosing.

Russia wields the economic IOP to threaten and coerce other nations to action or inaction. Economic sanctions, the destabilization of energy prices and physical access to energy resources, and the actions of transnational criminal organizations can all deter a country from action. However, positive incentives for inaction against Russia or support for the Russian cause can also have a profound effect on the decision-making calculus of another nation.<sup>(21)</sup> In essence, Russia's actions have become the quintessential economic carrot





JWC Situation Centre (SITCEN) during exercise TRIDENT JAGUAR 15/NRDC-ITA: JWC is NATO's main provider of Command Post/Computer Assisted Exercises (CPX/CAX) at the operational level, providing training across the full spectrum, including the hybrid warfare challenges. Photograph by Marina Dore (NRDC-ITA PAO).

and stick method of international discipline. Furthermore, the sinister capabilities of cyber warfare possesses the potential to achieve catastrophic effects if employed to disable financial and/or energy infrastructure in Ukraine or Western Europe. When coupled with their ongoing operations by the military IOP, this hybrid and coldly calculated strategy aligns with Freier's concept of hybrid norms and Liang and Xiangsui's concept of unrestricted warfare.

While Russia's use of hybrid ways and means to achieve its desired end state in Ukraine is not completely new, after synthesis of the Russian hybrid threat construct, some interesting overall implications exist. The Russians have been able to combine various military forms of warfare with economic, information, and diplomatic IOPs into essentially a hybrid threat whole of government approach. In addition, Russia is employing this hybrid threat whole of government approach during Phase 0 (Shape) of Joint and Multinational Operations.<sup>(22)</sup> This plan has allowed Russia to keep the conflict "below the threshold normally deemed necessary for invoking NATO's Article 5 Collective Defence guarantee."<sup>(23)</sup> Russia's hybrid presentation and employment of military forces with the other IOPs has also created uncertainty on how to deter or counter it. This ambiguity from Russia's continually

adjusting hybrid threat whole of government approach is the most thought-provoking implication of the current Russian hybrid threat construct because it has truly taken the battle beyond the battlefield.

U.S. AIR FORCE General Philip M. Breedlove, NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe and Commander of U.S. European Command, echoed this point of view during a recent Brussels Forum in March of this year. General Breedlove highlighted that Russia is using diplomacy and information warfare along with military and economic means to wage this campaign.<sup>(24)</sup> He went on to state, "Informationally, this is probably the most impressive new part of this hybrid war, all of the different tools to create a false narrative."<sup>(25)</sup>

Jens Stoltenberg, the former Prime Minister of Norway and current NATO Secretary General, added to General Breedlove's thoughts when he discussed the deception operations, and covert and overt actions associated with hybrid warfare.<sup>(26)</sup> Synthesis of General Breedlove and Secretary General Stoltenberg's comments elucidates the problem of uncertainty and ambiguity surrounding Russia's true intent and actions. If this Russian hybrid threat construct continues to be their chosen operational approach for future

campaigns, then this construct necessitates a change in NATO's approach to deter, and if required, defeat it. In this case, innovation will hold the key to success.

THE QUESTION of how militaries innovate is a critical area of study for military professionals and academics. Two prominent military historians and professors, Williamson Murray and Allan R. Millett, tackled this question in their edited collection of essays on military innovation entitled, *Military Innovation in the Interwar Period*. At the end of this study, Murray concluded that due to the complexity of multiple variables involved with the task of innovating, no exact formula for success exists.<sup>(27)</sup> However, he identified a few key characteristics of military organizations that successfully innovated during the interwar period between World War I (WWI) and WWII.

Murray argued that one central, key component for success was a military culture that embraced innovation.<sup>(28)</sup> He stated, "One of the important components in successful innovation in the interwar period had to do with the ability of officers to use their imaginations in examining potential innovations."<sup>(29)</sup>

An emphasis on learning organizations and the warrior-scholar concept within NATO will help cultivate innovation.<sup>(30)</sup> Additionally,



IF AMBIGUITY IS THE REAL CRUX OF THE CURRENT RUSSIAN HYBRID THREAT, THEN A HYBRID MINDSET MAY HELP TO DISPLACE THIS UNCERTAINTY BACK ONTO THE RUSSIANS CONCERNING NATO'S NEXT ACTIONS.



**TRIDENT JAGUAR 15 at JWC:** The complex training scenario challenges the staff with restoring security in a failing state set in an unstable region, pressured by political, military, and civil turmoil. Photograph shows Commander ARRC, Lieutenant General Tim Evans, CBE DSO. Photograph by Sergeant Mike O'Neill, ARRC PAO.

leveraging warfighting exercise scenarios and technology available at the NATO Joint Warfare Centre (JWC) in Stavanger, Norway, will serve as an enabler in the struggle to innovate. These warfighter scenarios will allow officers in NATO to test and refine their ideas on how to deter the Russian hybrid threat. They will also help officers eventually develop unique solutions for future use. The idea of using war games as tools to enable operational level transformation was a point Murray highlighted that the German Army and U.S. Navy successfully employed during the interwar period, as well.<sup>(31)</sup>

ANOTHER IDEA that General Breedlove proposed during the March 2015 Brussels Forum was the need to open the aperture when exploring responses to Russia's actions in Ukraine. General Breedlove suggested, "I think that you have to attack an all of a government approach with an all of government approach."<sup>(32)</sup> He continued by stating, "We, I think, in the West, should consider all of our tools in reply."<sup>(33)</sup> In essence, to deter and potentially defeat a hybrid threat, NATO military and civilian planners may need to think like one. A hybrid mindset could be one possible

cognitive tool to enable operational level innovation in the employment of military force and integration of other IOPs within a region from a holistic approach.

**A HYBRID MINDSET** consists of the conceptual interaction of understanding strategic context, developing holistic approaches to operations focused on potential opportunities, and embracing the natural complexity of an operational environment. This conceptual interaction will help NATO military and civilian planners to develop cutting edge operational approaches to the complexity of the Russian hybrid threat by thinking differently about the actual problem set. A hybrid mindset understands and embraces the systemic nature of the operational environment and operations that occur within it. It promotes the rearrangement of existing rules and the reconfiguration of time and space through innovation in order to exploit the natural potential of an operational environment. Instead of just recognizing the underlying asymmetry between two military forces, this conceptual tool helps exploit it in a manner that supports the user's objectives.<sup>(34)</sup>

If ambiguity is the real crux of the current Russian hybrid threat, then a hybrid mindset may help to displace this uncertainty back onto the Russians concerning NATO's next actions. This mindset can help to find new ways to collaborate and conduct multinational operations within NATO. In addition, a hybrid way of thinking can help foster updated approaches to intelligence gathering and sharing among NATO nations to draw out the truth from the Russian false narrative. It can help to find innovative ways to link and synchronize military actions with ongoing diplomatic, economic, and informational efforts. Overall, this mindset possesses the potential to help NATO planners think like complex-adaptive systems in order to out-think and out-learn the continually adapting Russian hybrid threat construct.

IN 2014, Russia took NATO and the world by surprise with its employment of a hybrid threat construct in Ukraine. Although the use of hybrid ways and means is not new to the landscape of history as a means for the weak to combat the strong, the use of it by the strong in such an unparalleled manner is something of concern for the future. Upon further analy-







sis, the Russian hybrid threat construct is truly taking the concept beyond the normally accepted visualizations of the merging of irregular, regular, and criminal elements for a single purpose and into a more protracted conceptual battle of wills. In this realm beyond the battlefield, no rules exist as the Russians employ a hybrid whole of government approach to achieve their desired end state.

AS NATO prepares to develop ways to deter and potentially defeat this Russian hybrid threat, innovation will hold the key to success. Learning organizations full of warrior-scholars could be one way to cultivate innovation throughout NATO. Another way could be the incorporation of a hybrid mindset into the NATO military and civilian planner's repertoire. This way of thinking possesses the potential to help them find inventive ways to link military capabilities amongst all NATO members with ongoing diplomatic, economic, and informational efforts. Innovation and evolution always come with some associated risk, but in this case, the opportunity may be well worth the risk to deter the future aspirations of the Russian hybrid threat. †

## END NOTES:

- (1) Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Wales, "Wales Summit Declaration," North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), September 05, 2014. [http://www.nato.int/cps/ic/natohq/official\\_texts\\_112964.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/ic/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm) (accessed April 15, 2015).
- (2) John Davis, *The Hybrid Mindset and Operationalizing Innovation: Toward a Theory of Hybrid*, Monograph (Fort Leavenworth: U.S. Army School of Advanced Military Studies, 2014). See this monograph for an in depth analysis of the evolution of the concept of hybrid warfare and hybrid threats in theoretical and historical terms.
- (3) Department of Defense, Joint Publication (JP) 1, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States* (Washington D.C.: Department of Defense, 2013), 39-42. See this JP for additional details on the Instruments of National Power consisting of diplomatic, informational, military, and economic instruments.
- (4) Headquarters, Department of the Army, *Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 3-0, Unified Land Operations* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2011), 12.
- (5) Cited in Michael Aaronson et al., "NATO Countering the Hybrid Threat," *Prism* 2, no. 4 (2011): 115.
- (6) Frank Hoffman, *Conflict in the 21st Century: The Rise of Hybrid Wars*, Monograph (Arlington: Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, 2007), 14.
- (7) Nathan Freier, *Strategic Competition and Resistance in the 21st Century: Irregular, Catastrophic, Traditional, and Hybrid Challenges in Context*, Monograph (Carlisle: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 2007), iii.
- (8) *Ibid.*, 6, 20, 27, 33, 36.
- (9) Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui, *Unrestricted Warfare* (Beijing: PLA Literature and Arts Publishing, 1999), 2.
- (10) *Ibid.*, 162.
- (11) *Ibid.*, 153.
- (12) Richard Weitz, "Countering Russia's Hybrid Threats," *Diplomaatia*, 2014: 3-4.
- (13) *Ibid.*, 3-4.
- (14) Department of Defense, Joint Publication (JP) 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Washington D.C.: Department of Defense, 2015), 261. JP 1-02 defines unconventional warfare as "activities conducted to enable a resistance movement or insurgency to coerce, disrupt, or overthrow a government or occupying power by operating through or with an underground, auxiliary, and guerrilla force in a denied area."
- (15) Weitz, 5.
- (16) *Ibid.*, 4.
- (17) *Ibid.*, 4.
- (18) *Ibid.*, 3.
- (19) Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. and ed. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 89, 119-120.
- (20) Weitz, 3.
- (21) *Ibid.*, 3.
- (22) Department of Defense, Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning* (Washington D.C.: Department of Defense, 2011), 117, 119-120. Phase 0 of a Joint and Multinational Operation usually consists of "normal and routine military activities in which various interagency activities are performed to dissuade or deter potential adversaries and to assure or solidify relationships with friends and allies." This phase does not include more openly hostile actions that usually fall in other phases or higher along the Range of Military Operations, as we are seeing in the Ukraine.
- (23) Weitz, 2.
- (24) Jim Garamone, "NATO Commander Breedlove Discusses Implications of Hybrid War," U.S. Department of Defense, DoD News, March 23, 2015 <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=128430> (accessed April 15, 2015).
- (25) *Ibid.*
- (26) Kevin McCaney "Russia's Hybrid Warfare Tactics Gain Upper Hand in Ukraine," *Defense Systems: Knowledge Technologies and Net-Enabled Warfare*, March 24, 2015 <http://defensesystems.com/articles/2015/03/24/russia-hybrid-warfare-ukraine-nato.aspx> (accessed April 15, 2015).
- (27) Williamson Murray, "Innovation: Past and Future," in *Military Innovation in the Interwar Period*, ed. Williamson Murray and Allan Millet, 300-328 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 302-303.
- (28) *Ibid.*, 312-313.
- (29) *Ibid.*, 317.
- (30) John Davis, "Defeating Future Hybrid Threats: The Greatest Challenge to the Army Profession of 2020 and Beyond," *Military Review*, Vol. XCIII, no. 5 (September-October 2013): 27-29. The warrior-scholar concept emphasizes investment by a military in the scholarly aspects of the soldier. The central premise of this concept is to take soldiers with proven operational knowledge (warriors) and broaden their mental capacities through advanced study on military, social, international relations, and political science type disciplines (scholars). As warrior-scholars, these individuals can serve as the core of learning organizations helping to solve tough problems and to cultivate this concept in junior leaders.
- (31) Murray, 317.
- (32) Cited in Garamone.
- (33) *Ibid.*
- (34) John Davis, *The Hybrid Mindset and Operationalizing Innovation: Toward a Theory of Hybrid*. See this monograph for the origin of the concept of a hybrid mindset, or hybrid way of thinking, and additional evidence of its existence throughout history.

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**People of concern:** The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is characterized by ongoing conflict, poor or non-existent infrastructure and highly challenging logistics, all of which make access to refugees and other populations of concern quite difficult. Due mainly to the conflict in the eastern part of the country, approximately 430,000 refugees from the DRC remain in neighbouring countries, particularly Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania. The scale of displacement within and outside the DRC remains serious. There are some 2.7 million Internally Displaced People (IDPs) within the country in 2014 due to ongoing armed conflict in the east. (Source: United Nations Refugee Agency) Photograph by Sam D. Cruz/Shutterstock.com

# HYBRIDITY IN OPERATIONAL CONTEXTS

Traditional forms of leadership augmenting governance

**By S.K. Moore, Ph.D.**  
 Innovative Peacebuilding:  
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**I**N THE FIELD of international relations, the term *hybrid* implies the potential synergy generated among organizations and groups in collaboration, hence the axiom, the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. This article will examine *hybridity* as it relates to three different spheres of influence within the operational environment. Firstly, experts increasingly focus on today's *hybrid threats* often stemming from radically inspired terrorism. Secondly, whole of government efforts to stabilize and reconstruct failing or failed states may also be characterized as a *hybrid* response to such threats — interagency approaches, supported by the military. Thirdly, and the major focus of this article, context will be explored as it relates to the public space of operations where civilian populations and their governments co-exist, while operations are conducted and concluded.





Creating lasting stability where internal conflict has ravaged societies has not been easy to achieve. The global south has been particularly susceptible to such turmoil. Constructive ideas as to how to establish stability and enhance governance are much needed. In the third world, *hybridity*, in terms of more traditional forms of leadership at the grassroots contributing to the functioning of central governments, is one such concept. Finally, by way of example in the African context, the chiefdoms of Botswana will be examined for their contribution to governance with leaders at the national level.

### Hybrid threats

Relating to today's operational environments, among those early to employ the term *hybrid* was Frank Hoffman. Referencing more specifically the modality of conflict, he poignantly spoke of the blurred or blended nature of combat. "We do not face a widening number of distinct challenges, but their convergence into *hybrid* wars."<sup>(1)</sup> This would translate into con-

fronting groups drawing from a "whole menu of tactics and technologies, blending them in innovative ways to meet their own strategic culture, geography, and aims."<sup>(2)</sup> Continuing, Hoffman saw this as a melding of "conventional capabilities, irregular tactics and formations, terrorist acts that include indiscriminate violence and coercion, and criminal disorder."<sup>(3)</sup>

As NATO adjusts its training emphasis to accommodate *hybrid* applications pertinent to contemporary operations, joint exercises — Army, Navy, Air Force and Special Forces elements — are of increasing relevance. Imparting to personnel a working knowledge of the operational context is indispensable to its success. As an example, this year's TRIDENT JEWEL 15 exercise maximized attention on "manag[ing] joint focus during a complex political and civil Crisis Response Operation," and worked through a "failing state scenario."<sup>(4)</sup> Stretching out before military and civilian leaders alike is this indubitable test of adapting and responding to the complexity of *hybrid* threats.

### Hybridity: third generation of civil-military relations

An approach to meeting such *hybrid* threats, political scientist, Frederik Rosen of the University of Copenhagen, illumines that the U.S. military has implemented a command structure which creates a more intimate affiliation between interagency modalities and its military.<sup>(5)</sup> The United States African Command (USAFRICOM) exemplifies this *soft power* mandate, inclusive of a civilian presence, at some of the highest levels of Command. Demonstrative of what Rosen identifies as *third-generation civil-military relations* — an inference of *hybridity* — it reflects an amalgam of military and civilian capabilities, far exceeding the interagency cooperation known to today's Provincial Reconstruction Teams (*second-generation civil-military relations*), and, from the strategic perspective, the way forward.

This approach is a blending of interests "from building and bolstering security institutions for watching over development projects, to humanitarian aid delivery, to disease management."<sup>(6)</sup> Rosen identifies *first generation civil-military relations* with the earlier "blue helmets" where in the 1990's the United Nations Security Council deployed troops to "low-intensity" missions in virtual conflict zones where humanitarian organizations en-

deavoured to aid civilian populations caught in the crucible of conflict. African security policy expert, Sean McFate, acknowledges that the impetus for closer *third generation civil-military relations* originates in the recognition that "lethal force alone is no longer the decisive variable in military campaigns,"<sup>(7)</sup> prescient lessons from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Underscoring the whole of government emphasis, McFate insists that achieving sustained security is inextricably tied to solving the challenges of development, which goes to the core of the security-development nexus. "Failure to heed this linkage results in a 'security-development gap', where the lack of security prevents development from taking root, thus perpetuating conflict and compromising development in a vicious cycle."<sup>(8)</sup> In her report to the United States Congress reference USAFRICOM and greater civil-military synergy (*hybridity*), analyst Lauren Ploch echoes McFate's call for "a broader 'soft power' mandate aimed at building a stable security environment incorporat[ing] a larger civilian component from other U.S. government agencies to address the challenges."<sup>(9)</sup>

A movement toward more *hybrid* strategies in confronting today's intrastate conflict has emerged as a viable approach. Knowledge of the cultural mechanisms at work in a given operational context is key to aiding whole of government personnel — civilian and military — to function effectively. The following will explore traditional/tribal leadership as one such cultural mechanism and its collaborative potential to strengthen central governments within third world contexts, particularly pertinent to conflict prone regions of Africa.

### Hybridity: traditional forms of leadership aiding central governments

Researchers out of the Australian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (Brisbane) are posing probing questions while offering cogent suggestions to seeing fragile states revitalized. From a historical perspective, they contend that much of the instability known to the global south can, in great part, be traced back to the move toward "decolonization" following the Second World War. Many of today's new states — a number of them known to the African continent — came into being during that time. Researchers such as Volker Boege, Anne Brown, Kevin Clements and Anna Nolan suggest that





**TRIDENT JEWEL 15 Scripting Workshop:** The exercise maximized attention on managing joint focus during a complex political and civil crisis response operation and worked through a failing-state scenario. Photograph by JWC PAO.

these independence movements were partially driven by the exhaustion of the colonial powers and some of the more specific international dynamics of the post-war period. Both the political elites and the international community at large welcomed the newly achieved statehood, often confusing the formal declaration of independence with the formation of a state, without taking into sufficient account the myriad of obstacles these newly formed states still faced.<sup>(10)</sup> Much emphasis has been placed on the benefits of statehood with a paucity of recognition as to its social costs in terms of the sacrifice of existing identities and structures that appear to run counter to hierarchies and systems being put in place — nascent statehood.<sup>(11)</sup>

The authors raise reasonable concerns regarding state institutions claiming authority over large territories, which may only give evidence to distant "outposts" in regions that may, to a large extent, remain stateless. Central governments often experience difficulty in extending sufficient, let alone consistent, influence beyond their national capital regions. In such instances, it is not uncommon to find the vestiges of traditional/tribal systems of governance functioning similarly to a time prior to colonial rule. It is in this expanse of territory, great distances from any central authority, "where state 'outposts' are mediated by 'informal' indigenous societal institutions that follow their own logic within the (incomplete) state structures."<sup>(12)</sup> Here, the identity of "citi-

zen" and the "notion of the state" find it difficult to take root. Overcoming this relative disconnectedness from the state is challenging for national leadership when expectations are low among the people in terms of receiving much from the central government, much less any sense of responsibility among the "citizenry" to fulfill obligations. Despite the best efforts of the international community, extending adequate security and other basic services to the more distant points of the state, in many instances, has been difficult to achieve.

Historically, for many former colonies, transitioning to statehood often meant a marginalization of more traditional forms of societal governance by elites in an effort to establish authority. Where representation of central government has been weak, a concomitant dearth of allegiance to the state by the people has followed. Compounding this further has been the relative ease by which "other entities" have moved into the vacuum — where the state has failed to provide adequate security and basic services, others have gained support of the local populace due to their ability to address these needs. Often, it is the lack of depth to the subjective notion of statehood among the people that lessens a sense of citizenship. People profess loyalty to their group — whatever that may be — instead of the state. "As members of traditional communities, people are tied into a network of social relations and a web of mutual obligations, and these obliga-

tions are much more powerful than obligations as a citizen."<sup>(13)</sup> Fragile statehood in many parts of the global south exhibits diverse and competing claims to power and logics of order that coexist, overlap and intertwine. The result has frequently proven to be a layered and complex convergence of more "formal" structures of statehood, traditional "informal" societal order, combined with the effects of globalization, all of which may be compounded by the social fragmentation associated with ethnic, tribal and religious forms.<sup>(14)</sup> Volker Boege et al. define this as *hybridity of leadership*.

Within fragile states, *hybrid political orders* of this nature are more the norm. In establishing governance and expanding development, whole of government personnel are frequently confronted with sustaining change within such *hybrid systems*, especially in regions where effective representation of central governments struggles to be a consistent presence. The danger lies in "trying to produce a state that people do not recognize as their own, or from which they feel alienated in important ways."<sup>(15)</sup> The authors cite cases where the lack of understanding of *hybrid political orders* has undermined efforts to revitalize the state in comparison to instances where central governments have successfully incorporated more traditional forms of societal structures/leadership into governance. In their estimation, conflict has often resulted where political elites have resorted to a more "top-down" imposition





"Culture is the soil in which conflict-handling mechanisms sprout and take root..." Non-Violence Sculpture at the UN Headquarters, New York. A gun tied in a knot as symbol for reaching peace; gift from the Government of Luxembourg. Photograph by Marco Rubino.

of values, as opposed to sustaining change in the recognition of more "bottom-up" formation of political communities committed to peacebuilding and development. Accordingly, it is important to stress the positive potential rather than the negative features of so-called fragile states, focusing on *hybridity* generative processes, innovative adaptation and ingenuity, perceiving community resilience and customary institutions not so much as spoilers and problems, but as assets and sources that can be drawn upon in order to forge constructive relationships between communities and governments and between customary and introduced political and social institutions.<sup>(16)</sup>

### **Contextualization and hybridity — a closer look at Botswana**

Leaders from the global north must guard against the presumption that western ideas hold within them the answers for conflicts in other parts of the world, disregarding rich and untapped peacebuilding mechanisms that other cultures may possess. Celebrated peacebuilder, John Paul Lederach, contends that "mov[ing] from stagnant cycles of violence toward a desired and shared vision of increased interdependence emerge[s] creatively from the culture and context."<sup>(17)</sup>

Such contextualization encapsulates how "appropriate responses for constructively responding to conflict are understood and rooted in the social realities — as perceived,

experienced, and created by the people in the setting."<sup>(18)</sup> He acknowledges that, "(...) culture is the soil in which conflict-handling mechanisms sprout and take root."<sup>(19)</sup> For this reason, he continues, "the international community must see people in the setting as resources, and not recipients."<sup>(20)</sup>

Traditional/tribal leadership, and the grassroots systems of governance that they represent within the African context, characterizes a cultural mechanism worthy of consideration. The concept of *hybridity*, and its potential to enhance stability, becomes much more germane to peacebuilding and development initiatives emanating from the external when seen in the light of the need for cultural compatibility within recovering states. Volker Boege et al. cite Namibia, South Africa, Ghana, Mozambique, Uganda, Zambia and Cameroon as having "(re) incorporated traditional leaders officially into state hierarchies in recognition of their ongoing influence as local players."<sup>(21)</sup> Where state institutions are relatively weak, a *hybrid* approach of traditional leaders assisting central government by performing certain state functions has contributed to a resurgence of customary rule. Some re-formulation has accompanied these new functions; nevertheless traditional leadership is playing an active role.<sup>(22)</sup>

Adding Botswana to the list of African nations to embrace a *hybrid* form of governance, authors Dipholo, Tshishonga and Mafema<sup>(23)</sup> offer further insight — its opportuni-

ties and challenges. Much of what is to follow is a summary of their research: Among the Tswana, the public meeting place in the village is the *Kgotla* where debates on public issues are held and cases under customary law are heard. This traditional authority system continued to function under the Protectorate (British rule) where the traditional leader's role (Chieftoms) complimented the colonial administration. The post-colonial period saw tribal leaders positions transferred into the new independent state. National political parties continued to use the *Kgotla* as a means for political mobilization.

Botswana operates on a two-tier system of government: the central government at the apex with local government constituting the next level. Here, governance is spread over district/urban councils or municipalities, District Administration, Land Boards and Tribal Administration. Designated personnel assist traditional leaders in carrying out their duties. As such, traditional leaders are public servants, paid from public funds.<sup>(24)</sup> This *hybrid* approach continues to this day, albeit not without its challenges.

Although the House of Chiefs, now renamed *Ntlo ya Dikgosi*, is enshrined in the Constitution, it is designated more of an "advisory body" on customary issues, coming into effect at independence in 1966. The same year, the Botswana Parliament struck The Chieftainship Act, subordinating Chiefs to the Ministerial level and the policies they impose. Today, tradi-



TRIDENT JUNCTURE 15 Scripting Workshop at JWC. Photograph by JWC PAO.



tional leaders function in accordance with these parliamentary statutes. They administer justice through customary courts, resolve disputes in their villages and oversee tribal ceremonies. As Sharma notes, "The Chiefs play a significant role in presiding over the customary courts, which handle about 80% to 90% of civil and criminal cases in the country."<sup>(25)</sup>

In addition, the District/Urban Councils are charged with the responsibility of development planning and oversight at the local level. Chiefs actively participate with the District Development Committees in the deliberations and coordination of district development plans and their implementation — a vital role.<sup>(26)</sup> Officials continue to look to them due to their influence at the grassroots, as the citizenry still identifies with these traditional leaders. The chiefdoms remain the oldest, most accessible and recognized institution in rural Botswana. They continue to be a dynamic focus for local initiatives, deemed an essential bridge between local governments and the people.

If managed properly in the African context, such *hybridity* in governance may prove to be of inestimable value in stabilizing recovering states in peacebuilding and development initiatives — a cultural mechanism that whole of government personnel should take into account when engaged in peacebuilding and development in third-world contexts.

## Conclusion

A pre-occupation of the international community for some time to come will be to discern and develop effective responses to intervening in the stabilization and reconstruction of failing or failed states. Compelling western governments to invest in sophisticated educa-

tion and training is the complexity of today's *hybrid threats*. Insurgencies within the borders of nations are increasingly becoming regional issues, defying containment. Additional concerns mount as the insidious nature of "home-grown radicalization" is on the increase — a *hybrid threat* now eliciting a domestic strategy as well as foreign intervention — realities of the twenty-first century.

Most are in agreement; the African context will garner its share of international attention in the future. Political instability of the post-colonial era and coveted resources are among the driving factors in creating the continued unrest evident in certain regions of the continent. Such turmoil may pull NATO and, by extension, the EU into its orbit.

Exercise TRIDENT JEWEL 15, now concluded, was focused and substantial, preparing both civilian and military personnel to function jointly in what may prove to be some rather inhospitable regions globally. Exercise TRIDENT JUNCTURE 15 will follow suit. The requirement for *hybrid* responses is undeniably a reality of the present and will undoubtedly persist on into the future. Concomitant to such training is the need for greater insight into the cultural contexts where stabilization and reconstruction endeavours will play out. Much benefit exists in the capacity to acknowledge and adapt to the inherent cultural mechanisms that resonate with the people at the grassroots. In time to come, *hybrid* systems in regions of the third world — collaboration between traditional/tribal and central forms of governance and the potential stability such balance affords — may prove invaluable to whole of government personnel and their peacebuilding and development endeavours. †

INSURGENCIES WITHIN THE BORDERS OF NATIONS ARE INCREASINGLY BECOMING REGIONAL ISSUES, DEFYING CONTAINMENT.



