

➤ Joint Non-Lethal Weapons Program

DISCUSSION

Lethal force is not always the preferred option when dealing with threats to deployed MAGTFs, particularly during peacekeeping or other operations where the use of deadly force might exacerbate an already tense situation. Current Non-Lethal Weapons (NLWs) and those under development can reinforce deterrence and expand the range of options available to commanders. They enhance our warfighting capabilities and are critical in exerting influence and creating the necessary effects to defeat an adversary, while minimizing fatalities and permanent injury to personnel, and reducing collateral damage.

Through the Joint Non-Lethal Weapons Program (JNLWP), in partnership with the Services, the Special Operations Command, and the United States Coast Guard, the Department of Defense examined the potential non-lethal needs of the unified commands. As a result of this analysis, the Joint Requirements Oversight Council consolidated non-lethal mission requirements from throughout DoD with a Mission Needs Statement for a Family of Non-Lethal Capabilities. This helped the JNLWP develop concepts and materials for use across all levels of war, while justifying future investments in non-lethal research and development, experimentation, test and evaluation, and basic research.

The Joint Non-Lethal Weapons Directorate supports the DoD Executive Agent (EA) for NLWs, the Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC). As the DoD EA, CMC has provided direction for the services and agencies (both Defense and non-Defense) to efficiently use resources in NLW development.

Newer directed-energy technologies under examination by the JNLWP include the Advanced Tactical Laser (ATL) and

the Active Denial System (ADS). These demonstration programs – which promise transformational capabilities in all types of military operations – will develop and provide deployable non-lethal, counter-personnel and counter-material prototypes to warfighters for use and evaluation.

Service-led JNLWP Concept Exploration (CE) efforts examine concepts that will become “seed corn” for future NLW capabilities. The CEs identify transformational solutions that support common needs for non-lethal capabilities in counter-personnel, counter-materiel, and counter-capability roles. CE efforts demonstrate how NLWs can deter and discriminate in force protection, support lethal weapons employment, expand long-range delivery capabilities using existing delivery platforms and weapons, and provide solutions in support of urban operations.

The JNLWP participates in bilateral NLW Information/Data Exchange Agreements with several nations and is the lead nation for a NATO study to develop a NLW measures-of-effectiveness (MOE) framework and Effects Database Structure. The publication of the Kosovo Incident Case Study offers additional insight into the impact of NLWs in peace-keeping operations.

MARINE CORPS POSITION

Future operating environments will involve a great deal of uncertainty, presenting us with a challenge to find new transformational capabilities. The Marine Corps supports continued development and application of advanced non-lethal technologies at the operational and strategic levels of war.