

## EXERCISE REPORT

# TRIDENT JACKAL 2019



“Our purpose was to challenge the Training Audience to **think ‘jointly’** and help them achieve their **Training Objectives.**”

– Rear Admiral Jan C. Kaack  
Commander JWC

**A**FTER NINE INTENSIVE DAYS, Exercise TRIDENT JACKAL 2019 concluded on October 6, 2019 at the San Isidro Military Base in Menorca, Spain, and the Joint Warfare Centre (JWC) in Stavanger, Norway. The exercise tested NATO Rapid Deployable Corps–Spain (NRDC–ESP) and its ability to execute a land-heavy Small Joint Operation involving air, maritime and special operations forces. It was the culminating exercise after a series of national exercises conducted by the Spanish Army this year to prepare NRDC–ESP for the position of NATO Joint Task Force Headquarters in 2020. The purpose of the exercise highlighted the ability to lead and integrate joint operations in multinational alliances, such as NATO. The director of the exercise was German Navy Rear Admiral Jan C. Kaack, who assumed command of the JWC on July 10, 2019.

“TRIDENT JACKAL 2019 provided an excellent opportunity to train NATO Rapid Deployable Corps–Spain for the position of Joint Task Force Headquarters,” said Kaack. “As the JWC team, our purpose was to challenge them to think ‘jointly’ and help them achieve their Training Objectives. Exercises like this provide the foundation on which we build our interoperability with joint and combined forces, enhance their readiness and make NATO stronger. I believe TRIDENT JACKAL 2019 is a significant milestone of future missions by NATO Rapid Deployable Corps–Spain.”

Approximately 1,000 civilian and military staffs from 24 countries came together as participants, evaluators and observers during TRIDENT JACKAL 2019.

“The purpose of the exercise was to challenge NATO Rapid Deployable Corps–Spain as they prepare for their new role within the framework of the NATO Force Structure,” said U.S. Air Force Lieutenant Colonel James “Ogre” Brassell, JWC’s Officer of Primary Responsibility for the exercise.





**ABOVE:** Rear Admiral Kaack, Exercise Director, during a meeting; the Exercise Control (EXCON) team at the San Isidro Military Base in Menorca, Spain. Photos by Miguel Lorente and JWC PAO **PREVIOUS:** Photos by MSgt Sven Giegerich, Miguel Lorente and JWC PAO

“Much of the exercise was focused on establishing **credibility** of the **Joint Task Force** as opposed to demonstrating NATO's combat capability.”



ABOVE: Lieutenant Colonel James Brassell, JWC's Officer of Primary Responsibility for the exercise. Photo by JWC PAO

“To meet this challenge, they have implemented joint processes using NATO doctrine while commanding a joint force including land, sea, air and special operations components.”

Brassell added: “The scenario further challenged the headquarters, as the path to success does not lie in a kinetic force-on-force solution, but rather points at a heavier emphasis on soft power. Therefore, strategic communications, civil-military interactions and cooperation with the non-governmental organizations are some of the Joint Task Force Commander's primary concerns.”

Brassell noted that during the planning phase of TRIDENT JACKAL 2019, the exercise shifted into a new and compressed training timeline, which eventually kicked off in December 2018. In other words, 18 months of planning were squeezed into a nine-months of planning period. “It was a challenging but a rewarding journey,” said Brassell.

The Training Objectives of TRIDENT JACKAL 2019 included a variety of different operations and tasks, such as effective command and control of NATO Forces in theatre; timely and effective decision-making through coordinated staff processes; impact assessment of military operations on civil environment; effective strategic communications as well as theatre logistics, force protection and

joint fires and targeting. “The Exercise Control (EXCON) has controlled the pace to ensure that NATO Rapid Deployable Corps–Spain was challenged at the appropriate level by providing key injects that triggered a reaction within the headquarters, stimulating action that demonstrated competence in the discipline, and ultimately resulting all primary Training Objectives being met,” explained Brassell.

### **An Excellent Training Opportunity for NRDC-ESP**

Spanish Army Lieutenant General José Francisco Gan Pampols, Commander of NRDC-ESP, underlined that the exercise provided a variety of invaluable training opportunities for his headquarters, especially focusing on the overall crisis response decision-making process.

“It is critical for us to train as a Joint Task Force Headquarters, especially to think from a wider perspective and to get the staff to synchronize and harmonize different processes vertically with our higher headquarters and our subordinates in the most efficient manner. One of the challenges was, for example, to extend the strategic communications in all areas of operation. The takeaways will help shape our Training Objectives for next year, and we keep improving as we will be in stand-by and ready to deploy should it be required by NATO,” said Gan Pampols.

According to Gan Pampols: “The exercise was no doubt a success. It allowed us to work in a more integrated way and to focus learning in the aspects concerning command and control of land, maritime, air and special operations forces; synchronizing the internal processes of the headquarters and the activities of the forces, as well as leading the fight in the contested information space.”

He noted: “I'd like to emphasize the support from the JWC's scenario teams, guidance by their advisory and evaluation teams, and simulation of the exercise media outlets as some of the highlights for me during this exercise.”