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Provincial Reconstruction Team, Afghanistan, where he conducted doctoral research (2006), completing his Ph. D. in 2008. The experience of engaging the religious leaders of greater Sarajevo left an indelible mark on his life — men of faith and leaders of communities, endeavouring to lead their people during a time of war. Dr Moore's last three years in uniform were with now, the Canadian Army Land Warfare Center, Kingston, Ontario where his post-doctoral research resulted in the development of the chaplain capability, Religious Leader Engagement (RLE), now Policy (January 2013) with the CAF Chaplain Branch and Doctrine (July 2013) with the Canadian Army. A member of the International Directing Staff, RLE has been incorporated into curriculum at the United Nations Training School Ireland, Dublin. During the years 2012-2014, he developed a Graduate Diploma Programme in Integrative Peacebuilding at Saint Paul University, Ottawa, now in the accreditation process. His recently published book is entitled, "Military Chaplains As Agents of Peace: Religious Leader Engagement in Conflict and Post-conflict Environments" (Lexington Books, 2013).

## END NOTES:

- (1) Frank Hoffman, "Hybrid Warfare and Challenges" JFQ, Issue 52, 1st Quarter, 2009, p 37.
- (2) Hoffman, 2009, 35.
- (3) Hoffman, 36.
- (4) "Training Takes Top Priority in January" Inci Kucukaksoy, NATO Joint Warfare Centre, <http://www.jwc.nato.int>, accessed 22 February 2015.
- (5) Frederik Rosen, "Third-generation Civil-military Relations" in Prism 2. No.1, (Dec 2010): 28.
- (6) Rosen, 2010, 27.
- (7) Sean McFate, "U.S. Africa Command: A New Strategic Paradigm?" Military Review 17 (January-February 2008): 17.
- (8) McFate, 2008, 16.
- (9) Laura Ploch, "Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa," CRS Report for Congress (Mar 2008): 7-8. Security Operations in the 21st Century: Canadian Perspectives on the Comprehensive Approach, eds. Michael Rostek and Peter Gizewski (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011), 2.





## An excerpt from SACT's Introductory Remarks to NATO Transformation Seminar — Washington, 25 March 2015

- (10) Volker Boege, Anne Brown, Kevin Clements and Anna Nolan, "Building Peace and Political Community in Hybrid Political Orders" in *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 16, No. 5, November 2009, 601, (599-615).
- (11) Christopher Clapham, "The Global—Local Politics of State Decay", in Robert I. Rotberg (ed), *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004, p.86 cited in Volker Boege, Anne Brown, Kevin Clements and Anna Nolan, "Building Peace and Political Community in Hybrid Political Orders" in *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 16, No. 5, November 2009, 602.
- (12) Boege, Brown, Clements and Nolan, 2009, 603. The authors offer the following word of caution in their notes (#12). It bears repetition here. "Traditional' or 'customary' institutions are taken as ideal types. Obviously, traditional societies have not been left unchanged by the powers of—originally European—capitalist expansion, colonialism, imperialism, evangelism and globalization. In practice, therefore, there are no clear-cut boundaries between the realm of the exogenous 'modern' and the endogenous 'traditional'; rather there are processes of assimilation, articulation, transformation, and/or adoption in the context of the global/exogenous—local/indigenous interface. An ideal type of 'traditional' or 'customary' institutions of governance is employed to elaborate as precisely as possible the specifics of phenomena that do not belong to the realm of conventional institutions originating in the West, which were imposed in the South. It would be misleading, however to think of this traditional realm as unchangeable and static. Custom is a constant flux and adapts to new circumstances, exposed to external influences, which allows traditional and introduced Western approaches to be combined so that something new—that is not strictly customary any longer, but rooted in custom—might emerge."
- (13) Boege, Brown, Clements and Nolan, 2009, 606.
- (14) Boege, Brown, Clements and Nolan, 2009, 606.
- (15) Boege, Brown, Clements and Nolan, 2009, 608.
- (16) Boege, Brown, Clements and Nolan, 2009, 611-12.
- (17) John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington: United States Institute of Peace, 1997), 84.
- (18) Lederach, 2000, 47.
- (19) Lederach, 2000, 47.
- (20) Lederach, 1997, 94.
- (21) Boege, Brown, Clements and Nolan, 2009, 604.
- (22) Boege, Brown, Clements and Nolan, 2009, 604.
- (23) Kenneth B. Dipholo, Ndwakhulu Tshishonga and Eve Mafema, "Traditional Leadership in Botswana: Opportunities and challenges for enhancing good governance and local development" in *The Journal of African and Asian Local Government Studies*.
- (24) Keshav C. Sharma, "Role of Traditional Structures in Local government for Local Development—The Case of Botswana," *Community Empowerment and Social Inclusion Program (CESI)*, World Bank Institute, Washington, 5, <http://info.worldbank.org/etools/docs/library/153055/BOTSWANA.pdf>, accessed 8 March 2015.
- (25) Sharma, 7.
- (26) Sharma, 9.

"Since 66 years, and certainly for the last decades, NATO's coherent, consistent and enduring Transformation has enabled NATO forces to respond to emerging crises when they were tasked to do so. I believe it is crucial to keep and even increase the pace of our dynamic Transformation, as our forces will likely face a hardened security environment in the foreseeable future, and I would highlight three main reasons:

— First, more and more state and non-state-actors may feel unconstrained by international laws and may look to strike our nations even on their own territories. On a Russian model, some of them will synchronize their efforts and act with higher ambiguity. This hybrid modus operandi will likely be very innovative, even disruptive.

— Secondly, our adversaries may trigger swiftly simultaneous and diverse crises to challenge our planning, preparation and decision-making process, putting also at risk the solidarity of the Alliance.

— Last, but not least, our opponents will deploy more anti-access and area-denial weapon systems to threaten our forces in their strategic, operational and tactical depth and challenge the Alliance's ability to re-posture.

For adapting our forces to cope with these mid- and long-term threats, I would stress five guiding principles, which ensue from our recent Bi-SC "Future Framework for the Alliance Operations" analysis.

— First, to make any appropriate decision, in every single operation, there is a

permanent need to improve our strategic awareness through information sharing, joint intelligence building, real-time surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities, and not to forget the indispensable human expertise. In looking into the future, a reliable strategic awareness is not an option, but a pre-requisite.

— Secondly, in this future operational environment, our forces have to remain a first strategic shock absorber. In times of enduring budget constraints and pressing environment, we should coordinate, consolidate our shared resilience through selected redundancy and measures of protection for critical infrastructure, decision-making centres, networks, population and other centres of gravity.

— Thirdly, to engage these opponents, our forces will have to be highly agile and modular, trained in the full spectrum of warfare. The enduring implementation of our Connected Forces Initiative (CFI) will be paramount in preparing, educating and training them in the right balance of our three core tasks.

— Fourthly, in any context, including hybrid, our Alliance has to gain the battle of the narrative, through effective Strategic Communications (StratCom).

— Last, but not least, our partners, committed to support our troops over the past decades have become part of the Alliance's DNA. We have to ensure the highest level of interoperability of these forces with our forces to enable them to take their full share in our future coalitions, and to cope with their own regional security. As a mutual benefit, they deserve enhanced involvement in the decision of the Alliance's future."



NORTHWOOD/STAVANGER



**Clockwise:** MARCOM HQ Situation Centre (SITCEN); SACEUR visiting the exercise, 24 March 2015. Photographs by MARCOM PAO. Brigadier General Roger Watkins, JWC's Chief of Staff with the OCE OPR at JWC SITCEN; Lieutenant Colonel Hodneland; Major General Wolski and Vice Admiral Peter Hudson, CB CBE, Commander MARCOM in Stavanger. Photographs by JWC PAO.

# TRIDENT 2015

# JEWEL



Co-written with third-person point of view by

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TRJL 15 logo by Tudor Jelescu, JWC

As TRIDENT JEWEL 15's execution phase came to an end on 26 March 2015, the Joint Warfare Centre (JWC) took a moment to reflect on the eighteen-month journey that culminated in a highly effective exercise, which resulted in the certification of NATO's Maritime Command (MARCOM) in its role of Joint Headquarters, marking the final step on MARCOM's road to Full Operational Capability.

**SHORTLY AFTER ARRIVING** in Norway and before attending the Exercise Planning Course in Oberammergau, CDR Mike Angelopoulos learned that he would be the Officer of Primary Responsibility (OPR) for the upcoming TRIDENT JEWEL 15 (TRJL 15) exercise. His first question was: "What does an OPR do?" His colleagues explained that an OPR was, in essence, a "wedding planner". But instead of coordinating the efforts of a decorator, a preacher, and a chef, an OPR coordinates the efforts of the scenario team, the training team, and the Main Events List/Main Incidents List (MEL/MIL) team as they provide the content and structure of a NATO exercise.

At first, the job did not sound that hard. But, after reviewing the ambitions of TRJL 15, CDR Angelopoulos immediately realized it might not be as easy as he had anticipated. First, the primary Training Audience was MARCOM. With vast experience in the maritime domain, one would expect they could easily succeed in the maritime-heavy joint operation that was planned for the exercise. However, TRJL 15 was the *first exercise* in which

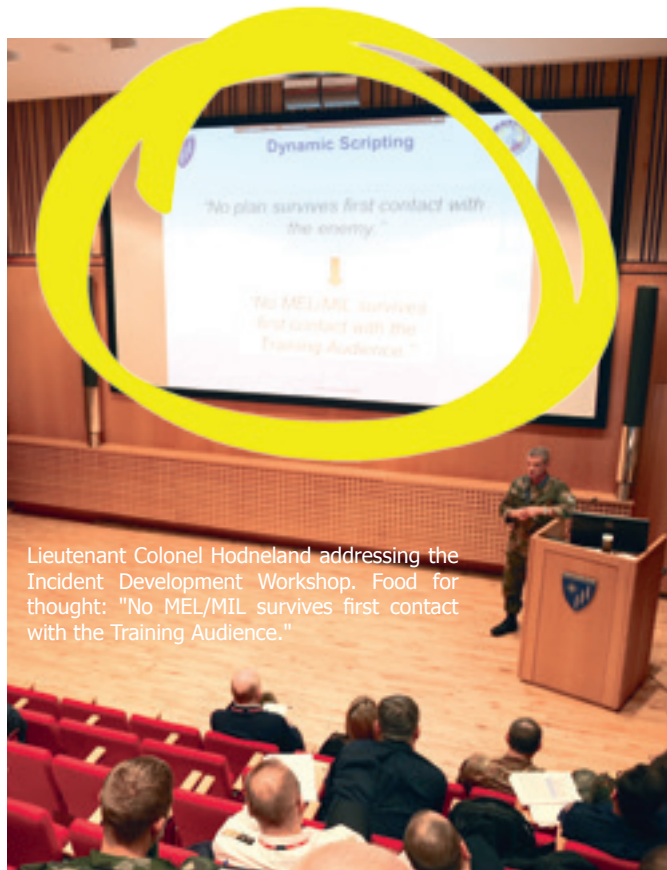
MARCOM would act as a headquarters at the operational level and be directly in charge of Land and Air Components. This would prove to be well outside of MARCOM's comfort zone and a significant challenge for them as well as for the scenario, MEL/MIL, Opposing Forces (OPFOR) and the Exercise Control (EXCON).

Secondly, the planned scenario — SKOLKAN 2.0 — was a brand new scenario built to support non-Article 5 Crisis Response Operations. Its basis is a growing regional crisis occurring in the failing, fictional country of "Arnlund", which is struggling within all PMESII (Political, Military, Economic, Social, Infrastructure and Information) domains, and which finally requested NATO support of their failing government. The scenario exposes the role and limitations of NATO forces operating without a robust mandate and within limited Rules of Engagement. Specifically, NATO's "Arnlund Security Assistance Force" (ASAF) was not equipped with a UN Security Resolution that would have provided them with the flexibility to conduct their operations without many constraints and caveats.

The scenario provides further complexity as the issues within the country are not solely limited to military ones. Arnlund has a weak and fragile government with a marginal majority in favor of inviting NATO forces to assist in stabilizing the government. In addition to these fragile conditions, ASAF had to deal with a President who at any given time could threaten to resign or to declare a State of Emergency, which would undermine the legitimacy of NATO's mandate before the campaign had even begun. Arnlund was also fighting against an active terrorist organization — the Arnlund Popular Front — which added significant risk to both NATO forces and limited their freedom of movement.

On top of all this, NATO would need to develop a plan to provide training support to the Arnish Security Forces. "Training support" sounds straightforward, but as NATO learned in Afghanistan, training implies more than just giving forces the capability to provide security; it also entails providing those forces with a "shopping list" of military equipment, including battle tanks, fighter jets, and techni-





Lieutenant Colonel Hodneland addressing the Incident Development Workshop. Food for thought: "No MEL/MIL survives first contact with the Training Audience."



CDR Angelopoulos briefing at the exercise Situation Centre, Stavanger.



COM ASAF's press conference in "Arnland" (Stavanger).

cal gadgets. As a result of these complex factors, MARCOM realized early on that dealing with maritime exclusion zones and freedom of navigation was far away from what this mission was about. Even worse, the terrorist organization causing most of the problems was not floating around in the Gulf of Finland, but was based on land. Given its limited role in the land-based arena, MARCOM realized that the mission would require a holistic Comprehensive Approach. In short, the mission provided MARCOM with the ultimate challenge for a Maritime Component.

After framing and understanding the problem, it became evident that the mission would require a significant in-country presence to engage with all the different entities and stakeholders that had an impact on the situation in Arnland. In practical terms, this would require MARCOM to interact with many international organizations/non-governmental organizations (IOs/NGOs), the EU, and INTERPOL, along with the many fictitious Arnish ministries within the fractured country. Additionally, because of the need for significant in-country interaction, MARCOM

NATO's MARITIME COMMAND CAN CONFIDENTLY MOVE FORWARD KNOWING THAT IF IT WERE CALLED TO LEAD A JOINT OPERATION IN THE FUTURE, IT WOULD BE FAR BETTER PREPARED TO DO SO AFTER HAVING ENDURED THE CHALLENGES PRESENTED DURING TRIDENT JEWEL 15.

had to alter its plans to act as a static HQ in Northwood, United Kingdom, and send a Forward Command Element to Arnland (JWC). Additionally, during Phase IIIB, "Commander ASAF" himself (Vice Admiral P D Hudson, CB CBE, Commander MARCOM) visited Arnland to conduct Key Leader Engagement. TRJL 15's MEL/MIL storyline would also present a challenge to JWC given the nature of the previous year's exercises — specifically, with regards

to supporting terrorist OPFOR and executing non-military operations. Since 2012, JWC had been developing both OPFOR and MEL/MIL processes and procedures that supported heavily kinetic exercises, such as the Article 5 operations in the Baltic region typical in SKOLKAN 1.0 events. JWC's experience with terrorist OPFOR and non-military operations was limited and presented a challenge during both the planning and execution of TRJL 15.

FACED WITH all of these challenges, CDR Angelopoulos began the planning of TRJL 15. As any good wedding planner or OPR knows, the success of the event is directly related to understanding what the "bride" wants and the quality of the professionals who make it happen. The first step in planning TRJL 15, therefore, was to understand what MARCOM wanted from the exercise. Fortunately, during the October 2013 Exercise Planning Course in Oberammergau, CDR Angelopoulos met fellow classmate CDR Thies Hofmann, who was already selected to be the OCE<sup>(1)</sup> OPR for MARCOM in TRJL 15. Their collective efforts and close coordination was critical in making





JWC's Training Team and administrative staff in Northwood with Major General Wolski, Exercise Director. Photograph by MARCOM PAO.

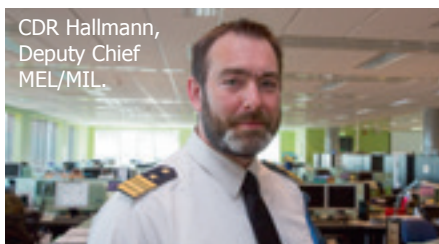
JWC remain in line with MARCOM's ambitions throughout the exercise planning cycle. Additionally, and most importantly, Commander MARCOM himself provided specific and direct guidance to the scenario and MEL/MIL teams on a visit to JWC in March 2014. This guidance provided the necessary direction for the lengthy development of the scenario under the guidance of Chief Scenario, CDR Bartosz Zembrzuski. Without this direction and close coordination between the OCE and ODE<sup>(2)</sup> teams, the exercise would not have been such a success.

The second step in planning TRJL 15 involved formulating a plan to meet MARCOM's goals. In this case, once the scenario had been developed by Chief Scenario, CDR Bartosz Zembrzuski's team, the bulk of the further effort was in the OPFOR and MEL/MIL areas. CDR Frank Hallmann, as Deputy Chief MEL/MIL, personally developed a comprehensive process for creating a MEL/MIL that specifically targeted the Joint HQ with

(1) Officer Scheduling the Exercise.  
 (2) Officer Directing the Exercise.



CDR Zembrzuski,  
 Chief, Scenario.



CDR Hallmann,  
 Deputy Chief  
 MEL/MIL.



Colonel Engen,  
 Chief, OPFOR.

operational level dilemmas. The process was directed against the Training Audience Operational Plans' (OPLAN) lines of operation, and provided specific guidance to visiting MEL/MIL Subject Matter Experts and scripters. This guidance and process immediately had significant impact by ensuring both MEL/MIL workshops were able to focus efforts on a cohesive storyline that ultimately delivered the intended results. Chief MEL/MIL, Lieutenant Colonel Nils Erik Hodneland, ensured that JWC facilitated "trusted agents" within MARCOM whose insider knowledge of the storyline allowed the EXCON to understand how the MEL/MIL was affecting MARCOM throughout Phase IIIB. His use of storyline managers broke with previous JWC tradition, but proved invaluable in ensuring the "Event Managers" were coordinated across each storyline while simultaneously challenging MARCOM's lines of operation.

This holistic approach to MEL/MIL pioneered by CDR Hallmann and Lieutenant Colonel Hodneland has been recognized within JWC as a best practice and will be adopted for future heavily scripted exercises.



## Three Swords News Special Report



**The wedding planners:** The exercise OPRs (from left CDR Angelopoulos, CDR Hofmann and CDR Mencucci). OPRs believe that their job was similar to that of a wedding planner, which demanded professionalism, energy and eye for detail as they coordinated efforts between different services and helped providing the content and structure of a NATO exercise. Photograph by Major Stephen Olsen, JWC PAO.



As Chief OPFOR, Colonel Chris Engen was afforded the opportunity to apply the recently published JWC OPFOR Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), which incorporates lessons from past exercises and formalizes the approach for planning and executing OPFOR. TRJL 15 validated the importance of identifying the OPFOR leadership early within the planning process in order to collaborate and maintain synergy with scenario and MEL/MIL development. Further, assigning the Chief and Deputy OPFOR as a MEL/MIL Event Manager and Deputy respectively ensured vital ownership and oversight of scripted OPFOR activity.

During Phase IIIB, the OPFOR core leadership was augmented by personnel from both JWC and external organizations to represent the "Arnland Popular Front" along functional lines. This included a dedicated Subject Matter Expert within the OPFOR Cell to replicate the information operations and media capabilities of the adversary. The scope, pace,

and complexity of the information environment continues to evolve, and enhancing that capability within the OPFOR added depth and rigor for the benefit of the Training Audience.

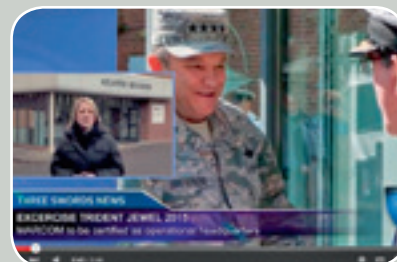
FINALLY, TRJL 15's success was a result of the collaborative efforts of all of JWC's professionals, joined by numerous EXCON augmentees, focused on providing MARCOM with an exercise aimed directly at Commander MARCOM's stated intent. NATO's Maritime Command can confidently move forward knowing that if it were called to lead a joint operation in the future, it would be far better prepared to do so after having endured the challenges presented during TRIDENT JEWEL 15. Likewise, JWC can move forward confidently with a renewed understanding of the challenges inherent in creating demanding exercise environments within crisis response settings as it looks ahead to the exercises TRIDENT JAGUAR 16, TRIDENT JET 16, and beyond. ✦

"Exercise TRIDENT JEWEL 15 will test the Mission Essential Task List of the Allied Maritime Command as part of NATO's overall efforts to ensure its readiness in order to meet the challenges at speed and with capable forces," said the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), General Philip M. Breedlove during a visit to HQ MARCOM on 24 March. Here, JWC's Laura Loflin DuBois conducted an interview with SACEUR for a special edition of the "Three Swords News":

**On TRJE 15:** "What we have been talking about in NATO for some time now is how we change the Alliance as we came out of Afghanistan, where we had a focus for many years on the counter-insurgency fight. And, before the crisis in Ukraine, we knew that we would have to adapt NATO, and focus on our Article 5 Collective Defence. And now, as we have seen how the balance of trust in Europe has changed, these exercises are even more important. There are individual HQs like MARCOM and others, bringing themselves to this skill level and not only trained at it, but also be evaluated at it, so that we can count on them."

**On security:** "The security architecture in Europe is now very different. (...) We expected that the days of nation states changing their international borders by force was gone. But now we see that it is not the case. So, we have to be ready. And, not only do we have to be ready to do the job, but we have to do it at speed. We need to be able to rapidly project power or rapidly establish Command and Control so that we can guarantee the Article 5 Collective Defence."

**On JWC:** "We are stepping our game up and asking for more as Strategic Commanders because our Alliance has to have these skills. The job is tough, but [you] will make it work. Thank you to the team that put together the exercise; obviously we cannot do this without the really capable people who understand not only what it takes to train, but also how to exercise and certify."



Watch the complete video on [YOUTUBE.COM/USER/JWCNATO](https://www.youtube.com/user/JWCNATO).

# Ready, steady

Co-written with third-person point of view  
by Paul Sewell and Dameon Schofield  
Joint Warfare Centre



## SMC4 and NCIA Off-Site: an example of JWC's culture in action

JWC exercises rely heavily on Computer Information Systems (CIS) support. This computer-networked infrastructure is essential for both the execution and realism of the exercise. While this support often appears seamless to most exercise participants, there is, in fact, a great deal of hard work and flexibility by those who do the actual work. Two of the main contributors are the JWC SMC4 C4 Event Support Section and the NCIA's local NCST Squadron. Although working for two different organizations, they are continually coordinating their efforts. For this reason, members from each organization conducted an off-site on January 20 and 21 at the Vatne military camp. The purpose of this two-day programme was to bring the two teams closer together to improve their common work practices in the preparation and execution of JWC exercises.

The two entities had already tried to resolve some lasting issues regarding their outputs in the past, but struggled to find a solution. This was due to a number of factors, one

of which was that they represent different entities (JWC and NCIA), with different areas of focus. In recognition of this, something needed to improve. This off-site initiative was driven internally from both parties and was supported by Mr Paul Sewell, a Lessons Learned analyst and the lead facilitator for the JWC's One Team Cultural Programme. He drove the first day's programme by focusing on the parts of JWC's organizational culture programme, which were most relevant to the issue at hand. This included the concepts of "Assuming Positive Intent", "Levels of Listening", "Being Here Now" as well as an awareness of our own blind spots and filters. All were delivered in an engaging manner where the participants were actively encouraged to take part.

For the second part of the day, the participants then worked together on the team alignment process, in which they worked to bring the participants to a tangible set of actions that they could implement to improve their interactions.

Day two kept building on this by focusing on the development of specific

outputs relevant to their daily work, but this time by going through the filter of cultural concepts. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Acting as one team, they were able to collaborate on their CIS Support Plan, a key document making sure their work is heading in the direction of all JWC exercises. Mr Dameon Schofield, one of the main organizers of the day and JWC's lead cultural coach said, "The work we achieved today, we could not have done before. We were a different group of people today compared to when we tried to resolve issues months ago. What really helped was the focus on these cultural concepts."

United States Army Colonel William Jones from SMC4 said, "Our strength is in our diversity — no question. However, that diversity often drives a requirement that special attention be paid to synchronizing plans and operations. This requires close coordination and teamwork. This event was a unique team-building opportunity. In the last two days we have been able to develop or refine systems and processes that will help us to deliver uninterrupted support for exercises and training. As a senior leader, I am interested in production — in a concrete deliverable. And, we have already seen tangible results from this event."

Lieutenant Colonel Atle Kjosnes, Commander NCST, also commented on the programme. "During exercises our two organizations are working very closely together with a common objective of providing the required CIS support to the event," he said. "A successful delivery is heavily dependent on the planning process. The cultural shaping part of the off-site is a key enabler in the effort to create a One Team approach to planning and provisioning of CIS support to exercises. Such a workshop really adds value to the teamwork and is something I would consider for all NCST staff." Overall, this is one exciting example of the JWC's culture in action and plans are made to follow up again later in the year. ✦



COMMUNICATION MATTERS

SPOTLIGHT

SHAPE's StratCom vision statement is to put information strategy at the heart of all levels of policy, planning and implementation, and then, as a fully integrated part of the overall effort, ensure the development of practical and effective strategies that make a real contribution to success.

The following pages investigate NATO's achievements in the field of StratCom since 2007.

With the article "Implementing StratCom" on page 39, the author, Lieutenant Colonel Lothar Buyny examines StratCom as a developing function and process. On page 45, Dr Thomas Elkjer Nissen explores the role of social media in global politics and contemporary conflicts. In the article on page 50, Dr Steve Tatham describes that "understanding the audience" is an imperative pre-requisite for success. On page 54, Lieutenant Colonel (Rtd.) Rita LePage gives us an insight into NATO StratCom Centre of Excellence and its Programme of Work. On page 58, Mr Mark Laity, NATO's foremost figure in the field of communications and one of StratCom's main engineers, goes on to explore the globalization of information and the importance of Strategic Communications, and how these determine who is winning and who is losing in modern warfare.

We will round off by reciting his quote from an earlier issue of *The Three Swords*: "Shaping the information battlefield, which I call the new frontline, depends on matching actions and words; recognizing that every action sends a message, developing a capacity to manage information campaign, and finally, getting the commanders to value and use information as naturally as they value and use airpower."

# STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

"THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE RIGHT WORD AND THE ALMOST RIGHT WORD IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LIGHTNING AND A LIGHTNING BUG."

— MARK TWAIN

# IMPLEMENTING STRATCOM

By Lieutenant Colonel Lothar Buyny

German Army

Information Operations and StratCom Programme Manager  
NATO Allied Command Transformation

STRATCOM

**I**N THE PAST, the information exchange and opinion building outside family and social structures happened through traditional channels, such as the radio, TV and print media. The focus was on local and regional news as the media was targeting an audience within a certain geographic area. In addition, media technology had not yet seen its great age, which was the main reason why large demographics were being left out of reach. As a result, the information environment was divided into small, fragmented environments with limited or no connection. In other words, people were living in separate information environments. A newspaper article written by someone in Italy would not easily reach a U.S.-based reader. Likewise, an event taking place in the U.S. would have no or limited impact in India or Iran.

The expansion of satellite broadcasting and international news companies, such as the CNN, at least in the western world, changed

the dynamics and reach of global information. This effect, sometimes called the "CNN effect", was only a short phase towards the development of a globally interconnected information environment. The internet, and later on, social media further revolutionized communication; they have become the technical enablers of a globalized information environment. There are no longer limitations, except those enforced by the national governments. An event happening in the U.S. can reach an audience in Afghanistan immediately. A newspaper article written in France or Denmark may create protests in the streets of Tehran and Cairo, which in turn can be seen momentarily on YouTube, worldwide. Today, it is not only the internet that connects the world, smartphones also have their impact. Citizen journalism could not imagine a life without smartphones, which enable users to upload information, pictures and videos on to media platforms available worldwide. In other words, there are no longer blind spots

and every action can be witnessed by anyone, anywhere, and at any time.

## **How has NATO dealt with this technical and behavioral global shift?**

NATO has specialized communication functions to interact with and inform audiences. Public Diplomacy (PD) and Public Affairs (PA) are the names of the functions that inform nations and audiences timely and transparently. Building and maintaining truthful relationships to relevant organisations (e.g. the EU or UN), the international media, and to audiences and stakeholders, is key in order to gain support in western democracies. Moreover, NATO makes an important distinction between domestic or home audiences and target audiences in theatre, such as local populations or adversaries. In theatres, troops have to interact with the local populations as well as with the adversaries. The aim is to *influence* them and change



"TODAY, STRATCOM IS ONE OF THE TOP FIVE TRAINING OBJECTIVES  
IN MOST NATO EXERCISES."

