

# *More than a Dress Rehearsal*



MRXs will also prepare commanders for complex battlefield decisions, such as the one depicted by Sam Shepard, who played Major General William F. Garrison in Columbia Pictures/Revolution Studios' *Black Hawk Down*. [Photo: Sidney Baldwin, Revolution Studios]



***USJFCOM IS USING MISSION REHEARSAL EXERCISES IN FORWARD DEPLOYED LOCATIONS IN ORDER TO PREPARE ITS JOINT AND MULTINATIONAL FORCES FOR INCREASINGLY COMPLEX BATTLEFIELDS.***

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During a recent discussion with MT2, retired Army General Gary Luck reflected that a number of trends, including globalization and the information revolution, are changing the world “very, very rapidly.” He stated that the Department of Defense’s senior civilian and military leadership understands the significance of these trends and is adapting its programs—including training—to remain abreast of the pace of change.

Luck retired from active duty after serving as a commander, United States Forces Korea. While in this position, he was designated commander in chief, United Nations Command, and commander, Republic of Korea-United States Combined Forces Command.

Today, he is one of several senior mentors at the Suffolk, VA-based Joint Warfighting Center (JWFC)—the organization supporting U.S. Joint Forces Command (USJFCOM) joint training efforts. In this capacity, Luck uses leadership skills and combat experience acquired during assignments in Vietnam and Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm to train military leaders and their staffs to deploy to the increasingly complex 21st century battlefield.

As part of his training portfolio, he enables the JWFC to annually sponsor between 18 and 25 joint and combined headquarters staff training events. These exercises complement one USJFCOM goal, as summarized by Luck, to enable deploying staffs and units “to train in the new joint and combined environment and trying, as best as we can, to acquaint those who will have to struggle in this environment with the vagaries it presents.”

One such event was conducted this March at Camp Doha, Kuwait. The Coalition Forces Land Component Command headquarters staff provided the core of the personnel for the exercise. Other participants consisted of personnel furnished by Combined Joint Task Force 7 staff and individual augmentees. Army Lieutenant General David McKiernan was the senior officer to participate in the training.

McKiernan, commanding general, Third U.S. Army, also leads U.S. Army Forces Central Command and coalition land component. On June 28, the Coalition Forces Land Component Command began supporting the transition of power from the Civilian Provisional Authority to an interim Iraqi government that will guide the nation until elections are held in 2005.

## EXERCISE OUTCOMES

There are four outcomes of a JWFC-sponsored mission rehearsal exercise (MRX): have unit members deploy with trust and confidence in each other; set conditions for their subordinate's success; operationalize all elements of U.S. national power—diplomatic, information, military and economic (DIME); and accept mission-type orders that provide flexibility and agility beyond which they would normally be possible.

While these conditions were also the desired outcomes for the March event, titled Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF-I) MRX, Luck was quick to note that outwardly, there was nothing “unique” about the event. After all, he said, JFWC trainers have worked with “every force in the recent past that has gone into harm’s way.”

Indeed, JWFC training teams have deployed three times to Iraq to train Combined Joint Task Force 7 and the Civilian Provisional Authority, and three times to Afghanistan to train Combined Joint Task Force 76 and its preceding command organizations. JFWC’s training program is also iterative, whereby “we go back and over and over again to tweak those units when they are actually there in the process,” Luck added.

## MRX DIFFERENCES

MNF-I MRX was conducted during a 60-day period at U.S. and overseas sites, and culminated at Camp Doha. The exercise consisted of four phases: preplanning; academic instruction on Combined Joint Task Force fundamentals, effects-based operations and other operational topics; mission planning and rehearsal; and after action review.

The MNF-I staff-in-training was comprised of a cadre of about 25 personnel from McKiernan’s staff and “many augmentees from around the world who had never worked together, and who did not have experience with an existing unit structure, and its standard operating procedures and

**Retired Army General Gary E. Luck, right, is now one of the senior mentors at the Joint Warfighting Center. Lieutenant General Thomas Metz, far right, is commanding general, Multi-National Corps - Iraq.**



battle rhythm,” said Army Lieutenant Colonel Eric Singer of U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM).

The scenario supported the staff headquarters organization that USCENTCOM Commander General John Abizaid wanted to establish. “His end-state goal is to take Combined Joint Task Force 7 into Iraq and split it into two separate units, focusing at two separate levels. One unit, Multi-National Force-Iraq, will work strategic-level down to operational-level issues. The other unit, Multi-National Corps-Iraq, will work the operational-tactical level issues,” Singer said.

Accordingly, one MRX objective was to train the assembled staff at both the operational and the strategic levels. Specific scenario objectives included planning in joint and interagency environments at strategic-political-national levels. The training focus enabled the staff to establish an “effects-based, battle rhythm, which focused on desired effects and end-state—not the immediate effects on an enemy that is in front of them,” Singer said.

McKiernan’s tool kit of tactics, techniques and procedures at the strategic level of warfare included elements of national power and the links into those elements that could affect those conditions and move the staff toward. “This was something that was a little different for the average Army or Air Force guy,” Singer recalled.

Consistent with USJFCOM training policy, the scenarios included DIME-focused events.

Luck cited one benefit of including DIME events in MRXs. “We want them to be fully apprised of the information—public affairs issues, which, because of rapid flow of information in this day and age, are inordinately important to the success of the mission. You can militarily win a battle and possibly still lose the war if you don’t understand how important the information set is.”

And it is through the prism of DIME events that staffs are able to view all aspects of

an adversary.

Air Force Colonel Frank DiGiovanni, associate director for ranges and training, Office of the Secretary of Defense’s Readiness and Training Directorate, told MT2 that while some of this MRX’s tenets have routinely been pre-deployment training, it was the manner in which the events were introduced and harmonized that made this a transformational training event. The MRX was “framed using an effects-based approach,” DiGiovanni added.

