

Atlantic Command's Joint Training Program

By CLARENCE TODD MORGAN

Our new strategy demands forces that are highly skilled, rapidly deliverable, and fully capable of operating effectively as a joint team . . .

—GEN Colin L. Powell, USA¹

Changes to the unified command plan in 1993 directed that the Commander in Chief, U.S. Atlantic Command (CINCUSACOM), integrate and conduct joint training of all forces based in the continental United States (CONUS). U.S. Atlantic Command (ACOM) was assigned combatant command authority over Forces Command (FORSCOM), Atlantic Fleet (LANTFLT), Marine Forces Atlantic (MARFORLANT), and Air Combat Command (ACC) as service components, forces which comprise fully three-quarters of the Armed Forces. As a result, ACOM implemented a joint training program (JTP) to significantly enhance the capability of U.S. forces to deploy and operate immediately on arrival overseas. This article describes these joint training responsibilities, the scope of ACOM joint training, and the various tiers of training and their implementation. It also addresses ACOM reorganization to meet new requirements, the training facility necessary to accomplish the program, and the transition to new exercises and training.

CINCs have full authority and responsibility to train assigned forces. As the largest joint force provider to regional CINCs, ACOM trains CONUS-based forces in joint doctrine and joint tactics, techniques, and procedures (JTTPs) for deployment anywhere in the world. In addition, ACOM continues to conduct distinct theater exercises focused on these unique missions. The

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five-year defense program (FYDP) planning for 1995–99 provides detailed training guidance to CINCs, especially CINCUSACOM. It puts greater emphasis on joint and combined exercises and training to stress interoperability and joint warfighting doctrine and prepare joint force commanders (JFCs) and staffs for crisis and contingency operations. Together with the other CINCs, Joint Staff, and services, ACOM trains and conducts exercises in peacekeeping, peace enforcement, counterdrug, disaster relief, and humanitarian assistance operations. Current guidance stresses using technology (including simulations) to improve training at a reduced cost. Such training is designed to achieve efficiency and full effectiveness through distance learning, distributed simulation, and leveraging existing service component and other joint training and exercise programs.

Three Tiers of Training

ACOM JTP enriches joint and service component training and exercise programs, where appropriate, with scheduling coordination and sponsorship for increased joint participation. It also includes specific joint task force (JTF) training tailored for CONUS-based joint forces that emulates portions of the Army's battle command training program (BCTP) and CINCEUR JTF training. ACOM JTP consists of three tiers as outlined in table 1.

ACOM service components conduct tier 1 training to meet unit- and force-specific training requirements at service standards. ACOM will monitor schedules for these events to preserve their integrity and ensure deconfliction and/or coordination with joint training.

Tier 2 includes diverse activities such as LANTFLT/MARFORLANT fleet exercises, ACC exercises (Quick Force, Sand Eagle), and FORSCOM exercises (Roving Sands, Market

Table 1. ACOM Long-Range Joint Training Program



Tier 3 (Joint Operational)		
COMMANDER AND STAFF TRAINING		
Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Academic Training Seminars	JTF OPORD Development Exercise	CAX/CPX CINC, JFC Components
Tier 2 (Joint Operational/Tactical)		
JOINT FIELD TRAINING		
Component Staffs/Forces		
Tier 1 (Service Operational/Tactical)		
SERVICE COMPONENT TRAINING		
Forces		

Source: Adapted from ACOM J-7A briefing, "ACOM Joint Training Program," March 15, 1994.

Rangers jumping during Agile Provider.

Square) as well as other initiatives. Tier 2 activities are usually executed by a sponsoring service component. Utilizing tier 1 exercises to generate tier 2 opportunities for resource efficiency is a primary goal. The tier 2 objectives are derived from tactical joint mission essential tasks (JMETs) and service-specific operational and tactical mission essential tasks. ACOM sets tactical JMETs to be attained by components and the components nominate specific tier 1 exercises to accomplish them.²

ACOM conducts tier 3 training with a focus on JFCs and staffs and objectives derived from operational-level JMETs. Potential JFCs come from XVIII Airborne Corps, III Corps, Eighth Air Force, II Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF), and Second

Fleet. These commanders will serve as JFCs in the tier 3 program approximately once every two years. The JTF components will be drawn from among eight Army divisions; six Navy carrier battle groups; 2^d Marine Division, Air Wing, and Force Service Support Group; three Marine Expeditionary Units; and eight Air Force fighter wings and five bomber wings. Both a joint force air component commander (JFACC) and a joint special operations task force (JSOTF) will also normally be assigned.