## NATO STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

The **coordinated** and **appropriate** use of NATO communications activities and capabilities — Public Diplomacy, Public Affairs, Military Public Affairs, Information Operations and Psychological Operations, as appropriate — in support of Alliance policies, operations and activities, and in order to advance NATO's aims.

NATO Strategic Communications Policy, 29 September 2009

HQ MARCOM photo by Sergeant Artigues/French Air Force.

certain attitudes and behaviours in order to achieve results, but the overall goal of this kind of communication is to reduce casualties and set the conditions for a peace process through dialogue. The military functions that perform these tasks are the Information Operations (Info Ops) and Psychological Operations (PsyOps).

WITH TODAY'S information environment, it is not possible to separate audiences (domestic vs. in theatre), which in turn might effect the consistency of the messages being conveyed and create different perceptions with unintended consequences. Today, all activities appear in a *single information environment at the same time* and therefore need to be fully synchronized and integrated with each other in order to avoid messages to be misunderstood or contradictory. A PsyOps leaflet in Afghanistan (very tactical and specific) can be compared to other NATO stories and activities in the internet momentarily. Similarly, a press release by NATO HQ can have an immediate impact in a small village in theatre. The inability to properly integrate all messag-

ing, including kinetic activities, can potentially lead to misunderstandings and misinterpretations within different contexts. To minimize this risk, we need to put an effort into ensuring consistency in the stories that we distribute, so as not to damage the credibility with our audiences worldwide. This is a challenge shared by all NATO communication functions. NATO's adversaries fully understand the information environment and sometimes it even serves as their main battlefield, often with success. As former U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates said in 2007 "we are being out-communicated by a guy in a cave."

PERCEPTIONS AND NARRATIVES are at the centre of every successful operation. NATO's challenge is to understand the different opinions, perceptions and patterns of communication that lie within relevant groups in order to better frame and match own operations and communications. By doing this, we will achieve the envisioned communication effect or create the right perception. Understanding human opinion building and behaviour is difficult, but important to know.

In addition to the challenges mentioned earlier, coordinating five different specialized communications functions from the political level down to the smallest tactical unit seems to be almost impossible to achieve for an organization consisting of 28 different nations with different languages and communication patterns.

Adversaries possessing lean organizational structures are very agile and can adapt methods of communication with which they can reach and influence their supporters and neutral populations effectively. Looking at the future, it is crucial that NATO possesses the capability to better communicate its intentions and reasons for engaging in a mission as well as explaining what it is doing. But, how do we transform the Alliance?

In 2009, the NATO Secretary General initiated a Transformation process, issuing a policy on Strategic Communications (StratCom). Further guidance on the development and implementation of StratCom was delivered by the Military Committee (MC) concept on StratCom in 2010. Ultimately, Allied Command Operations (ACO) and Allied Command







**Above:** Traditional media and citizen journalists working together — communications landscape gets more complex each day with social media, but the real potential lies in support of civil society and the public sphere. The NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg arriving in Paris to attend the "Unity Rally" to pay tribute to the victims of the terrorist attacks in Paris, 11 January 2015. Photograph by NATO.

Transformation (ACT) were tasked by the MC in 2011 to start a StratCom implementation process (StratCom Capability Implementation Plan, CIP). As it stands, the CIP is the centrepiece of ACT's StratCom Development and Implementation Programme today.

### What is StratCom?

StratCom is first and foremost a mindset and will not necessarily supersede or replace the existing communication functions. With StratCom — Public Diplomacy, Public Affairs, Military Public Affairs, Information Operations and Psychological Operations — are being integrated by an overarching process created to achieve better coordination, which will result in unified messaging. Keeping in mind the many different responsibilities, mindsets and tasks, the goal is to inform and/or influence audiences in theatre while maintaining our credibility. In a nutshell, this will help us to avoid misunderstandings and misinterpretations, for example in social media, or any contradictions in our messaging, especially when taken out of context. StratCom is NATO's answer to this challenge. By coordinating the

communications functions within operations, messages will become more unified. And, if commanders are advised on how their operations may impact the perceptions of different groups, they will be able to reach better decisions and achieve the integration of words and deeds. The NATO StratCom Concept and Capability Implementation Plan has defined nine essential capabilities needed in order to reach an effective StratCom:

1. The ability to coordinate NATO and coalition force information and communications activities with other military actions and to shape the battlespace and maximize desired effects on selected audiences;
2. The ability to coordinate NATO and coalition information and communications activities with the efforts of other agencies and partners within the context of a broader NATO strategy, and in accordance with the Comprehensive Approach Action Plan;
3. The ability to access, produce and maintain information and knowledge of the perceptions, attitudes, behaviours and beliefs of potential audiences;

4. The ability to access, produce and maintain updated information and knowledge of complex social communication systems, taking into consideration the characteristics of various media agencies;
5. The ability to detect, monitor, translate and assess the effects of the StratCom efforts on stakeholders — whether friendly, neutral or adversarial;
6. The ability to estimate how direct and indirect actions and signals potentially could effect the perceptions, attitudes, behaviours, beliefs and actions of certain audiences;
7. The ability to develop and disseminate timely and culturally-attuned messages based on narratives (including spokespersonship);
8. The ability to quickly develop and disseminate information designed to change the attitude of, or influence, certain audiences;
9. The ability to document NATO and coalition force operations and exercises, and to disseminate this information in real or near-real time.

Some of these capabilities already exist within NATO, but only in stovepipe processes and





agencies that are not fully integrated. ACT is leading NATO's Transformation in order to ensure that all these capabilities are developed and fully implemented to the benefit of NATO as a whole, and the nations.

### **How exactly does ACT lead Transformation and make StratCom more efficient?**

ACT leads the transformation towards a more effective StratCom approach by collecting best practices, lessons identified and lessons learned, through exercises and multinational experimentation events. With these efforts, StratCom core processes are developed and, more importantly, codified through a StratCom handbook (Spring 2015). Together with ACO and other partners, ACT recently collected and introduced useful and applicable tools and templates to support StratCom coordination and advice processes, such as the Narrative Development Tool or a system to better assess the information environment in its relevant dimensions. ACT is indeed collaborating with a network of stakeholders and

partners from within and outside NATO. For example, the multinational experimentation project MCDC (Multinational Capability Development Campaign) developed concepts on StratCom implementation and social media, while the MNIOE (Multinational Information Operations Experiment) worked on a Narrative Development Tool. Additionally, a systematic review was developed to assess the information environment as part of a German-led project during MNIOE. Through this kind of collaboration, ACT can reach out and utilize NATO nations and other partner nations (Australia, Austria, Sweden, Finland, Japan), relevant organisations, such as the EU, as well as academia and think tanks. This smart approach fosters a common understanding of StratCom and parallel implementation on all levels and by all nations and partners.

### **What are some of the products and projects?**

ACT organises different workshops and seminars, from stakeholder meetings with NATO's leading StratCom experts and senior advisors

at strategic level to process development workshops (e.g. for the StratCom handbook) for both NATO and national experts. As a result, several NATO policies and doctrines, including the Info Ops or PsyOps, were updated and adjusted to better match the StratCom approach.

A milestone towards a sustainable StratCom evolution and implementation was the accreditation of a NATO StratCom Centre of Excellence (StratCom CoE) in Riga, Latvia, in September 2014. ACT assisted Latvia through the accreditation process and coordination of the Programme of Work (POW). The StratCom CoE encompasses the communications functions of PA, Info Ops and PsyOps and strives to reach a common understanding and better collaboration between them.

Additionally, the StratCom handbook will be signed by ACT and ACO as a "draft for use" in Spring 2015. The handbook explains state-of-the-art processes and tools to facilitate the StratCom approach, as well as four years' work of development and experimentation. It introduces, for example, three different organizational StratCom models for operational level commands and it also describes in detail possible mechanisms, working groups and meetings within a command's battle rhythm to achieve better coordination and synchronization of information activities.

Achieving a clearly defined under-

ULTIMATELY, THE NATO STRATCOM WILL BECOME A MORE COMPREHENSIVE, INCLUSIVE AND INTEGRATED APPROACH, ENCOMPASSING ALL EXISTING COMMUNICATION FUNCTIONS.





standing of processes through training is a precondition for an effective and sustainable implementation of StratCom. ACT led the programme to develop a StratCom Strategic Training Plan (STP) that was submitted to NATO HQ in January 2015. The StratCom STP encompasses Public Diplomacy, PA, Military PA, Info Ops and PsyOps in a single document. What drives this approach is the idea that a more comprehensive and inclusive view on training will ultimately foster a common understanding and reduce stovepipe thinking and will ultimately lead to smarter training solutions.

Inaugurated in 2013 at the NATO school in Oberammergau, Germany, the NATO Senior Official StratCom Familiarization Course is a success story, judging from the positive criticism and high demand. Far more than 100 senior staff officers and some communications personnel were introduced to the StratCom principles and understanding through this course. All these products and activities are only the beginning of a transition towards a more effective StratCom approach.

### What is the role of exercises for StratCom's development?

Exercises are vital for the introduction and testing of new and improved processes and tools. They are a safe test-bed that allows mistakes

and gathers lessons identified. Once processes and tools have demonstrated their potential, exercises play a major role in their implementation. Staffs can be trained in using the new processes and techniques, while gaining their own learning experiences. Successful collective training can foster by far more confidence than classroom lectures. Exercises can also convince staffs to change their routine by applying new tools and processes.

For StratCom testing and implementation, ACT took part in the Swedish VIKING exercise and in NATO's STEADFAST JAZZ exercise in 2013. VIKING was used by the MCDC project to implement a StratCom process and information strategy on the strategic level with a strong emphasis on Comprehensive Approach. The ACT team made use of the lessons identified when adjusting some of the tools and processes for NATO StratCom. Especially, exercise STEADFAST JAZZ 13 showcased insufficient common understanding of StratCom within the NATO commands as well as underlined inefficient processes and tools. The StratCom policy and concept simply did not provide enough practical guidelines for direct application. Similarly, designated StratCom personnel had no reference documents or practitioner training. These issues laid the basis for developing the StratCom handbook.

Last but not least, ACT will use TRI-



STRATCOM

"Through the use of our media simulation platforms, including television news, print media and social media simulation, we are able to create a highly realistic and challenging media environment for the Training Audiences at JWC," said Pete DuBois from JWC's Media Simulation Section. "Additionally, our media training is a unique opportunity for them to gain practical on-camera experience delivering key messages in support of their operation. We expose them to two different types of TV interviews, each followed by honest feedback and some constructive criticism. During the execution phase, we put their media handling skills to the ultimate test."

#### Photographs:

**Top, from left:** Vice Admiral P D Hudson, CB CBE, Commander MARCOM, TRJL 15. Photograph by MARCOM PAO. Live TV Studio, JWC. A press conference with Major General Nick Welsh during TRJR 15, photograph by Sergeant Mike O'Neill; a press conference during TRJL 15, photograph by MARCOM PAO; Pete and Laura DuBois.



Aligning the full range of communications resources  
**to achieve consistent communications**  
 on the political down to the tactical level.



U.S. live fire training with M1A2 Abrams battle tanks at the Adazi military base, Riga, Latvia, 7 March 2015. Photograph by NATO.

DENT JUNCTURE 2015 and, maybe also TRIDENT JUNCTURE 16, to test, revise and implement all StratCom processes, as described in the StratCom handbook. Thanks to the Joint Warfare Centre (JWC), the new exercise scenario, SOROTAN, has been made to reflect today's information environment, which allows staffs to be challenged in a realistic way in line with the current situation.

**What effects (ultimate results) were achieved so far?**

Over the last years, reviewed policies and doctrines as well as training and multinational experimentation changed the understanding of StratCom amongst the related communications functions. In 2014, the Strategic Commands (ACO and ACT) organized and conducted a NATO conference series gathering all NATO working groups and conferences for PA, Info Ops and PsyOps under the umbrella of StratCom in Split, Croatia. The success of this "joint" event showed an increased understanding of teamwork and cooperation between the different independent functions. Most importantly, the leadership continues to highlight the necessity of a properly imple-

mented StratCom approach. Both commanders and their staffs would like to see an efficient StratCom that supports their mission and objectives. Significantly, all NATO HQs and smaller commands have established StratCom elements and processes as part of their organizational structures. In the near future, we will see evolutions and adaptations in some of the commands in order to create more efficient StratCom-related structures.

The idea of crafting and implementing narratives that drive planning and execution of actions is growing. Narratives must align words and deeds that will help the Alliance maintain its credibility. Today, StratCom is one of the top five training objectives in most NATO exercises. And the exercise scenarios take into account the implications of modern communications and social media. This ensures that Training Audiences can be properly challenged with up-to-date and realistic scenarios.

The newly established StratCom Centre of Excellence will contribute to foster a common understanding of StratCom and to implement new processes and tools that match with the real world challenges. The StratCom Centre of Excellence has already delivered

very useful and relevant studies on the crisis in Ukraine. The findings gave NATO a thorough understanding, which again made it possible to reach decisions at the strategic level.

TO SUM UP, StratCom is still a young, developing function and process, and the implementation has just started. There will be friction during its development and implementation phases, as people often do not want to change. But, ultimately, the NATO StratCom approach will become a more comprehensive, inclusive and integrated approach, encompassing all existing communication functions, simply because the modern information environment demands a quick, reliable, and efficient process in order to achieve consistent communications on the political down to the tactical level. ✦

"THE GREATEST VICTORY IS THAT WHICH REQUIRES NO BATTLE." — SUN TZU, THE ART OF WAR

By Thomas Elkjer Nissen, M.A.  
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## #GetUsedToLosingControl

# SOCIAL MEDIA, STRATEGIC NARRATIVES AND STRATCOM



STRATCOM

**N**ATO Strategic Communications (StratCom) has evolved a great deal in recent years. Several of the policies and doctrines governing the communication disciplines contained in the StratCom definition have been revised, and new core documents are being developed to even further establish StratCom as a core function in NATO policies and operations. This applies to Public Affairs (PA), Psychological Operations (PsyOps), and Information Operations (Info Ops) alike. Furthermore, work on a StratCom handbook is underway and processes have been initiated to draft both a Military Committee (MC) policy for StratCom and a military doctrine for Operational Security (OPSEC) and Military Deception (MILDEC).

These revisions and developments are derived from lessons identified from the Afghanistan mission (ISAF) and the current crisis in Ukraine, amongst others. One common factor in all this is the integration of the concept of "Strategic Narratives" in policy and doctrine. Another factor is that of how to adapt to new technologies that affect the information environment and the social media in particular.

There are still several challenges associated with the latter. These include issues with planning authorities and command and control, and not least, on how to control the narrative and associated messaging in a profoundly uncontrollable domain. Here is where the concept of empowerment, or "mission command" to use the military jargon, (*and also coping with the fact that "having less control" in certain situations*), come into play.

Dr Neil Verrall from the UK Defence Science and Technology Laboratory also questions whether "military commanders fully understand and appreciate the range of activities where social media could provide added value and demonstrate operational impact,"<sup>(1)</sup> implying that military organisations, such as NATO, still have some work ahead of them. What, then, is the consequence of applying a novel concept, such as the Strategic Narrative in a social media domain for which there is no definite agreement on policy and doctrine, while at the same time dealing with those expectations for maintaining control over the messaging?

In an era of media convergence that makes the flow of content across multiple social media channels and platforms almost inevita-

ble, it is important to look at the characteristics and definition of social media in order to fully understand its role in StratCom and how it is used. It is also beneficial to take a look at the evolving methods of Cross Media Communication (CMC) and how Strategic Narratives are projected in social media, and consequently, how these two concepts can contribute to understanding the military use of social media in modern conflicts. So as not to confuse them, let us first examine these two concepts of social media — Strategic Narratives and Cross Media Communication — within the context of StratCom and attempt to identify solutions.

### **#SocialMedia #CrossMedia — a game changer?**

As social media evolves, and its usage changes and expands, so do its characteristics. This is in part due to the fact that social media is linked to technologies and platforms that enable connectivity and creation of interactive web content as well as collaboration and exchange among participants, the public and the media.

As platforms and software change, so do their functions and the ways in which we utilize them. Nonetheless, it is possible to



single out certain fundamental characteristics thereof. Social media is comprised of online technologies and practices that people use to share content, opinions, insights, experiences, and perspectives as well as media. It is characterised by easy access, global reach, and the rapid (near to real time) flow of multimedia information. This results in an aggregation of users with common interests who are able to conduct one-to-one and one-to-many two-way conversations. Social media has virtually an unlimited reach with respect to time and space, providing an effective platform to conveniently aggregate common interests across a broad demographic spectrum. This includes new aggregated network configurations, which might not have crossed, had it not been for social media. This, in turn, allows for the emergence of new and different types of (target) audiences. Social media is, in other words, media for social interaction, and can therefore also be utilized to inform and influence.

Furthermore, it is inexpensive to develop and maintain an online presence, which thereby reduces the common barriers for wide-spread technology. Social media can be accessed from other inexpensive platforms, such as mobile telephones and other mobile devices. These platforms have an inherent tendency to spread and become available to large groups of people, including people



The author at the StratCom Conference in Croatia. Photograph by Henry Plimack.

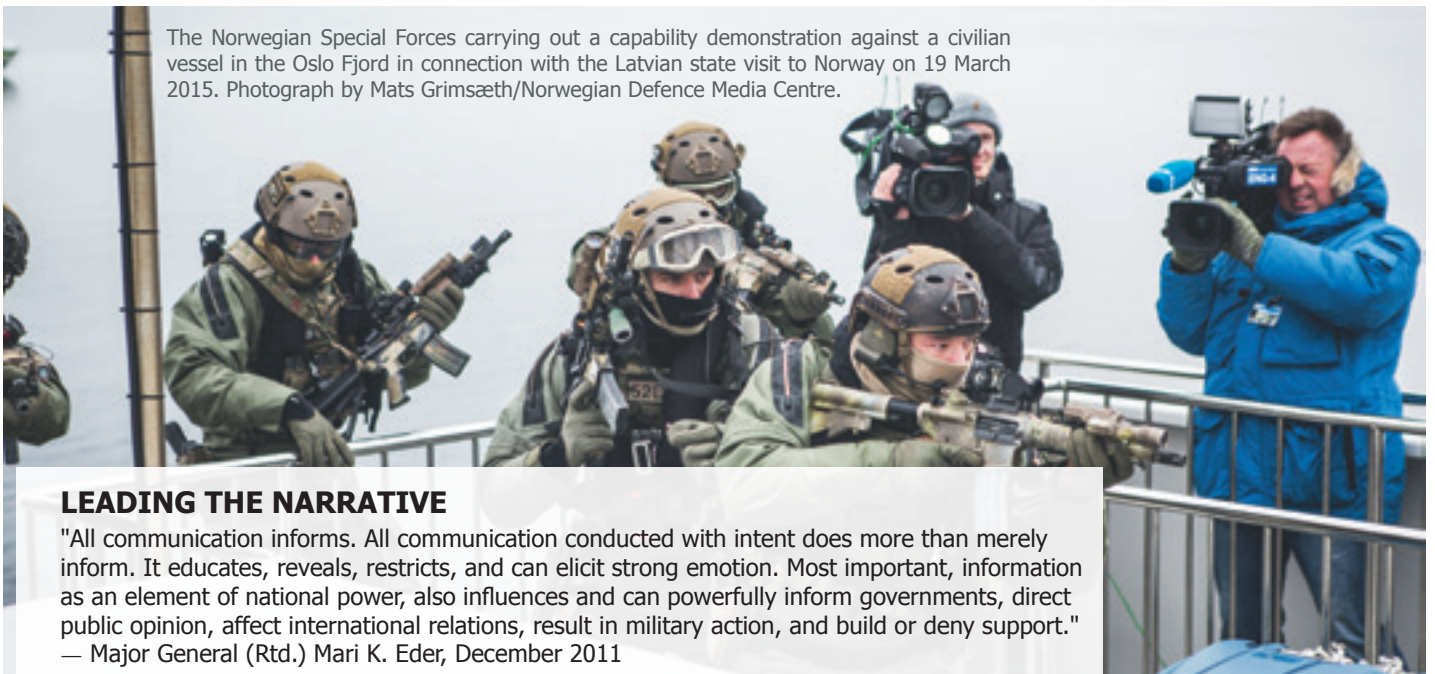
in areas with otherwise limited resources, such as those in developing countries and conflict areas. Social media, therefore, allows for information and commentaries to reach a broader audience, bypassing geographical limitations, making it one of the most permeating features of the global information environment. Other characteristics include its potential for automation, repetition of information and permutation of content and the creation of User Generated Content (UGC) based on "self"-generated content as well as on other users' updates, postings, tweets etc. over various combinations of channels. Social media also opens up possibilities for

anonymity, impersonation, and distortion of content to such a degree that it (intentionally) misrepresents the original intent.<sup>(2)</sup> All of these characteristics help us to define social media in a military context such as the one below:

"Social network media refers to internet connected platforms and software used to collect, store, aggregate, share, process, discuss or deliver user-generated and general media content, that can influence knowledge and perceptions and thereby directly or indirectly prompt behaviour as a result of social interaction within networks."<sup>(3)</sup>

DESPITE THE FACT that social media is an integral part of the information environment, it has been a subject of debate in NATO for years. The question is: does it really present anything new for the Alliance? Most would probably say no, but this is about where the agreement ends. NATO continues to debate over fundamental issues that would allow for clear policy and doctrine concerning social media. Is it an "information activity" in its own right, or nothing more than a new communication platform? Who has planning authority and where does it sit in the Operational Planning Process, and, in order to achieve which effects? Is social media to be used only to monitor, inform, and influence, or perhaps more?

The Norwegian Special Forces carrying out a capability demonstration against a civilian vessel in the Oslo Fjord in connection with the Latvian state visit to Norway on 19 March 2015. Photograph by Mats Grimsæth/Norwegian Defence Media Centre.

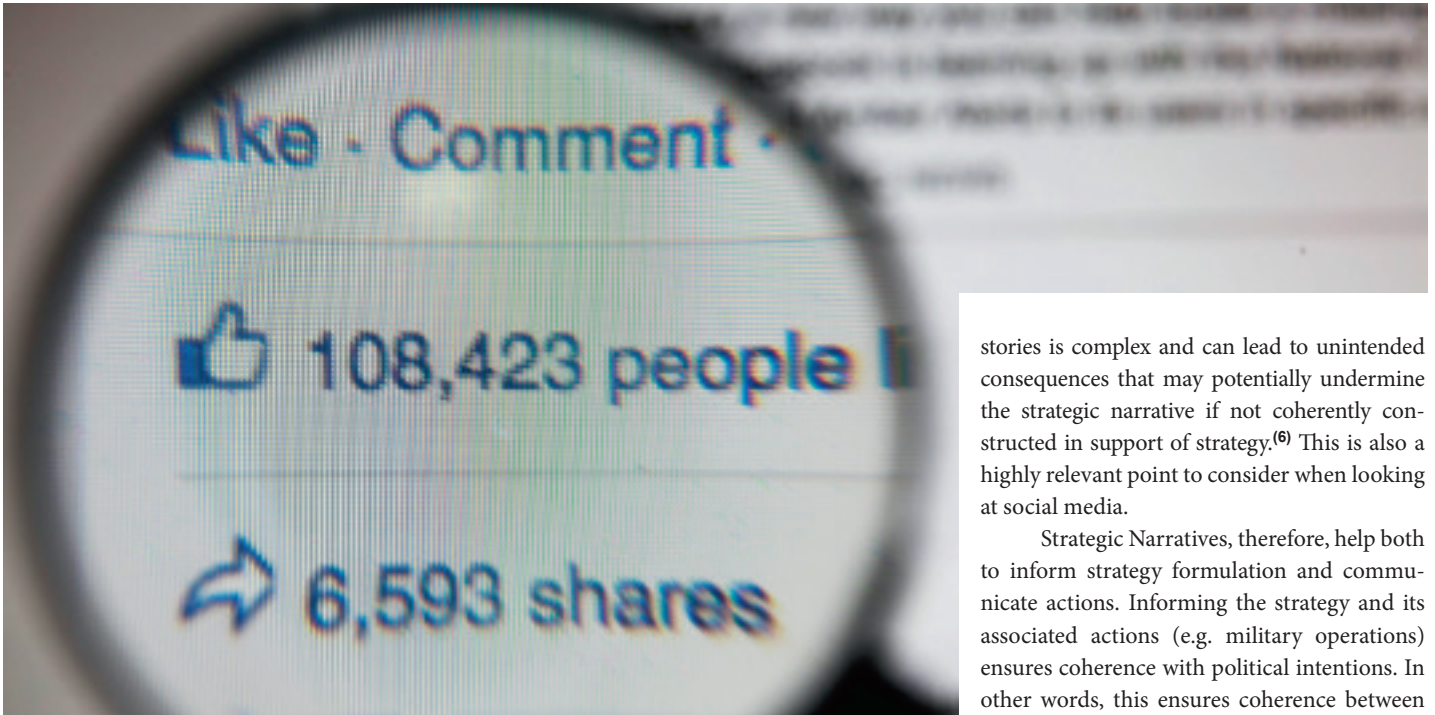


## LEADING THE NARRATIVE

"All communication informs. All communication conducted with intent does more than merely inform. It educates, reveals, restricts, and can elicit strong emotion. Most important, information as an element of national power, also influences and can powerfully inform governments, direct public opinion, affect international relations, result in military action, and build or deny support."  
 — Major General (Rtd.) Mari K. Eder, December 2011



NATO CONTINUES TO DEBATE OVER FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES THAT WOULD ALLOW FOR CLEAR POLICY AND DOCTRINE CONCERNING SOCIAL MEDIA. IS IT AN INFORMATION ACTIVITY IN ITS OWN RIGHT, OR IS IT TO BE USED TO INFLUENCE, OR PERHAPS MORE?



One thing is for sure: although social media challenges the traditional, doctrinal firewalls between others, PA and PsyOps are still maintained in the current policy. One could, in fact, argue that this "division of labour" becomes increasingly artificial with the convergence of various social media platforms and audiences. So, social media should therefore be viewed in the broader framework of StratCom and employed in line with the Strategic Narrative.

