

# KEEPING THE KING ON HIS THRONE

**The purpose of multinational Fires in unified land operations**

*By Maj. Jason Carter and Capt. Robert Auletta*

**Necessity is the mother of adaptation.** At the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany, observer, coach, trainers (OCTs) regularly adapt to an operational environment (OE) unique to JMRC – one that is both multinational (MN) and deterrent in its European setting. Adaptation is manifested in interoperability and interoperability, when optimized, is a deterrent to those who may oppose the U.S. or her allies in the European theater of operations.



The effectiveness of allied forces in peace, crisis or in conflict, depends on the ability of the forces provided to operate together coherently, effectively and efficiently. Allied joint operations should be prepared for, planned and conducted in a manner that makes the best use of the relative strengths and capabilities of the forces which members offer for an operation.

### AJP-01(D) Allied Joint Doctrine

#### The big picture: The multinational training imperative

NATO Article 5 provides that if a NATO ally is the victim of an armed attack, each and every other member of the alliance will consider this act of violence as an armed attack against all members and will take the actions it deems necessary to assist the ally attacked.

President Obama confirmed the U.S. pledge saying, “What we will do – always – is uphold our solemn obligation, our Article 5 duty to defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of our allies. And in that promise we will never waiver; NATO nations never stand alone.” The Army’s Operating Concept assumes that, with the exception of national emergencies, the U.S. Army will conduct operations as

part of joint, interorganizational and multinational teams. Finally, United States Army, Europe’s (USAREUR) Strong Europe concept serves as the U.S. Army’s main contribution to NATO and its allies and partners, as they act as the main enabler for NATO land forces on behalf of U.S. European command. Within USAREUR, the 7th Army Training Command and the JMRC have proponency for training lead-

ers, staffs, and units (U.S. and MN partners) to dominate in the conduct of unified land operations (ULO) anywhere in the world. Key to achieving true interoperability is to train Soldiers and leaders in an environment they will face in a deployment. We replicate that environment at the JMRC by task organizing multinational units under and adjacent to forces different from their own.

“Keeping the king on his throne” is the overarching title for a series of what will be three articles aimed at reversing a consistent observation of the Fires warfighting function at the JMRC – particularly the field artillery, the “King of Battle” – being technically competent but tactically isolated in its support of the JFC or commander (See

*Lt. Col. Dave Pasquale, battalion commander, 4th Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade, gives an introductory briefing during the 7th Army Joint Multinational Training Command’s Distinguished Visitors Day for Exercise Allied Spirit IV at Hohenfels Training Area, Germany, Jan. 27, 2016. The Allied Spirit IV Exercise focuses on unified land operations and enhancing fires interoperability and integration of NATO Allies. (Gertrud Zach/Training Support Activity Europe)*





Figure 1). This is typically rooted in fire supporters failing to competently and confidently advise the commander in a manner that allows him or her to visualize how multinational Fires can support their scheme of maneuver. That said, the fire support community is not the sole bearer of the burden. Trends at the JMRC indicate that both Fires and maneuver leaders lack the foundational experience to develop their employment of Fires competency. Without this foundation, neither the fire supporter nor the commander can visualize the use of Fires in time and space. Subsequently, if a commander, regardless of echelon, lacks confidence in his/her own understanding of the employment of an asset or the fire support officer's ability to bring the asset to bear, the commander either hesitates or,

more often than not, flat out doesn't use it.

Fire supporters who can successfully advise the commander or commanders who can successfully visualize Fires must then surmount the next challenge – achieving interoperability to deliver on the promised multinational Fires product. NATO Joint Doctrine defines interoperability of joint and multinational formations as having three dimensions, technical (e.g., hardware, systems,) procedural (e.g. doctrines, procedures) and human (e.g. language, terminology, and training). “Keeping the king on his throne” will highlight all three.

