JOINT ANALYSIS AND LESSONS LEARNED CENTRE
LISBON, PORTUGAL

The 2010 NATO Lessons Learned Conference Report

From the Commander…

The Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned Centre hosted the NATO Lessons Learned Conference in Lisbon, Portugal from 26 to 28 October 2010. The aim of the Conference was to provide NATO's forum for exchange of information within the NATO LL community, and in doing so, to stimulate discussion on best practices for Joint Analysis, the LL Process, Remedial Action processes, and supporting tools; in order to enable the continuous improvement of the Alliance. Specifically, the conference sought to attack the two questions that appear to be the major stumbling blocks in NATO's LL Process: how to turn Lessons Identified into Lessons Learned and what constitutes a LL Capability. To that end the heart of the conference was a series of panel discussions related to these Conference themes:

- ACT Panel – How can LL doctrine and training better support the LL process?
- ACO Panel – How can we obtain better LIs – where do we apply analysis and other tools to the LL process?
- JALLC Panel – How do we turn LI into LL – what are the challenges that need to be overcome?

This report will provide a summary of the discussions held at these panels and the presentation delivered by the keynote and guest speakers, DSACT and Mr Nick Milton, as well as documenting the statistics and other relevant facts about the conference. During the conference, there was also a breakout session held with the representatives from participating Centres of Excellence. This session highlighted the need for the JALLC and COE Programmes of Work to be coordinated and for efforts to be made to increase the contact and mutual support among us.

From my point of view, the conference was a success. Attendees were given an insight into how NATO is developing its LL Capability. But we need to do more to make this capability a reality. As Mr Milton said in his speech, a lesson is not learned until something changes, until an improvement is implemented. We also discussed the critical factors of a successful LL Capability: Engaged Leadership, Stakeholder Responsibility and Information Assurance.

In that sense, we, the LL Community are not the Stakeholders in LL. We as LL practitioners do not benefit from learning specific lessons. We are merely the facilitators whose role is to help leaders and stakeholder learn lessons and implement change.

Most likely, no conference attendee is empowered or has the authority to implement major changes within his or her organization; that is, to require other branches or individuals to learn a given lesson and change the way they do business. Even my 1-star command can do no more than make recommendations to ACT and ACO leadership. I cannot make them act on those recommendations.

But true organizational learning only takes place when driven by leaders. Commanders and Chiefs of Staff must assign and track remedial actions, follow up to ensure their organization has actually learned and, just as important, be the driving force in the sharing of lessons.

Our role then as LL practitioners is to support our leaders in ensuring we are Learning Organizations, in ensuring the quality of lessons and recommendations, and in ensuring all stakeholders are aware of their responsibilities in the process. Finally, it is up to us to ensure lessons are shared early and widely. Only then will we have a NATO LL Capability. This is the message I want to leave you with and the message I ask you to take back to your home organization.

Peter Sonneby
Brigadier General, Danish Air Force

Conference Agenda

Day 1 – 26 October

Administrative Remarks – LTC Blake Nash, JALLC, Production Branch Head

Opening Remarks – BGEN Peter Sonneby, JALLC Commander

NATO HQ Update – Mr. Ilay Ferrier, IS, Head CRSPE Section

ACT Update – Col Jim Miller, HQ SACT

ACO Update – LTC Jean-Christophe Darbon, SHAPE

ISAF Update – "ISAF LL Management" – COL Stephen Ryan, CH CJ37 ISAF HQ

JALLC Update – COL João Barbas, JALLC Chief of Staff

JCOA Update – Mr Mike Barker, JCOA

NATO LL Portal – LTC Blake Nash

LL in Exercises and Training – Col Curtaz JALLC, Exercise, Training & Experimentation Branch Head

LL Capability Introduction – Col Lipscombe, JALLC, Lessons Learned Analyst Branch Head

Day 2 – 27 October

ACT Panel – "The role of Policy, Doctrine and Training in the LL Process"
Chairman: Col Jim Miller, HQ SACT

"Policy (doctrine) and the LL process" – CDR Mike Hallett, HQ SACT: Strategic Plans and Policy Branch

"NATO LL Policy" – Mr Ilay Ferrier

"The LL Process: another perspective" – Dr. Nick Milton, Knoco Ltd, UK

Keynote Speaker – DSACT, Lt General Mieczyslaw Bieniek, POL A

ACO PANEL – "How do we turn LI into LL – what are the challenges that need to be overcome?
Chairman: Col Nascimento, SHAPE