### Strategic Communications and Strategic Narratives

As previously mentioned, several of the policies and doctrines governing NATO communication disciplines are either currently undergoing revision, or have recently been revised. A major factor here is the introduction of the concept of Strategic Narratives in policy as well as in doctrine. Strategic Narrative in NATO is now defined as: "A concise but comprehensive written statement of an organization's situation and purpose, which can stand on its own as the principle context to strategic planning

directives or be used to support the creation of individual, culturally attuned stories that will resonate with particular audiences and foster cohesion within the organization."<sup>(4)</sup>

Strategic Narratives can also be explained as "(...) a system of stories that share common themes, forms, events, and participants, and create expectations for how those elements can be assembled to satisfy a desire that is rooted on conflict."<sup>(5)</sup>

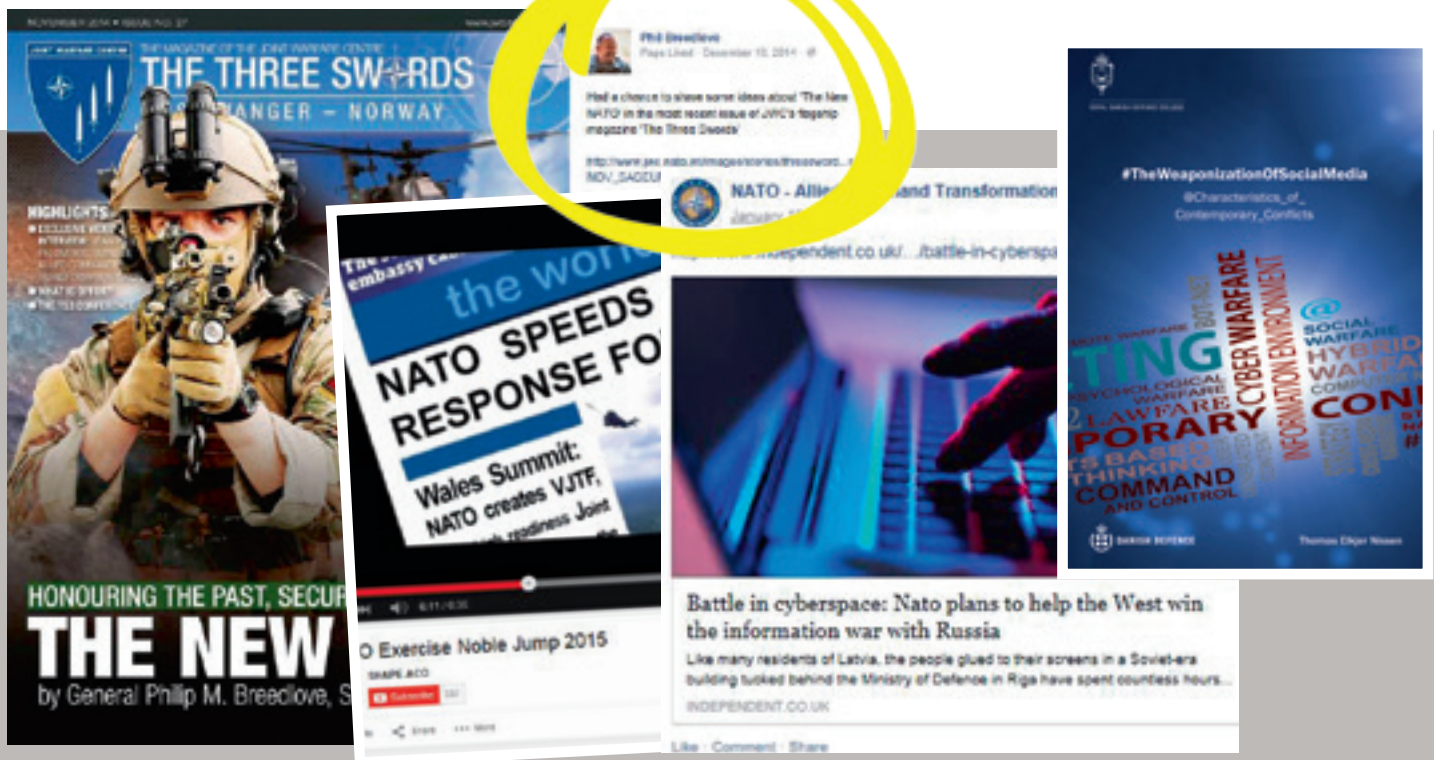
This approach to Strategic Narratives indicates that they are not just single stories, but several stories that together make up, or support the narrative. This factor is of particular importance when looking at narrative projection in social media, which we will return to later. Furthermore, this approach indicates that all actions taken as part of a strategy or operation are "storied", thereby becoming part of a larger, overarching strategic narrative, and that these actions also have communicative effect(s). It also stresses that the interaction between these

stories is complex and can lead to unintended consequences that may potentially undermine the strategic narrative if not coherently constructed in support of strategy.<sup>(6)</sup> This is also a highly relevant point to consider when looking at social media.

Strategic Narratives, therefore, help both to inform strategy formulation and communicate actions. Informing the strategy and its associated actions (e.g. military operations) ensures coherence with political intentions. In other words, this ensures coherence between words and deeds (even though the Strategic Narrative is normally constructed as an integral part of the strategy formulation process). Communication (through information activities) explains why the actor is actively involved in a conflict, which other entities the actor is up against, how the actor seeks to resolve the conflict, or what the actor hopes to achieve. Thus, the basic concept of a Strategic Narrative is that it offers a framework through which information activities that explain the conflicts' past, present, and future can be structured.

However, an actor cannot hope to have a monopoly on telling the story. There is a competition between the Strategic Narratives of several actors involved in a given conflict. As also noted in a UK military doctrine on Strategic Communication: "In the global information environment it is very easy for competing narratives also to be heard. Some may be deliberately combative — our adversaries for example, or perhaps hostile media. Where our narrative meets the competing narratives is referred to as the 'battle of narratives', although the reality is that this is an enduring competition rather than a battle with winners and losers."<sup>(7)</sup>





**The power of social media:** Screen captures from various NATO social media platforms. From left: SACEUR's personal Facebook page where he "shared" JWC's The Three Swords magazine; a video on SHAPE's YouTube channel about exercise NOBLE JUMP that talks about Very High Readiness Joint Task Force; an article from British Independent newspaper about cyber warfare, shared on ACT's Facebook page. Also included above is the book written by Dr Nissen, the author, titled: "The Weaponization of Social Media", which can be downloaded online.

Strategic Narratives should therefore focus on alternative futures, based in the present situation and informed by the past, taking the audiences' current views and expectations into account (existing narratives), rather than focusing on the differences between the competing narratives. On the other hand, we may find existing narratives that relevant stakeholders (local or international) use as a framework to make sense of the world around them — existing narratives that the strategic narrative should both tap into and seek to influence, preferably in an emotional manner. Strategic Narratives are therefore used by actors as a tool through which they can articulate their interests, values and aspirations for the international system and to change the environment in which they operate, manage expectations, and extend their influence.<sup>(8)</sup> Essentially, narratives function as frameworks that allow people to make sense of the world, policies, events, and interactions.<sup>(9)</sup> As the strategic narrative is a "guiding" framework for information activities (e.g. PA, PsyOps etc.) and other actions, and not a piece of messaging in itself, it will be projected in individual — Target Audi-

ence Analysis-based — media products. These products could traditionally be, to some extent, controlled by the author or sender. This is by far always the case when using social media. Here, we have to look at other approaches to projecting our narrative, and we also have to expect others to have the ability to co-author our narrative.

**Cross-Media Narratives**

Cross-Media Narratives are stories projected through social media. They are different in character compared to the more classical, linear storytelling that has been symptomatic for StratCom and mainstream media. Bryan Alexander and Alan Levine also touch on this when they note that: "Today, with digital networks and social media, [this pattern] is changing. Stories are now open-ended, branching, hyperlinked, cross-media, participatory, and unpredictable. And, they are told in new ways: Web 2.0 storytelling picks up these new types of stories and run with them, accelerating the pace of creation and participation while revealing new directions for narratives to flow."<sup>(10)</sup> This is also evident

when looking at what Jeff Gomez defines as a trans-media narrative: "a process of conveying messages, themes, or storylines to a mass audience through the artful and well-planned use of multimedia platforms."<sup>(11)</sup>

Put differently, it is a question of a single narrative being supported by a story element or components told through different media. Cross-Media Narratives are, in essence, characterized by being centred on social media characteristics and supporting stories that are self-contained and smaller in scale. In another words, we might describe these stories as "micro-content". Each of these self-contained "micro-content" stories is able to project a core piece of the overall narrative either directly or indirectly. This is due in part to the fact that they are developed or designed to be re-distributed across multiple platforms, and also because they are specifically designed for social media. The fact that they are designed to be re-distributed across multiple social media platforms also results in audience participation and to some extent co-creation of the narrative through content-associated conversations, as it spreads throughout networks or goes viral. This





also includes # tagging and bookmarking the content so other networks or audiences can find the content and be exposed to the narrative or at least stand-alone, core parts of it. The narrative can also be distributed through hyper-texting, which again creates new ways of exposing the audience to the narrative. This also points to another characteristic of Cross-Media Narratives: distributed storytelling. The narrative's supporting stories are told through multiple sites or platforms and from different angles. This might involve either official accounts (e.g. Facebook or Twitter) and blogs or micro-content uploaded onto existing platforms in relevant networks or personal accounts.

This way of creating narratives in social media also, of course, involves risks. Audiences can, due to co-creation and UGC, alter the story and add content directly or through commenting or replying to the original story, thus altering the experience for other participants in the conversation. It is thereby possible to deprive the author of control over the narrative, at least partially. This, in turn, also affects the narrative as a framework for sense-making when the narrative and its supporting stories become open-ended as the "story-world" loses its boundaries. It, therefore, becomes hard to control just how far the story goes.<sup>(12)</sup>

We may also find challenges on a more technical level. For the most part, these come as a host of information design challenges as the individual story elements or components (text, images, video, audio and other media) all require different product development styles and have different production cultures assigned to them, as Jenkins et al. also highlight: "Each medium has its own affordances, its own systems of representation, its own strategies for producing and organizing knowledge. Participants in the new media landscape learn to navigate these different and sometimes

conflicting modes of representation and to make meaningful choices about the best ways to express their ideas in each context."<sup>(13)</sup>

This latter point often presents a challenge for more "linearly thinking" entities (e.g. PA, PsyOps, Info Ops) and organizations. Lastly, the question of how to maintain audience interest in a narrative scattered across multiple platforms and design is also a challenge when projecting a narrative in social media. Despite the challenges involved with working with Cross-Media Narratives in social media, it is still possible to create effects in support of the strategic narrative and the broader StratCom effort and still retain some control.

### **@ Narrative-led Operations — retaining (some) control**

Although developed for more traditional operational and communications planning, the concept of Narrative-led Operations may also be applied when it comes to "information activities" in order to create "information effects" in and through social media.

"Narrative-led Operations are the purposeful strategic narrative-led analysis, planning and execution of operations for the purpose of creating a clear linkage between the strategic intent and the campaign design in order to ensure that the words of the political level are matched by the deeds, images and words of the joint force."<sup>(14)</sup> It does, however, require appreciations (*appreciations is a military planning term for operational planning considerations: Ed.*) in regards to how staffs are organized and the processes governing their planning and execution of operations and activities in social media. When it comes to planning, communication planners need to think in cross-media terms and create hyper-linked, visual and highly emotional media products that are specifically tailored to the relevant social media platforms. These

media products also need to focus more on the general trend and accumulated impression left behind from multiple "micro-stories" and on controlling specific messages, when projecting the strategic narrative. A large part of these appreciations also has to do with the adaptation of organizational structure. This is necessary in order to enable them to cope with the requirements of narrow OODA (Observe, Orient, Decide, Act)-loops; agile, flexible and fast approval processes and mission command (empowerment), using the Strategic Narrative as a framework, as it is required to work effectively with social media in contemporary conflicts (both as a sensor and as an effector). This, however, will require a complete overhaul of NATO policy on social media. ✦

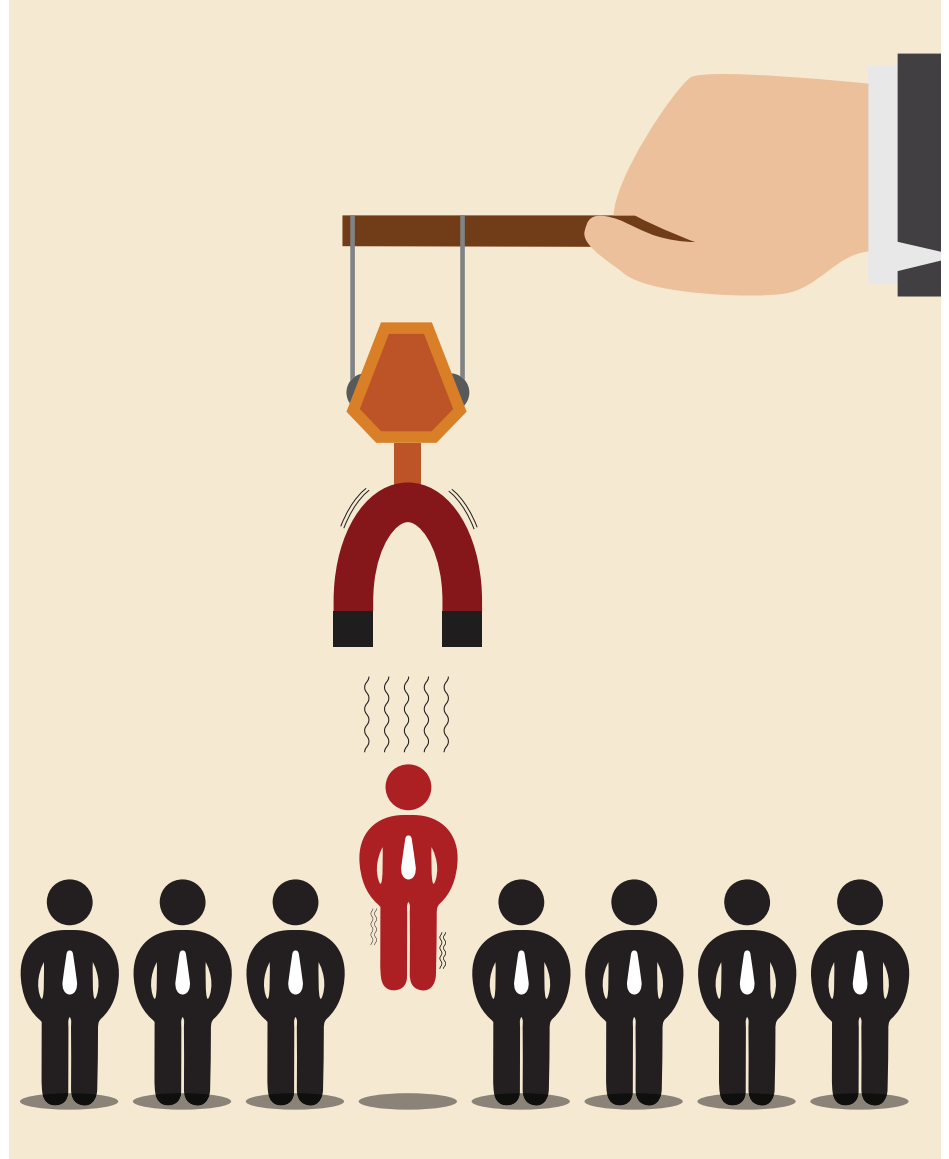
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NATO Riga Summit.

THERE EXISTS  
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# TARGET AUDIENCE ANALYSIS

By Cdr (Rtd.) Dr Steve Tatham Ph.D.  
Royal Navy  
StratCom and TAA Subject Matter Expert  
StratCom Centre of Excellence

**T**HERE is a great (and true) story about the inventor of the jet aircraft engine, Englishman Frank Whittle. Whittle, a Royal Air Force officer, took his first design for a jet engine to the British Government in 1929. It was turned down for funding on the grounds of impracticality (displaying the same long-term strategic vision that the British Admiralty showed in 1901, when they turned down a design for submarines, proclaiming them "underwater, underhand and damned *un-English*"). Thankfully, Whittle persevered, and in 1930,

he patented the design himself, having sunk all his personal funds into research. In 1934, with the patent up for renewal, he again applied for the British government sponsorship, and again he was declined. Luckily, he managed to raise £2,000 in private finance and continued his research. In 1937, after eight years of further research and development, he again offered the project to the British Government, which again declined to assist him. It was only in 1939 that a single government official, at personal risk to his career and reputation, backed Whittle's invention and lobbied in the corri-

dors of Whitehall for its funding. The result of all of this procrastination was that the British jet aircraft only finally entered operational service at the end of the Second World War but rather scarily, and very nearly, did not enter at all.

All very interesting but, so what? Well, one could just as equally apply this story to the tortuous journey that NATO and western Strategic Communications (StratCom) have taken over the last few years. Like Whittle's jet engine, the huge number of naysayers has nearly drowned the concept, which I think is incredible, con-



sidering its highly effective use by Russia in Crimea, and Da'esh (I refuse to call such murderous criminals "Islamic State") — in Iraq and Syria, not to mention its hugely ineffective use by NATO in Afghanistan, and the wider, so-called Global War on Terror.

But, StratCom has languished for some time now. In the United States, the term was even abandoned, albeit unilaterally, by George Little, then Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, who banned the term, proclaiming it has: "added a layer of staffing and planning that blurred roles and functions of traditional staff elements and resulted in confusion and inefficiencies."

Indeed, one of the problems for StratCom is that it has not really worked very well. NATO is currently undertaking a full review of ISAF's StratCom efforts in Afghanistan, which may well conclude that NATO (and western StratCom) were unhealthily wedded to advertising and marketing techniques (and companies) that costed a fortune and delivered, as the U.S. Government Audit Office (GAO) has observed, almost nothing of worth — aside from big profits for their shareholders.

As early as 2012, the U.S. GAO had concluded that: "the [U.S. StratCom] programs are inadequately tracked, their impact unclear, and the military doesn't know if it is targeting the right foreign audiences." What is needed now is a "divorce" and at last this is happening in the newly established Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Strategic Communications in Riga, Latvia, where the vision and focus are very much on the "audience" and its actual behaviour, not on the synchronisation across varied themes and perceptions. By courtesy of a CAD \$1-million donation to the StratCom CoE, the Centre will soon be an accredited training facility using Behavioural Dynamics Institute's "Target Audience Analysis Methodology" through a Train the Trainer Programme — a purpose-built NATO course developed and delivered by the Strategic Communications Laboratories Group (SCL) and Information Operations Training and Advisory Services Global (IOTA-Global) of London, UK.

Verified and validated by government scientific organizations globally, and coincidentally cited as best practice by the U.S. GAO, the TAA programme will be delivered by the UK company SCL, who have spent over \$40



"If there is one lesson that Afghanistan must drum into everyone in the NATO community it is that understanding the audience is not a nice to have but an imperative pre-requisite for success."

million and 25 years, developing this group behaviour prediction tool. In June and July of this year, upwards of 20 students from across the NATO Alliance will begin an eight-week training programme in Riga; Lesson 1, Day 1, Week 1 will explain to the assorted PsyOps, StratComers and Intelligence Analysts from across the NATO Alliance why attitudes are such poor precursors to behaviours and why trying to make the audience "love us" ("us" may be substituted by ISAF, KFOR, U.S., UK or NATO, etc.) using mass advertising techniques is destined to fail.

AT THE heart of TAA is the ability to empirically diagnose the exact groupings that exist within target populations. Knowing these groupings allows them to be ranked and the ranking depends upon the degree of influence they may have in either promoting or mitigating constructive behaviour. The methodology involves the comprehensive study of a social group of people. It examines this group of people across a host of psycho-social research parameters, and it does so in order to determine how best to change that group's behaviour.

Crucially, it goes much further than opinion polling, which can only examine attitudes. TAA is the decision-maker's tool, which will explain and forecast behaviour — and make scientifically justifiable recommendations to implement programmes to change problematic behaviours. Indeed, it is not simply research for the sake of greater understanding, but TAA achieves many of the crucial tasks that the planners require. Indeed, when undertaken properly, TAA employs innovative and rigorous primary research, drawing together qualitative, quantitative and other methods. This data is then triangulated with extensive expert elicitation and secondary re-

search. It builds up a detailed understanding of current behaviour, values, attitudes, beliefs and norms, and examines everything from whether a group feels in control of its life, to who they respect, and what radio stations they listen to. TAA can be undertaken covertly. Audience groups are not necessarily aware that they are the research subjects and government's role and/or third parties can be invisible. In short, it is a tried, tested and proven methodology.

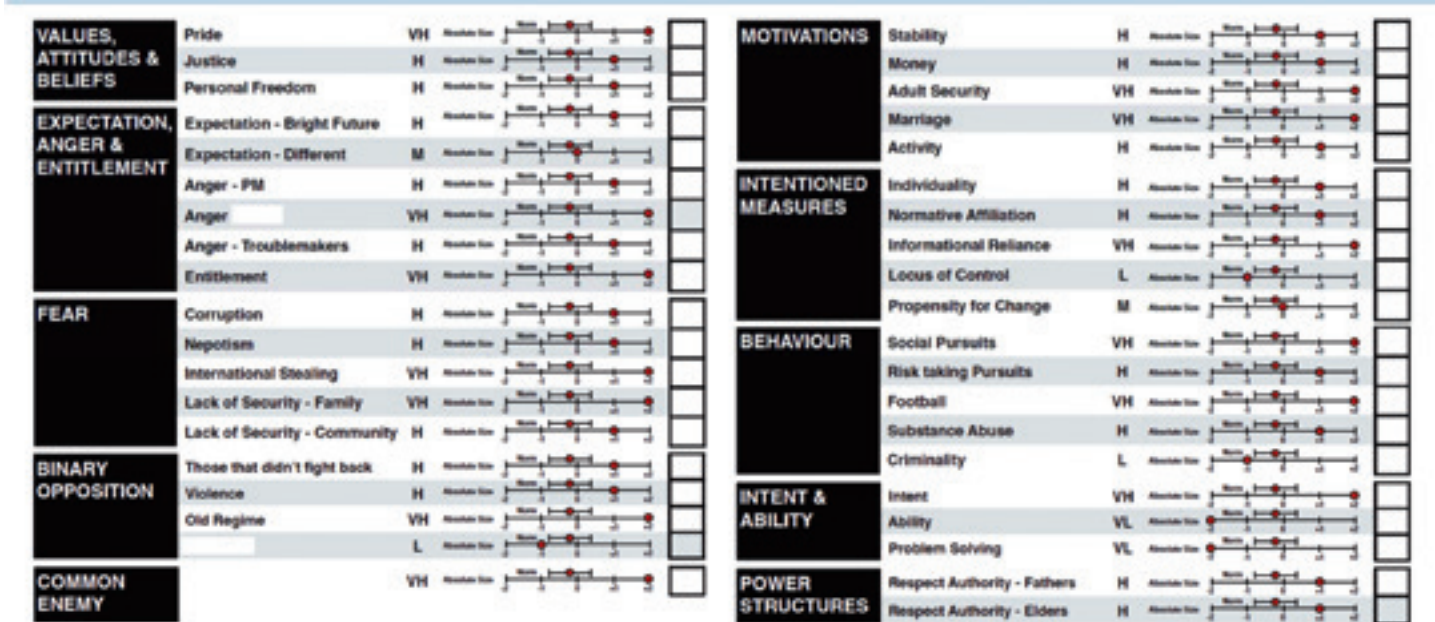
IF THERE is one lesson that Afghanistan must drum into everyone in the NATO community it is that understanding the audience is not a "nice to have" but an imperative pre-requisite for success. Matt Cavanagh was a special adviser to the UK Labour Party. In an article for the RUSI journal, he writes: "No one inside the British [government] system knew much about the insurgency, the opium trade, or the local politics and tribal dynamics — or, just as importantly, how these different elements fitted into each other. Planners and policy makers [in 2006] did not know much about the human or even physical geography of Helmand."

The Pentagon's paper *Five Lessons We Should Have Learned In Afghanistan* notes: "what deploying soldiers really need to learn is how and why Afghans do certain things," whilst retired British Army Captain Dr Mike Martin wrote in his book *An Intimate War: An Oral History Of The Helmand Conflict 1978-2012*, that "We [UK] often made the conflict worse, rather than better. This was usually as a result of the Helmandis' manipulating our ignorance (...) outsiders have most often misunderstood the struggle in Helmand."

TAA, therefore, aims to fill this Population Intelligence gap by constructing a robust profile of the audience and how it can be influenced by an appropriately conceived and



YOUNG UNMARRIED MALES PARAMETERS



deployed message campaign. One key feature of this approach is that messages are developed in a bottom-up fashion, with them being constructed from a process of measurement and research, and subsequently derived from reliable knowledge of the audience. This is a significant change from the way the big PR and marketing companies work, in that their approach is a creative one and based on sending pre-determined messages in volume to mass audiences in the hope that they will resonate with some portions of that audience. This, of course, fits with the traditional way that the military conducts its business, where themes and messaging are crafted centrally and distributed downwards to theatre troops.

Experience from over 20 years of conflict communications tells me that Whitehall and Washington political messages are often a diluted and distant memory by the time they reach the tactical level, and they may actually have no relevance at ground level anyway. The huge amounts of data that are captured during this process can be daunting for policy-makers and strategists. This is why SCL's Gaby Van den Berg and Tom Wein have created a "dashboard" that quickly presents the information in a manageable format.

An early design example is illustrated: The picture above shows the various behavioural pa-

rameters associated with a real key target audience study — in this case "Young Unmarried Males", aged 18-24. The group was identified in the early stages of the TAA methodology as being the most influential from many identified groups in the area being studied. The black columns are key Behavioural Change Research Parameters, to their right you can see the various data points within those parameters and then a scoring system to assess their relevance to group behaviour. Finally, the white boxes to their right will form a basic traffic light system indicating how a particular course of action may or may not resonate with that audience. However, because this data is taken from a real life project some redaction has been made for operational security.

The picture below models the effect of an influence intervention — in this case the traffic lights quickly show that the large injection of money into the problem would resonate badly on the behavioural research parameters for the target group. Thus, using this model potential strategy can be modeled to a very high degree of accuracy.

It should therefore be clear why the empirical TAA approach is far more effective than simple marketing approaches, or even cultural understanding. There exists no universal communication model applicable to all groups and cultures. All communication efforts must be

tailored to the local dynamics, and with respect to the behaviours one is seeking to change. Because audiences are multi-faceted and cannot be grouped as a population, influencing the differing component groups of a society requires precisely targeted methods and approaches: *One message — no matter how culturally relevant — does not fit all.* Working out who to influence, why, how, when, and whether it is possible, constitutes the first steps of TAA. Often, it will be necessary to influence one group in order to influence another. Above all else, the process of influencing is not necessarily to make a particular group like "us" or "our" ideas — although this is always an extra "bonus."

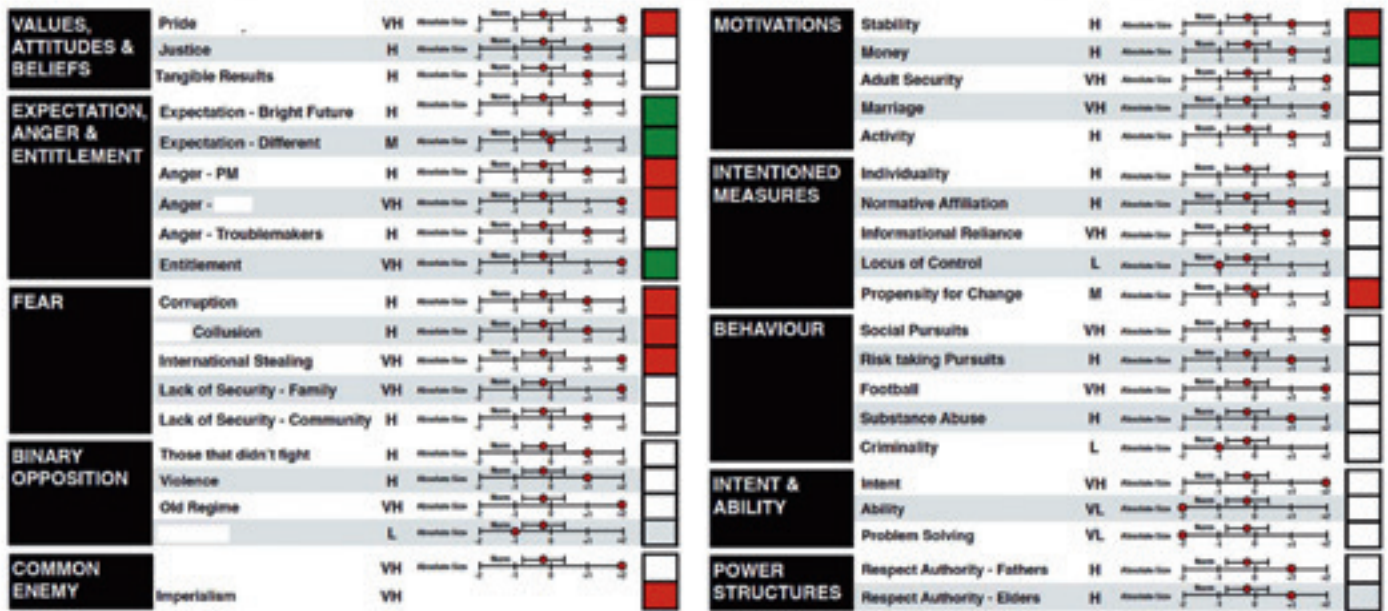
There are some further issues with TAA that merit consideration. If we think of TAA as the process of identifying the "right" audience, we must also be mindful that there are other audiences also present. We might think of them in four groups, and the messages that we deploy may well cast a shadow upon them. They are:

- The target audience;
- A group who may react positively to the messaging applied to the target;
- A group who may react negatively to the messaging applied to the target; and,
- A group who will be ambivalent and who might even be best left alone.



# YOUNG UNMARRIED MALES PARAMETERS

# FINANCIAL AID



THERE HAS BEEN A GRADUAL REALIZATION THAT TAA IS A KEY COMPONENT IN FUTURE OPERATIONS.