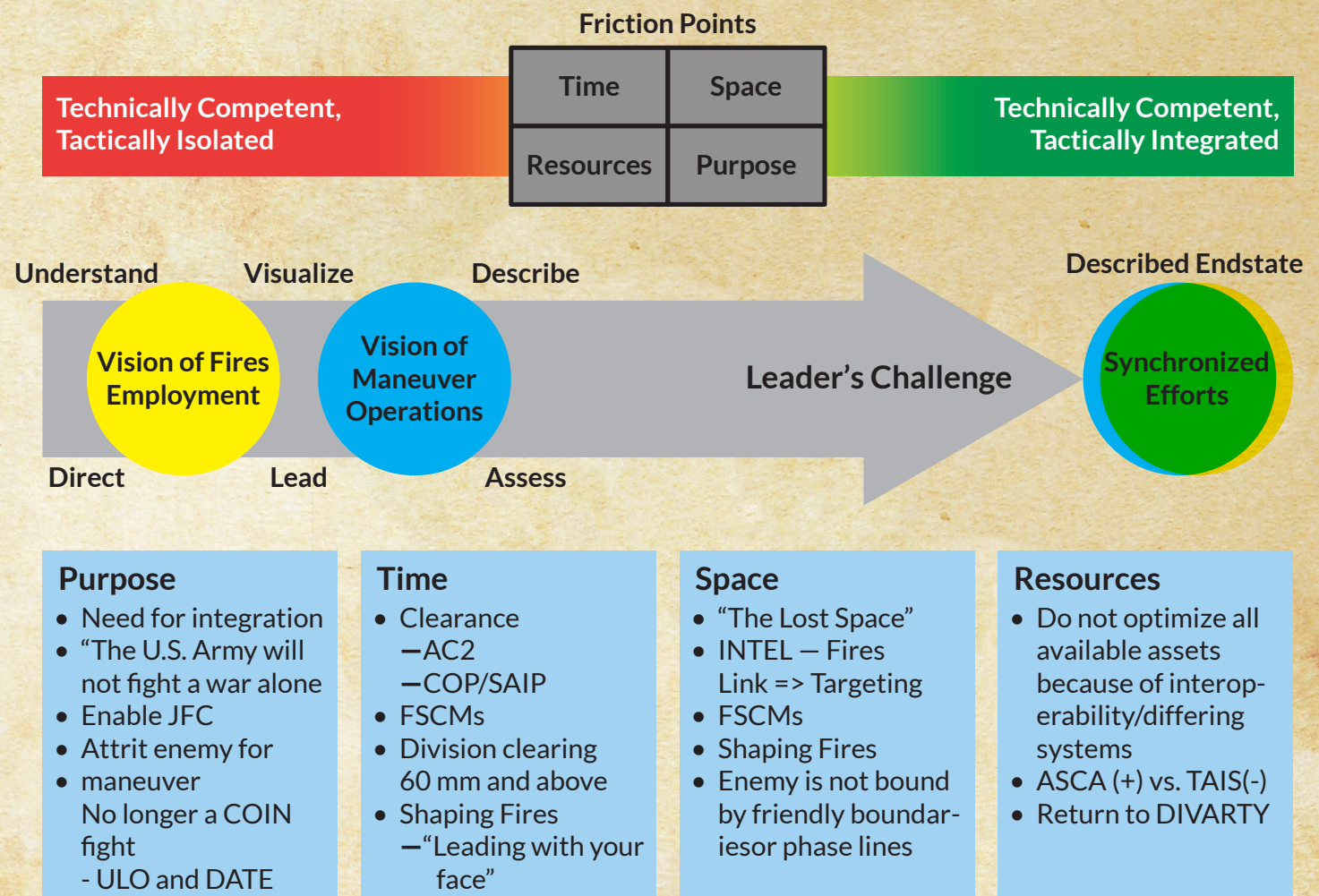
### Technically competent, tactically isolated

