
RETHINKING THE Joint Doctrine Hierarchy

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EDITOR'S Note

PACOM relies upon joint task forces (JTFs) to conduct a wide range of operations in its area of responsibility. However, task forces are one level of joint organization that has not profited extensively from defense reform and joint doctrine initiatives over the past decade. Those efforts have not focused on JTF needs and are not user-friendly to joint trainers. Doctrinal publications are stovepiped—narrowly based on functions rather than on multi-functional JTFs. It might be time to scrap the current system because of its waning utility. Moreover, this approach to doctrine might constrain thinking on future operations and otherwise impede implementation of *Joint Vision 2010*.

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As the joint community embarks on linking joint doctrine to the operational concepts in *Joint Vision 2010*, it may be helpful to consider the joint task force (JTF) perspective. Ironically that is the level improved least by reforms such as the Goldwater-Nichols Act, yet it has carried much of the joint operational workload. JTFs have driven operations from Sea Angel (typhoon disaster relief in Bangladesh) to Pacific Haven (Kurdish refugee reception and onward movement in Guam) to Provide Comfort and Uphold Democracy in other regions.

Since U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) adopted two-tiered command and control in 1990, over 40 command post exercises, field training exercises, and actual operations have employed the concept. It includes theater-level command as the first tier and JTFs as a preferred second tier—the level that would likely

plan and conduct joint contingency operations throughout the PACOM area. The two-tiered model has a deliberate training protocol; pre-identified JTF commands; a designated and trained cadre of JTF augmentees primarily drawn from the staffs of the commander in chief, U.S. Pacific Command (CINCPAC) and PACOM service component headquarters; and CINC-JTF commanders' conferences.

JTF training and operations experience includes working with JTF core headquarters from all services across a range of operations primarily in the lower end of the conflict continuum. This article discusses JTF lessons learned, conclusions drawn from them vis à vis joint publications, and recommendations to better support JTFs.

Lessons

By examining assessments from various JTF commanders, after action reports, and items from the joint universal lessons learned system (JULLS), PACOM joint trainers isolated the five most frequently identified JTF training needs.

Crisis action planning. Activities associated with developing plans and orders to execute joint actions. Normally involves mission analysis and the development, analysis, comparison, and selection of courses of action; includes warning orders, course of action sketches, commander's estimates, and operations orders.

Managing information. Activities associated with the staff's ability to process information from internal and external sources. More than identifying sources and making connections, it also determines what we need to know, who needs to know it, and how we get it to users.

Developing staff battle rhythm. Since time is critical in crisis action planning, how staffs manage it is key. This includes integrating internal meeting

most JTF mission requirements call for a high degree of multi-functionality

schedules with the command decision cycle to ensure timely decisions.

Forming JTF. Concurrent with planning and at times deploying to forward locations, JTFs flesh out single-service tactical organizations with multi-service attachments, liaison teams, and augmentees (some staffs growing from fewer than 100 to over 600 personnel).

Developing time phased force deployment data (TPFDD). Forces flow into theater based on the joint operations planning and execution system (JOPES). TPFDD is the major JTF interface with JOPES. Without aggressive management of TPFDD, JTFs lose control of force flow. The development and management of TPFDD has been a recurring deficiency in JTF exercises.

These tasks represent the core knowledge and skills JTF staffs need to make the leap from single-service tactical to JTF headquarters reporting directly to CINCPAC. To develop training plans to meet such needs, JTF staffs and PACOM joint trainers created a mini-library of reference sources (see figure 1) that may be useful to JTF commanders and staffs as well as joint trainers.

Conclusions

Based on an analysis of JTF needs, we have discovered some helpful markers. One is that JTF work is time sensitive. This is driven not only by inherent mission urgency but the concurrent task of standing up JTF headquarters—initiating communications with a new higher and probably new subordinate headquarters, organizing a J-staff and supporting boards and teams, assimilating augmentees, and establishing an internal information flow and staffing procedures.

Another conclusion is that most JTF missions require multi-functionality. Joint personnel, intelligence, operations, logistics, and command and

Figure 1. PACOM Mini-Library

Joint Pub 1,
Joint Warfare of the Armed Forces

Joint Pub 0-2,
Unified Action Armed Forces

Joint Pub 3-0,
Doctrine for Joint Operations

Joint Pub 5-0,
Doctrine for Planning Joint Operations

Joint Pub 5-00.2,
Joint Task Force Planning Guidance and Procedures

Joint Pub 3-56,
Command and Control Doctrine for Joint Operations

USACOM Joint Task Force Master Training Guide

Armed Forces Staff Pub 1,
Joint Staff Officer's Guide

universal joint task list (UJTL)

joint mission essential task list (JMETL)

joint operations planning and execution system (JOPES)

joint unit lessons learned system (JULLS)

remedial action program (RAP)

mission specific tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP)

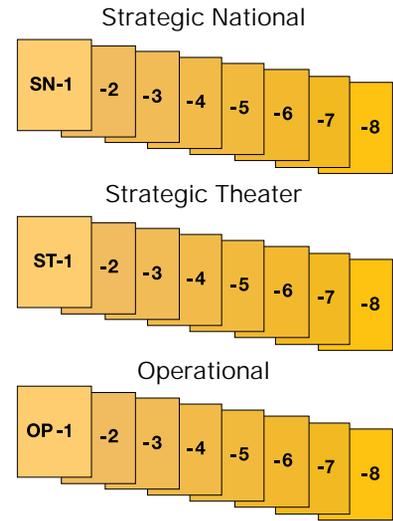
control converge on JTFs in varying degrees depending on the mission. As an area expands to include joint aspects, the difficulty of integrating functions increases dramatically.