There has been a gradual realization that TAA is a key component in future operations, and commercial companies are increasingly making claim to these skills. To understand TAA capabilities better, one of my final tasks in the UK Ministry of Defence last year was to define three tiers of TAA capability: Tiers 1, 2 and 3, which are presented briefly below:

**Tier 3 TAA** is the least detailed TAA and is almost exclusively secondary research. This is typical remote, open source analysis of target groups, but these analyses are done in the language of the analyst as opposed to that of the target group. This may be an internet-based research project on a specific group — for example, Alawites in Syria or the Kurds in Iraq. Invariably, it will try to find third party studies, perhaps academic or NGO, and aggregate the information for military usage. Although this is invariably open source, it may also involve classified intelligence. The UK has defined output of **Tier 3 TAA** as *assumed information*.

**Tier 2 TAA** is any primary research involving actual contact with the audiences of interest but, critically, it does not follow any specific scientifically verified deductive methodology. It may be conducted in-country or remotely and is largely attitudinally-based. The output of **Tier 2 TAA** is information recorded from interactions with target audiences. An example of **Tier 2 TAA** is a patrol report or a shura, where soldiers ask locals what they think is going on and what actions might positively change attitudes and behaviours. A refined variation might be Cultural Advisors (CULAD) on patrol. This type of TAA is typically undertaken by coalition PsyOps forces and it may with time become quite detailed. It provides another layer of data over and above that of **Tier 3**.

By far the most useful TAA, however, is **Tier 1**. This is a multi-source, scientifically verified, diagnostic methodology undertaken in-country and in host language, and it is used to identify specific motivations for behaviour. The output of **Tier 1 TAA** is information deduced from methodically gathered data, which is tested against a scientifically derived hypothesis.

So, for nearly eight weeks this summer, students from across NATO will study at the Latvian Defence Academy and learn how to undertake **Tier 1 TAA**, and with those skills return back to their

respective commands and HQs with the mission of improving organic StratCom capabilities. Leon Wieseltier, American writer, critic, philosopher and magazine editor once wrote that "The doctrine of 'exit strategy' fundamentally misunderstands the nature of war and the nature of historical action. The knowledge of the end is not given to us at the beginning." But, perhaps, better armed with science-based TAA in the future, maybe that knowledge will be with us at the start, not just at the end like the jet engine, and our joint communication efforts will then be truly strategic. †

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Anyone wishing further guidance on TAA is invited to contact the author by email on: [steve.tatham@iota-global.com](mailto:steve.tatham@iota-global.com)

"We must promote collaborative work as a standard, and I think that we have made significant progress in that direction. This collaborative approach should be extended more and more to all sources of knowledge, of progress, of creativity to take the full benefit of our interconnected world. First to come to my mind are the Centres of Excellence (CoEs). In order to take the full benefit of this precious resource for Transformation, we must involve them more and more in our work, as it is the case for training. We must promote the CoE networking, which will multiply their effectiveness.

I am sure as well that CoEs represent a great asset for innovation. In fact, Transformation should be nurtured by innovation; by effective, pragmatic, and efficient innovation."

— General Jean-Paul Paloméros  
Supreme Allied Commander  
Transformation (SACT)

By Lieutenant Colonel (Rtd.) Rita LePage  
Canadian Army, Senior Expert  
NATO StratCom CoE

*Riga, Latvia*



# THE STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE (CoE)



**S**TRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS, or StratCom, a nascent concept in 2008-2009 when the first NATO StratCom office was established at SHAPE, has evolved to occupy a position of primacy within the Alliance. There are now StratCom offices at every level of the NATO Command Structure and in missions. NATO exercises include StratCom as a major exercise objective, and a NATO Centre of Excellence (CoE), devoted exclusively to the development of StratCom and its application in NATO, is accredited and well on its way to establishing itself as the "go-to" institution for StratCom support to NATO. The NATO Strat-

Com CoE was inaugurated in January 2014 under the Latvian Ministry of Defence. By July, it had seven sponsor nations — Estonia, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and the United Kingdom — in September, the CoE received formal NATO accreditation, and by October, the Centre had become an international organization. This is an important designation and distinction as Centres of Excellence are not part of the NATO Command Structure.

## StratCom and NATO

Today's complex communications environment plays a vital role in contemporary crisis and conflict. The importance of Strategic

Communications for NATO and nations is ever increasing. The revolution in information technology has diversified the resources available — especially with the accessibility of internet and internet-enabled applications, such as social media by computers, tablets and smart phones — and has complicated the task of communicating with audiences, especially as audiences are no longer only recipients of the information, but active content creators. Moreover, the increasing number of partners in NATO coalition operations and different activities has also made it more difficult to agree quickly on a coherent information campaign. From Afghanistan to Libya, it is increasingly





**Opposite:** Architectural view of the new StratCom CoE building, which will be operational in August this year. **Left:** To mark the Canadian contribution to the StratCom CoE, the Canadian Ambassador to Latvia, Alain Hausser, and the Director of the Centre of Excellence, Ambassador Janis Karklins, came together for a ceremonial raising of the Canadian flag on 18 February. On the picture, from left: Dr Steve Tatham, IOTA Global; Ambassador Alain Hausser; Ambassador Janis Karklins; Nigel Oakes, CEO, SCL Group; and Canadian Chargé d'affaires to Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, Ms Jeanette Stovel. **Inset:** A picture of the report cover. Photographs by StratCom CoE.

more challenging for NATO to compete effectively in today's media environment, or to implement proactive information techniques. These challenges relate to the Alliance's mindset as much as the structures, established procedures and finances, but NATO cannot afford to cede the information theatre if it is to continue to be a successful Alliance.<sup>(1)</sup>

### StratCom CoE organization

The StratCom CoE began with a handful of dedicated Latvian staff working hard to handle the administrative, legal, financial, and logistical requirements of standing up a new organization while beginning research projects directed by the Latvian Ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs as well as Allied Command Transformation (ACT) and Allied Command Operations (ACO). The CoE's capabilities have increased with the arrival of officers from sponsor nations, including Estonia, Poland and the United Kingdom. However, the establishment is not anticipated to be fully staffed until the au-

turn of 2015 with the arrival of officers from Germany, and voluntary national contributions from three additional nations.

### Programme of Work 2014

The first major research paper facilitated by the StratCom CoE, "*Analysis of Russia's Information Campaign Against Ukraine*", was published in late summer 2014 and focused on an area of great interest to NATO — the role of the information environment in relation to Russian aggression towards Ukraine. The paper, widely briefed and distributed throughout NATO's political and military communities, invoked both a tremendous interest and desire to expand the original timeframe examined in an effort to keep extant the knowledge gleaned from the study. This again has led to a greater understanding of the methods and psychology employed to motivate various audiences. The report covered the period from the third Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius (28-29 November 2013) until the annexation of Crimea (16 March 2014). It referred also to some more relevant examples of the information campaign relating to events, such as the MH17 air tragedy. Although Russia's informa-

tion campaign against Ukraine entered its active phase as the Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius approached, the campaign should not be viewed as a separate, spontaneous phenomenon, but rather as a result of a long-term strategy rooted in vertical power and state controlled mass media. This long term strategy is supported by national policies and legal frameworks as well as the protracted application of "active measures" in countries of strategic interest to create a favourable environment for such targeted campaigns.

### General conclusions of the research paper

— **Russia was prepared to conduct a new form of warfare in Ukraine where an information campaign would play a central role:** The characteristics of the new form of warfare, which were implemented in Crimea were outlined by General Valery Gerasimov, Chief of the Russian General Staff, nearly a year before the crisis in Ukraine. Analysis of the Ukraine conflict suggests that NATO and the EU must adapt to the new reality where information superiority, as opposed to military power, is becoming increasingly important.





**Hybrid (information) Warfare:**

In February 2013, General Valery Gerasimov, the Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Federation, wrote in *Military-Industrial Kurier* about the "military means of a concealed character" and how: "(...) a perfectly thriving state can, in a matter of months and even days, be transformed into an arena of fierce armed conflict, become a victim of foreign intervention, and sink into a web of chaos, humanitarian catastrophe, and civil war." He added: "The very 'rules of war' have changed. The role of non-military means of achieving political and strategic goals has grown, and, in many cases, they have exceeded the power of force of weapons in their effectiveness." (Huffington Post, Robert Coalson)

**Left:** Lieutenant Colonel Geir Karlsten, Director Strategic Communications and Psychological Operations, Norwegian Defence Command and Staff College, at the 2014 NATO Bi-SC Information and Communicators Conference. Photograph by Henry Plimack.

— **Russia's narrative is largely based on historical memory:** Russia, through understanding of its own audiences — including compatriots abroad — was able to leverage historical memory; e.g. the Great Russian Empire (1721-1917), the atrocities of the World War II, and the might and collapse of the USSR.

— **Crisis in Ukraine is a result of Russia's long term strategy:** Learning from the Russian information campaign in Ukraine, it is clear that early detection and analysis of those elements within the Russian narrative signaling potential aggressive behaviour is critical. *(The report also demonstrated that Russia's state policy documents contained such indications.)*

— **The role of the "Compatriots Abroad" policy is critical and should be considered carefully in the future:** The security implications for countries neighbouring Russia are particularly serious. The kind of strategy that Russia has employed in Ukraine may also be used in other areas where large communities of Russian compatriots live.

— **There is "another side of the coin" to Russia's information campaign:** Although Russia's information campaign has been successful in

influencing its audiences (the ethnic Russian population abroad), it also bears a degree of counter-productivity as it has radicalized and alienated other audiences such as Ukrainians, the populations of NATO and EU countries.

— **Deception is used by Russia as a tactic to distract and delay:** Investigating and disproving the false information, different versions of events and even conspiracy theories rapidly disseminated by Russia requires a lot of time, effort and resources on the part of international organisations like NATO, the Ukrainian Government, independent media, defence experts and even ordinary citizens.

— **Disinformation campaigns erode over time:** The evolution of the crisis in Ukraine beyond Crimea demonstrates that disinformation campaigns erode over time as more and more factual evidence is revealed to negate lies and falsification.<sup>(2)</sup>

**"Russian strategic communications is driving media coverage"**

The second major report commissioned by the StratCom CoE and completed by the Arizona State University Centre for Strategic Commu-

nications is *"Strategic Frames Analysis of NATO Ballistic Missile Defense and Changes in Public Opinion."* The report noted that the project used "a media analysis methodology based on strategic framing; a well-known function of media and strategic communications that attempts to influence the perception of facts and situations by encouraging certain interpretations and discouraging others using words, phrases, metaphors and images highlighting desired aspects of a perceived reality," adding that the goals were to "demonstrate that framing is relevant to understanding and improving strategic communications capabilities of NATO member and partner countries, to do this in the context of a topic important to NATO, and to show the potential relevance of these methods to operational capabilities."

The report stated that the project "studied NATO Ballistic Missile Defense, as discussed in texts from NATO, the governments of nine member/partner countries, and major print media outlets from these same countries." The text below is an extract from this report:

"The analysis shows, first, that with respect to NATO/government sources, NATO framing is very disciplined, consistently invoking general threat, specific threat, collective security, deterrence systems, progress/effective-





ness, and Russia partnership in the affirmative, and negation of threat to Russia. Government framing is remarkably similar to NATO framing. Second, media framing is significantly different from that by NATO and government sources. In almost all cases, media are significantly less likely to invoke the frames favored by NATO and government, and significantly more likely to use frames less emphasized by them. This indicates that Russian strategic communications is driving media coverage, likely because of the media's interest in reporting and promoting controversy. Third, framing appears to differ based on both individual countries' political and economic concerns, as well as the general political climate. Finally, there are strong correlations between some of the frames studied and public opinion in the United States and Poland. This suggests that framing analysis could serve as a useful measure of effectiveness for NATO strategic communication."

The report noted that the project also established the practicality of adding a strategic framing capability to the StratCom CoE. "First, it showed that data from the project could be effectively incorporated into a decision-making environment based on Arizona State University decision theater visualization technology. Secondly, it demonstrated that automation of strategic frames coding using machine classifiers is feasible. The combination of these can provide real time, on-demand analysis and monitoring of strategic framing on topics of interest to NATO."



## Programme of Work 2015

The StratCom CoE received some 60 projects for inclusion in the 2015 Programme of Work, submitted by sponsor nations, ACT, ACO and other Allied nations. These were refined and resulted in the Steering Committee accepting 41 projects with 81 associated sub-projects, the scope of which includes: research papers, policy manuals, studies, surveys, reviews, publications, courses and NATO exercises. This now defines the CoE's mandated work for 2015.

## Major projects in 2015

- A research paper on how to identify the early signals of a "hybrid warfare scenario" in order to develop "early-warning measures".
- A policy manual on how NATO and its members could protect themselves from subversive leverage.
- A study on Russia's information campaign against Ukraine, Volume 2.
- A research paper on the Russian information campaign and propaganda methodology against NATO.
- A research paper on analysis of social media networks as well as activities within them being used as a weapon or larger part of hybrid warfare.
- Research and deep analysis of ISAF StratCom lessons.
- A survey paper on NATO StratCom policy implementation within the NATO Command Structure.
- NATO countries' StratCom review.
- A research paper on the ISIL information campaign and its influence on NATO countries' societies.
- Recommendations on how to connect NATO and its members' training capabilities.
- A study paper on NATO's image and reputation among Allies.
- Establishing an academic magazine on StratCom and printing an annual CoE book.
- StratCom courses for senior officials (for instance, for the Cabinet of Ministers) about StratCom and its influence on national security in order to increase understanding about StratCom as well as its impact on national and international security and decision-making processes.
- Establishing an e-learning course to be used before attending in-classroom StratCom courses or taking StratCom electives.
- International staff officers basic StratCom

course and international staff officers advanced StratCom course.

- Support to NATO exercises, such as the high-visibility exercise TRIDENT JUNCTURE 15.

## Target Audience Analysis: "Train the Trainer" Programme

In addition to these projects, the CoE is undertaking a major, Canadian-funded Target Audience Analysis "Train the Trainer" Programme in Riga, Latvia. On 4 September 2014, at the NATO Summit in Wales, the Prime Minister of Canada, the Honourable Stephen Harper, announced support to various initiatives to help Ukraine and NATO Allies counter the Russian threat to the region, including a CAD \$1-million contribution to the StratCom CoE, saying, "The Canadian support being provided for NATO initiatives today will help Ukrainians better defend themselves against the Russian threat and strengthen the ability of NATO Centres of Excellence in the region to better address regional security challenges related to energy, communications and cyber defence."

The StratCom CoE's project is to acquire the Behavioural Dynamics Institute Target Audience Analysis "Train the Trainer" methodology in the form of a purpose-built NATO course delivered in Riga by Strategic Communications Laboratories, Ltd., based in the UK. The course, which will be attended by CoE staff as well as CoE sponsor-nation personnel, was approved in early 2015. The course itself is a two-month intensive training programme recognized as world-class and is expected to be completed by end July 2015.

THOUGH ONLY into the second quarter of the 2015 Programme of Work, the StratCom CoE is already building the 2016 Programme of Work. So, while the first year has been very busy with incredibly diverse projects, the second year promises to expand the work further covering all aspects of StratCom support to operations, StratCom education and training, and StratCom doctrine, concept development and experimentation ✦

(1) Section taken from stratcomcoe.org

(2) Taken from the report.



COVER STORY

# RISING TO THE CHALLENGE AS INFORMATION TAKES CENTRE STAGE

IMPLEMENTING EFFECTIVE STRATCOM IS A NECESSITY FOR THE ALLIANCE'S HEALTH AND THE SECURITY OF NATO'S NATIONS.

**By Mark Laity**  
Chief of Strategic Communications  
Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers  
Europe (SHAPE)

**T**HIS IS A REMARKABLE time to be involved in Strategic Communications (StratCom). Ever since Russian Federation put its forces into Ukraine, StratCom has been central to the NATO debate about how to best respond. In confronting hybrid warfare, effective StratCom is fundamental to how we do business. So, this is a time of opportunity for StratCom. I would go further and say implementing effective StratCom is a necessity for the Alliance's health and the security of NATO's nations.

However, it is also a time of challenge. For, although everyone's talking StratCom we are still arguing too much about it. Everyone knows they want it, but what is it they want?

Looking back on eight years of StratCom in NATO, I am torn between satisfaction at progress, and frustration at the distance still to go. Perhaps the communicators' conference we held in Split last autumn best illustrates this. The first StratCom conference was held in 2008, with 38 attendees, rising in succeeding years to 130+ in Riga in 2013. Then in 2014, for the very first time, all of the communication disciplines, Public Affairs (PA), Psychological Operations (PsyOps), Information Operations (Info Ops) came together with StratCom to hold their annual conferences and working groups in the same place and week. Never before had all the communication disciplines done this — and the attendance was over 220.

So, a clear success, but also cause for re-





**Left:** General Philip Breedlove, Supreme Allied Commander Europe, answering questions from journalists following a press conference, 22 May 2014. Photograph by NATO.

yet. The price for me is that our response to the Russian challenge fell short in 2014 and we are still playing catch-up in what will be a long game of existential importance to our Alliance in the years ahead.

### **In the beginning**

In answering the question of what is StratCom then I will go back to the start for SHAPE and NATO, which was March 2007, when I was ordered to create the first StratCom cell within NATO. Having formerly been the first civilian Chief PAO at SHAPE, I had just returned from a tour as NATO Spokesman in Kabul and Media Adviser to Commander of ISAF. As with Russia now, there was a clear sense within SHAPE and NATO that something was badly wrong with our communications, and that we should be doing far better against the Taliban information campaign. It was Robert Gates, the then U.S. Defense Secretary who summed this up saying, "Are we organized properly... when we're being out-communicated by a guy in a cave?"

So, StratCom has always been, in part, a response to failure. I have always felt that the dismissive or critical response of some communicators towards StratCom has always had an edge of complacency or arrogance. Our leadership has been telling us for a long time to sort ourselves out, and we have to ask ourselves whether we have yet done that.

Of course that does not mean our leaderships are free from criticism themselves! Nor should we pretend that StratCom is more than it is. From Sun Tzu, through to Napoleon saying, "four hostile newspapers are more to be feared than a thousand bayonets," the power of communication has been both understood and used. So, if Sun Tzu and Napoleon were across the issue, what's new?

PUT SIMPLY, while information has always mattered, we are now in the Information Age, where the power of information itself has become transformational and revolutionary. Where once information was a part of the mix, it is now — as General Gerasimov, Chief of the Russian Armed Forces, has noted — increasingly dominant. It forces us to significantly re-

evaluate and revise tactics, strategies, training, organisation, and doctrines.

Enduring principles still remain valid — but we need to understand the new landscape and then apply them in a fresh and appropriate way. StratCom is a fresh way of applying some enduring principles to what we can justifiably call the Information Age. Getting our communication right has never been more important.

This is what our leaderships felt, along with the sense that we needed to do better. Within NATO, and more specifically at SHAPE, those first steps were to create a small StratCom cell, made up of myself and two staff officers. My fairly basic instructions, unwritten, from the then Chief of Staff, were to pull things together and make our communications more strategic.

### **ISAF points the way**

As noted earlier, it was the Afghan conflict that really sparked the growth of StratCom within NATO. This reflects the way that change is often driven by crisis.

For instance the information challenges of the Kosovo conflict produced reform within NATO HQ's media operation, but the scale of the challenge from ISAF was much larger.

Indeed, my appointment in 2006 by the NATO Secretary General as civilian Spokesman in Kabul had been a response to our failures in linking the information effort at both civil/military and strategic/tactical level. When I returned from that first tour, the sense of crisis was



flection. Within the communication community, it was considered a real achievement to get the whole community to the same conference. The response of outsiders was different. They were impressed by the numbers, but their attitude to being together was, "Of course, why wouldn't you?"

And both views are right — getting all of our communicators at the same conference was simultaneously both a real achievement and an action of the blindingly obvious. It basically symbolises the problem and the prospects.

In 2007, when SHAPE created a StratCom cell, I saw many communicators who talked about coordination, but who in practice were keener to emphasise differences rather than similarities, and regarded coordination as a matter of choice on their terms, rather than obligation. That is changing and the direction of travel towards a more cohesive community is clear, but it has taken a long time and we are not there





A workshop during the StratCom Conference, 2014. Photograph by Henry Plimack.

even greater. In Kosovo, we had not lost a single soldier in combat, but in Afghanistan we were losing scores of soldiers and killing hundreds of Taliban as normal business. Even more, there was a growing realisation that winning was not inevitable or quick, and our enemies used information as one of their strongest weapons.

### ACO 95-2

In that light, creating the StratCom cell at SHAPE may have been modest in numbers, but it was more radical in intent as it was specific recognition that in the communication field just doing more of the same was not enough. So, although modest in resources, it was greater in ambition. That was how we took it

and after delays caused by my second Afghan tour, we produced SACEUR's first directive on StratCom, ACO 95-2, in 2008. It looks less radical now than then, but it was forward-leaning for the time and set the tone for what has followed.

What we realised early on was that there was too little consensus amongst the communicators to produce a forward-leaning policy all the nations could agree upon. For, while most communicators supported StratCom in some form, others really disliked it and would defend their individual specialism by blocking forward movement. As the old saying goes, "a convoy moves at the speed of the slowest ship" and our fear was that some ships might simply drop anchor. We therefore resolved (and supported by the SHAPE Command Group) to lead rather than wait or follow. The first to respond was NATO HQ itself. There had been some scepticism within the Public Diplomacy Division on the need for a StratCom policy, but it was soon clear that NATO's Permanent Representatives wanted a StratCom policy, and the result was NATO's StratCom Policy of 2009. I was told later that without ACO 95-2 coming first

then, there would have been no NATO StratCom policy, an early justification for pushing forward from below. The NATO StratCom policy also illustrates the difficulties of getting an ambitious policy at the level of 28 nations, as in my view it is rather bland and cautious. I am sure a 2015 StratCom policy would be more expansive, but as NATO veterans know, it is hard enough making policy, but once made, it can be even harder to change. ACO 95-2, as a directive, is more flexible and adaptable and is now on its third version. Each is more ambitious than the previous, and all responded to experience and feedback from the user. The NATO policy's key value is its definition. Not only did it clearly state all the information and communication disciplines came under the StratCom umbrella, but the ending showed StratCom is more than informing. Thus, StratCom was defined as the "(...) coordinated and appropriate use of NATO communications activities and capabilities (...) **in support of Alliance policies, operations and activities, and in order to advance NATO's aims.**"

At the time, there had been a strong lobby against adding the ending in favour of stating StratCom was purely a coordinating instrument without highlighting the purpose of that coordination. It reflected the age-old debate about *inform* vs. *influence*. By defining StratCom as advancing NATO's aims, the



"I'm here to persuade you to stop your pirating ways."





The author briefing at conference "Strategic Communications Challenges and Opportunities and Response to Disinformation in the Context of Hybrid War" in Kyiv, Ukraine, from 24 to 26 November 2014. Photograph by StratCom CoE.

North Atlantic Council (NAC) clearly signalled StratCom was not just about information, but about achieving an effect.

### Creating the community

Right from the start, we focused on creating a community of interest. Policy and directives covering StratCom are recent and limited. It meant we needed to learn from practice and share problems and thinking. Many of those in StratCom posts also had limited training or experience. That meant providing mentorship and mutual support. I should also add that while I am a career communicator with decades of experience it was not always one-way traffic. In particular, operational level headquarters deploying to Afghanistan were faced with a formidable communications adversary and problems critical to mission success. The criticality and immediacy of the challenge made many communicators open-minded and innovative.

Military history is full of examples of wartime exigencies sweeping aside established peacetime practice and doctrine, and I think ISAF exposed that our overall communication policies, doctrines and practices were no longer fit for purpose. It has meant some of the best thinking about StratCom has been at the operational level. It certainly led the way on re-assessing how communicators organised

themselves. Within ISAF, Vice Admiral Greg Smith became their first Director of Communications, combining all of the information disciplines into one directorate. Variations on that theme have continued into the current Resolute Support mission.

Returning Corps have also in some cases adapted their structures, with the 1 German/Netherlands Corps creating a Communication and Engagement Division, an initiative that has been picked up by other Corps as well. Communications staff in ISAF also led the way in other initiatives such as practically incorporating narrative into processes and procedures. ISAF's needs were also the catalyst for SHAPE's development of StratCom Frameworks; now the standard means of providing overarching guidance throughout the chain of command.

So, we have gained enormously from the operational level staff, and the annual operational workshop has proved consistently helpful in setting the agenda for evolving StratCom within ACO. In the same way, the annual conferences have played a key role in creating that essential communicators' community of interest. But, there was a further community of interest we needed to create — not the *practitioners*, but the *users*. From the start, we tried to generate what we called the "StratCom mindset" across the

whole headquarters. Ultimately, what marks out StratCom from being just a trendy new name for business as usual is the emphasis on making the "Information Line of Effort" part of everything and involving everyone. As ACO 95-2 says, "ensuring information and communication aspects are placed at the heart of all levels of policy, planning and implementation, and fully integrated in the overall effort."

This has been one of StratCom's biggest successes. At SHAPE HQ the demand for StratCom involvement is routine and intense, and in other headquarters the interest in StratCom has steadily risen as demands from commanders grow. But persuading our leaderships of StratCom's value brings its own problems. For StratCom is still evolving and much remains to be done — so can we rise to the challenge?

OUR LEADERSHIPS want more, and they want it now, because the hybrid warfare conducted by Russia is happening *now*, just as groups like ISIS are also demonstrating their skill with information campaigns. But is the demand exceeding the capability? If the communication community cannot deliver, we risk disillusionment from the customer, and while more resources are part of the answer, we must also make the best of what we already have.





**NATO Wales Summit:** The NATO Declaration underlines the commitment to enhancing Strategic Communications. Photograph by Crown, Arron Hoare.

## The way ahead

It won't be easy, but at least the desire is there and many key elements are aligning. For instance, as previously noted, when StratCom was launched, internal frictions within the communications community tended to drive us apart. What we see now is an ever-strengthening trend towards combining our efforts. That has brought more flexibility, imagination and open-mindedness. Not long ago some still argued against PA and PsyOps being in the same room and, on occasion, some staff from individual information disciplines refused to speak or take emails from StratCom. Such attitudes now look not just unprofessional and ineffective, but also absurd.

It will be no surprise to most that I am an advocate of grouping our communicators. At the theatre strategic and operational levels, HQs like ISAF (with its Communication Directorate) and Corps such as 1 German/Netherlands Corps, (with its Communication and Engagement Division), created these groupings in direct response to operational necessity and experience. At the national level, we have, for instance, seen the British creating such groupings at both the operational and strategic level.

Now, the Russians have shown that the kind of information threat posed by the Taliban to ISAF can be elevated to the Grand Strategic Level using the full resources of the state. In these circumstances, I believe pulling communicators into a grouping can produce critical mass. It would enable a more effective integration in delivering effects, while our greater combined numbers will give us more influence, opening up opportunities for growth in numbers and seniority and a better career path. At the same time, I believe key principles — such as PAs having direct access to commanders for PA issues — can still be respected. Separate we are too small; together we can start fulfilling our potential. To do that we obviously need more than improving our level of togetherness.

The Russians give us some lessons. It is too easy to over-focus on their lies and deceptions and to overlook other factors in their effectiveness. They apply resources; are professional and well-trained, able to build upon a body of experience; their info campaign is sustained, operationalized and fully integrated into their overall strategy; they understand the impact of narrative, culture and psychology; they have done their

Target Audience Analysis (TAA); they have a coherent doctrine and policy; and have clearly carefully assessed and responded to the new information age.

So, we need more and better training both for practitioners and to give our "customers" an "instruction manual", and with the Strategic Training Plan (STP) initiative this is developing. But it is not enough to train. We must also build up experience and professionalism. The cadre of experienced StratCom professionals is still dismayingly small, as new staff arrive, do one tour, and move on never to return. StratCom has benefitted from outside fresh thinking, but the perpetual rotation of so many inexperienced staff would be unacceptable elsewhere in NATO.

The training also needs to take in studying such topics as narrative, culture and behavioural psychology as well as the techniques of the new information era. Carrying out information campaigns requires understanding our audiences and current training is too limited, just as appreciating and using the power of information also needs an understanding of ethics. We also need more people, as the more StratCom is appreciated, the more is asked of us.