Recent trends at the JMRC indicate that a 13B40 and his executive officer can lay the firing

battery and his number one men can pull lanyards with violence of action to achieve destructive effects. A 13D can process a fire mission, calculate scatterable mines emplacements, or determine ammunition requirements for a linear sheaf in support of a breach. A joint terminal attack controller can request planned or dynamic fixed wing air support. An AH-64 Apache pilot can conduct screening operations beyond the forward line of his or her own troops. Tactical isolation occurs when the integration and synchronization of those technical competencies into the commander's tactical plan fail. Without integration, they remain stovepipes of excellence that achieve minimal effects on the enemy force. If a fire supporter can paint the Fires picture appropriately for the commander during the

planning process, delivering on the promised product is the next challenge. While these observations aren't limited solely to multinational operations, they quickly surface in the multinational environment of the JMRC. It is not uncommon for a multinational brigade combat team to have a task organization consisting of a U.S. field artillery battalion and multiple MN maneuver battalions, simultaneously receiving direct support radar acquisitions from a different MN force (see Figure 2). Initiatives such as the Artillery Systems Cooperation Activities (ASCA), which we will address in our next two articles, make interoperability possible and help surmount the technical component of interoperability. Prior to addressing technical challenges, an understanding of the human dimension and “how we fight”

Figure 1. An illustration of the “Keeping the King on His Throne Concept.” (Rick Paape)





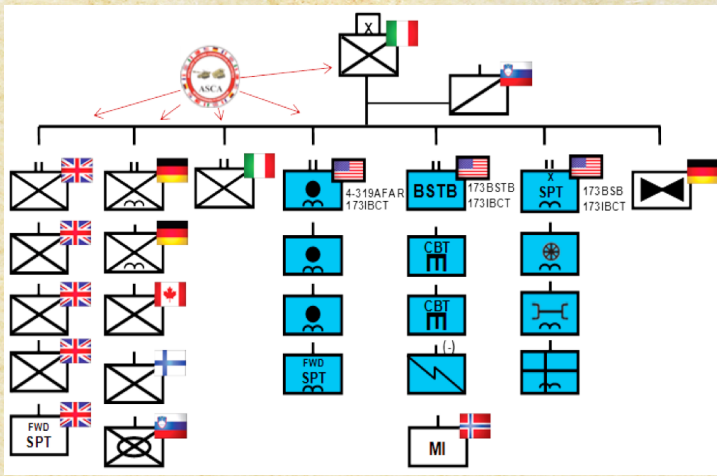


Figure 2. Multinational task organization during the Allied Spirit IV exercise. (Courtesy Illustration)

as a multinational force is paramount.

### A common understanding: Education at the JMRC

In a multinational environment, one must seek understanding before demanding

to be understood. As noted in the opening paragraphs, fire supporters understand procedure, but procedure without an understanding of purpose is futile. Educating both U.S. and our MN partners on mutual capabilities and gaps helps mitigate the challenge of the human

*Soldiers of 4th Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade prepare a M119 105 mm howitzer for relocation while conducting an air insertion operation during exercise Allied Spirit IV at the U.S. Army's Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels Training Area, Germany, Jan. 20, 2016. Exercise Allied Spirit IV is a U.S. Army Europe-directed, 7th Army Joint Multinational Training Command-conducted multinational exercise that is designed to prepare forces in Europe to operate together by exercising tactical interoperability and testing secure communications within NATO Alliance members and partner nations. (Spc. Courtney Hubbard/Viper Combat Camera USAREUR)*



dimension and achieves initial interoperability prior to the first round being fired.

The JMRC's Joint Combined Academics Program (JCAP) is a multi-day program that occurs prior to each MN rotation and focuses not only on building the commander's team but also on building a shared understanding of the Fires warfighting function in a decisive action training environment (DATE). Each JCAP is tailored to its rotation. For example, a U.S.-pure airborne brigade combat team (BCT) and a multinational armored brigade combat team will receive different programs of instruction. In each case, objectives remain the same. They include: defining roles and responsibilities at all levels (reporting, rehearsing, relationships), developing an architecture that is supportable under tactical conditions within a MN construct (digital versus voice communications), delin-

