

Putting the Big J into training

As commander of the U.S. Joint Warfighting Center in Suffolk, Va., and director of joint training, Maj. Gen. Gallinetti manages programs that train combat personnel and organizations from all services for joint operations.

The Iraq war has increased the center's prominence and put a sharper focus on the need for more joint training, not just across the U.S. services, but also across international coalition forces. Gallinetti understands this need firsthand, having served as chief of staff for the Combined Joint Task Force 7 in Iraq directly before assuming his new post last summer.

Gallinetti also is aware of his command's expanding role as services turn to the center for joint mission rehearsal, as well as for joint.

Describing himself as a 'champion of virtual and constructive' training to enhance live training, Gallinetti will lead his command through a critical period, supporting joint training requirements during wartime and spearheading the Joint National Training Capability (JNTC) program that relies heavily on virtual and constructive simulation and which will continue to build up this year as it heads for full operational capability in 2009.

Q What were your initial impressions of the Joint Warfighting Center and J7 as you took the helm?

A I'm in a little bit of a unique position because, between 1996 and 1999, I was assigned to U.S. Atlantic Command, the precursor of Joint Forces Command. So I was fairly familiar with J7 and what they were doing. I quickly saw that since the late '90s the mission had expanded. We were doing a lot more. It is still about the people, the high caliber of the officers and the enlisted members of each one of the services who provide those folks who come here. We are very appreciative to the services that provide those people.

But the training has taken on a new urgency and new perspective these days because of the global war on terrorism. The aftermath of 9/11 has caused us to adapt our training and what we are doing, and we are constantly changing and spending a lot of our resources, manpower, time and energy facilitating what's going on over in central command.

A lot more work has come our way from the Joint Staff and the Pentagon, and I think the missions for joint forces command have increased. There has been more influence from within the Department of Defense and especially from the secretary of defense, to transform the Joint Force to enable joint war fighting to become more embedded and

more ingrained and better utilized than it has been in the past. It really has increased our task load.

Q How close do you believe U.S. forces are to being able to fight in a truly joint way?

A I think we are there. I had a very good perspective when I saw the task force in Iraq truly working together with all the service input with the major subordinate commands with a number of different capabilities, and I saw it all come together. I was also able to participate at that time in training at the Joint Warfighting Center when I came over to analyze and assess what we were doing. So I saw it working quite well.

However, there are still some issues, some challenges, gaps and seams, especially on the operational end of the war fight. There are still some command-and-control issues and intelligence/ISR issues that need to be worked out, especially when we collaborate. When we are trying to make things more interoperable, it's not just about the equipment or the technology, although that's a large piece, but it's also about processes that are involved and that's what we are trying to really get at here at Joint Forces Command and more specifically with joint training and at the Warfighting Center. Because we believe that's when the rubber meets the road. We can take a look at those things and make them work better.

It's both about technology and also policies or processes. The services are doing quite well and have been working together for quite a long time and I know they want to go and get better at that.

But how do we improve that training prior to deploying to the fight, instead of it being an ad hoc pickup game? That's what we are trying to do with JNTC, with all our mission rehearsals, with all our doctrine and education, to try to improve that prior to actually deploying so they have a better education and footing.

Q What key things about joint-training needs did you learn from your experience of multinational operations in Iraq?

A I saw very clearly in Iraq, in Baghdad, where we worked with 34 coalition countries, that it was extremely important. There were issues with their caveats and with their red-line items that they could or could not do according to their directions from their governments. There were the command-and-control issues, and also with communications and information technology. Another good thing we have here at Joint Forces Command and with Adm. [Edmund] Giambastiani is that he is also commander of ACT [Allied Command Transformation], which is the NATO end of transformation, and we are working very closely with NATO's European Joint Warfare Center in Stavanga, Norway, where we are providing a lot of help and support and expertise and establishing personal relationships because they are asking us how it's done. They want to go ahead and excel and they want to get a jump-start on what they are doing.

Q What do you see as the major joint operational gaps and needs and how is the Joint Warfighting Center and J7 addressing these?

A It's not easy and it needs to be constantly reviewed, but it needs to be training that begins as early as possible. The doctrine that we have today is a long, laborious process and it takes a long time to get it changed. Because the doctrine takes a long time to change, we put out interim pamphlets and handbooks that will let the forces out there know where we are on the latest concepts and procedures so they can practice and work with them.

One of the biggest things we are doing now is changing over to effects-based planning and effects-based operations and one of our primary focuses at Joint Forces Command is to organize, train and equip joint task force commanders and staffs. I saw very clearly in Iraq that it worked, but it would have worked a lot better if the training had been there beforehand. We need to improve it by instilling this earlier on.