## CASE STUDY

### BMD as a political, rather than military, tool

Excerpted from NATO Review Magazine

By Bilyana Lilly



Last December, while we busied ourselves with holiday preparations, Russia's President Vladimir Putin found time to sign an updated version of Russia's military doctrine. Despite this, the logic behind one of Russia's classic grievances against the West — the deployment of Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) in Europe — has remained largely unexplained. Russia's 2014 military doctrine lists BMD as Moscow's fourth external military danger. Since the United States officially announced the deployment of BMD in Europe in 2004, Russia has persistently referred to the project, run by NATO, as a demonstration of anti-Russian intent. Why after 10 years, does this issue still get such high ranking?

Moscow's confrontational position on missile defence has proven politically expedient for a Russian government that has built its legitimacy on the necessity to defend Russia from external enemies. Now, when Russia is entering a full-fledged economic crisis that could affect the political allegiances of the Russian population, the Kremlin needs to revive the issue of BMD — a welcome enemy that contributes to the justification for government survival.

Russia's objections seem more logical when examining the domestic utility of hostile rhetoric towards missile defence in Europe. Describing NATO's missile defence as a threat to Russia feeds into the currently-promoted narrative. This paints the West as an aggressive force, which aims to change Russia's regime and negate its nuclear deterrent, which Moscow regards as the ultimate guarantee of its sovereignty.

The strategy to portray BMD as a threat to the Russian population seems effective. The justification that Russia has to protect itself from the external threat strengthens the need to maintain a strong, centralised government, endure economic woes, and continue to invest in military modernisation. For all of these reasons, BMD has become a political, rather than military tool for distraction that helps to convince the Russian population of the need to focus on protecting the Russian state, rather than their economic livelihoods.

The full article can be read at <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2015/Also-in-2015/Ballistic-Missile-Defence-Putin/EN/index.htm>



NATO StratCom Conference, 2014.

**"The new type of warfare: A war of words, aggressive propaganda and misinformation — war was never declared."**

Photograph by Henry Plimack.

The demand greatly exceeds capacity, something exacerbated by the lack of staff experience noted above. Even managing the demand for exercise support is almost impossible.

THIS HIGHLIGHTS the responsibility of nations to supply those resources. The NATO Wales Summit Declaration emphasises the commitment to enhancing StratCom, and while we can improve the effectiveness of existing resources it is not enough on its own. Looking at the Russians, what we know about their military information effort shows they are devoting significant resources and this ignores the hundreds of millions of Euros being spent on state media such as RT and Sputnik, which are effectively civilian PsyOps organisations.

We also need to move forward on policy and doctrine. As noted above, in the early days this could have just led to conflict at a stalemate, but as StratCom has evolved, it is time to move towards a shared understanding as nations develop their capabilities. This is now in prospect with a new MC policy on StratCom to be developed, and we also have the new StratCom Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Riga to help.

The launch of the new CoE, although young, will be a key element for future progress in many areas. All this means we have cause for optimism in putting information at the centre of policy, planning and implementation. The desire and the need are there, and many of the elements to produce the response are also there. Yes, we need help from outside, but as I also look out to our community I see a will, an enthusiasm and a growing unity of purpose. Now is our time. ✦

Mark F. Laity is the former BBC Defence Correspondent who is NATO's Chief Strategic Communications at the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE). His extensive operational experience includes three tours of Afghanistan, two as NATO Spokesman. Prior to this, he was Deputy Spokesman and Personal Adviser to the then Secretary General of NATO, Lord Robertson of Port Ellen for nearly four years. As a journalist he covered most major conflicts of the nineties, starting with the 1991 Gulf War when he was based in Saudi Arabia. He regularly reported from the Balkans from 1992 to 1999, notably from the frontline in Bosnia during the worst of the fighting. Mark Laity was born in Truro, Cornwall, and has a BA (Hons) and MA from the University of York.

# OPEN SOURCE INTELLIGENCE (OSINT)

By CDR Tristan Lovering MBE, Royal Navy  
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## DATA MINING IN **REAL** and **SYNTHETIC** ENVIRONMENTS

COLLECTING INTELLIGENCE THESE DAYS IS AT TIMES LESS A MATTER OF STEALING THROUGH DARK ALLEYS IN A FOREIGN LAND TO MEET SOME SECRET AGENT THAN ONE OF SURFING THE INTERNET UNDER THE FLUORESCENT LIGHTS OF AN OFFICE CUBICLE TO FIND SOME OPEN SOURCE.<sup>(1)</sup>

**UKRAINIAN** pro-Russian rebels use it, as do Boko Haram in Nigeria; Al-Shabaab in Somalia embrace it, as do the terrorist organisation ISIS in Iraq and Syria — in one way or another, all exploit social media for their own recruitment and propaganda purposes. Posts by fighters and their supporters make the news, and no one from across the NATO Alliance could have failed to see the disturbing reports emanating from the Levant in the last year. As an example, while their extremist policy towards the local population is horrific, and actions against their

myriad victims utterly deplorable, one area in which the ISIS appears to be particularly effective is in the way they manage and exploit social media for their own ends. Using Twitter, You Tube, Facebook, Google+, Instagram, Pinterest and WhatsApp, both ISIS and Al Qaeda<sup>(2)</sup> create pages as a means of broadcasting beheadings, public executions, torture and the use of child martyrs. Intelligence commentators have reported that the Web has consequently become the terrorists' "command and control network of choice."<sup>(3)</sup> Whilst the World Wide

Web should be a neutral conduit of data, which sits outside conflict and crime, internet providers not only host material of violent extremism, but also facilitate the flourishing of criminality and terrorism.

### "Data Explosion"

The volume of the information flow ("Big Data") is staggering. The growth of Open Source and exponential increase in the use of social media reflects what technology experts call the "data explosion." In every one minute







PHOTO VIEWS DAILY  
ON FLICKR  
20 MILLION

NUMBER OF  
YOUTUBE USERS  
1 BILLION

NUMBER OF DAILY  
UPLOADS ON FACEBOOK  
350 MILLION

of internet time 3,000+ photos are uploaded; 277,000 log onto Facebook; there are 330+ new Twitter accounts; 100,000 new tweets; over two million Google search queries and more than 30 hours of video uploaded onto YouTube. Internet users have now passed the 3 billion mark (3 November 2014, 40.4% of the global population), and over 2 billion people now have an active social media account<sup>(4)</sup> (28% of the global population). The plunging costs of mobile telephone ownership and wider availability have resulted in 1.639 billion (23%) of the global population now having active mobile social media accounts. This trend looks set to continue, as the Apple Corporation sold over 74 million mobile telephones (greater than the entire population of France!) to a burgeoning customer base in China in just one three-month period alone.<sup>(5)</sup>

### "New Media"

Replicating this volume of information and variety of news in JWC's operational level exercises is critical. As the scope which includes individual "citizen reports", photographs and commentaries is also evolving in the real world of journalism, it is how we use this scope in our training and how we export it into a synthetic domain (News Web) which is of key importance.

The evolving media and the "Changing Face of News" was discussed in a recent Chatham House Conference in London. The forum reviewed the new demographics of young people following events in Syria, Ukraine and the terrorist attack in Paris, and concluded that mainstream channels were no longer the preferred means by which many access the latest information.<sup>(6)</sup> Whilst the stalwarts of the international media (CNN, BBC, Reuters, AFP, Wall Street Journal, etc.) appeal to the older generation, their immediacy, format and style do not attract younger readers.

New sites like the Daily Beast, Vice News and Buzz Feed are changing what is broadcast by whom, and when. No longer the preserve of "long in the tooth" journalists who have practiced their trade for decades, "new media" is less sanitized or edited, and consequently has growing appeal. For the under 35s, as long as the news is vibrant, authentic and live from the front line, many prefer the new type of presentation, most of which also include video clips of varying duration. The report is timely, uncensored and not "interpreted" by an expert — it is simply information uploaded by those whom it affects the most, on the ground, at the epicenter of any given story. The viewer is then left to make their own assessment of the cred-

ibility of the source and the reliability of the information. Where the information appears to be actively manipulated or falsely presented, alternative sites, such as [stopfake.org](http://stopfake.org), are there to highlight perceived lies, deception, deceit and propaganda.<sup>(7)</sup>

Simulating this environment in NATO, exercises will require focus and sustained effort. This becomes even more challenging when considering the plethora of new independent sources, and the growing population of citizens "armed" with mobile telephones. As the public upload an array of data onto news and social media sites, it will require flexible, agile and intimate scrutiny by the military. This will impact on all future NATO operations and necessitate full acknowledgement when developing our own Strategic Communications (StratCom) themes. Successful overwatch will be key for maintaining the Information Operations (IO) and Psychological Operations (PsyOps) campaign, and to ensure that whatever information is available is scrutinized appropriately by the Intelligence staff.

### Open Source

Advocates such as Major General Michael T. Flynn and Robert David Steele (a former Marine and a former CIA officer) frequently stress





Jordanians gather in Amman to light candles in memory of the Jordanian fighter pilot Moaz al-Kasasbeh who was burnt alive by the ISIS militants in Syria, 6 February 2015. Photograph by Zaid Saadallah/Shutterstock.com.

the need for new methods to transform the craft of Open Source Intelligence (OSINT).<sup>(8)</sup> They and others recognize that OSINT often equals or surpasses classified material and is frequently faster to arrive, easier to access and significantly cheaper than alternative sources.<sup>(9)</sup> That being said, some military observers still view OSINT as a less reliable source than other types of Intelligence (Imagery, Signals, Human, Electronic, Technical, etc.) — an assumption which is flawed, as OSINT deserves greater focus and attention. Just as with all Intelligence, the key is to get the analysis right, both in terms of confidence in the source and an accurate assessment of the reliability of that information.

At the operational level, no single source of Intelligence is of greater value than the other. However, the emphasis on one particular type may weigh more heavily depending upon the target, and on whether the Joint Force Command (JFC) has the most appropriate collection capability for that objective.<sup>(10)</sup> Despite reliance possibly switching from one type to another, *all* Intelligence has value. Confidence in that reporting increases exponentially if cross-checked with other sources and corroborated. The aim is to build an all-source, integrated Intelligence picture in which the JFC has an articulated level of confidence. Regardless of source or agencies, promoting a particular

type (primacy) undermines the value of the whole Intelligence enterprise. Timely fusion of all Intelligence types, and objective reports with sound analysis is what distinguishes a great Intelligence section from an adequate one.

However, it is not just those from the Intelligence community who need to be cognizant of this plethora of useful information online — the ability to scrutinize and assess is dependent upon the whole staff monitoring, evaluating and recognizing salient information when "surfing". The old adage that soldiers, sailors and airmen are the best sensors is not only true on the battlefield, but is equally critical for today's personnel while navigating the Web. They need to remain alert when accessing social media in order not only to safeguard personal and unit security, but should remain cognizant of information available in Open Source to identify potential leads for NATO exploitation.

Whether Web based aerial imagery, or information gleaned from social media, if it enhances military understanding, it should be fused with data retrieved from other sources and agencies. A photograph of a terrorist outside a building (posted on Facebook), a ground-based SAM engagement of a helicopter (video uploaded to YouTube), or of rebels executing prisoners (Instagram), it is not just news; it is unprocessed "raw" intelligence.

## Precedent

Tracking the activities of potential enemies via Open Source is nothing new; precedent of this source confirms its value in building early Situational Awareness (SA). The U.S. Government, for example, relied upon information gleaned from Japanese newspapers in the 1930s in order to build a better understanding of the Imperial Japanese Navy, the number and type of warships and their home port. Whilst time consuming, the American military attaché oversaw the translation, then read and analyzed newspapers from Tokyo, before forwarding his findings to the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) in Washington.

A decade later in 1943, the Allies called upon the British public for holiday brochures and postcards from the coastal areas of Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands and France prior to D-Day. Intelligence staff trawled thousands of documents, listed and "fused" information about potential landing beaches and then made recommendations for further Intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance collection (e.g. aerial imagery, submarine surveillance, close target reconnaissance by French Resistance, etc.) of the most suitable landing sites.

The European Union Naval Force monitored Twitter for indicators and warnings that Pirate Action Groups were about to strike from





**Left:** A powerpoint slide showing the Information Arena for JWC exercises at the operational level. **Right:** A press conference during exercise TRIDENT JAGUAR 14, Menorca, Spain. Photograph by JWC PAO.

the Somali coast, and Israeli organisations (e.g. Meir Amit) tracked Facebook accounts used by Hamas Youth Camps operating across the Gaza strip as they trained new activists.

The Russians are seeking to exploit all multilingual data in Open Source, and their Defence Ministry is developing new computer programmes designed to monitor and analyse social media.<sup>(11)</sup> Reports refer to a proactive and highly competent "Troll Army", refining propaganda skills and taking the initiative online. A Kremlin "Troll Factory" has been established in Savushkina street in St. Petersburg, with the aim of spreading disinformation, creating parallel "reputable" media websites and producing fake reporting.<sup>(12)</sup> They re-write breaking news, undertake crude spamming, post aggressive comments on forums and present Putin's alternative view on the conflict in Ukraine. A number of the NATO members are determined to exploit the new opportunities presented by the plethora of media websites and commentary on Facebook and Twitter. The UK military are establishing a "new Brigade for the Information Age", a team of "Facebook warriors",<sup>(13)</sup> whose role will be to monitor and track 24-hour news, smartphones and social media, with the objective of "controlling the narrative".

A spokesperson for the intended 1,500 personnel in the new 77 "Chindit" Brigade

said: "77 Brigade is being created to draw together a host of existing and developing capabilities essential to meet the challenges of modern conflict and warfare. It recognizes that the actions of others in a modern battlefield can be affected in ways that are not necessarily violent and it draws heavily on important lessons from our commitments to operations in Afghanistan, amongst others."<sup>(14)</sup>

The advent of the new "citizen journalist" is a good example of how much can be drawn from social media. From a bland office



in Leicester, Eliot Higgins successfully tracked the removal of the Russian missile launcher linked to the downing of Malaysian airliner MH17 in 2014.<sup>(15)</sup> In three years, the investigative blogger has tracked weapon sales to ISIS, plotted locations of executions in the Syrian Desert, and identified specific chemicals used by the Assad regime.

Sleuths from the website [bellingcat.com](http://bellingcat.com) have demonstrated just how effective fusion of online information can be. Investigators are exposing how much key material is available, and how, if assessed and scrutinized appropriately, it can lead to real, tangible and actionable intelligence. Vladimir Putin's propaganda chiefs as well as ISIS now have an unlikely nemesis, as people like Higgins scroll through posts made by unwitting fighters in different conflicts around the world.<sup>(16)</sup>

### Challenges

Within the military, the most salient problems remain attitudinal, cultural and human. There is a misperception that because information has been classified "SECRET", it automatically becomes Intelligence, and conversely, because information might have been collected from Open Source, it is consequently *not* Intelligence. Other challenges are that the Intelligence community's standard mode of





## TRADITIONAL MEDIA

Observer: Trained journalist  
 Assessment: Informed analysis  
 Information: Filtered/compressed  
 Type: TV or print  
 Credibility: Good +  
 Reliability: Good +

operation is generally passive about aggregating information that is not enemy related, and some individuals remain transfixed by one type of collection capability and ignore feeds from other sources. Maintaining Operational Security (OPSEC) in this evolving, dynamic environment also remains a challenge — specifically in terms of identifying that information, which is suitable for release and that which, if shared, would undermine NATO's operational effectiveness. Protecting personnel whilst online is imperative, and therefore the widest promulgation of NATO security policy for social networking remains critical.<sup>(17)</sup>

### JWC's synthetic environment

Simulating Open Source information is a challenge because of the volume of data, differing levels of reliability and confidence in that information as well as the frequency of information posted or uploaded online. A former director of U.S. Defense Intelligence, Lieutenant General Samuel V. Wilson, said that "90% of Intelligence comes from open sources,"<sup>(18)</sup> so it is important to get the synthetic domain right. It is an area, which will impact on the



## NEW MEDIA

Observer: Citizen journalist  
 Assessment: Basic or specialist  
 Information: Immediate/agile  
 Type: TV and print  
 Credibility: Good —  
 Reliability: Fair

JFC, not only in terms of the requirement for suitably trained OSINT analysts, but on cyber and CIS capabilities as well. The challenge rests not only with the Intelligence section, but with the Media/Public Affairs, StratCom, Information Operations and Psychological Operations teams, in translating and interpreting a plethora of information and identifying "the wood from the trees." It is not good enough simply to cut and paste; the skill lies in analysis, building understanding, assessing reliability and confidence in the sources, and presenting it in a timely and digestible format.

The successful delivery of JWC exercises depends upon the provision of a realistic environment replicating the real world. The Scenario Section in JWC's Joint Exercise Division (JED) constructs this from early concept through to execution. In Phase III (force activation, deployment and operations) it is supported by relevant Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) in the Exercise Control (EXCON) who undertake live (dynamic) scripting, enhancing both context and content. The Training Audience (TA) builds a comprehensive picture around this information, and the Intelligence



## SOCIAL MEDIA

Observer: Public/witness  
 Assessment: Limited/none  
 Information: Raw/uncensored  
 Type: All formats  
 Credibility: Unknown  
 Reliability: Fair +/-

staff provides a holistic assessment of the complex, inter-locking and overlapping factors which shape that scenario.

### The "Information Arena"

The "Information Arena" requires careful coordination in order to ensure that the synthetic picture is realistic, relevant to operational dilemmas and designed to ensure opportunity to satisfy all TA Training Objectives. Appropriate injects via the media, close collaboration with the Opposing Forces (OPFOR), and a scenario that is flexible enough to shape — in line with the direction taken by the TA's Operational Plan (OPLAN) — is the foundation to success. Replicating this on exercises is crucial, particularly with SACT's focus on the Joint Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (JISR) objectives and its prominent endorsement in the latest keystone Intelligence Doctrine.<sup>(19)</sup> This aim is to ensure Intelligence understands the complexity of modern operations and facilitates a single Intelligence environment to support decision makers at all levels. The task is to make the Intelligence community not only stronger, but relevant, and JWC exercises



Twin Design/Shutterstock.com



A close-up of the simulation media equipment, Joint Warfare Centre.

provide the perfect forum for achieving that objective. The Media cell established an active social media environment in 2012 and it continued to build on replicating Facebook with "Face Page", and Twitter with "Chatter", in each exercise since then. They provide comments on the unfolding story of the conflict, create posts by fictional characters which add further depth, and ensure an alternative source of information for the JFC to assess.

### Information exploitation

Publicly available data is so voluminous, detailed, explicit, and broader than ever before that replicating it will remain a challenge. Much is rudimentary "background noise", or repetition, some is useful or provides context, and occasionally some material is like a gold seam from which the most revealing data can be mined. Intelligence-led operations are about exploiting all available information. A "call to arms" is required so that commanders recognize that Open Source information is a crucial strand of evidence, which assists in building understanding. It underpins the "Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Environment" and shapes subsequent operations in conflict.<sup>(20)</sup>

The replication of Open Source will continue to be delivered and enhanced in JWC-facilitated scenarios in 2015 and beyond. Exercise TRIDENT JUNCTURE 15 (TRJE 15) will provide an opportunity to practice Open Source analysis, and getting the appropriate training methodology and suitably qualified personnel in place will be key. Of course, the perennial military dilemma remains: does the JFC then decide to exploit that source of information for strategic/operational Intelligence purposes, or does the commander seek tactical

advantage by targeting or neutralizing in order to deny the enemy their ability to communicate? Whether social media is used as a source for enhancing Situational Awareness or to cue JISR activity, publicly available information is invaluable. Analysis of Open Source is now a "must do" not a "nice to have." Consequently, the requirement to monitor all aspects of on-line activity remains mission critical not only for Intelligence specialists, but for the JFC as a whole. We need to look through our target's eyes, uncover their digital footprints, understand their deception and reveal their identity. It requires imaginative and agile solutions, to be embraced and resourced in reality, and fully replicated and practiced on exercise. After all, the secrets are out there, it is just a matter of knowing where to find them. ✦

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SPECIAL REPORT

OLRT TRAINING

## KEY OBSERVATIONS FROM HIGH PERFORMING OPERATIONAL LIAISON AND RECONNAISSANCE TEAMS

A WELL-PREPARED OLRT IS ABLE TO BEGIN TO ENGAGE "HOST NATION" IMMEDIATELY AFTER ARRIVING IN COUNTRY.

**N**ATO Allied Command Operations (ACO) Joint Task Force Headquarters Standard Operating Procedure (JTF-SOP) 001 for Operational Liaison and Reconnaissance Team, or OLRT, describes the OLRT as an "ad hoc multinational team held at high readiness state able to operate legally in an area or region that is yet to be designated as a future operating area." The JTF-SOP 001 states that the OLRT is drawn largely from the sending JTF HQ that is being contemplated as the organization that NATO will deploy to engage a given crisis. The mission of the OLRT is described in short as "(...) responsible to liaise and coordinate with the host nation authorities, international organizations/non-governmental organizations (IOs/NGOs), and other stakeholders, in the potential theatre of operations to provide reliable and timely informa-

tion to the Joint Operational Planning Group (JOPG)," adding that OLRT "contributes to gaining early, first-hand situational awareness in theatre, facilitating the rapid establishment of liaison and conducting reconnaissance in a designated area."

Thus, the OLRT is seen as the JTF Commander and the JOPG's tool to both gain information and establish liaison between the command and the foreseen host nation.

JOINT WARFARE CENTRE conducts OLRT training evolutions in conjunction with the Crisis Response Planning phase of its operational level training exercises. I have been privileged to be a part of the JWC OLRT Training Team for the last two years. During that time, we have observed that sending headquarters are preparing for and requiring that OLRT training becomes more realistic and challenging. This





The OLRT deployment to the fictional SOROTAN countries of Lakuta and Tytan (real world Stavanger) for exercise TRIDENT JUNCTURE 15, 8 February 2015. Photograph by Major Stephen Olsen, Norwegian Army, JWC PAO.

has meant that we have seen gains in efficiencies made as various headquarters begin to learn through the JWC training experience how to prepare and send better functioning OLRTs. What follows are my observations of those OLRTs that have performed at the highest level and an effort to provide future headquarters with some ideas to continue that trend.

### **OLRT preparation**

Good initial preparation of the OLRT prior to deployment is imperative in order to allow the OLRT a good chance at success in the typically ambiguous environment in which they will be engaging. A well-prepared OLRT is able to begin to engage "host nation" immediately after arriving in country. Simply put, the OLRT is able to gain rapport quickly with their host nation counterparts if they are well-prepared; and if poorly prepared, there is a significant

chance of damaging that rapport, which could also damage their mission effectiveness.

There are three key areas that must be addressed to ensure that a JTF's OLRT is well-prepared for its mission: team-wide preparation; subject matter area detailed preparation; and command guidance documents. Some information must be clearly understood by the OLRT personnel as a whole in order to ensure that the team speaks with one voice to the host nation. Team-wide preparation is normally accomplished with formal briefings from the JOPG in conjunction with other Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) in the sending headquarters. These briefings are important because OLRTs and JOPGs often are just beginning their working relationship with each other due to personnel turnover or ad hoc staffing. This set of formal briefings from the JOPG to the OLRT with command attendance

should describe the areas that the command needs the OLRT to focus on. Normally, two different broad subject areas should be covered: deployment and employment. These two areas can be briefed together or in separate briefs. The deployment part of the brief is normally relatively straightforward and generic. The topics can include deployment times and means; the legal status of the OLRT; weapons carry instructions; living and working arrangements once in country, and general Public Affairs (PA) guidance.

The employment part of the brief should be tailored to the specific items that the JOPG and Command Group need the team writ large to focus on and the background data needed to successfully accomplish this mission. The employment briefing is much more wide open as far as subject matter, but some items that could be included are: key RFIs (Requests for Infor-



Photographs by JWC PAO.



Joint Warfare Centre's White Cell practising NATO's Comprehensive Approach during OLRT deployments and Scripting Conferences.

mation) ranked in importance, existing arrangements between NATO and the host nation, the general size and scope of the foreseen NATO deployment, background data on potential areas of negotiation with the host nation, notes on key personalities that the team will regularly or initially engage with, known details on logistics mechanisms that the JOPG is considering, what multi-national groups the nation is a part of and what those organization's relationship is to NATO and any preparatory work that the JOPG staff members have done together with the host nation authorities and military staffs prior to sending the OLRT.

Specific SMEs should be prepared at a deeper level than the team writ large. There are numerous options here depending on the expected mission parameters delineated by NATO and the sending JTF, but key areas that many JTF OLRTs engage in at operational level exercises have been noted by JWC Training Teams over time. As such, the logistics SMEs need to be thoroughly briefed on the key APODs (Aerial Ports of Debarkation), SPODs (Sea Ports of Debarkation) and logistics hubs as well as the key factors that are affecting the logistics planning. The OLRT commander

could be briefed in detail on the senior leaders in the host nation that he is expected to interface with and a preparatory plan of engagement for the host nation ministries should be considered. The Intelligence SME should be briefed in detail on the Intelligence agencies in country and how they normally interface with each other. Additionally, Intelligence SMEs should be prepped by the J2 section, and potentially the LEGAD, to begin socializing the planned information exchange parameters between the host nation and NATO. The OLRT LEGAD should be prepared with drafts of potential host nation support arrangements, Intelligence-sharing and other documents that he may need to coordinate with the host nation if the JTF headquarters and NATO deem that the OLRT is the best tool to work on these issues.

Pre-deployment documents such as a direction and guidance letter from the commander to his OLRT leader and a letter from the JTF commander to the host nation authorities that delineates to both the OLRT and the host nation what the team is responsible to provide to the command, as well as what the team has authority to negotiate on behalf of the commander, will allow the OLRT to function with much more initiative than if they

deploy without such guidance. This direction and guidance help the OLRT focus on what the commander needs from his OLRT, and if properly promulgated, bounds the mission of the OLRT, so that the JTF staff does not bog down the OLRT with tasks that are outside its mandate. These documents do not obviate the necessity for the commander to meet with and directly address his OLRT. In the best case, the commander will find time in his schedule to personally brief the OLRT on his expectations and give the team the opportunity to ask clarifying and amplifying questions so that his guidance is clearly known to the entire team. The OLRT should feel empowered when they board their aircraft to accomplish their mission with a clear understanding of what the command expects from them, and know that the command stands behind them in the accomplishing of that mission.

### Assessment

The OLRT, as the JTF commander's earliest element in country, is charged with gathering information needed by the JOPG and evaluating the information based on their position as the only NATO personnel that are in country at the time. Normally, the topics of the meetings that an OLRT has with various governmental and







## WHAT IS COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH?

NATO's 2010 Strategic Concept underlines that lessons learned from NATO operations show that effective crisis management calls for a Comprehensive Approach involving political, civilian and military instruments. Military means, although essential, are not enough on their own to meet the many complex challenges to Euro-Atlantic and international security. The effective implementation of a Comprehensive Approach requires all actors to contribute in a concerted effort, based on a shared sense of responsibility, openness and determination, taking into account their respective strengths, mandates and roles, as well as their decision-making autonomy. The implementation of NATO's contribution to a Comprehensive Approach is a permanent feature of the Alliance's work. (Read more at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_51633.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_51633.htm))

non-governmental personnel in a host nation are provided by the JTF JOPG as RFIs. These are primarily fact-based and specific. However, in the ambiguous environment that the OLRT often finds itself, it often hears conflicting views from the various host nation personnel that it interacts with. The OLRT's "sense" of the country that they are interacting with is often difficult to pass to their HQs, but it is imperative that they attempt to pass this atmospheric "feel" as best as they can while also answering the specific RFIs generated by the JOPG. The sense or feel of the host nation is best passed in analysis documents and video tele-conference (VTC) meetings.