"How the Australian Army integrates LI into units and organizations" – LTC Stephen Fomiatti, Centre for Army Lessons – Australian Army

"Challenges of capturing LI/LL at operational level" – LTC Ben Brinks, JFC Brunssum

"C-IED success case at tactical level" – CDR Darrin Hopkie, HQ ISAF, C-IED Advisory, Plans and Policy Branch

COE Breakout Session

Day 3 – 28 October

JALLC Panel – "Lessons Learned Capability"
Chairman: BGen Sonneby, JALLC Commander"

Panel Members: Col Miller, HQ SACT,
Col Nascimento, SHAPE,
Col Lipscombe, JALLC
"LL Sharing" – Andrew Eden , JALLC

"LL Tools"- Mr. John Redmayne – JALLC

"Lessons from JATT Engagement" – LTC Peter Coppens, JALLC

Conference Closure – BG Peter Sonneby, JALLC Commander

Mr John Redmayne, JALLC, asks a question during one of the Panel Discussions

Pre-Conference Training Day

MAJ Manuel Costa, PRT F, explains the NATO LL Database to Pre-Conference Training Day participants.

An Introduction to NATO LL

On the day preceding the formal start of the 2010 LL Conference, JALLC invited newcomers to the LL community to attend a Training Day. The point of this day was to provide the basic introduction to NATO LL needed to understand and contribute to the main portion of the conference. Nearly 60 people attended.

The Pre-Conference Training Day included an overview of the NATO LL Process as described in the Bi-SC Directive for Lessons Learned, a description of the Analysis Process employed by JALLC, including an overview of generating Analysis Requirements and Objectives, and a demonstration of the NATO LL Database and a JALLC developed software tool called Observation Collection Program.

As a continuation of the Pre-Conference Training Day, conference attendees were also afforded the opportunity to visit JALLC and meet with specific JALLC members.

Updates

COL Steve Ryan, US Army, Chief of HQ ISAF CJ37 LL Branch delivers the HQ ISAF update briefing.

The first day of the conference was devoted to the key players in the NATO Lessons Learned Process informing the audience on happenings, changes, and innovations in NATO's Lessons Process and activities.

After the opening remarks by Commander JALLC, Brigadier General Peter Sonneby, updates were given by NATO HQ, SHAPE, HQ SACT, HQ ISAF, JCOA, and JALLC.

Among the more notable changes and innovations was the unveiling of the new NATO LL Portal by JALLC. This portal will provide a single point of entry for the LL community, both for formal lessons staffing and management, including the NATO LLDb, and for more informal exchange and discussion among LL practitioners.

Other points of note included the report from NATO HQ that the NATO LL policy will be revised, with the NATO HQ internal portion being moved to an internal SOP, and that NATO HQ will seek greater support from JALLC. NATO HQ also reported that MC 133/4 will be approved in the next few weeks.

COL Nick Lipscombe, JALLC LL Analysis Branch Chief, gave a presentation on the *LL Capability*, describing a framework for understanding what such a capability might be (see box below)

COM JALLC wrapped up the day by listing the five main takeaways from the day. These went on to be discussion points for the remainder of the conference:

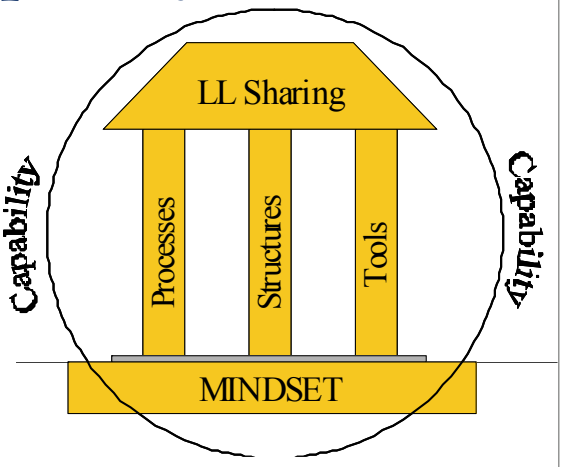
- The need to update the NATO LL Policy and directives.
- The need for strong leadership to serve the LL Process.
- The need for a Mindset that LL is a responsibility for all, not just those within the LL community.
- The need to have the right tools available.
- The need to Promote, Market, and Sell the LL Concept.