The new JTP training initiative breaks with previous CONUS-based training and resides in tier 3 activities under three phases. Phase 1 uses academic instruction structured as seminars, briefings, or interactive computer learning to train JTF staffs. Topics include responsibilities and functions of a joint staff, joint planning, joint doctrine, and JTTPs. The JFC guides the academic design and sets training objectives. ACOM provides a team of subject matter experts, appropriate training materials, and a retired flag officer to mentor the academic training. The instruction will be structured toward three distinct audiences: executive level for senior officers, action officer level for staff officers, and noncommissioned officer level for staff support personnel. Phase 1 is one week in duration and is conducted at either the JFC's home station or another location of his choosing.

Phase 2 has the JFC and his components develop a crisis action operation order (OPORD) concentrating on JTF planning, joint doctrine, and JTTPs. A joint training team and senior mentor assist with the training objectives. The JTF staff, with component liaisons, assembles at its home station or the ACOM Joint Training, Analysis, and Simulation Center (JTASC) for one week to develop a plan. JTF components develop supporting plans at locations selected by the ACOM component commanders in conjunction with their training programs. All planning uses a crisis situation based on a real-world scenario.

Phase 3 uses a computer-assisted command post exercise (CAX/CPX) to execute the JTF staff OPORD previously developed in phase 2. This phase lasts between seven and ten days and normally includes participation by a CINC, joint intelligence center, JFACC, JFC, JSOTF, and JTF components. The JTF staff conducts phase 3 at its home station or JTASC, and components participate from home stations or other facilities. Primary emphasis is on planning procedures, decisionmaking, and the application of joint doctrine and JTTPs. ACOM continues to provide joint training support as in phases 1 and 2. The CAX/CPX will generally use a confederation of service models to challenge the JTF in exercising virtually any aspect of joint warfare. It also uses a real-world scenario with real terrain and threat data bases. A professional opposing force (OPFOR) with an observer/controller group supports the training.³

JTP Implementation

An accurate definition of joint training requirements is needed to design an effective JTP. To identify requirements each regional CINC will rely on JMETS derived from assigned theater missions and plans, which will be compiled into a master list called the joint mission essential task list (JMETL). This will become the design basis for a regional CINC's joint training program. In order for ACOM to train its CONUS-based forces for deployment to the forward-based CINCs their JMETS must be a driving factor in the JTP's structure. When two or more CINCs identify the same JMETS as a requirement it becomes a common joint task. ACOM will use common joint tasks as a baseline JMETL for training in tiers 2 and 3.⁴

ACOM will plan its JTP by hosting quarterly exercise and training scheduling conferences to provide deconfliction and coordination for the three tiers and ultimately produce the ACOM joint training master plan. The Joint Staff's annual worldwide joint exercise scheduling conference will furnish the mechanism to ensure that the ACOM JTP fits the CJCS overall training and exercise

scheme. The worldwide conference will produce the CJCS joint training master schedule, which includes all CINC joint training plans.

Joint training execution encompasses a range of academic and exercise activities which include traditional field exercises, hybrid exercises with live play in the field and constructive or virtual simulation, CPXs in synthetic environments, academic seminars, briefings, and computer-aided instruction. Field training exercises (FTXs), advanced distributed simulation, academic training, and seminar wargames will all play a role in the ACOM JTP. In order to train as we will fight, JTTPs will guide JTP execution.⁵ Joint command, control, communication, computer, and intelligence (C⁴I) equipment and procedures will be used and logistics support will be modeled.

JTP evaluation is critical to overall effectiveness. The assessment must ask if the training objective—meeting specific JMETS—is being successfully achieved. Joint readiness assessment will use reports by regional CINCs, the joint after action reporting system (JAARS), and the status of resources and training system (SORTS) as measuring devices. Objective evaluation can provide the impetus for program improvement and increase overall joint readiness.

