

# **Training Multinational Corps** **– on –** **Joint Air Land Integration**

*By COL Kevin Jackson, LTC Tony Dunkin and MAJ Wes Martin*



## Foreword

“Integration and interoperability are key to executing successful large-scale combat operations and vital for survival. U.S. Army Europe and Africa (USAREUR-AF) is delivering a gated, command-post centric training model that prepares NATO Corps and Divisions to plan, coordinate and fight through the breadth and depth of today’s battlefields. Ukraine illustrates how truly decisive this can be. The side that successfully integrates air and land operations gains the advantage. The side that doesn’t suffers the consequences.” LTG John S. Kolasheski, CG, V Corps

## Joint Air-Land Integration Initiative

The training and readiness of the U.S. Army and U.S. Joint Force may not be enough to win the next war alone. We will need to fight alongside our partners and Allies to bring the strength and capabilities of a coalition to the fight. Future U.S. Army efforts must center on the training and readiness of the entire coalition to achieve battlefield success. The current conflict in Ukraine highlights the complexity of large-scale combat operations (LSCO) and the need to continue to ready U.S. and coalition forces to ensure integrated deterrence or to fight and win if called upon. Interoperability remains a constant challenge but shouldn’t prevent efforts to train land and air forces on integrating capabilities and training staffs to fight in LSCO.

Recent changes in command structures across NATO have simplified command and control for the land and air components. This unity of command and intuitive leadership allows subordinate commanders to lead efforts to train and integrate more than has ever been done before in Europe. Joint air land integration is one area that we see renewed interest and focus as we continue to learn lessons from the current conflict in Ukraine. Many nations across the globe question how their forces could conduct air land integration in LSCO at echelon. In short, staffs at the division and corps levels must continue to train the basic principles and find ways to exercise and learn how to fight their formations. How then do you train both a U.S. and multinational staff outside of a major warfighter exercise/combat readiness evaluation, or prepare them to participate and excel?

One approach to the training we are adopting

in USAREUR-AF, is to develop a scalable and repeatable training program of instruction (POI) to train these staffs. A shortfall of relevant experienced coupled with an immediate demand for capability across NATO force structure drives the need for both short and long-term approaches to building expertise. The basic premise is to utilize existing organizations and enhance the combat readiness evaluation (CREVAL).

Naturally, it will take time and resources to institutionalize air land integration (ALI) training creating a sustainable model within NATO Force Structure (NFS). While that system comes online, the immediate solution focuses on a small mobile training team (MTT) that attempts to visit each of the ten multinational corps and train them on air land integration. If this MTT can increase the organic capability of a corps or division to accomplish their wartime mission, we consider this success. We also recognize this is the “commercial off the shelf solution” and the need exists to institutionalize this process across NATO and develop doctrine and standard operating procedures (SOPs) to promulgate lessons learned and drive change for future operations and training.

The current four-day POI model we are implementing is based on feedback and application from one of the multinational corps, 56th Artillery Command and the expertise from the Army Joint Support Team (AJST). AJST is key as the foundational proponent with vetted doctrine like how U.S. divisions and corps are trained for warfighter preparation, that can be applied across theater. Both U.S. and NATO air components, U.S. Air Force in Europe (USAFE-AFAFRICA) and Allied Air Command (AIRCOM), are also major players in providing subject matter expertise in their portions of the POI. The expertise of NATO’s Deployable Air Command and Control Centre (DACCC) is also key for utilizing this 4-day POI model and ensuring NATO doctrine and processes are permeated throughout this training. The 19th Battlefield Coordination Detachment, who interfaces with all the various elements and maintains a Battlefield Coordination Detachment/ Ground Liaison Element (BCD/GLE) inside of AIRCOM and USAFE, is coordinating across all the players to strengthen this effort. The 19th BCD’s relationship with organic USAREUR-AF corps and divisions allows for synchronization of those units’ air land integration efforts with both Allied Land Command (LANDCOM), AIRCOM, USAFE-



AFAF and USAREUR-AF. The goal is to create a POI and establish Joint Air Ground Integration Center (JAGIC) SOPs that could be utilized by any partner nation in Europe or multinational corps to increase their war fighting ability.

### The four-day model explained:

JALI ACADEMICS				
	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
0900-0915	LSCO Overview Brief	US Targeting Seminar	Indirect Fires, Airspace Requirements, and Coordination Measures	Systems Interoperability
0915-1000 (45 min)	TACS/AAGS			
1000-1010	Break	Break	Break	Break
1010-1100 (50 min)	Joint Air Tasking Cycle	Fire Support and Targeting in support of LSCO	Army Aviation: Employment & Airspace Requirements	Review and AAR
1100-1110	Break	Break	Break	
1110-1200 (50 min)	Joint & Army Airspace Control	JAGIC Overview & Duty Positions Part I	Airspace Demo	
1200-1300	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	
1300-1350 (50 min)	Joint Airpower & Air Org for Combat	JAGIC Overview & Duty Positions Part II	JAGIC SOP Review	
1350-1400	Break	Break	Break	
1400-1450 (50 min)	The BCD and GLD	ASOC	Battle Drill Review	

**Day 1:** Key concepts of the operational level and organizational structure that enable air-land integration. Creating a baseline understanding of the players and concepts necessary to enable execution of air-land operations across all echelons. This day creates common understanding of influences above the corps level and what entities and systems drive joint force synchronization.