Defining a LL Capability

A central theme of the conference was to agree a definition of what is meant by a Lessons Learned Capability. JALLC proposed a working definition on Day 1, which formed the basis for much subsequent discussion during the panel sessions. A final definition was agreed on the conference's last day:

> *"A Lessons Learned capability provides a commander with the structure, process and tools necessary to capture, analyse and take remedial action on any issue and to communicate and share results to achieve improvement. A desire to improve and the right mindset are essential to ensure that the capability works in harmony."*

The figure to the right illustrates the concept with Process, Structure and Tools forming the supporting pillars of a LL Capability , with Mindset as the foundation, and Sharing as the capstone that holds the capability together.



What a LL Capability should consist of.

General Mieczyslaw Bieniek, POL A, DSACT, delivers his remarks to the 2010 NATO LL Conference. During his address, General Bieniek expounded on the LL Capability NATO currently possesses and urged attendees to adapt the mindset and engagement needed to make the Capability a success.

General

Mieczyslaw Bieniek

Polish Army

Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Transformation

JALLC was honoured to welcome, on the second day of the conference, DSACT, General Bieniek, who delivered the Keynote Address to the conference audience.

In his speech, General Bieniek began by highlighting some of the challenges that NATO and the Nations face, such as in ISAF, downsized organizations, and national reductions. He emphasized the role of Lessons Learned as a force multiplier that NATO absolutely needs to capitalize upon in order to move successfully into the future. He cited Lessons Learned as a means for continuous improvement and the importance of each NATO body, Member Nation, and Partner developing its own LL Capability in order to, ultimately, prevent the unnecessary loss of human life.

General Bieniek went on to describe the development of LL elements in terms of DOTMLPFI. Besides describing the Policy and Directive, the LLDb and other tools, he highlighted the importance of leaders being engaged and driving LL within their organizations. He went on to highlight the importance of sharing, and interoperability to enable that sharing.

In the area of doctrine, he described HQ SACT's approach to the LL Process that will be incorporated into the revised Bi-SC LL Directive. At it's core it will involve a three-step process that begins with a Lesson Identified, develops it into a Lesson Learned and then, through formal and informal distribution methods, make it into a Lesson Shared.

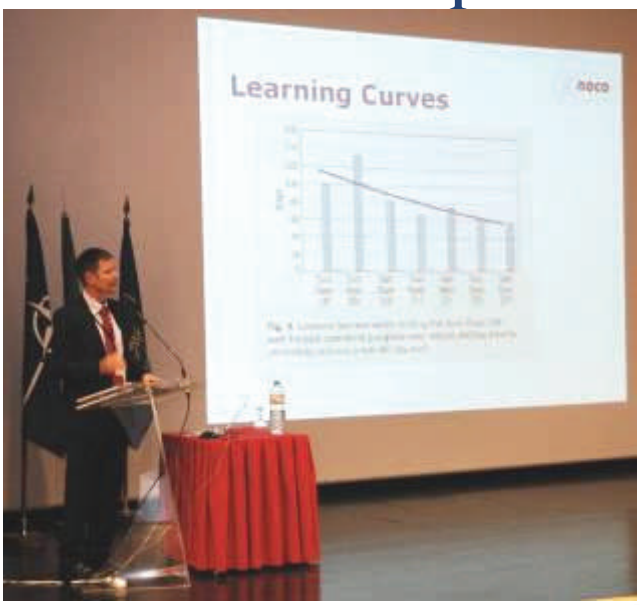
He went on to address the organizational requirements for the LL Process, pointing out the needed shift in NATO regarding the release of information from a "need to know" to a "responsibility to share" mentality. He reiterated that NATO organizations must not see the LL Process as being about airing dirty laundry. Rather, it is about implementing continuous improvement to support ACT's role of facilitating and advocating the development of our capabilities.

In the area of training, he spoke of the importance of educating staff officers on Lessons Learned and described how the LL Staff Officer course and JALLC's Advisory and Training Team are providing this training.

Most significantly, he spoke about the importance of Leadership, reminding the audience that "Commanders at all levels are responsible for the LL processes within their commands". He stressed that the responsibility for developing a LL Capability lies with Commanders—not their staff officers. The commander provides the direction and guidance and holds his underlings accountable; the LL staff officer facilitates sharing and the use of the LL tools, and everyone contributes observations and lessons.