ACOM has reorganized to successfully execute its expanded joint training responsibilities. A joint training directorate was created to ensure forces are highly skilled, rapidly deliverable, and fully capable of operating as a joint team on arrival. A Director for Joint Training is responsible for joint force exercise and training development, resource allocation, management, and assessment. He also supervises the review, coordination, development, promulgation, and application of joint doctrine, joint universal lessons learned, and JTTPs ensuring that maximum value is attained from joint force integration.⁶

ACOM J-7 is organized into exercise (J-71), training and doctrine (J-72), and analysis and simulation (J-73) divisions. J-71 coordinates JTP



Agile Provider '94.

U.S. Navy Combat Camera (Robert N. Scoggin)

communication and computer capacity for advanced distributed simulation, distance learning, and teleconferencing with components or on-site computer exercises and training. This will provide JFCs and their staffs with assets to conduct all phases of tier 3 training in one location using actual C⁴I facilities in exercise spaces.

scheduling, monitors CJCS-directed NATO and bilateral exercises, and documents and reports or corrects deficiencies in exercises and operations. It also maintains a schedule of tier 2 component activities to identify and enhance mutual training opportunities and lower costs.

J-72 has overall responsibility for tier 3 training. Its joint training teams develop, execute, and maintain tier 3 phase 1 academic training as well as design and direct phases 2 and 3. The teams provide observer/controllers and arrange for a professional OPFOR to support phase 2 and 3 exercises. J-72 also manages doctrinal issues, develops and promulgates ACOM JTTPs, coordinates the application of JAARS, and assists in the design and evaluation of CONUS joint exercises and training.

J-73 is a focal point for joint modeling and simulation. It has the expertise, analytical tools, and facilities necessary to conduct analysis, modeling, and computer simulation. J-73 supplies the analysis and simulation support for tier 2 and 3 training. Also, it evaluates operational and concept plans in support of J-5, maintains theater-wide analysis and simulation capability, and coordinates analytical studies with J-3 on adaptive force package deployment, employment, and force mixes.

In support of the new J-7 directorate, a state-of-the-art JTASC will be created with an initial reduced training capability slated for operation in January 1996. It will have a

By FY97, JTASC will routinely host three JTF tier 3 training cycles each year, have the capability to conduct JTF mission rehearsals to support crisis action preparations, and provide simulation support for tier 2 FTXs.⁷

Exercise and Training Transition

JTP implementation is changing previous training methodologies. Ocean Venture has been canceled and Agile Provider (AP) '94 is probably the last exercise of its kind. Funding previously used for ACOM-sponsored major field exercises will be divided between tier 2 activities for added participation and tier 3 training. This will allow greater opportunities for service component participation in tier 2. Additional financial assets shifted to tier 3 will enable more people to participate in joint staff training. Rather than a single staff gaining experience in an expensive annual FTX, three staffs will undergo tier 3 training each year at less cost.⁸

AP '94 served as a partial transition from previous CINC-sponsored annual FTXs toward the future JTP. In addition to traditional planning conferences, AP '94 included an ACOM seminar wargame and crisis action planning exercise (CAPEX). The ACOM staff held a seminar wargame in the autumn of 1993 with component, JFC, and JTF staff participation. The wargame explored

AP '94 force deployment, employment, and sustainment issues and produced a CINC-level draft OPOD for later JTF-level campaign planning at CAPEX. This experience provided outstanding staff warfighting training, enhanced coordination, and exercised staff crisis action procedures. The JTF CAPEX was held in January 1994 at Camp Lejeune with the commanding general, II MEF, as JFC. Much like planned tier 3, phase 2 training, the JFC staff met in one location and developed an OPOD based on a given scenario. Staff and component liaison teams greatly benefitted from being able to meet and work together, solidifying the staff prior to the FTX.

Both the wargame and CAPEX exposed divergent experience levels among staff members in joint operations and the staff planning process. These experiences illustrated the need for tier 3, phase 1 academic training to reach a common level of knowledge and understanding. CAPEX, unlike tier 3, phase 2 training, was constrained by actual unit training in May 1994, planned by each service for AP '94. Linking the staff exercise and live ground FTX limited the possible courses of action (COAs) available to staff planners because of unit availability as well as fiscal, geographic, and environmental constraints. This limitation drove the development of a fictitious scenario that melded widely separated training areas at Camp Lejeune and Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and Fort Chaffee, Arkansas. At the Camp Lejeune CAPEX debrief, the JTF chief of staff recommended that future scenarios be devised to fully maximize JTF staff training with portions of those scenarios designed for suitable unit field training.