One of the better tools for driving analysis is the post-meeting minutes that many OLRTs use to describe the various meetings that they attend during the day. The OLRT should develop a template for post-meeting minutes that both answers the detailed questions that the JOPG needs and provides information on the reliability of the personnel that they meet with, while at the same time passes on the atmospherics of the meetings. While the quality of detail about reliability and atmospherics is often variable depending on the experience level of the various OLRT personnel, the discipline of the process that is exerted by

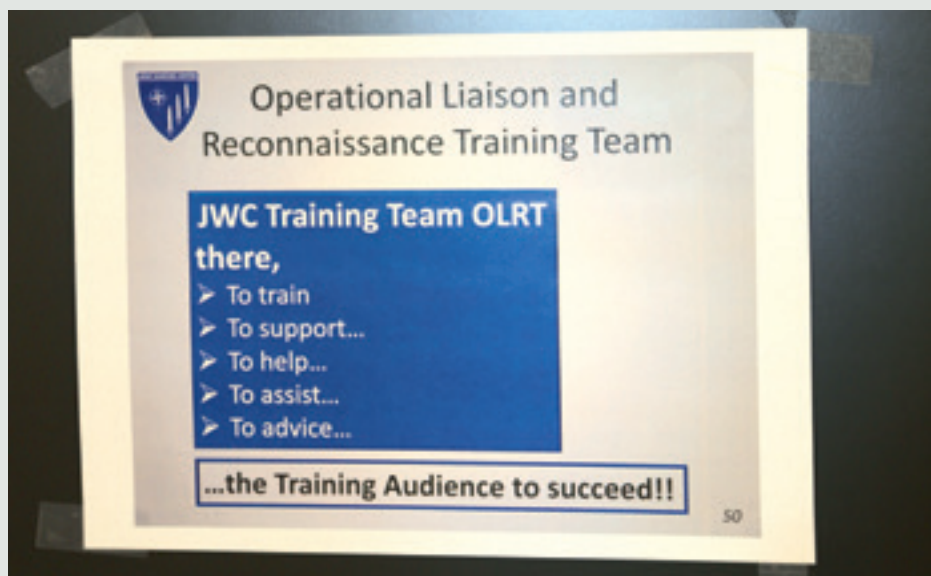
having a formal place in a templated post-meeting minutes document often drives the individual team member to greater analytical output. In fact, we have seen that over the OLRT training phase, team members make gains in analytic quality as well as quantity. Further, the template makes reference by the JOPG or commander much easier when there are questions or follow-up meetings that need to be engaged by the OLRT.

THOSE OLRTs that are best able to communicate their understanding of the host nation that they are engaging go one step further than the micro-analysis that comes out of specific post-meeting minutes. These teams typically conduct recurring macro analysis of the situation and provide it to their JOPG and commanders in their situation reports that are normally provided daily. While many teams use the situation report to collate and report factual data, the best teams use it as primarily an assessment document. Typically, the command has access to the post meeting minutes and therefore does not need a regurgitation of what already has been written, therefore the OLRT can assist their sending headquarters in understanding the operating environment by summarizing the

key facts and presenting their assessment of the overall situation that the team has observed each day in this situation report. The team can also produce a larger weekly analysis document to show how the facts combined with atmospherics are impacting on key JOPG planning factors and command focus areas.

VTC meetings are very useful for the OLRT to pass its understanding to the JOPG and to the Command Group because it allows an opportunity for both the JTF and the OLRT to have a two-way communication that can quickly clear up misunderstandings. It is especially helpful for the Command Group to have regular VTCs with the OLRT leadership to ensure that the commander is well aware of the atmospherics that the OLRT observes in country and to ensure that the OLRT is aware of the commander's focus as the planning process progresses. While ad hoc VTCs can be useful, VTC time is normally a scarce commodity due to communications limitations. And so, formal VTCs with enforced agendas, timeliness, and executive communication is normally better, at least in the beginning of an OLRT deployment when all are unfamiliar with the host nation and processes are new. These VTCs should be attended by as many of the OLRT team





members as daily work will allow, so that SMEs are available to answer the command's questions and allow as many as possible from the OLRT team members to hear directly from the Commander and the JOPG what issues are priority in the planning process.

### **Daily OLRT preparation during employment**

In order to be successful, the OLRT must be prepared to engage the host nation on numerous fronts in both formal and informal formats. In many cases, meetings over coffee or side-bar discussions in hallways are more successful in advancing the OLRT's mission than formal meetings. While OLRTs rightly focus on the formal meeting occasions, the team must develop a mechanism for preparing for both formal and informal types of engagements. The most highly performing OLRTs are those that can leverage the informal meetings by always being prepared with an understanding of the JTF's priorities and an understanding of the host nation's interests. Being able to advance the JTF's priorities through the host nation's interests is part of the art of good OLRT practice and must be prepared for in advance. Efficient use of team-wide expertise to prepare all for both chance and deliberate meetings will go a long way toward ensuring that all are fully prepared to make the team's mission successful.

Normally, OLRTs have one- to two-team meetings a day, set in accordance with the JTF and the host nation battle rhythm. These meetings will cover the basics of internal RFI management, formal meeting schedules,

command guidance, and other necessary team-wide information. While these items must be covered, better performing OLRTs also use these team meetings to cross-level information and atmospheric to ensure that all team members understand as much about their host nation counterparts and analyze in a group setting that information. A good OLRT meeting includes much of the same items as described above about VTCs. The meeting should have an adhered-to agenda. Team members should be prepared to speak on their various engagements and be required to both give facts and analysis of those engagements. If possible, team meetings should begin before deployment, so that team members are familiar with the format and are prepared to discuss key points and analysis without rambling. Additionally, the OLRT key leadership can encourage open and frank discussion of the host nation and identify strategies for engagements in areas that are not going well or ways to exploit the areas of success. Effective utilization of the team meetings to ensure that all members are largely of the same understanding of the situation will significantly enhance the ability of the OLRT to engage in the informal opportunities that present themselves during the OLRT employment phase.

Formal engagements can also be prepared for in a group setting although not normally with a team-wide meeting. Each formal engagement should have a plan that is developed by the primary interlocutor with the host nation. That plan can be staffed with other team members that need to be collaborated along with the OLRT leadership

in order to ensure that priorities are being accomplished and that the best strategy is used for efficient use of engagement time to gain information and conduct liaison. In an ambiguous environment with actors that may have different agendas and different points of view about the involvement of NATO with regards to the host nation, it is sometimes necessary to engage different personalities in different manners. Some individuals may be best approached directly, while others need a more indirect approach while in an extreme circumstance certain personnel may need to be bypassed while finding another path to gaining the information that the OLRT is seeking. Particularly, when analysis has indicated that an individual interlocutor has a specific agenda or bias towards NATO, it may be necessary to have different approaches to that actor. Therefore, after the basic engagement plan has been developed, it is often helpful for the OLRT SMEs that are engaging the host nation to conduct an informal war game of the meeting to attempt to prepare for the personality of the host nation interlocutor.

Strategies for engagement based on the known or believed personality of the host nation personnel and their interests can be refined based on this war game. Due to the varying experience levels of OLRT personnel with host nation engagement, it may be useful for the OLRT leadership or other more experienced personnel to sit in on these preparatory war game sessions to provide hints on ways of engaging the host nation personnel. In the case of very important meetings, or ones that the JOPG is particularly interested in, the war game session can be attended via VTC by JOPG SMEs as well.

### **Conclusion**

While the foregoing observations and ideas have come from various JWC exercises, they should not be taken as the final word on how to conduct OLRT training or execution. The OLRT is an organization that can be tailored to the mission of the JTF headquarters and commanders can be as creative as necessary to build their OLRT organizational procedures to maximize efficiency in gaining information and developing liaison structures needed for mission accomplishment. Hopefully, future OLRT organizations will be able to use some of the thoughts in this article to enhance the training of their teams. †

# U.S. soldiers receive German Proficiency Badge



By Lieutenant Colonel Stefan Kuehling, German Army, JWC Chief PA Officer —

On 10 April 2015, six U.S. soldiers from the Joint Warfare Centre (JWC), were decorated with the German Armed Forces Badge for Military Proficiency in Gold for meeting rigorous proficiency standards. During the ceremony at the Centre, Senior German Representative, Army Colonel Peter Baierl, gave his words of appreciation to the Chief of Staff, U.S. Air Force Brigadier General Roger Watkins and the German and American delegations. The soldiers who were awarded the badge had met the benchmarks in swimming, running and other physical activities; qualified on the pistol range; passed a first-aid test; and completed a 7.5-mile road march while carrying a backpack weighing at least 33 pounds!

The award has been available to U.S. service members since 1972. In his speech, Colo-

nel Baierl took a look back on the short history of the new German Armed Forces — the Bundeswehr: "Although it is relatively new in comparison with those of many NATO partners, we can already look back on a 60-year tradition within the Bundeswehr," Colonel Baierl said.

The successful participants were Lieutenant Colonel Kevin Catron, Major Dan Walker, Major Jason Burns, Major Kevin Burgess, Master Sergeant Bernard Lazare and Sergeant First Class Daniel Onnen, who were all very pleased with the ceremony. "I am very proud to be recognized as a U.S. soldier with the German Badge," Major Burns said.

Established in 2003 in Norway, JWC consists of 250 military and civilian staff members. 36 Germans and 31 Americans constitute the largest national shares within the command comprised of eighteen nations.



## 2014 Merit Awards — NCST Squadron Stavanger



Spanish Air Force Major General Luis E. Andrey, Chief of Staff NCI Agency, awarded outstanding members of the NCST Squadron Stavanger in recognition of their professionalism and teamwork on 27 February 2015.



## THE TYRANNY OF

# SMALL HURDLES

**HOW TO:**  
Bring awareness to the task, break it down into manageable steps, and make those steps concrete and actionable.

**By Paul Sewell**

Lessons Learned Analyst  
Lead Facilitator for Organisational  
Cultural Change Programme, JWC

**REGARDLESS** of the level at which we work, we are constantly facing challenges when trying to achieve our aims. Working within the Alliance itself is demanding with its fair share of both external and internal challenges, all of which can hamper our ability to learn and grow as an organisation.

Many of the external challenges are well known: the threat of opposing nation states, terrorism, and a volatile global economy, amongst others. Ironically, these external challenges often bring out the best in us collectively as an organisation and strengthen our resolve.

In contrast, the internal challenges we sometimes face may produce an opposite effect, threatening our growth and splintering

our teams. As a matter of fact, business literature is full of these common, and all too familiar, organisational woes: poor communication, empire-building, hidden agendas, bad resource management, and so on. That being said, there is another subset of challenges, which is not well documented and yet can have a significant negative effect on our daily output, namely: the phenomenon of small hurdles.

### **Small hurdles**

Consider the following examples: A four-page email that is too complicated and impossible to understand and so you flag it, resolving to come back to it later. Or the task "from above", which is so ambiguous and unclear that you

put it off and look for something simpler to work on. Or, the presentation where the speaker is telling you everything about a topic, except what you *really* need to know. While these examples differ from each other, they do share some similarities.

When faced with any of these, we may experience anything from a simple lack of clarity to feeling completely overwhelmed. Even the slightest hint of ambiguity leads us to hesitate. This is the first trap of the "small hurdle": when we hesitate with a task, we more easily find other things to do, or at the very least we turn away from the task at hand. Furthermore, because these tasks are often seen as less important, and definitely not at the top of our



priority list, it is easier for us to put them off and not give them the attention they require.

Ironically, the reason why these small hurdles have such a negative effect lies in the idea that they drain more of our energy when we are not dealing with them compared to when we actually are. To elaborate, while we may not be working on these tasks, they still occupy space in our minds, wasting our energy, bothering us with anything from mild stress to full anxiety because we have not started working with them yet. If we were to stop and think for a moment, we could have dozens of these small hurdles occupying our personal and professional lives at any one time.

A second trap of the small hurdle is that it appears bigger than it actually is — another reason we don't tackle them right away. Consider anything you are currently putting off either at work or at home. Most likely there is some lack of clarity, or there are too many steps to hold in your head. This leads us to exaggerating the workload because we have not really assessed what it would take. Yet, the irony is that when we finally get around to completing the task, we realise it took no time at all. So why is it that we do not/cannot/will not complete these tasks right away? As mentioned before, *hesitation* is the small hurdle's main weapon. This thin layer of hesitation is often enough to block us from pushing through. But why? *Because of the very nature of the human mind.* Our mind is designed to automate our lives as much as possible. This saves us from having to re-learn how to drive a car, brush our teeth, or dress ourselves every day. But the mind is not without its limitations and this automation can lead to many cognitive biases<sup>(1)</sup>, which in turn may skew our thinking. One of the main flaws is not being present, not focusing entirely on the task at hand.

**What can be done?**

**1 BE AWARE:** Being aware of our own human biases is an essential first step. By simply being aware when the action signals of hesitation or of being overwhelmed enter our radar (our awareness) we can be reminded that we have not yet fully examined the issue. A key principle worth remembering in this situation comes from psychology: the closer I move towards the issue, the smaller it becomes. This is definitely true



**TOP TIPS:**

1. The closer you move towards the issue, the smaller it becomes.
2. Chunk the problem down.
3. Quantify each of the small chunks.

in our personal lives as well as our daily work. An issue may appear to be enormous precisely because we have not examined it closely enough. It is the monster under the bed, which growls and claws in our minds, until we can shine the light of reality on them. The more awareness we bring to an issue, the less power it has over us. Marcus Aurelius<sup>(2)</sup> the Roman emperor and Stoic philosopher would employ what he called Contemptuous Expressions towards challenges to "lay them bare and see how pointless they are, to strip away the legend that encrusts them." Awareness alone may help you realise how illusory the small hurdle actually is and encourage you to take action, to deal with it.

At this stage in the article, many will argue that they already use them in one shape or another in their work. This is definitely true for the tasks that we, or our leaders, are interested in. However, it is harder to employ these little techniques to those numerous small hurdles, which are constantly draining our energy under the surface. This is why awareness ("being here now") is the essential first step.

**2 BREAK IT INTO CHUNKS:**  
*"How do you eat an elephant?  
 One bite at a time."*

If we still fail to act, another tool to consider is to "chunk" the problem down. Breaking the problem down into smaller chunks reduces the sense of being overwhelmed, which then makes it easier to compel us to act. Now we only have to focus on one "chunk" or "bite" at a time! By doing this, that monster task that you have been procrastinating over for months may actually turn out to only be two emails, a phone call and a short meeting — all of which could have been done in less than a day.

The trick therefore is to break the task down until it becomes manageable enough to work on.

**3 MAKE IT CONCRETE:** The small hurdle is often clouded in a fog of ambiguity, leading our mind and its biases to exaggerate and distort reality. To see through this fog, we can apply a tactic, which aims at quantifying each of the small chunks. This makes them more tangible and, therefore, more concrete for us to manage. For example, asking yourself how long would each step take can reduce this fog. The task, "interview Subject Matter Experts" is too vague and leads us to hesitate. However, we can make it more tangible by writing "interview five Subject Matter Experts (ten minutes each)". This simple re-wording of the task makes it easier for us to quantify what needs to be done so we can dedicate our time and resources to it.

THE AIM OF this article was to point us in the direction of dealing with the numerous small hurdles we face in our professional and personal lives: bringing awareness to the task, breaking it down into manageable steps, and making the steps concrete and actionable. However, these points are equally applicable when you are the person sending the email, directing the task, or giving that presentation. Anything we can do to reduce the ambiguity and the hesitation in the minds of those we are trying to communicate with will ultimately make us and our audiences more effective.

This is arguably at the very heart of *StratCom* and worthy of our consideration as members of the NATO workforce constantly striving to craft clear and impacting messages, which compel our audiences to act. ✦

**END NOTES:**

(1) Aurelius, M. (published 1909). *Meditations*, Book Six, page 71.  
 (2) See Kahneman, D. (2013): "Thinking Fast and Slow" for a great exploration of these biases.

# FACILITATING NATO'S READINESS



**By Lieutenant Colonel Peter Schelland**  
The Netherlands Army  
Land Doctrine Staff Officer  
Joint Capability Integration Division  
Joint Warfare Centre

**T**HE WORLD has changed dramatically with the disbandment of the Warsaw Pact in 1991. NATO also changed "beyond recognition", as reflected in 1998 in the words of former NATO Secretary General Javier Solana, and redefined its reason for being. Mr Solana then said: "Instead of concentrating exclusively on defence of our territory, the Alliance is now focusing on the contribution it can make to help manage regional crises and promote a broad network of security cooperation across the Euro-Atlantic area."<sup>(1)</sup> Indeed,

with the disappearance of the military threat that the Warsaw Pact posed, NATO with its new member states redirected its efforts towards Crisis Response Operations, widening its scope to include areas outside those of NATO member states. Since then, the Alliance has not planned for any land-heavy joint operation in Central Europe, but has conducted joint operations out-of-area (non-Article 5), instead. The NATO military structure also became fundamentally different from that which existed before the end of the Cold War. Restructuring concerned not only the strategic





**Left:** Canadian and American soldiers train and fire mortars at enemy positions in Adazi training ground, Latvia, 23 February 2015. Photograph by NATO.

terror to our European borders and even into our streets.

NATO's primary role and greatest responsibility has always been the deterrence of potential adversaries and the defence of the Alliance and its populations against attack, as set out in Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. At the Wales Summit last year, NATO agreed on a Readiness Action Plan in order to address the current threats from the East and from the South, once again proving its adaptability to a continuously changing world. Bolstered by Security Assurance Measures, all 28 nations provide continuous air, land and maritime presence on a rotational basis. The Alliance also agreed to significantly increase its military presence in Eastern Allied countries by setting up a Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF). This Spearhead Force of the NATO Response Force (NRF), comprised of land, air, maritime, special operations forces as well as appropriate Command and Control, counts up to 5,000 troops and is ready to move within as little as 48 hours. Simultaneously, the NRF itself will increase two-fold up to 30,000 troops.

What we see today is a renewed focus on NATO's conventional task of defending European territory, crisis management and cooperative security. Reinvigorating European defence also translates into bolstered military training through simulations and exercises aiming at readiness, preparedness and effective interoperability of NATO forces. At the opening of the NATO Transformation Seminar on 25 March 2015, Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg addressed his audience: "There is a particular role for Allied Command Transformation (ACT) to test NATO in realistic and time-pressured scenarios." Jens Stoltenberg expressed himself in clear wording, raising subjects and circumstances NATO needs to prepare for in the light of the Alliance's adaptation to a new security situation.

INDEED, an orchestrated environment of intimidation and propaganda in which proxy soldiers and un-badged Special Forces are operating close to European borders is a new reality that needs to be taken seriously.



level through to the tactical level headquarters, but also NATO agencies, aligned institutes and national organizations who had played an important role in the Alliance's General Defence Plan during the Cold War. Simply put, they lost their *raison d'être*. NATO's standing military forces were also significantly reduced. By 1997, major combat units available to NATO were reduced by 35%; major naval combatants available to NATO were reduced by 32%; and combat squadrons available to NATO were cut by 41%. NATO nations cut their military personnel by 24% and defence expenditures by

22%. Additionally, NATO's land-based nuclear stockpile was cut by over 80%.<sup>(2)</sup>

NATO commenced its largest combat operation in Afghanistan from 2003 until last year, with the aim to deny safe haven to international terrorists and ensure the country's security while making Europe safer in the process. Today, following a decade of continuous non-Article 5 operations, we are once again witnessing fundamental changes in Euro-Atlantic security with Russia's military intervention in Ukraine and the rise of violent extremism in North Africa and the Middle East, bringing



**NATO Transformation Seminar:** Joint press conference with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and Supreme Allied Commander Transformation (SACT), General Jean-Paul Paloméros, 25 March 2015. Photograph by NATO.

Hybrid warfare particularly challenges the domains of intelligence, knowledge development, analytical capabilities and information management; the domains which feed continued horizon scanning and military planning and decision-making. In parallel, this type of aggression is a potential threat to NATO's core value democracy and urges political decision-makers from 28 nations to close the ranks, allowing the military to respond swiftly to fast-changing circumstances.

Cyber aggression also belongs to modern conflict. At the Wales Summit, NATO agreed that, if aimed against one of the Allies, cyber aggression could potentially trigger an Article 5 response. Early cyber detection and protective counter measures will help the Alliance to detect and address cyber aggression at an early stage, thus increasing NATO's resiliency and survivability. Cyber needs to feature more prominently in all future exercises.

The Joint Warfare Centre (JWC), under SACT direction and guidance, has the capabilities of supporting the NATO commands in their efforts to implement SACEUR's Assurance Measures. Translating the words of the Secretary General into transformational actions, the JWC has the unique ability to combine the delivery of a challenging training environment, give advice on staff procedures and provide scenarios that reflect current evolving threats to European security creating a test-bed, not only for adequate operational

planning and decision-making, but ultimately for the conduct of operations. Fast-changing circumstances in a hybrid environment that might cross the Alliance's borders require operational commands to prepare to be able to swiftly change course and re-orchestrate and synchronize tactical level actions throughout the campaign more than ever before. Not only orchestrated illegal initiatives may drive the pace of changes in the environment. Short term amendments in force posture, for example, as directed by NATO political leadership, will complicate the environment and require

the operational command to have the ability to adequately respond. This is why Battlespace Management at the operational level becomes of crucial importance. The JWC can deliver the means to train, test and validate.

NATO's Glossary of Terms and Definitions, the AAP-6, does not cover the term "Battlespace Management" but describes only "battlespace" as follows: "The environment, factors and conditions that must be understood to apply combat power, protect a force or complete a mission successfully. *Note:* It includes the land, maritime, air and space environments; the ene-





my and friendly forces present therein; facilities; terrestrial and space weather; health hazards; terrain; the electromagnetic spectrum; and the information environment in the Joint Operations Area and other areas of interest."

Although current doctrine publications have not specifically addressed this subject as yet, the primary focus for Battlespace Management at the operational level must be assumed to be the *coordination* and *synchronization* of actions, or activities, performed by the Component Commands (CCs) operating in the same Joint Operations Area. The desired effects of those combined actions were initially identified through a process of collaborative analysis and deduction during the Operations Planning Process (OPP). They are of crucial importance for the achievement of operational goals and ultimately for the achievement of the desired strategic end-state for the campaign. However, this may rapidly change in a hybrid environment, more than in an environment characterized by the hostile application of doctrine and Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTP).

The JWC delivered a challenging scenario for exercise TRIDENT LANCE 14 (TRLE 14) last December, based on an Article 5 situation, which generated important lessons identified. If our wish is to train and test operational and strategic adaptability to fast-changing and varied circumstances, this scenario has the potential to be further developed as a setting that reflects current aggressive developments putting pressure on European borders. ✦



## JWC HAS THE UNIQUE ABILITY TO DELIVER THE MEANS TO TRAIN, TEST AND VALIDATE.

### END NOTES:

- (1) Speech by Dr Javier Solana, former Secretary General of NATO, 9 July 1998.
- (2) "The Transformation of NATO's Defence Posture": [www.nato.int/docu/comm/1997/970708/infopres/e-defpost.htm](http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/1997/970708/infopres/e-defpost.htm).



Scripting Workshop for exercise TRIDENT JAGUAR 15. Photograph by JWC PAO.

Photographs by Flight Sergeant C. Artigues (HQ MARCOM)



### NATO READINESS ACTION PLAN

Changes to the NATO Response Force (NRF) are just one of the adaption measures approved by the Allies at the Wales Summit under the Readiness Action Plan. Other related initiatives include:

- Assuring Allies with an increased presence, including exercises and maritime and air patrols, surveillance, and policing;
- Upgrading intelligence gathering and sharing and updating defence plans in order to enhance NATO's ability to quickly detect and respond to ambiguous hybrid threats;
- The pre-positioning of military equipment and supplies;
- Improvement of NATO's ability to reinforce its eastern Allies through preparation of national infrastructure, such as airfields and ports;
- More exercises focused both on Crisis Management and Collective Defence;
- Enhancing NATO's Standing Naval Forces; and
- Raising the readiness and capabilities of the Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast (Szczecin, Poland) and enhancing its role as a hub for regional cooperation.

(Source: [www.aco.nato.int](http://www.aco.nato.int))

COVER STORY

# ALI: A LANGUAGE ISSUE

## CHANCES AND CHALLENGES OF AIR-LAND INTEGRATION

By Lieutenant Colonel Heiko Hermanns  
German Air Force  
Integrated Air and Missile Defence SME  
Joint Warfare Centre

**C**ONSIDERING the complexity of modern warfare and battlespace, it is vital to bring to effect the maximum combined effort of all capabilities in any operation, regardless of ownership. In any military conflict, Air-Land Integration (ALI) provides a perfect example of the joint operations. The success of such an undertaking depends on cooperation and coordination of all activities, that is, an effective joint Battlespace Management.<sup>(1)</sup> Usually, military forces achieve this through unity of command, which is a prerequisite for the planning and execution of operations. One might think it is self-evident that service doctrines are subordinated to the central idea that the Supported Commander and the Joint Force Commander are one and the same, and that the components exist to support his campaign and efforts to

resolve conflict. NATO's Allied Doctrine for Joint Operations<sup>(2)</sup> acknowledges that in modern warfare, military success relies on a joint effort. This effort is usually taken on by three environmental and functional components, brought together under a unified joint Command Structure. Within the NATO Command Structure (NCS), these established components are the Maritime Component, the Land Component and the Air Component, together with their respective headquarters.

### Setting the scene

The Maritime Component contributes to joint operations on the surface, sub-surface and air (as maritime air forces) to project power from or at sea. Maritime forces can influence or support land operations through deterrence, sea basing of land assets, and by moving land forc-

es into, or providing access to, the operational area.<sup>(3)</sup> Holding terrain, destroying enemy forces, occupying territory and regaining territory is the usual purview of the Land Component.<sup>(4)</sup> The diversities and complexities of the land environment are expressed by the number and variety of actors, observers, agencies and the interested parties nested in the land battlespace. This complexity requires an approach that emphasizes on decentralized command, freedom of action, tempo and initiative in order to contend with the multitude of activities. Consequently, a wide variety of missions need to be executed, requiring substantial logistics supply, provided by sealift, airlift and ground transportation capabilities.<sup>(5)</sup> Based on this, the reader could draw the conclusion that most often it is the Land Component that demands most support in a Joint Task Force.



**Left:** NATO photograph (edited from the original) by Staff Sergeant Ian Houlding, British Army.



derstanding of "jointness" is still not mature enough amongst military services and their leadership or staffs. On the joint level, the significant dominance of one service in comparison to the others amplifies this issue further. As it currently stands, joint doctrine frequently reflects a consensus view rather than a truly integrated joint perspective.<sup>(7)</sup> So, why is this still the case when we know that creating effective organizations and procuring equipment for the changing battlefield in the domains of land, air and maritime are both on the Alliance's and the national armed forces' agendas?

Derived from its internal organizational culture, the doctrine of a military service sets the frame of reference, which fundamentally defines its activities by outlining the shared worldview and the "proper" methods, tools, techniques and approaches to problem solving within and amongst the services. It is this very difference in the organizational cultures and the subsequent effects, which make Air-Land Integration so challenging.

### **So, where are we?**

Undoubtedly, the Air-Land Integration has seen much improvement at the tactical level. However, this has been mainly driven by events on the battlefield and has had little, if anything, to do with the concept of integrated planning of air and land movements at the operational level, or above. The result is, therefore, a bottom-up approach rather than a top-down approach.

This may be attributable to the fact that there is no strategic ownership of Air-Land Integration in NATO.<sup>(8)</sup> Reading through the Allied Joint Publications on Allied Doctrine for Joint Operations (AJP-3), Land Operations (AJP-3.2) and Air and Space Operations (AJP-3.3), it becomes evident that service doctrines and capabilities are still too often accommodated at the operational level planning without proper deconfliction. This is due to the fact that the services across most NATO nations have tended to view the conflicts of the post-Cold War period through their specific institutional prisms, wherein "jointness" has too often been just a "buzzword" rather than a mindset. In the end, many joint plans are an amalgamation of component plans, designed for optimal em-

For shaping the operational area, control of the airspace is a prerequisite for the Joint Force Commander, who needs to ensure that friendly operations on the ground or at sea can proceed efficiently and effectively, both in place and time, without prohibitive interference from the opponent. Therefore, the Air Component must gain control of the air whilst protecting its joint forces from air and missile attacks. Once air control has been established and employed at all levels of operations, the air capabilities will provide various opportunities to project military power where and when needed, almost unlimited by natural barriers.

FOR COMMANDING a joint force, centralized authority for direction and guidance must be achieved while integrating differently timed and executed planning cycles at the various

levels. Therefore, it is essential to establish a joint Command and Control (C2) structure, including all components contributing to the operation, whilst taking into account coordination and cooperation with civil and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The Joint Task Force and its components must be capable of attacking the opponent directly or indirectly at any given time by applying physical or cognitive effects, to achieve strategic, operational and tactical effects. This illustrates the doctrine, procedures, organizational cultures and equipment of the subordinate components must always be understood and complied with by both the Joint Task Force Command and the components.<sup>(6)</sup>

The primary task of such a joint coordination is to exploit the full potential of its assets whilst maximizing the synergy of joint effects. Unfortunately, the common un-



# THE MOST IMPORTANT THING NEEDED FOR REAL AIR-LAND INTEGRATION ON ALL LEVELS, AND ESPECIALLY ON STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL LEVEL, IS JOINT EDUCATION AND TRAINING.

ployment of their individual organic capabilities.<sup>(9)</sup> In other words, service cultures and their doctrinal paradigms still largely trump joint culture and doctrine. As a result, the joint war fighting potential of a comprehensive Air-Land Integration is not fully realized today.