General Bieniek ended his speech by challenging the audience to move forward with the good ideas generated from the Conference and to use the new tools being introduced. He noted in particular the need to populate the new NATO Lessons Learned Portal with observations and lessons.

Guest Speaker – Mr. Nick Milton



Knowledge Management Guide, Coach, Mentor and Practitioner

Nick Milton is a director and co-founder of Knoco Ltd, a Knowledge Management consultancy comprised of seasoned knowledge management practitioners, mentors, and coaches. Knoco Ltd have been delivering successful and sustained Knowledge Management implementation to clients since 1999.

Before joining Knoco Ltd he spent two years at the centre of the team at British Petroleum (BP) acting as the team Knowledge Manager, developing and implementing BP's knowledge of "how to manage knowledge", and coordinating the BP Knowledge Management Community of Practice. Prior to this he had worked for 5 years as Knowledge Manager for BP Norway.

He is the author of "Knowledge Management for Teams and Projects", and co-author of "Performance through Learning – knowledge management in practice". He has published many articles in the Knowledge Management press. Nick is a widely recognized coach, mentor and trainer, and has spoken at many international conferences. In 2007 he was awarded "Lecturer of the year" from Chalmers University. Nick has an MA in Natural Sciences (1st Class) from the University of Cambridge, England, and a PhD from the University of Wales.

Nick can be found at www.nickmilton.com

JALLC was honoured to have as this year's guest speaker Mr. Nick Milton, a renowned expert on lessons learned in private industry.

Mr Milton's presentation and participation on the ACT panel was certainly a highlight of the conference. Both during his talk and when answering panel questions he brought several interesting issues to light. These included a clear definition of a *lesson*, how industry ensures lessons get learned and the role of knowledge management in that process, and some of the differences between LL in private industry and the military.

For Mr. Milton, a lesson is a statement or explanation, based on experience, from which others in the organization can learn in order to improve their working practices. It needs to be usable, meaning it contains enough context and detail, expressed as a recommendation, to be used again by others.

In industry, the key to learning lessons is that someone has to own the process. Not the LL process but the process about which a lesson needs to be learned. CONOCO, for example, assigns each lesson to a community of interest with the expertise to implement it and stands to benefit from its implementation.

The role of Knowledge Management is to ensure that the right info gets to the right people when they need it, both in identifying lessons and in broadcasting the remedial actions to those who will act on them.

"A Lesson is not Learned until something changes as a result"

Mr Milton described a common problem. In project reviews, Project Managers always seem to want a bigger team, thinking the lesson is the need for more manpower. Mr Milton asks them what they would have done differently if they'd had it? The answer is often nothing, so then what's the benefit of more people? You need to find the real lesson in order to understand if this is really the solution.

As for the differences between industry and the military, the most significant is that the military often can't apply the same objective measures to determine efficiency that industry does: *cost* and *time*. Few specific military activities at operational level are easy to quantify in this way. It is very hard in ISAF for example to know if OPLAN revision is over budget or behind schedule. Another difference is the high turnover of military personnel compared to the longer tenure of experts in private industry, but which is somewhat offset in the military by larger training resources to train up new personnel.

ACT Panel

How can LL doctrine and training better support the LL process?

Chair: *Col Jim Miller HQ SACT*

Panel Members:

CDR Hallett, HQ SACT; Mr. Milton; Mr Ferrier NATO HQ

The ACT panel began focused on bringing the training and tools needed by LL practitioners. CDR Hallett explained that LL takes place in three phases: Knowledge Management (gather data), Implementation (do the work to make the changes), Sharing (pushing info out) and how the LL Staff Officer Course focuses on these. He also gave for tips designing training so that students can relate the theory to the practice.

CDR Hallett was followed by Mr. Milton (see previous page) and Mr Ferrier, who described his vision of how JALLC can support NATO HQ, as well as mentioning that MC 0133/4 would be approved shortly and describing how Ambassador Sedwell's, (NATO's Senior Civilian Representative in ISAF) Comprehensive Approach report led to changes in NATO HQ, an example of lessons being learned.

Much of the discussion session was directed at Mr. Milton but a final line of questioning concerned whether NATO can be considered to have a LL Capability. The consensus was that we do, but that it needs to be integrated into existing organizational management processes (e.g. tasker/tracker). Mr Ferrier concluded by stating that the capability will be successful if everyone can work in harmony by harmonizing their work in a coordinated way.