The AP '94 seminar wargame and CAPEX offered the first opportunity to conduct limited joint training. J-71 provided the control group and acted as higher headquarters staff. In this role, J-71 coordinated and facilitated the required intelligence and scenario support for the CAPEX from ACOM. J-72 acted as primary observer for the exercise and documented JTF staff interaction and functions. Data were collected to

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support AP '94 after action reviews and lessons learned. J-73 provided analytical and computer simulation support at Camp Lejeune for the JTF staff. During OPORD development, various COA options were discussed and J-73 did a comparative analysis of options using a joint conflict model. This model acted as a high resolution joint combat simulation under controlled conditions and produced quantitative results allowing the JTF staff to compare the impact of various COA options. The J-7 participants in this exercise all gained valuable experience and a glimpse of the future JTP.

After AP '94, the next step in JTP implementation was Unified Endeavor (UE) '95. This was the first developmental tier 3 CAX/CAPEX. The phases were as follows: phase I, academic training (January 1995); phase II, OPORD development (February 1995); and phase III, plan execution (April 1995). The 1994 aggregate level simulation protocol (ALSP) confederation of models acted as exercise driver for the phase III CAX/CPX via distributed simulation architecture transmitted to the JFC and component commanders at their home stations (see table 2 for participants).

The confederation linked service models listed in table 3. The exercise scenario was set in Southwest Asia and included a JTF with two reinforced heavy divisions, a reinforced composite wing, MEF forward, carrier battle and amphibious ready groups, and special operations forces. The opposing forces fielded seven divisions and supporting combined arms. UE '95 was a training and technical success as well as a proof of principle for the JTF tier 3 initiative.

Numerous lessons from UE '95 are being used in the planning for UE '96-1 which is well underway and scheduled for September, October, and November 1995.

The ACOM joint training program will enhance operational capabilities, increase service interoperability, and provide a higher state of joint readiness. It will be an effective, efficient, and flexible way to conduct

Table 2. Phase III CAX/CPX Participants

Command	Training Role	Training Location
U.S. Atlantic Command	CINC	Norfolk, Virginia
III Corps	JFC	Fort Hood, Texas
CCDG 12	NAVFOR	Portsmouth, Virginia
II Marine Expeditionary Force	MARFOR	Camp Lejeune, North Carolina
III Corps (-)	ARFOR	Fort Hood, Texas
Eighth Air Force	AFFOR	Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana
1 st Brigade, 87 th Division	OPFOR	Birmingham, Alabama



Roving Sands.

Table 3. Phase III CAX/CPX Service Models

Model	Warfare Area
Corps Battle Simulation (CBS)	ground
Air Warfare Simulation (AWSIM)	air
Research, Evaluation, and Systems Analysis (RESA)	naval air, surface, and subsurface
Tactical Simulation Model (TACSIM)	intelligence
Joint Electronic Combat-Electronic Warfare Simulation (JECEWSI)	electronic warfare



Agile Provider '94.

joint training which is less costly and better than the available alternatives. The program is designed to accommodate current technology and incorporate new capabilities as they are developed. Existing service component exercises will continue to provide opportunities to train jointly. The JTP tier 3 initiative will train additional staffs in extremely important skills that heighten the ability to fight as a team. Joint warfare is critical in realizing the greatest return from limited resources. We must train as we intend to fight, and the ACOM JTP provides the means to reach that goal.

NOTES

¹ Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Report on the Roles, Missions and Functions of the Armed Forces of the United States* (Washington: Joint Chiefs of Staff, February 1993), p. III-4.

² Briefing by James C. Sherlock, ACOM, J-7A, "USACOM Joint Training Program," January 24, 1994.

³ CINCUSACOM Message, "USACOM Joint Task Force Training Program," DTG 050423 JAN 1994, p. 3.

⁴ Joint Chiefs of Staff, Universal Joint Task List, October 25, 1993, p. i.

⁵ U.S. Atlantic Command, Implementation Plan, October 1, 1993, p. D-1-1.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Briefing by Walter Brentano, MITRE Corporation, January 24, 1994, pp. 7-9.

⁸ Sherlock, "USACOM Joint Training Program."