**E**XERCISE TRIDENT JACKAL 2019 was the final exercise to use the SKOLKAN 2 scenario; a fictitious, non-Article 5 Crisis Response Operation scenario, created and developed by the JWC, and first used during Exercise TRIDENT JEWEL 2015.

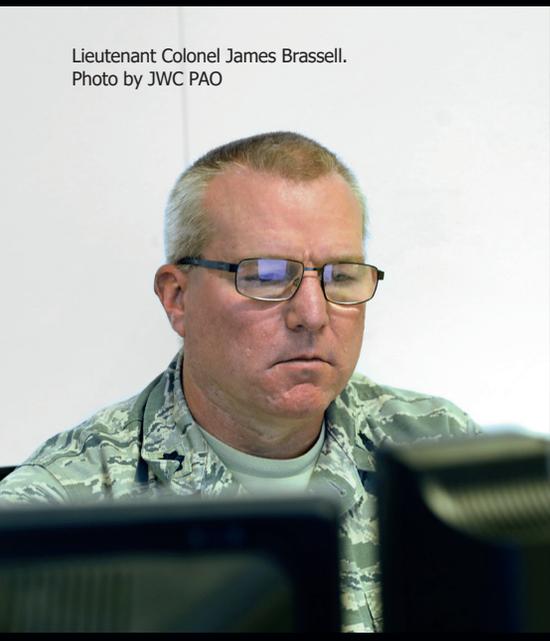
British Navy Commander Nicholas Meredith, JWC's Chief Main Events List/Main Incidents List (MEL/MIL) for the exercise, underlined that much of the exercise was focused on establishing credibility of the Joint Task Force in the field environment as opposed to demonstrating NATO's combat capability.

Meredith said that over the course of nine days, around 600 injects were made, “all of which contributed to a testing environment.”





Exercise Situation Centre at JWC. Photo by MSgt Sven Giegerich



Lieutenant Colonel James Brassell. Photo by JWC PAO



Commander Nicholas Meredith. Photo by JWC PAO



Colonel Peter Teeuw. Photo by JWC PAO



Early morning arrival to JWC Training Facility, Jättå, Stavanger. Photo by MSgt Sven Giegerich



Rear Admiral Kaack. Photo by MSgt Sven Giegerich

"During the exercise, NATO Rapid Deployable Corps–Spain trained their decision making and staff processes in the early phases of a Small Joint Operation, where establishing the credibility of a NATO-led Task Force and laying down the conditions for long term success were the primary challenges, rather than engaging Opposing Forces in kinetic actions," said Meredith.

Netherlands Army Colonel Peter Teeuw, who served as the Chief Opposing Forces (OPFOR) during the exercise, explained how the "simulated adversary" exercised its capabilities. "During this exercise, the Joint Warfare Centre provided NATO Rapid Deployable Corps–Spain a realistic, believable and nuanced adversary through its OPFOR and scenario branches, and the media. This allowed training for our colleagues in all warfare domains."

"Although predominantly military, but also information, political and social aspects of a crisis were highlighted," said Teeuw. Teeuw said that the realism of OPFOR reinforced the exercise scenario. He added: "OPFOR activities in all these domains were as realistic as possible, and therefore, enabled the best learning a headquarters could wish for. I am sure NATO Rapid Deployable Corps–Spain will not easily forget Stavanger."

On October 3, 2019, Danish Army Major General Peter H. Boysen, Commander of the



NRDG-ESP Response Cell at JWC. Photo by JWC PAO

Royal Danish Composite Special Operations Component Command (C-SOCC), visited the JWC to observe the special operations portion of TRIDENT JACKAL 2019. He participated in a variety of exercise events and had an office call with the U.S. Navy Rear Admiral James A. Kirk, JWC's Deputy Commander and Chief of Staff, who also served as the Deputy Exercise Director based in Stavanger. Currently led by Denmark, and supported by Belgium and the Netherlands, the C-SOCC's mission is to plan and coordinate, and, subsequently, to command and control the

tactical level special operations which is integrated into the operational level of command within the full spectrum of joint operations. Boysen said: "Exercise TRIDENT JACKAL 2019 has allowed the Composite Special Operations Component Command to achieve Initial Operational Capability, thereby paving the way for Full Operational Capability in 2020."

## Almost 37,000 man-hours of Exercise Control

On October 6, 2019, Rear Admiral James A. Kirk closed out TRIDENT JACKAL 2019 in Stavanger with his final remarks to the EXCON staff highlighting that they had "expended almost 37,000-man hours of work, allowing the Training Audience to achieve their list of 14 Training Objectives, and more than 130 Supporting Tasks" during the execution phase.

"You should all be proud of yourselves," Kirk said, adding: "We have achieved everything asked of us, and I might add, with style. Take this investment and build upon it. I thank you all for your participation and professionalism. Central to all we do is NATO's readiness, and through TRIDENT JACKAL 2019, you all played a role in improving our readiness." ✦

Inci Kucukaksoy  
PAO, NATO Joint Warfare Centre

BELOW: Rear Admiral James A. Kirk, JWC Deputy Commander and Exercise Deputy Commander. Photo by JWC PAO

