

# OUT-FIGHT OUT-THINK OUT-LAST



Photo by Tommy Ellingsen





# Three Steps to Operationalize Warfare Development

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• B A C K G R O U N D •

## NATO military leaders discuss warfare development

**T**HIS YEAR'S NATO Military Committee visit to Allied Command Transformation (ACT) was conducted at the Joint Warfare Centre (JWC) in Stavanger, Norway, on March 3 and 4, 2020. The visit to the JWC, organised by General André Lanata, Supreme Allied Commander Transformation (SACT), had the overarching aim of engaging the NATO Military Committee on ACT's Warfare Development Agenda. Panel discussions, videos, demonstrations, and presentations were focused on interoperability, innovation, agility, and NATO's continued deterrence and defence against any attack in the Euro-Atlantic area. These discussions focused on the development of the NATO Warfighting Capstone Concept as well as the integrated development of the Alliance's Military Instrument of Power.

ACT, as NATO's Warfare Development Command, leads the military adaptation of the Alliance, contributing to the orientation of nations' efforts, ensuring coherence, assuring interoperability and delivering the connecting tissue that makes the Alliance's capability greater than the sum of its individual parts. During the event, General Lanata set the tone of the discussions by explaining the Military Committee's visit to ACT was, "an opportunity to shift our mindsets from a reactive mode to a proactive mode, and to pull the future into the present, in order to anticipate the right strategy for NATO."

General Lanata added, "the JWC tests concepts and doctrines in a near-real exercise environment, develops foresight thinking

through scenarios, experiments new technological solutions, and improves our education and training. This is the reason why JWC provides some of the most vital components of ACT's effort to cope with the challenges of future warfare."

On the first day of the visit, the NATO Military Representatives were updated on ACT's current work on NATO adaptation with a particular focus on warfare development, the Transatlantic Bond, Allied deterrence and defence, and the strong commitment to NATO's three core tasks — collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security.

The NATO Military Representatives also received a series of briefings by the JWC staff that centered on four themes: Managing Complexity, Future Exercise Environment, Training Audience Opportunities and Warfare Development. The Commander of the JWC, Rear Admiral Jan C. Kaack, addressed the unique aspects of the Centre's mission in linking Allied Command Operations (ACO) and ACT through major NATO operational exercises, which are more complex and larger than ever before.

Rear Admiral Kaack said: "The Joint Warfare Centre has a key role in validating doctrinal and experimental concepts and in improving command and staff processes and interaction, optimised for warfighting. Our exercises remain the most realistic environment available to achieve this. Complexity and scale is at the very heart of our mission to both provide realistic and testing exercises. And in

our role to help NATO's Command Structure, and the Force Structure, to be ready and to be better. The quality and professionalism of the Joint Warfare Centre crew is central to our success. We are encouraging our staff to innovate and explore new possibilities that will enable us to meet the future growth in ambition for NATO exercises. Working with our partners across NATO and beyond, it is our maxim that Together! We make NATO better!"

On the second day, NATO Military Committee Chairman, Air Chief Marshal Sir Stuart Peach, talked to the Joint Warfare Centre's "The Three Swords News Channel" about the visit, where he underlined that, "the focus is now on improving our readiness."

Air Chief Marshal Peach said: "The Joint Warfare Centre has a vital role to play in preparing our commanders because the NATO Command Structure is a very important part of our capability. We will continue to use the Joint Warfare Centre in Stavanger, under the command of Allied Command Transformation, to develop our leaders for this generation and the next. It is all about the multi-domain approach; it is about the fusion of the tactical with the operational level and the strategic level to deliver command teams across the Alliance that are fit for the purpose."

Air Chief Marshal Peach added: "The Joint Warfare Centre, clearly, is an excellent team. I think all the people I have spoken to will return to their Nations stronger for the experience here in Stavanger." ✦



**ABOVE:** Lieutenant Colonel Richard Parvin, the author, briefing the members of the NATO Military Committee on how the JWC manages complexity in large-scale operational level exercises. Photo by Tommy Ellingsen

“Realistically testing NATO's **operational** and **strategic** levels of command, potentially in an **Article 5 crisis**, is a complex undertaking.”

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ITHIN THE FRAMEWORK of the NATO Military Committee's visit to Allied Command Transformation (ACT), hosted at the Joint Warfare Centre (JWC) in Stavanger, Norway, Rear Admiral Jan C. Kaack, JWC's Commander, was given the opportunity to showcase the Centre's work and the future direction of travel. The emphasis was on four areas:

- I. How the JWC manages complexity in large-scale, computer-assisted command post exercises (CAX/CPXs),
- II. What the future exercise environment looks like as the Centre continues to build near-real exercise scenarios,
- III. What new opportunities can the JWC offer to its training audiences to enhance their experiences while training here,
- IV. How the JWC supports NATO Warfare Development, and especially, how it can support the new NATO Warfighting Capstone Concept.

The following is a quick rundown of these four areas that help define the JWC's Vision.

## I. Managing Complexity

The exercises delivered by the JWC have undergone a major transformation in recent years. Realistically testing NATO's operational and strategic levels of command, potentially in an Article 5 crisis, is a hugely complex undertaking. The JWC-directed exercises must faithfully reflect the changing nature of conflict, including shifts in NATO policy and doctrine, the complex operating environment, the roles played by international organizations, the role of technological change and the potential opponents that NATO Forces might face.

With the growth of the JWC mission now including the strategic level, the Centre has embarked on a process of expanding its exercise material into the concepts that exist in the political to military realm. But, to fully replicate this multi-dimensional level of warfare in JWC exercises, the hunger for subject matter experts and national expertise has grown.