**Day 2:** The key theme for the day is the transition down to the tactical level where JAGIC or similar tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) are utilized to enable air-land operations. The lead-in topic of targeting at echelon and its importance in influencing the LSCO fight. This day introduces organizations to concepts necessary to the ergonomics of synchronizing all airspace usage with procedural control to best enable the commander to shape with air-land operations.

**Day 3:** This day focuses on the measures and controls necessary for synchronization. To enhance understanding and build the team, a

practical exercise portion will reinforce concepts introduced earlier in the POI. This practical exercise demonstrates the building of a unit airspace plan (UAP) to underscore the importance of accounting for all planned airspace usage. Further experience is generated through a battle drill focused practicum. This demonstration of how a JAGIC operates in

specific scenarios emphasizes the importance of the skills need and arrangement of the cell.

**Day 4:** This day will focus on the topic of systems interoperability. Various NATO organizations based on country specific systems and training expertise require robust federated mission networking solutions to effectively communicate. The training concludes with a review and AAR to refine the POI for other organizations and discussion on developing a sustained training plan.

### Beyond Academic Foundations

The logical progression of training for NATO Corps is development of individual skill proficiency for the staff team. This can be gained through a variety of training sources including National Institutional Training, NATO Schools and unit on the job training. Beyond the individual level the progression to collective training requires more deliberate planning and resourcing. Opportunities available during the near term, short of tier one



JALI Proficiency Roadmap		
2023	2024	2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual Training (ex NJTS)</li> <li>• Initial Academics 4x Corps               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ MNC-NE</li> <li>○ Euro Corps</li> <li>○ RRC-FR</li> <li>○ MNC-SE</li> </ul> </li> <li>• JAGIC SOP Development</li> <li>• Finland JALI Conference</li> <li>• NATO F2T</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transition to Collective Training</li> <li>• Additional Corps Academics</li> <li>• SOP Implementation</li> <li>• CREVALs</li> <li>• Expanded Discreet Training Events</li> <li>• Sustained Training</li> <li>• Over the Shoulder Coaching</li> <li>• Increased Systems Interoperability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved Academics</li> <li>• Institutional Base for NATO</li> <li>• CREVALs</li> <li>• Discreet Training for Sustainment</li> <li>• Exercise OC/T Support</li> <li>• Systems Interoperability</li> </ul>

exercises, include AIRCOM Find, Fix, Track (F2T) events, USAFE Air Warfare Center (UAWC) training network and simulation, unit level digital skills training (DST). Find, fix, track events provide a short duration training experience with NATO air assets participating in live fly events that could scale to include land forces participating in sequence with dynamic targeting events. USAFE Air Warfare Center operates on up to 13 different networks and has the capability of connecting remote systems to facilitate scenario-based training. Units partnered with USAREUR rotational forces bring both experience and access to battle labs enabling DST like training for partnered forces.

Building capability over time requires organizational experience and the ability to adapt to lessons learned. The standard NATO model of CREVAL creates a gap between experience-based training evolutions with 10 Corps competing for resources. To address this timing gap at unit level a more frequent stream of training experiences is necessary to generate and maintain readiness. Future training must be frequent and specialized enough to stimulate a JAGIC responsible for synchronizing fires and airspace during LSCO. Ideally units build and resource training at home station to develop, refine and validate SOPs. A progression to multiple echelon DST is also an important step in ensuring systems interoperability. Coupling of scenarios and simulations with training objectives would provide a robust collective training program. Beyond these steps options exist leveraging the federated mission network (FMN) connected systems to create and drive distributed discreet training events on a reoccurring basis. This

bridges the gap between individual training and CREVAL level events by inserting gated command post centric training evolutions.

### Conclusion

The NATO fight is inherently joint and multinational and to win this fight, prepared forces with the ability to integrate land and air operations will remain key to battlefield success. We believe that foundational POI focused on air land integration across war fighting functions with practical exercises can improve both U.S. and multinational formations at echelon. The digital architecture and interoperability especially in NATO create challenges, but we are confident that through low-cost repeatable training and practical monthly exercises success can be achieved. NATO will benefit from a deliberate institutionalization of air land integration principles and training that creates an asymmetric advantage.

*COL Kevin Jackson is currently the Brigade Commander for the 19th Battlefield Coordination Detachment in Ramstein, Germany. He previously served as the Battalion Commander for 2-15 FAR and has held various joint jobs in the Joint Staff J35 and Office of the Secretary of Defense (Policy).*

*LTC Anthony Dunkin is currently serving as the Joint Targeting Coordinator for 1 German Netherlands Corps in Munster Germany. LTC Dunkin is headed to Battalion Command in Grafenwoehr, Germany in summer of 2024*

*MAJ Wesley Martin is currently the Deputy Plans Chief for the 19th Battlefield Coordination Detachment in Ramstein, Germany. He previously served as the Battalion Executive Officer for 1-94 Field Artillery Regiment at Joint Base Lewis-McChord.*