CDR Mike Hallett, HQ SACT, Mr. Nick Milton, and Mr Ilay Ferrier, NATO HQ International Staff (from l. to r.), answer questions during the ACT Panel discussion.

ACO Panel

How can we obtain better LIs: applying analysis and other tools to the process?

Chair: *Col António Nascimento, SHAPE*

Panel Members:

LTC Fomiatti, AUS A; LTC Brinks, JFC Brunssum; CDR Hoke, ISAF C-IED Br.; COL Ryan, ISAF CJ37

The ACO panel opened with an insightful presentation from the Australian Army. LTC Fomiatti highlighted how, in contrast to NATO, Australia categorizes its lessons not by tactical, operational or strategic, but by the timeframe to which the lessons applies: short (this war), medium (any war), long (a future war), and how lessons are approved and assigned for remedial action by general officer-chaired boards for each of these timeframes, which ensures the necessary engagement by leadership.

CDR Hopke described how C-IED branch analyses and delivers C-IED related lessons in Afghanistan. His brief highlighted how the ISAF C-IED organization exhibits the characteristics of a successful lessons learned process. It was also evident that the successful learning of C-IED takes place outside of, and largely independently of, the ISAF LL Process, a point which came up during the discussion period.

LTC Brinks described the two challenges he faces inside his own HQ: getting the rest of the HQ to submit observations and getting them to act on remedial actions, and reinforced the conclusion that leadership and stakeholder involvement is essential to successful learning and that the LL Practitioner is not the stakeholder.

The discussion period probed into reasons for the successes and some of the problems reported by the presenters. For example, CDR Hopke attributed much the perceived success of C-IED to the way C-IED branch rapidly disseminates technical findings but noted that tactical lessons from units were often off the mark and led to delays in identifying the correct remedial action. LTC Fomiatti explained how his LL vetting agency knows what interests the three boards, meaning they get targeted info they need and want. The panel was asked if the three success factors were sufficient. The panel wished to add: Training, Direction from leadership on what they want to learn, and a means to hold stakeholders accountable. Finally, all agreed a that LL Mindset is crucial.

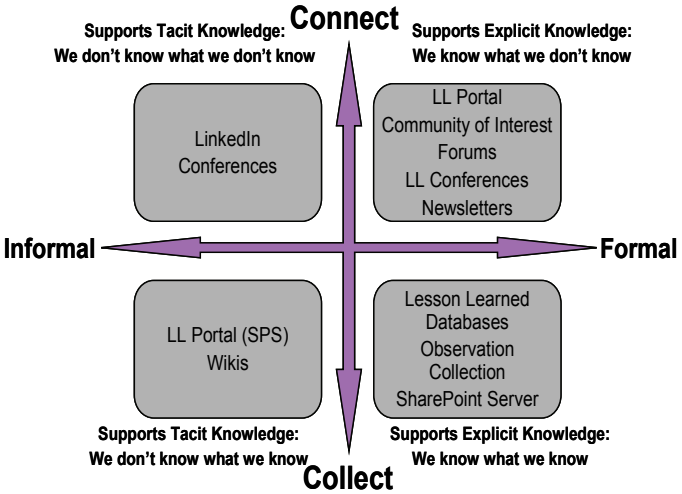
JALLC Panel

How do we turn LI into LL – what are the challenges that need to be overcome?

Chair: BGen Peter Sonneby, COM JALLC

Panel Members: LTC Coppens; Mr. Eden, Mr. Redmayne, Col Lipscombe, Col Miller, Col Nascimento

This panel gave JALLC the chance to showcase the efforts we are making at improving the tools and capacity for sharing. The JATT presentation offered an insight into JALLC's Outreach programme to improve the LL Capability across NATO and Mr. Eden's and Mr. Redmayne's presentations focused on how we can actually improve sharing of information and lessons. The former focuses on the three critical factors for success in LL: Leadership engagement, Stakeholder Responsibility, and Quality Lessons, while the latter illustrated an approach to LL Knowledge Management using the tools available in NATO (see figure).



Supporting LL Approaches
The four quadrants of learning approaches and the tools used in NATO to support them (adapted for NATO from Mr. Milton).