THE CHALLENGE of getting distinct and different components (like Air, Land, Maritime, Special Operations Forces, etc.) with individual interests and deep-rooted traditions to agree to the principles that have a fundamental effect on the conduct of their operations cannot be mastered in a simple manner. For example, Army staffs at all levels, but most particularly at the operational level, lack broad and solid understanding of air power's capabilities and operation principles, and vice versa. More precisely, both ends lack the ability to define, in a common language, the effects required to achieve the Joint Commander's intent. This often leads to misunderstandings, compounded by insufficient expert advice on how that effect can best

be delivered, without vainness or envy. By the same token, air and land operational staffs must understand each other's capabilities and limitations in order to ensure timely and effective decision-making on the appropriate level.

All elements working together as a Joint Task Force must have a common understanding of each other's doctrine if we are to achieve synergy and effective use of capabilities.<sup>(10)</sup> Our end state vision can be very different. Soldiers instinctively look to achieve tactical and operational success through a relatively close battle where ambiguity, uncertainty and unpredictability prevail; an airman, on the other hand, will be conscious of, and strive for, strategic effect without necessarily understanding the operational, tactical or even political consequences of his actions. Joint planning and execution against this backdrop will be difficult.<sup>(11)</sup> For instance, air power attributes, such as speed, reach and flexibility, would be too constrained if operating solely in support of land forces. In effect, it would become tac-

tically fixed, unable to achieve independently its own strategic and operational effects in the joint arena. Alternatively, shared experiences on recent operations, like ISAF, have provided the opportunity to recognize, understand and appreciate the potential of the respective equipment and capabilities in the services. Regardless of those latest positive developments, the absence of trust and mutual understanding between soldiers and airmen is evident at certain levels, and it will not improve until this relationship is viewed as a partnership, rather than with mild, but frequent enmity.<sup>(12)</sup>

These viable inter-service relationships have deep cultural and institutional origins. The issue is not so much that service cultures are different, but that these differences need to be understood and allowed. Acceptance of diversity is what seems to be required rather than handling it as a disadvantage. NATO operations of the last 20 years proved that whilst subscribing to and optimizing the use of joint structures and doctrines is required, too often only lip service is paid to them. Air-Land Integration must be more than just a term or the topic of a casual conversation; it has to be both a learning process and a culture change within and between the services.

Forces across the different domains use their own unique languages, and even within each domain, specialist elements have a dialect of their own.<sup>(13)</sup> Hence, Air-Land Integration requires an even deeper understanding of each other's language than already required within each domain. Language is the accumulation of shared meaning and understanding, which in the end enables us to interact jointly in making and doing things.<sup>(14)</sup> Although we may not end up speaking one language, we will learn to appreciate each other's vocabulary much more. So, when merging into a joint operation, there is no mystical "babel fish" to translate what one says into what the receiver hears. We must accept that an appreciation of the ways of Air-Land Integration comes about through personal contact and building of mutual trust and respect.



Photograph by NATO.





# AIR-LAND INTEGRATION CASE STUDY: OPERATION COMPASS

**TOWARDS THE END OF** World War I, the Western Front witnessed the beginnings of close cooperation between troops and aircraft; British aircraft had begun to cooperate with tank formations attacking German headquarters as well as lines of communication. However, this common air-land effort was far from systematic, but was rather embryonic, and they required evaluation before being refined into doctrine. This happened neither in the British Army, nor in the Royal Air Force.

Consequently, at the outbreak of World War II in September 1939, neither of the services was prepared for the challenges posed by an opponent who already operated with a significant level of Air-Land Integration. The lack of further close cooperation between Air Force and Army after World War I played a major role in the Allies' defeat in Norway and France in the beginning of World War II. Regardless of this bad start, the Allied armies and air forces left the battlefields in 1945 as cooperating partners in all theatres of World War II.

"Operation Compass" (December 1940 to February 1941) proved the statement by General Montgomery, that "if you can

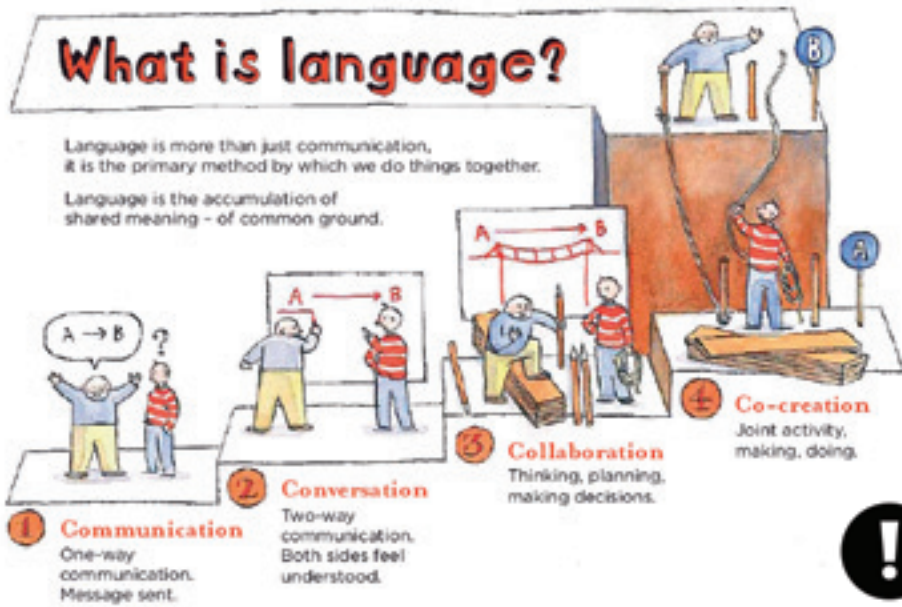
knit up the power of the Army on the land and the power of the air in the sky then nothing will stand against you and you will never lose a battle."<sup>(1)</sup>

In Operation Compass, a numerically superior Italian Army and its supporting Air Force was defeated in Libya by the British. Compass was an air-land success that enabled the British Western Desert Force to advance over 800 km, destroy an Italian Army of ten divisions and capture 130,000 prisoners along with some 400 tanks and over 800 artillery guns with only two divisions of their own.<sup>(2)</sup> Certainly, General Montgomery was not the first, nor the last, to recognize the potential of joint Air-Land Integration. So, a discussion on Air-Land Integration appears as apposite today as it has been at any time in history. In the Iraq war of 2003, over 15,000 of 20,000 targets struck by the coalition air forces were through Close Air Support missions.<sup>(3)</sup>

Today, the traditional military services and their specific power projection capabilities are essential enablers and multipliers for each other. In other words, the topic of Air-Land Integration is not new; on the

contrary, it is once again proving to be a topic of pressing importance. Today's conflicts demand innovation in the joint application of force. Contemporary strategic uncertainty and increasing financial austerity elevates the need for coherent joint thought. Therefore, NATO leaders at the 2012 Chicago Summit set the goal of "NATO Forces 2020", which cannot be achieved without the essential pillar called the Connected Forces Initiative (CFI).

The CFI will enhance the ties between NATO Command and Force Structures, national staffs and armed forces as well as partner countries. This provides opportunities, not only in terms of confidence building and mutual understanding, but also for the planning of further integration of military components. Lessons Learned in Afghanistan shows that having fully joint and interoperable forces is a critical success factor. Hence, a strong Air-Land Integration is vital to the CFI and also helps the Alliance stay well-prepared to undertake the full range of its missions with the necessary capabilities and resolve in light of the ever changing and unpredictable security environment.<sup>(4)</sup>



**Left:** The image is from the book "Using Language" by Herbert H. Clark. It is published on [www.davegrayinfo.com/2008/04/05/what-is-language/](http://www.davegrayinfo.com/2008/04/05/what-is-language/) According to the announcement on Cambridge University Press website about the book, the author "argues that language use is more than the sum of a speaker speaking and a listener listening. It is the joint action that emerges when speakers and listeners, writers and readers perform their individual actions in coordination, as ensembles. In contrast to work within the cognitive sciences, which has seen language use as an individual process, and to work within the social sciences, which has seen it as a social process, the author argues strongly that language use embodies both individual and social processes."



**SPEAKING A COMMON LANGUAGE IS THE KEY TO A SUCCESSFUL AIR-LAND INTEGRATION.**

## What is required?

In order to further improve joint operations, the first box to tick off should be a sound comprehensive doctrine on Air-Land Integration; and therein lies the crux of friction at an early stage. In the military, single services are not unsophisticated, monolithic entities, but their "institutional essence" is defined by their doctrine. As a result, we see a growing number of doctrinal AJP's being drafted, but many of them appear to drive further specialization rather than unification. A proper joint doctrine relies on defining a common perspective from which to plan, train and conduct military operations rather than demanding one and thus continuing to defer to the services or special interest areas. No such comprehensive Air-Land Integration doctrine is available as of yet. The good



Exercises such as Combined Resolve involves complex and demanding tasks such as operational planning, the manoeuvre of forces and effective employment and synchronization of air and ground forces. Photograph by NATO.



news, however, is that there is information in other doctrines, which could be used to draft a complete NATO Air-Land Integration doctrine, such as in the Allied Joint Doctrine on Land Operations (AJP-3.2 Chapter 4) or the Allied Joint Doctrine for Close Air Support and Air Interdiction (AJP-3.3.2). What is important now is to take the next step towards the integration of this information in a single AJP on Air-Land Integration.

EFFECTIVE INTEGRATION is not derived from pure ownership of the capabilities them-

selves, but from identifying what more can be done. In this respect liaison is crucial, both in operations and in peacetime locations, and as much as this has a physical element to it, there is an equally important conceptual dimension. It seems to be fair to say that the air forces are in the lead in this issue over land forces. This is because most national air forces have expended considerable energy and capital by establishing an Air Operation Coordination Centre (AOCC) in a land headquarters. Unfortunately, this is not yet the case in the NATO Command Structure. By placing pro-





**Left:** U.S. Air Force General Frank Gorenc, NATO's Senior Air Advisor and Commander of Allied Air Command, receiving a briefing from the author on TRIDENT JET 16. The exercise aims to ensure NATO's single air command, AIRCOM, for operational readiness. Ultimately, the scenario will also reinforce HQ AIRCOM's multiple standing missions and operational priorities, such as the Air Policing Mission and Ballistic Missile Defence, while exploring further air capabilities by practicing Command and Control in a complex and diverse environment. Photograph by JWC PAO.

## END NOTES:

- (1) Compare to: Rob Weighhill, *Air/Land Integration - The view from Mars*, in *RUSI Defences systems*, February 2009, Page 55, picked up from [www.rusi.org/downloads/assets/RDS\\_Weighhill\\_Feb09.pdf](http://www.rusi.org/downloads/assets/RDS_Weighhill_Feb09.pdf) on 1 March 2015.
- (2) Allied Joint Paper (AJP)-3(A) - Allied Joint Doctrine for Joint Operations.
- (3) Compare with AJP-3(A), Para. 111 and 112. Since this article will focus on the topic of Air-Land Integration (ALI) the relationships between the Maritime Component and the other parts of the NATO Joint Force structure will not be further discussed unless it is necessary for explanation.
- (4) Compare with AJP-3(A), Para. 114.
- (5) For further details see AJP-3.2 "Allied Joint Doctrine for Land Operations" Chapter 1 -3.
- (6) Compare with AJP-3 (A), Chapter 1, Section IV.
- (7) Learning large lessons: the evolving roles of ground power and air power in the post-Cold War era/David E. Johnson, RAND Corporation 2007.
- (8) Sir Clive Loader, *Is True Air/Land Integration Achievable?* in *RUSI Defences systems*, February 2009, Page 50, picked up from [www.rusi.org/downloads/assets/RDS\\_Loader\\_Feb09.pdf](http://www.rusi.org/downloads/assets/RDS_Loader_Feb09.pdf) on 01 March 2015.
- (9) Compare Bruce R. Pirnie [et al.], *Beyond close air support: forging a new air-ground partnership*, RAND Co-operation, 2005, page 20.
- (10) Harv Smyth, *From Coningham to Project Coningham-Keyes - Did British Forces Relearn Historical Air-land Co-operation Lessons During Operation Telic?* in *Royal Air Force Air Power Review*, Vol. 10, Nr. 1 Spring 2007, page 2.
- (11) Rob Weighhill, *Air/Land Integration - The view from Mars*, Page 53-54
- (12) Graeme Davis, *Air/Land Integration: A Venusian View From Mars*, in *RUSI Defences systems*, October 2009, Page 79, picked up from [www.rusi.org/downloads/assets/Davis\\_RDS\\_Aut09.pdf](http://www.rusi.org/downloads/assets/Davis_RDS_Aut09.pdf) on 1 March 2015. Rob Weighhill, *Air/Land Integration - The view from Mars*, Page 53.
- (13) Graeme Davis, *Air/Land Integration: A Venusian View From Mars*, p. 78.
- (14) Compare to Dave Gray, *What is Language?*, found at [www.davegrayinfo.com/2008/04/05/what-is-language](http://www.davegrayinfo.com/2008/04/05/what-is-language).

## Case Study (on page 85):

- (1) The National Archives, *Air 37/876*.
- (2) Compare to: Ian Gooderson, *Doctrine from the crucible - The British air-land experience in the Second World War*, Royal Air Force Air Power Review, Vol. 9, Number 2, Autumn 2006, Pages 1-13.
- (3) Numbers according to: David E. Johnson, *Learning large lessons: the evolving roles of ground power and air power in the post-Cold War era*, RAND Corporation 2007.
- (4) Compare to: [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_98527.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_98527.htm) as of 29 March 2015.

professional and capable officers in influential positions in those headquarters, the precondition for joint planning and execution is achieved. Political and military leaders must be convinced that the investment in people, and in particular, the implications on career development is invaluable. If this does not happen, an imbalance and a perceived inequality will prevail, whereupon NATO will never be able to totally overcome (and does not want) the rifts of cultures between the single services. Mutual understanding comes from education, training and leadership. Therefore, the most important thing needed for real Air-Land Integration on all levels and, especially on strategic and operational level, is joint education and training. Professional military education and individual training are two elements of the training needed to produce the most professional, competent and interoperable NATO individual possible.

It can be questioned whether the joint nature of twenty-first century military operations sufficiently permeates in every level of single service training. Therefore, training in this context must be understood in its broadest sense, including education linked to a thorough knowledge of capabilities. Joint understanding and mindset can only be achieved through high fidelity. Joint education and training efforts will never mature to the necessary extent in single service training efforts. Commanders are best advised to impress upon people with a desire to

engage with and understand colleagues, other components or services. It must be accepted that an appreciation of the ways of Air-Land Integration comes about through personal contact and building of mutual trust and respect.

## Summary

Lessons from current operations have certainly highlighted the constructive working relationship that air can have with tactical land forces in the provision of joint "strike and find" assets, but we must be wary of translating this lesson into a justification for amalgamation.

In recent years, Air-Land Integration has come a long way, but numerous potential frictions still exist between the services, spanning every line of development and driving to the core of each service's ethos and culture. To overcome these hurdles, it will be important to focus on joint doctrine, joint education and training as well as on understanding each other's capabilities and limitations. Speaking a common language is the key to a successful Air-Land Integration, not only between the components but also, and even more importantly, between the people within. In many of the NATO exercises delivered by the Joint Warfare Centre, we have identified and brought to the attention the shortfalls of Air-Land Integration, but the Centre is also in an excellent position to help overcome these shortfalls. ✦



TRJR 15 logo by Erinc Öz, JWC

BACK COVER STORY

**NRDC-ITA achieved NATO certification as a Joint Task Force HQ**

■ ■ **TRIDENT JAGUAR 15 (TRJR 15):** NATO's High Readiness Force Headquarters, NATO Rapid Deployable Corps-Italy (NRDC-ITA), achieved Full Operational Capability as a land-heavy Joint Task Force (JTF) Headquarters for Small Joint Operations (SJO) following the conclusion of the 13-day exercise in Stavanger. TRJR 15 is a command-post/computer-assisted dual exercise sponsored by Allied Command Transformation (ACT) and directed by Major General Reinhard Wolski, Commander of Joint Warfare Centre (JWC). It aims to certify both NRDC-Italy (April) and ARRC (May) in a JTF HQ role, planning and conducting a land-heavy Crisis Response Small Joint Operation, involving war-fighting capabilities in the early stages.

It is also the first exercise to use SKOLKAN 2.0 training scenario in conducting a land-heavy SJO — additionally, for the first time, a Joint Force Commander from JFC Naples served as the Officer Conducting the Exercise (OCE) for a NATO Force Structure exercise. Admiral Mark Ferguson,

Commander JFC Naples, earlier explained that TRJR 15 was "one of a number of national, bilateral and multinational NATO exercises taking place across Europe, the Baltic Sea and the Mediterranean that are building enhanced national and Alliance military capacity, capability, readiness, responsiveness and joint interoperability."

The Admiral also stressed that with any joint multinational exercises on this scale, NATO continued to demonstrate its commitment to its Allies on Collective Defence in a dynamically changing and complex security environment.

Preparations for exercise TRJR 15 started in February 2014. At the end of the exercise in April, NRDC-ITA achieved Full Operational Capability as a JTF HQ, able to provide an immediate military response in reaction to the traditional and asymmetrical threats associated with a fictional failing state in northern Europe as part of the JWC-created SKOLKAN 2.0 training scenario. "NRDC-ITA is paving the

way for a new series of NATO exercises, which indicates the new NATO approach towards new international challenges," an article on NRDC-ITA website said.

TRJR 15 involved approximately 1,100 NRDC-ITA civilian and military personnel. JWC's Officer of Primary Responsibility (OPR) for TRJR 15, United States Army Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Sachariason, highlighted the significance of the exercise, saying that the SKOLKAN 2.0 scenario provided the depth and complexity required for this level of exercise. He then added: "Specifically, this is an excellent opportunity for NRDC-ITA and NATO Special Operations Headquarters (NSHQ), but also for the JWC and the Host Nation. NRDC-ITA and the Special Operations Component Command Core (SOCC-CORE) get to practice deploying and operating in remote locations and the JWC and the Host Nation get to showcase the outstanding facilities and capabilities they have to offer to conduct operational level exercises."

NRDC-ITA is commanded by Italian Army Lieutenant General Riccardo Marchiò. When asked about the significance of the exercise, Lieutenant General Marchiò said: "This exercise is our milestone event, the final step of our Full Operational Capability validation process as a Task Force Headquarters, land-heavy for Small Joint Operations." He then added: "TRJR 15 represents the outcome of more than three years of commitment of the twelve contributing nations of NRDC-ITA. This effort will allow our HQ to comply with the NATO Level of Ambition and will test our readiness to deploy worldwide in response of any crisis under the NATO umbrella." NRDC-ITA is one of the first NATO HQs to complete transformation into a Joint Task Force Headquarters, following NRDC-Spain last year.

(JWC website article by Inci Kucukaksoy, JWC PAO)



**Lieutenant General Riccardo Marchiò.**  
Photograph by JWC PAO.





Major General Wolski with Lieutenant General Mark O. Schissler, Deputy Chairman, NATO Military Committee. Photograph by JWC PAO.



JWC's "Opposing Force" (OPFOR) Photograph by JWC PAO.



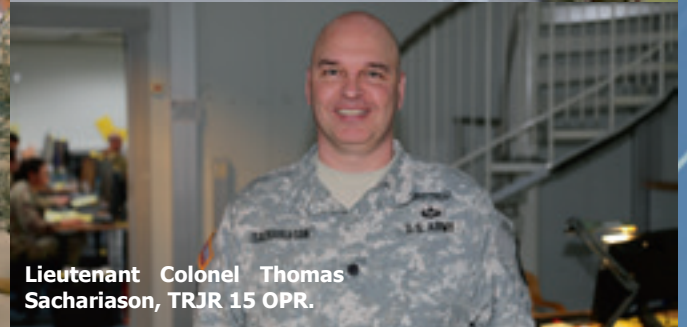
Major General Wolski welcoming General Mirco Zuliani, Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Transformation, to JWC.



Situational Awareness Briefing. Photograph by NRDC-ITA PAO.



JWC exercise Situation Centre (SITCEN). Photograph by NRDC-ITA PAO.

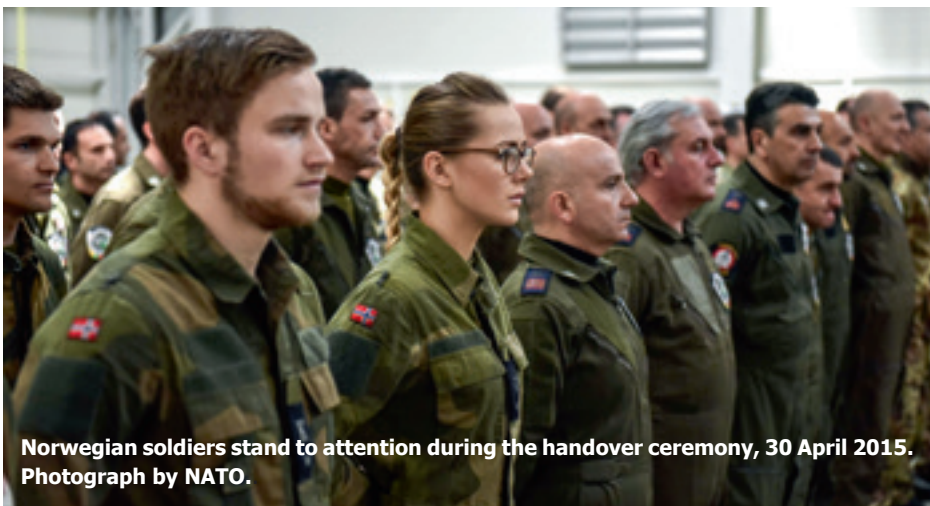


Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Sachariason, TRJR 15 OPR.



## ON THE COVER

On Wednesday 6 May, Major General Reinhard Wolski, Commander of the Joint Warfare Centre, visited Akershus Fortress in Oslo where he met with Admiral Haakon Bruun-Hanssen, the Norwegian Chief of Defence. Today, Akershus Fortress serves as the headquarters of the Norwegian Ministry of Defence and Defence Staff Norway. Admiral Bruun-Hanssen welcomed Major General Wolski during an office call, where the two parties discussed current and future cooperation in areas of common interest within all aspects of training for full spectrum operations. The aim of this training is to leverage NATO and Partner forces' ultimate readiness, efficiency and effectiveness. (Photograph by Torbjørn Kjosvold, Norwegian Defence Media Centre).



Norwegian soldiers stand to attention during the handover ceremony, 30 April 2015. Photograph by NATO.



## Norway takes the lead for the 38th rotation of the Baltic Air Policing Mission

NORWAY OFFICIALLY ASSUMED the role of lead nation of NATO's Baltic Air Policing mission at Šiauliai Air Base in Lithuania on Thursday, 30 April 2015.

This is the 38th rotation of the Baltic Air Policing mission and Norway's third time as lead nation. Norway has deployed four F-16 fighters to the Lithuanian base in Šiauliai, where they will fly missions over the Baltic region until the end of August. Eurofighter Typhoons from Italy will remain in place at Šiauliai for an additional four months. Polish MiG-29 fighters will return to Poland after a successful four month tour of duty.

"Block 37 was a huge success. This can be credited to the fantastic performance of deployed units from Italy, Poland, Spain

and Belgium," said General Frank Gorenc, Commander of Allied Air Command. "The peacetime task of Air Policing continues to serve as an excellent example of Alliance cohesion and the high priority that member nations place on NATO's Collective Defence. I am really glad to see the continued support to Assurance Measures and Air Policing – support that spans beyond Baltic Air Policing, and support that safeguards our skies from northern to southern Europe," he added.

(...) Since the beginning of 2015, NATO has observed an increase in Russian military flight activity, particularly in the Baltic Sea and Black Sea regions. NATO Air Policing aircraft routinely scramble in response to various air incidents.

The Baltic Air Policing mission has been executed continuously since 2004. It is a longstanding, peacetime task with the simple goal of safeguarding Allied skies. This mission illustrates NATO's unique approach to Collective Defence and security. Allied nations regularly rotate the mission command as part of the Alliance's Collective Defence agreement providing air policing jets in support of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. So far, 15 NATO Nations have executed this mission. In May 2014, NATO increased the number of fighter aircraft conducting enhanced Baltic Air Policing due to instability caused by Russia's interference in Ukraine.

Story by HQ Allied Air Command and SHAPE Public Affairs Office: [www.aco.nato.int](http://www.aco.nato.int)

## 2014 JWC MILITARY MEMBER OF THE YEAR AWARD



ROYAL Navy Chief Petty Officer Craig Pilley, Staff Assistant at Joint Warfare Centre's Joint Training Division, was named the Centre's Military Member of the Year

(MMOY) 2014. During an awards ceremony held at the Harald Hårfagre Auditorium on 17 April, Chief Petty Officer Pilley was recognized for his selection as JWC's 2014 outstanding Military Member of the Year.

ACT's MMOY programme aims to recognize the vital role played by the non-commissioned officers (NCOs) of ACT and its subordinate headquarters, and is an annual opportunity for senior enlisted members within ACT to honour one of their NCOs for his or her hard work and dedication to duty in support of his or her command and the mission of the NATO Alliance.

Speaking at the ceremony, French Navy Master Chief Petty Officer Jean-Luc Steimle underlined that Chief Petty Officer Pilley provided outstanding service to JWC during one of Centre's most demanding periods.

He added: "Chief Petty Officer Pilley flawlessly coordinated and provided the

administrative support to Training Teams and the ACT Senior Mentors during the duration of five major exercise phases for TRIDENT JAGUAR 14, TRIDENT JUNCTURE 14, and TRIDENT LANCE 14," thus enabling the smooth running of administrative activities during these exercises, ensuring JWC Training Teams and Senior Mentors were able to operate effectively and focus on the mission at hand.

During the ceremony, Major General Reinhard Wolski thanked Chief Petty Officer Craig Pilley for his outstanding service and unwavering support and presented him with a certificate and a plaque of appreciation. "I am very honoured to have been given this award and feel it highlights the vital contribution that JWC's NCOs collectively make to supporting JWC in its delivery of training to NATO HQs," Chief Petty Officer Pilley said.

## JWC's first ever NATO Meritorious Service Medal commendation

Mr Garry Hargreaves, JWC's Head of Organizational Development Planning, received the "NATO Meritorious Service Medal", and Certificate signed by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, for distinguished service and outstanding leadership while assigned on NATO duties over many years.

Recognizing him specifically for his contribution to JWC include the planning, development, delivery and operation of JWC's virtualized data centre, which revolutionized NATO's ability in conducting multi-tier exercises and is being used as model across NATO, as well as development of the JWC "One Team" Organizational Culture Programme, which started at JWC in 2012 and is generating NATO-wide interest. Mr Hargreaves is JWC's first

recipient of this prestigious award. During the awards ceremony on 6 February, he said: "To be publicly awarded this medal is a very great honour for me personally of course, however, the things I have been recognized for could not have been possible without the support of so many dedicated, talented and committed people here at JWC. It is an award I am humbled to hold, but in truth, it is a symbol of the collective efforts of the gifted, engaged people I have had the privilege to work with."

The NATO Meritorious Service Medal was introduced in 2003 in recognition of both operational and non-operational exceptional service to NATO for nominated military and civilian personnel.



On 6 February, French Army Master Sergeant Franck Morizot from JWC's Joint Training Division received the award of the "Non-Article 5 NATO Medal" and Certificate signed by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg in support of the Alliance's ISAF operation in Afghanistan. The Medal, awarded for personnel participating in NATO operations in Afghanistan, was established by the North Atlantic Council (NAC) in December 2003.



**NATO RAPID DEPLOYABLE CORPS – ITALY  
EXERCISE TRIDENT JAGUAR 15**

PHOTOGRAPH BY **MARINA DORE**  
**p. 88**



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