This leads to a third conclusion, that the doctrine hierarchy is not user friendly in most JTF operations. First, doctrine segregated by function is unwieldy for a staff trying to integrate joint capabilities and staff functions. The regime for joint doctrine makes it easy for functional users to identify applicable titles, but JTF staff structures and responsibilities may not mirror a joint staff. Thus the doctrinal J-code hierarchy with its numbering system based along traditional joint staff lines



Australian and U.S. forces observing amphibious assault.

Figure 2. UJTL Doctrine Hierarchy Model



pub focused on their level for both training and operations. The revised JTF planning publication (Joint Pub 5-00.2) is one step in the right direction and should be expanded to include personnel, intelligence, operations, logistics, and C⁴ guidance and aids.

Second, it may be time to abandon the current joint doctrine hierarchy. The functional area regime served as a good linear roadmap for creating joint doctrine but may impede meeting future needs—implementing *JV 2010*. The system in use is unwieldy, perhaps an indicator that its utility on that level is waning. JTF staffers find it difficult to maneuver through its 109 approved and emerging titles. Moreover, it may constrain thinking on how to operate in the future.

A practical and less restrictive model may already exist: the universal joint task list (UJTL) hierarchy (figure 2). It has a mission—vice functional area—focus and is banded by levels of joint command: strategic national, strategic theater, operational, and tactical. It even has a task and level numbering system. The logic used to build UJTL can be applied to thinking about joint doctrine. The basis should be the mission or task, not a J-staff code.

of responsibility does not mesh well with JTF staffs.

The amount of doctrine found in the joint publication system is daunting (see pages 40–41). Navigating through the vast menu of sources to select applicable guidance is tough. Where do you start? What is “need to know” and “nice to know” for any given mission?

Recommendations

The joint community would be better served with improvements in three areas. In the near term we should produce a multi-functional publication focused on the JTF level to address the

five topics identified as core joint competencies. It would act as the nucleus of a set of JTF references. Complementing it would be titles on specific missions such as humanitarian assistance. The JTF master training guide published by U.S. Atlantic Command is a start. It has a mission focus on a single level and combines useful directives, guidance, formats, and samples from many sources. The popular “purple book” published by the Armed Forces Staff College, *The Joint Staff Officer’s Guide*, offers much of this material to theater and national level audiences. These hybrid volumes are well received since they are almost one-stop-shopping references. JTF commanders and staffs would benefit from a comprehensive

There would be keystone pubs for each level of joint command rather than for either staff or functional focus under the current system. They would be multi-functional like that described for JTFs.

UJTL also relates well to the joint warfighting capability assessment areas used by the Joint Staff. This match, although not perfect, portends a linkage among doctrine, training, strategy, and resource allocation that only exists today through extraordinary effort. Full integration of these now disparate areas would provide a more logical approach to addressing readiness issues that surface through the joint monthly readiness report, lessons learned from joint operations and training, and resource requirements through the Joint Requirements Oversight Council processes. Recognizing that an adjustment in one area impacts on others, a common structure will be helpful in the joint community's effort to implement the *JV 2010* framework.

Third, in the longer term we must look beyond paper and electronic li-

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braries with CD-ROM technology. We must meld disparate developments in information technologies and warfighting concepts, organizations, and hardware to fit together optimally.

We should ease the burden that integration puts on JTFs. We have given them integration responsibilities but not the right tools. Applicable formats, doctrine, checklists, lessons learned, samples from exercises and operations, situational awareness presentations, and modeling should be available on demand—not just more information faster but better and more useful information in a decisionable format. On-screen information and decisionmaking would be like a combination of CNN and an Internet browser running concurrently. Instead of assimilating news and preparing e-mail messages, JTFs would monitor common operating pictures of the battlespace while



25th Infantry Division departing for Tandem Thrust.

U.S. Army (Kevin Thomas)

drafting and staffing operations orders. Moreover, on-line help would come from both military and civilian data bases worldwide such as JULLS. Key words and phrases would be hyperlinked to applicable source documents regardless of data base

location. Operators could keep aware of lessons learned in real time instead of waiting for the next JULLS CD.

The tools would support tutorials (training and evaluation), simulations and modeling, and operational modes. If constructed correctly, they would be level transparent—users would think they were made specifically for their missions. The information environment could be shared with higher and lower staffs for collaborative planning. An effective information environment could reduce deployed staffs by deploying information instead.

Although we have focused on the JTF level, there are implications for all levels of joint command. Experience in PACOM and elsewhere indicates that much joint doctrine is helpful, but a stovepipe hierarchy may impede fully implementing *JV 2010*. While adopting the UJTL model would be helpful in focusing on joint doctrine users and

further integrating doctrine with strategy, training, and resource allocation in the near term, it may be time to assess the overall phenomenon of jointness. That joint doctrine is nearly overwhelming to implementers may indicate that we may be going down the path of jointness for the sake of jointness. *JV 2010* is a step toward refocusing on jointness for the sake of joint warfighting.

We have made tremendous strides in developing joint doctrine to complement the quality of our people, technology, and training. We can capitalize on this foundation by taking advantage of operational experience and emerging information technology. Focusing on the JTF level provides more than insights for improving joint operations today. It is key to expanding our thinking about the joint operations and information environment of tomorrow. **JFQ**