The question and answer session addressed some of the technical aspects of sharing: when should lessons be shared (during all phases since one never knows when a piece of information might be useful); the need for more adaptive incorporation of lessons into training, especially at TTP level; and the availability of JATT visits and the LL Staff Officer Course.

Conference Action Points

The Conference has shown that NATO is making progress in developing a LL Capability and in turning LI into LL but we have also learned from our discussion panels that we are not there yet.

So where do we want to be this time next year? What are the action points for us and for you?

JALLC Commitments

JALLC will push up the results of this conference to HQ SACT and NATO HQ to help inform the revisions of the NATO LL Policy and the Bi-SC LL Directive. Both need to reflect the following from this conference:

- A coherent LL Capability needs to contain the critical success elements identified during the conference: Engaged Leadership, Stakeholder Responsibility and Information Assurance
- That Mindset, Promotion, Leadership and the right tools are needed

To do this we at JALLC will help provide the tools, the Portal, the handbooks and even this conference

NATO HQ and Strategic Command Commitments

NATO HQ and the SCs will revise the NATO LL Policy and Directive.

Another action point, which came out of the COE Breakout Session, is that HQ SACT will rationalize the Programmes of Work for the COEs and the JALLC.

Your Commitments

NATO needs you to commit to:

- Adopting a LL mindset
- Promoting LL processes and mindset at your organizations
- Providing feedback to JALLC on our tools
- Getting your Leadership to drive the learning of lessons

Acknowledgements

JALLC wishes to thank the following organizations and Individuals for their support and assistance in executing this conference:

The Portuguese Army Military Academy for allowing us to use the facilities, and for their support in IT, catering, and admin during the conference itself.

The US Navy Reserve, which every year provides personnel who play a major role in the successful execution of the conference.

All the speakers and presenters—especially General Bieniek, Mr. Milton, and LTC Fomiatti from Australia— without whom there could be no conference.

Major Manuel Costa from JALLC Production branch, the lead conference planner for the last three conferences, who now leaves JALLC at the conclusion of his tour.

Finally, all the attendees for your engagement and enthusiasm in helping to make NATO into a successful learning organization.

Conference Statistics

Total Attendance:	**209**
Attendees from NATO:	69
Attendees from NATO National Bodies:	85
Attendees from PfP National Bodies:	15
Other Attendees (Australia, Iraq, Industry):	3
NATO Representation	
NATO HQ:	IS, IMS
Agencies:	NCSA, NSA
NCS HQs:	All except MC Northwood and JFTC
NFS HQs:	4
COEs:	10
NATO National Representation	
National MODs and Joint Staffs:	15
National Commands/HQs:	31
National Training/Doctrine/LL Centres:	18
PfP National Representation	
National MODs and Joint Staffs:	7
National Commands/HQs:	2
National Training/Doctrine/LL Centres:	1

A complete list of attendees with contact details is available from JALLC on request

Mark Your Calendars – NATO LL Conference 2011

The 2011 NATO LL Conference will be held in October 2011 in Lisbon. The exact dates will promulgated during the 2nd Quarter of 2011.

A preliminary goal for next year's conference will be to include more stakeholders and not just pure LL practitioners. As we learned at this year's conference, the stakeholders are the ones who need to learn a given lesson, not the LL staff, and including them will allow them insight into their roles and responsibilities in turning LIs into LLs.

As can be seen from the statistics, there was strong representation this year from national entities, especially from operational and service level commands. Whereas JALLC sees a role for MOD/Joint Staff and national TRADOC/LL centres at the conference, in order to allow greater stakeholder participation, JALLC will look to have many of the seats filled this year by national commands taken by staff from NATO bodies representing a cross section of branches and project teams from SHAPE, HQ SACT and the JFCs—the stakeholders in LL. We also intend to invite representatives from the NATO Working Groups and have more NFS HQs and COEs. Doing so we can focus the conference on those whose effort and engagement are critical to making NATO a successful learning organization.

All conference materials, including all presentations, are available at JALLC's conference site located on our unclassified Internet website at (note sign-in with conference userID and password is required):

https://www.jallc.nato.int/llconf2010/

JALLC

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NATO's Lead Agent for Joint Analysis

The Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned Centre (JALLC) is NATO's centre for performing joint analysis of operations, training, exercises and Concept Development and Experimentation, including establishing and maintaining an interactive managed Lessons Learned Database.

http://www.jallc.nato.int