Q What specific areas of concern on the battlefield can joint training help prepare for?

A In no order of priority, I think these are some areas which we can improve upon: battlefield assessment, or what we are now calling effects assessment; fratricide prevention; deployment planning and execution; reserve mobilization; and coalition information sharing.

Those are areas that we are working on and where we can definitely improve.

Another big part of what we are doing is analyzing and assessing, as part of joint lessons learned. Teams go out there and spend long periods of time with Joint Task Force (JTF) staffs and combatant commands and take a look at the whole spectrum of lessons learned and plug that back into us so that we can adjust our training and more rapidly inject that into our training. If we see an area that needs to be improved, then we can go ahead and can take it through a transformational change. If it makes sense, we don't have to wait around.

The services have great training and they also have their own lessons-learned teams. But we complement and augment that from the joint side of the house and it has been a tremendous addition to how we train the force.

Q What do you believe are the main achievements of JNTC so far and where do you see JNTC headed?

A JNTC is a very large, integral part of what we are doing now and we reached initial operational capability on Oct. 1 through four different exercises last year in horizontal, vertical and integrated events. By the end of fiscal year '05, we will have 32 sites across the United States and these are mainly at ranges and sites utilized for training, but it's also where we can go ahead and put in the processes to put the joint construct and the joint context into what the services are doing.

Each horizontal, vertical, integrated event is not really that important; the importance lies in what we are eventually going to tie it to. We plan on putting out a joint training plan in May 2005. This is going to be very important because it will incorporate all the different uses of the JNTC. It will take a look at the joint tactical tasks and the joint training

requirements. The services will see where they can go ahead and plug in and participate and actually do joint tactical tasks and joint training requirements.

But this is more than permanent, persistent sites. It's about the joint context, the joint construct and how we are going to train for the future. To make this work even better, as part of our charter and part of our resources, we are going to be sending support elements - military contractors who will be trained here and sent out to the services and the combatant commanders so they can put them at these different ranges and sites and help facilitate accreditation and certification, and also continue to work on the input from the services.

JNTC has a long growth period. Its full operational capability does not happen until 2009 and it will eventually go global. For example, the United Kingdom is interested in getting involved very early and we would like to work with them. They want to send liaison officers here and want to participate in more exercises. There is a lot of interest from other countries, too.

If Gen. [Tommy] Franks had had this capability back in December '02 or January '03, he could have trained his joint forces where they were located prior to going over to the [Persian] Gulf. That's not to say they had not been through joint training before, but they were rushing to get people over there and then they had just a little bit of time to get it together before they kicked off Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Q You sound like a fan of virtual and constructive simulation. Do you support its greater use as part of training?

A You have the warriors out there who are trained for this and are plugged in. They can operate with this and get realistic training, state-of-the-art technology training.

I don't think anything will replace live training because I still believe you need to do live training to an extent, but I also believe that virtual and constructive can certainly add to the complexity and to the dimensions of what you can include in an exercise.

Q Do you get any sense of reluctance among individual services to support Joint Forces Command's training initiatives and goals?

A I don't sense any of that. It's come a long way since the 1990s, when I think there was still some, but we've gone through that. Obviously, there's competition for resources and I think that will remain between what the services have and desire, what they want to do and what the joint part of that is. But I also know they want to get better and know they need to get better on the joint end of it. [Defense] Secretary [Donald] Rumsfeld said he is trying to see what he can do to have standing joint task force headquarters available so that when we have an operation, they can be up to speed and ready to go. What we are doing is helping them out at Joint Forces Command, but the services are part of that, too.

A Top Gun general

Maj. Gen. Jon Gallinetti is a Top Gun aviator with an extensive flying career, and he also

brings to Joint Forces Command his recent experience overseeing joint wartime operations.

Gallinetti, who received his U.S. Marine Corps commission in 1972, was promoted to his present rank in January 2004. From September 2003 until April 2004, he was deployed in Iraq as chief of staff for Combined Joint Task Force Seven.

He has accumulated more than 5,000 flight hours in a wide range of helicopters and jets, including the A-4, AV-8B and F/A-18, and has attended the Naval Fighter Weapons School's Top Gun Adversary Course.

Between June 2002 and June 2004, he commanded Marine Corps Air Bases Western Area and was commanding general of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar in San Diego.

Among several tours outside the Fleet Marine Force, he was Air Launched Weapons Project Officer and F/A-18 Project Pilot at the Naval Weapons Center in China Lake, Calif. He also stood up the USACOM J9 Directorate responsible for Joint Experimentation.

Gallinetti assumed his current assignment as commander, Joint Warfighting Center, and director, Joint Training, J7, at Joint Forces Command, Suffolk, Va., on July 8.