He cited one example of the unique nature of this training event. Planners transitioned from “a traditional operational staff construct, where there is a J-1 [administration] up to a J-6 [communications] directorates. The MNF-I staff was given an opportunity to organize the appropriate staff structure to address the desired effects. For example, providing a secure and stable environment or enabling the Iraqi population to be knowledgeable of the election process.”

These requirements stem directly from today’s challenges Singer explained. “The need for us, as the joint trainer, to run these exercises is because the units that are deploying are not inherently joint units. They are being tasked to do things for which they were not trained and ready to do in their service training programs,” he said.

JWFC is also integrating service requirements into this training construct. For example, in December 2003, JWFC partnered with the Army’s Battle Command Training Program to jointly train III Corps and two subordinate divisions, to complete joint and service requirements “in one, very large event,” Singer said. While JWFC has not “taken over and integrated requirements into existing exercise programs, what we have done is combine multiple requirements into one event.”

“The strongest part of the JWFC team during MNF-I MRX was the senior mentors,” DiGiovanni said. “Those individuals were highly experienced. They had been through

many similar scenarios and, as a result, provided credibility and legitimacy to JFCOM's goals."

Other senior mentors support Luck on an exercise-by-exercise basis. For this exercise, senior mentors included Luck; retired USMC Lieutenant General Emil Bedard; and retired Army Lieutenant General Thomas Burnette. Individuals from other organizations who supported the MRX included John Holzman, foreign policy advisor to U.S. Pacific Command; Francis J. Ricciardone, ambassador to the Philippines and Palau; and Claude M. Kicklighter, DoD advisor to the U.S. State Department.

Army Lieutenant General Thomas Metz, commanding general, Multi-National Corps -Iraq, completed USJFCOM-sponsored MRX training en route to his duty assignment. He provided *MT2* with a program assessment based upon his in-theater command experience.

"Because too few of today's leaders have had robust joint and combined experience, teaching, coaching, and mentoring from proven leaders who have had such experience, is key to our success in today's warfight—which is joint and combined," he said. "The JFWC's MRX program is an excellent tool that helps us ensure the readiness, adaptability and lethality of our Army formation when they are employed in a joint and combined situation," Metz added.

## TRANSFORMATION CONTINUED

Luck stated that the Joint National Training Capability (JNTC), a component of the DoD initiative to transform DoD training for joint operations, "mirrors the realities of today's world contextually—so that we might put those that we are training for this joint environment into that context and give them a look at it before they have to do it for real."

Luck added, "We are trying to set a context that replicates what these joint forces headquarters and coalition forces headquarters will face when they go around the world to do the bidding for the free world."

JNTC's No. 1 priority for fiscal 2005 and beyond is to sponsor events that support deployment requirements. Indeed, said Singer, this mirrors a command goal of USFCOM Commander Admiral Edmund Giambastiani, which is to conduct a "fully resourced mission rehearsal exercise for every unit, worldwide, that is being tasked to deploy as a joint headquarters into any of the ongoing conflicts."



**Lieutenant Commander Bill Garren, commander, Second Fleet/Striking Fleet Atlantic, conducts a briefing in the Joint Operations Center onboard USS Mount Whitney during the USJFCOM exercise "Operation Blinding Storm." [U.S. Navy photo by Photographer's Mate 2nd Class Greg Roberts.]**

USJFCOM's plans for its burgeoning MRX program includes opportunities to expand the use of the department's Advanced Distributed Learning initiative; use of other underpinning technologies, including constructive simulations; and other components of Training Transformation—Joint Knowledge Development and Distribution Capability (JKDDC) and Joint Assessment and Enabling Capability (JAEC).

For example, learning technologies can provide exercise participants with a reach back capability, where by they could obtain subject matter expert perspectives throughout the MRX. This type of reach back and individual preparation is exactly what the individual training and education portion of the transformation, the JKDDC, is aiming for.

JKDDC is developing training and education products in response to commanders requirements to fill gaps in individual joint training. Beginning in January 2005, JKDDC courses will be available to USJFCOM and other combatant commanders to prepare the individual warrior for specific Joint Task Force assignments.

Complementing the efforts of the JNTC to provide collective training, the JKDDC will distribute a minimum of 38 courses through a global distribution capability that will utilize the Internet, the Secret Internet Protocol Router Network and the Non-Classified Protocol Router Network. The third tenet, JAEC, "will systematically collect and analyze performance measures at multiple levels and help guide the spiral development

of JKDDC and JNTC," said Don Johnson, the founding director of the JAEC Joint Management Office. According to Dan Gardner, director, Readiness and Training on the OSD Staff, JAEC will enable DoD to measure what it is managing, to determine if its investment resources are properly allocated, and to answer the fundamental question: "Are we being transformational?"

The DoD Training Capabilities' Analysis of Alternatives study, to be completed in August, is examining topics that include how to better support warfighters' real-world training requirements through the use of simulation programs and other technologies. The study, which was started this past winter, is led by the undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness and the USJFCOM commander, and has included participation by different DoD components, other government agencies, industry and the academic community.

USJFCOM's effort to expand the scope and quality of joint and combined staff training is meeting the warfighters' increasingly complex training requirements. Inserting training technology into MRX processes and increasing interagency, intergovernmental and multinational participation in JNTC scenarios will further enable DoD training to match the rapid rate of change in global trends and events and help warfighters maintain their combat readiness.

Comments and Letters to the Editor about this story are encouraged. Contact Editor Jordan Fuhr at [jordanf@kerriganmedia.com](mailto:jordanf@kerriganmedia.com)