

**"By three methods we may learn wisdom: first, by reflection, which is noblest; second, by imitation, which is easiest; and third by experience, which is the bitterest."**

Confucius

# SOME LESSONS FROM **TRIDENT JUNCTURE 2018 COMMAND POST EXERCISE**

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ot on the heels of TRIDENT JUNCTURE 2018 (TRJE18) LIVEX, the Command Post Exercise (CPX) proved to be a challenging and hugely rewarding exercise and a fitting finale to this NATO High Visibility series. Joint Force Command (JFC) Naples was a well-prepared and well-led Primary Training Audience that hit the ground running from the outset. The overwhelming consensus from the Commanders' Post Exercise Discussion was that the Joint Warfare Centre (JWC) delivered an exercise design that sustained throughout the CPX and coped with many dynamic aspects such as Partner Nation involvement and the more visible role of HQ SHAPE. Most importantly, the *OCCASUS* scenario was robust, challenging, and survived contact with its first Training Audience—a good omen for future exercises, not to mention NATO readiness; this scenario certainly proved to be a key to practicing interoperability.

Beyond its Exercise and Training Objectives, TRJE18 has also offered real substance to Allied Command Transformation's Warfare Development agenda, with opportunities in many areas, including concepts, doctrine, individual and collective training, equipment and standard operating procedures.

This article does not seek to do credit to the 21 experiments spanning both LIVEX and CPX. Instead, it will highlight only a few exciting areas of warfare development accomplished during the CPX.

NATO Joint Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (JISR) benefited from significant development on TRJE18. Seeking to integrate Alliance and National ISR capabilities, policies and procedures, leaders and commanders were required to plan at all levels; political/military/strategic, down to operational and tactical. Moreover, TRJE18 practiced fighting an Article 5 operation in a contested Space domain where the adversary could disrupt the

JISR feed and the ability to fuse data across multiple sources. To that end, the impact of Space and Cyber on JISR continues to drive pace into innovation in the JFCs and SHAPE and the augmented Space Cell on TRJE18 provided more capacity than ever before, adding considerably to realism in terms of denial, degradation and disruption.

Procedures, processes and organization to exploit and harmonise Allied and National assets undoubtedly evolved during the planning and execution phases and we should expect to see further adaptation and innovation in advance of TRIDENT JUPITER 2019 (TRJU19).

Another area of exciting developmental work was JFC Naples' experimentation and capability baselining of a "Forward Coordination and Liaison Element" (FCLE). The FCLE was seeking to address the dilemma and choices associated with deployable Joint staff in Article 5 operations. The JFC Naples FCLE Report is likely to point to a modular construct reflect-

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Major General Bengt Andersson (left), Swedish Armed Forces, during a Grey Cell meeting. Admiral James Foggo (right) addressing the JFC Naples staff at JWC Bunker. Photos by JWC PAO

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ing different needs in different phases of the campaign and the ability to deploy to multiple countries concurrently. This experiment is a great start by JFC Naples and more development is likely in forthcoming TRIDENT JUPITER exercises to appreciate the complexity of multiple NATO Member and Partner Nations with different perspectives, requirements and strategic calculus. This work acknowledges that CIMIC in Article 5 operations is far removed from the non-Article 5 era, not least due to national reporting of the civil environment and Total Defence Concepts. TRJE18 really shone a light into how well-coordinated Civil-Military Interaction (CMI) delivers comprehensive outcomes whilst reducing the risk to force and the mission; it warrants very close attention, particularly in relation to how the Command and Control (C2) binds actors.

The JWC's collaborative work with Norway's Directorate for Civil Protection has

helped to highlight the all-encompassing nature of this "Big Rock" and evidence gained from TRJE18 has delivered some excellent vignettes and training products for future Training Audiences. It is also helping to improve and fast-track modalities for interaction with Host and Partner Nations, including Technical Agreements. It goes without saying that National Defence plans and concepts will be revised and updated as a result of TRJE18.

Management of air engagements saw quantum development since Exercise TRIDENT JAVELIN 2017. JWC and Allied Air Command (AIRCOM) collaborated over a series of key events, including Exercise RAMSTEIN AMBITION and Event and Vignette Testing, to develop and adjust our appreciation of attrition, risk and payoff against a near-peer opponent. Consequently, a huge data bank of knowledge and training materials for air planning has been gathered by AIRCOM from TRJE18 for their training and warfare development. This collaborative investment has undoubtedly paid off and is a great tribute to AIRCOM and JWC staff who took this project forward. The work has also delivered some high value Operational Analysis and Decision Support Tools for both mission planning and Exercise Control (EXCON) purposes.

To this end, our warfare development initiative has harvested a series of excellent storyboards of operational challenges and dilemmas, held by the Training Team, for future Training Audiences' workshops and study periods (Space, Intel, C2, Battle Space Management, Humanitarian Assistance in Article 5,

etc.) This initiative is leveraging even more value from JWC exercises and offers fresh stimulus to our contribution to Key Leader Training and Academic packages. It also supports our pursuit of "evidence for change".

There could be no better example of this than the Tromsø anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) challenge presented on TRJE18 and the requirement for a clearly articulated supported/supporting approach for component commands to help Joint Synchronisation; the critical bridging activity between plans and execution of orders. In pursuit of this complex training requirement, it is exciting to note the JWC's continued support to partners in Swedish Armed Forces International Centre (SWEDINT), who are leading the charge by addressing this significant individual and collective training gap.

In sum, TRJE18 was a dynamic and exceptionally well-executed exercise, thanks to an experienced team who had learnt lessons and incorporated them into our thinking. That said, things never stand still and there remains yet more to learn and incorporate into the future TRIDENT JUPITER Series. As the JWC prepares to host the Allied Command Transformation Human Capital Workshop in the spring of 2019, it is evident that many of our warfare development observations will be major areas for consideration. The case for using exercises for experimentation is compelling and, as TRJE18 has proven, some of the most disruptive and innovative thinking in NATO Warfare Development comes from the operations floor of these exercises. ✦



ABOVE: Colonel Wright, the author, at an EXCON briefing during TRIDENT JUNCTURE 2018. Photo by JWC PAO