

Training the Next Generation of NATO Commands

Our mission is to provide transformational exercise support for NATO's military headquarters, while ensuring Alliance combat readiness for joint operational- and strategic-level warfare through rotational force certifications.

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The Joint Warfare Centre (JWC) provides resident subject matter experts (SMEs) for an Advisory Team to advise and assist each respective training audience participating in a supported exercise, regardless of whether the training audience is from the NATO Command Structure or NATO Force Structure. Though most SMEs are permanent staff members within the JWC, members of the Advisory Team can also come from anywhere within the NATO enterprise, such as a respective centre of excellence or component command.

In addition, the Advisory Team will have selected retired NATO generals or flag officers supporting the overall effort as senior mentors, thereby ensuring each participating headquarters staff, including key leaders, are properly assisted through every stage of the exercise life cycle.

The core functional areas typically supported by the Advisory Team in an exercise are command and control, intelligence, manoeuvre and fires, force protection, strategic communications, sustainability, and civil-military cooperation. There can be up to an additional 15 functional domains supported, depending on the needs of the training audience and the complexity of the given exercise.

Though the Advisory Team is available to support each headquarters staff at any time during the exercise process, support to certain phases, such as academics, crisis response planning, and the execution phase is of particular importance. By ensuring that these critical milestones are successfully completed, the Advisory Team also ensures that all identified training objectives are met and that they fulfil NATO standards.



JWC's Additional Domain Support

- Land operations
- Maritime operations
- Air operations
- Special operations
- Space operations
- Assessments
- Operations planning
- Targeting
- Human intelligence
- Chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear defence
- Theatre ballistic missile defence
- Gender perspective
- Law
- Cyber
- Battlespace spectrum management

Supporting Certification

As NATO Command and Force Structure Headquarters progress through the training and certification process, the JWC's Advisory Team members support the headquarters staff with functional expertise from their career within their own national military service. In addition, these individuals also contribute with their experiences from multiple JWC-led NATO exercises and participation in functional and doctrinal NATO forums. Each exercise represents a cooperative effort between the JWC, the training headquarters, and various supporting NATO organizations. During the exercise design and development stages, the Advisory Team supports the JWC Exercise Planning and Exercise Production Divisions. As the exercise progresses into the delivery and execution stages, the Advisory Team forms a partnership with the training audience headquarters' staff that begins during preparation for the formal academic seminars and continues through the post-exercise analysis.

Academic Seminar

During the academics, select SMEs may spend a focused week with the training audience, discussing functional issues and reviewing NATO standards. These discussions incorporate recent operational experiences of the training audience, new functional concepts in development throughout NATO, and functional best practices developed through exercises and operations. The ideas and conversations sparked in academics continue throughout the planning and execution phases of the exercise, and beyond.

In academics, SMEs present and reinforce the common NATO framework processes and procedures for planning and conducting operations. The development of this common framework in each NATO headquarters is critical to interoperability across the force. Common processes and procedures across joint headquarters and component commands ensure seamless planning and execution of Alliance operations. Scenario introduction and exercise framework and execution mechanics are a few of the critical themes reviewed and discussed during academics.

In close coordination with the training audience, the finalized academics programme is approved by the training audience commander, thereby ensuring tailored, relevant training is accomplished throughout the headquarters.

Crisis Response Planning

The most important aspects of the crisis response planning (CRP) are to ensure integration with the NATO crisis response system, application of the collaborative operational planning process, and the production of an executable and complete concept of operations (CONOPS) and the operations plan (OPLAN). The CRP will follow the NATO crisis response process ensuring the application of collaborative, convergent, and parallel planning processes between the strategic, operational, and tactical levels in order to develop effective planning directives and executable operational plans at all levels.

Where the Advisory Team is forward deployed to the supported headquarters, the CRP is typically a two-week intensive joint operational planning effort



JWC Advisory Team Will

- Observe
- Report
- Advise
- Assist
- Provide feedback
- Identify lessons learned and analyse trends

JWC Advisory Team Will Not

- Test
- Examine
- Evaluate
- Execute training audience functions
- Give the answer
- Reveal future script

conducted by the certifying headquarters that begins with a comprehensive mission analysis based on the exercise scenario and concludes with a course of action decision brief. The Advisory Team observes the planning processes and coaches and advises headquarters staff in a cooperative effort to gain the most training value as staff moves through the operations planning process.

The cooperative planning effort continues long after the course of action brief concludes, even after the Advisory Team returns to the JWC. The training headquarters often spend an additional four weeks developing the CONOPS and the OPLAN. The Advisory Team supports this effort remotely, offering advice during the development of each of these documents.

Between the CRP phase and the execution phase of the exercise, the Advisory Team may also support several other exercise events, including but not limited to key leader training, battle staff training, and a pre-execution phase that incorporates force activation and deployment activities. For each of these events, the JWC Advisory Team can deploy a tailored team of SMEs to provide expert advice and assistance as needed.

BELOW

The JWC's Advisory Teams participating in various exercises between 2018 and 2021 at deployed locations



Execution Phase

The execution phase of the exercise, Phase IIIB, is normally the most dynamic part of the exercise. During Phase IIIB, the JWC's Advisory Team will advise and mentor the training audience towards the accomplishment of their training objectives with a focus on the joint staff functions and processes.

The Advisory Team will advise the training audience by sharing their in-depth doctrinal knowledge, personal experiences, lessons identified, and good practices observed in previous exercises. As exercise control (EXCON) forward, the Advisory Team will monitor the training audience to ensure its understanding of the scenario is coherent and aligned with the exercise design. The Advisory Team will also report and share this relevant information with EXCON main, so that the exercise script and appropriate injects continue to be relevant as the execution phase progresses in real time.

Any areas of concern identified in a headquarters can quickly be stress tested with follow-on injects or storylines, commonly referred to as dynamic scripting. As more and more exercises are supported by the JWC team, trends with regards to headquarters' performance can be readily identified through analyses and lessons identified. This provides NATO with a common framework for warfare development progress and feedback from areas that need improvement. The JWC Advisory Team support provided during the execution phase is the culmination of a year-long relationship established during academics and strengthened in CRP.

Developing Expertise

While each staff officer arrives at the JWC with a deep understanding of their functional expertise, that expertise is often framed in the context of national organizations, national capabilities and national processes. Merging these various cultural and organizational ways of thinking into a cohesive, effective military alliance is what NATO is all about.

To learn the ways of NATO, staff officers often begin their tour at the JWC with several courses at the NATO School Oberammergau. At the start of their tour, the SMEs attend class as students, learning NATO processes and procedures within their functional area. By the end of their tour, they are teachers and seminar leaders who assist in training the next generation of NATO staff.

In order to maintain up-to-date functional expertise, the SMEs aggressively pursue professional development between exercise events. Functional workshops and seminars in NATO are ideal forums to discuss lessons learned in exercises and operations. The cycle of exercise execution and the conduct of operations, reflection in workshops and seminars, and updates to doctrine and policy are the transformational engines that keep the JWC Advisory Team current and relevant. ✦

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