Additionally, the number of training audiences the JWC serves has grown considerably with recent exercises having 14 training audiences, spanning the strategic to the tactical. And the future sees a requirement for even more. To achieve all this, the Centre relies on the excellence of its staff. Diverse and capable, JWC staff must also be at the heart of the Centre's efforts







ABOVE: Rear Admiral Jan C. Kaack, Commander Joint Warfare Centre, addressing the NATO Military Committee on JWC Vision 2025.  
Photo by Tommy Ellingsen

to manage complexity and deliver excellence in training. The JWC's new vision strategy, "Vision 2025", is designed to ensure the Centre trains, professionally develops, and adequately equips its staff to continue to meet its unique mission to deliver complex exercises at the operational and strategic levels.

## II. Future Exercise Environment

By summer 2022, the Centre will have completed the geostrategic, 360-degree fictitious environment in support of NATO's exercise programme, from the tactical to the military/political level. From a Brussels-centric perspective, the fictitious setting that the JWC has developed enables a 360-degree replication of the geostrategic environment. This fictitious environment has been designed in reflection of Supreme Allied Commander Europe's (SACEUR) identified areas of strategic focus described in a variety of reference documents, and re-iterated in the concept for the deterrence and defence of the Euro-Atlantic area. Based on a modular approach, a scalable geographic scope from local/regional focus to SACEUR's area of responsibility-wide campaigns and operations can be achieved. This new ar-

ray allows for a combination of play between any number of the seven regional areas that are being created and fine tailored to the requirements and ambitions of the training audiences. With full control of the fictitious environment, a wide range and combination of challenges and problem-sets can be applied across the current- and near-future characteristics, symptoms and stages of conflict and crisis.

The JWC scenarios have been designed

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**"Scenarios have been designed to enable both Article 5 collective defence, as well as non-Article 5 crisis response operations."**

to enable both Article 5 collective defence, as well as non-Article 5 crisis response operations. Within these portfolios, the full range of foreseeable missions, based on the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) and NATO Response Force (NRF) can be portrayed. Initially designed for unclassified computer-assisted/command post exercises at the operational level, spin-offs and specific evolutions of the JWC scenarios have also been used in a wider spectrum, such as live training or tailored problem-sets for table-top exercises at various levels of command.

## III. Training Audience Opportunities

In addition to achieving set exercise objectives and training objectives, training audiences for the JWC-delivered exercises have the opportunity to incorporate and test elements of Contingency Plans (CONPLANS), Graduated Response Plans (GRPs), and their National Plans within the tailorable scenarios that the JWC offers. And it is the long period of time that a training audience is involved in the exercise planning process that provides for an experience that is significantly more than just the ten days of exercise execution. Rather, it is a con-







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The Joint Warfare Centre attracts and develops the most capable staff, both permanent and augmentees, based on a **reputation for excellence** built on a culture of professionalism, curiosity, innovation and cooperation.

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ABOVE: The Joint Warfare Centre's Training Facility.  
Photo by Sven Giegerich

stant adaptive learning experience throughout the exercise planning process that makes each headquarters better. This process incorporates a series of collective training events such as Academics, Key Leader Training and Battle Staff Training, in addition to the planning phase and the execution phase.

Throughout all of these events, the JWC Advisory Team, with the addition of Senior Mentors, delivers lectures on best practices, discuss common joint operational issues, and facilitate functional area discussions in syndicates. During the Crisis Response Planning in Phase II, the Advisory Team remains with the training audience as they develop the necessary planning products to enable improvement within their Battle Staff Training and exercise execution during Phase III.

On average, the JWC Advisory Team spends 80 days with the training audience throughout the exercise planning process. Within most JWC scenarios, training audiences gain an understanding of emerging ideas and concepts within NATO, such as cyber and space, which they traditionally will not see at their home stations.

By the end of 2020, the JWC will also complete the development work to provide an additional wargaming capability to further

support the training audiences' development and certification.

#### IV. Warfare Development

The JWC is a catalyst between conceptual development for future warfare and its translation into practices through training and experimentation. Warfare development is a very broad term, which can be divided into concepts, doctrine, capability development, domains, experiments, and threat analysis. The exercise planners, advisory teams, quality assurance teams and CAX operators at the JWC integrate all these elements into every exercise. They also aim to capture best practice as we test almost all elements of NATO's Command Structure and many elements of the Force Structure too, and this is captured in a series of handbooks we produce for the operational level of war.

Every exercise that the JWC directs is also a venue to experiment with new concepts and successfully bring challenging domains to the right level of attention. A good example is the success of experimentation on Space Support in NATO Operations. Following the new conceptual frameworks described in "Deterrence and Defence of the Euro-Atlantic Area

and NATO Warfighting Capstone Concept", the JWC's intent is to focus its warfare development on three lines of effort, resulting in tangible products:

- **Out-fight** focuses on summarising multi-domain lessons identified and ensuring the broadest distribution of those best practices;
- **Out-think** focuses on optimising design and planning methodologies that adjust to the complexity of the operational environment and improves the NATO Alliance's ability to increase its speed, relevance and consistency in decision making;
- **Out-last** focuses on providing exposure and increasing knowledge of NATO Forces on the different dimensions of resilience, including resilience in the cyber and space domains.

**T**HE JWC HAS a clear and realistic understanding of what it can provide to deliver practical and relevant products today, while creating the required conditions for tomorrow. Short of actual war, the JWC exercises are the only venue where the NATO Command Structure can develop warfighting skills in a realistic environment. ✦