eating the roles of the field artillery battalion versus the brigade Fires cell (radar management, positioning guidance, ammunition resupply procedures etc.), and discussing in detail the differences in terminology to ultimately gain a common operating picture. Who is the BCT fire support coordinator when the brigade commander is from a MN force that deploys their fire support coordinator (who is not their FA battalion commander) and the Fires battalion is a U.S. formation? In a recent rotation, a multinational field artillery battery commander also served as the battalion fire support officer, which is common in many NATO countries. JCAP solves these problems to mitigate friction within the rotation. We teach adaptation and coach/mentor both U.S. rotational units (RTUs) and our MN partners through a multinational lens to leverage each other's strengths to best support the commander's objectives. A significant coaching effort that begins during JCAP and typically endures throughout the rotation is the mindset shift toward employing expeditionary Fires in support of unified land operations.

### Changing a mindset: Expeditionary unified land operations

While conducting unified land operations within the decisive action training environment is not unique to the JMRC, its MN flavor is. Instead of being greeted by a re-deploying unit surrounded by the luxuries of hard-stand command posts pre-wired for internet and American Forces Network, shops, fitness centers, and Wi-Fi in the tents and container housing units, U.S. and MN rotational units arrive ready to gain and maintain contact and in many cases are in contact within minutes. Providing access to and integrating multinational Fires enables



commanders to attack the enemy throughout the depth and breadth of the area of operation in combined arms maneuver and wide area security operations. Targeting cycles are no longer two weeks, but 72 or 96 hours. U.S. forces seem to struggle to understand this more than our defense-minded MN partners but doing so is critical to the multinational Fires warfighting function achieving success.

This is why gaining an understanding, during JCAP, of employing MN Fires in time and space helps set conditions prior to infiltration. After JCAP, but prior to RTUs entering “the box,” simulations operators create deep areas which allow the BCT (MN or U.S.) and the joint task force/higher command (MN or U.S.) to begin their targeting cycle and attrite enemy forces in depth with long-range intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance and Fires. This is the first true test that demonstrates an understanding of multinational Fires capabilities outside of the classroom JCAP setting. The purpose behind this is twofold: 1) the MN or U.S. BCT commander is able to not only understand the enemy forces composition and disposition, but also shape as he deems necessary prior to the close fight, and 2) minimize RTUs having to begin operations with a “cold-start” targeting cycle, meaning that on day one, they face an enemy force that hasn’t been attrited. While keeping lessons learned from the last 10 years (precision/risk reduction, positive identification, non-lethal targeting) in mind, we coach a mindset shift from either precision or massing to precisely massing multinational Fires. As mentioned in our opening, an understanding of multinational



*Soldiers of 4th Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade utilize UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters to relocate a M119 105mm howitzer while conducting an air insertion operation during exercise Allied Spirit IV at the U.S. Army's Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels Training Area, Germany, Jan. 20, 2016. (Spc. Courtney Hubbard/Viper Combat Camera USAREUR)*

Fires in a decisive action environment is the first step toward a shift from tactical isolation to tactical integration.

In summary, we have emphasized the importance of sharing an understanding of how we fight as a multinational warfighting function. The effectiveness of allied forces in peace, crisis or in conflict, depends on the ability of the forces provided to operate together coherently, effectively and efficiently. Once the multinational force understands those capabilities, the next step is the demonstration of that understanding through the application of multinational Fires in time and space.

In the second article of “Keeping the king on his

throne,” we will highlight the timely delivery of MN Fires, with an emphasis on multinational airspace command and control (AC2). We will also explore what ASCA has accomplished for the field artillery community and propose an “ASCA-like” solution for airspace command and control interoperability. We will focus on how RTUs have adapted to suboptimal interoperability for AC2 and how multinational airspace management affects the timeliness of Fires, which affects the scheme of maneuver and, when inadequate, leads to further isolation as a multinational warfighting function. This will segue into the third and final article, which will highlight multinational Fires in

space, specifically attrition in depth prior to the close fight.

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