At the 2014 NATO Lessons Learned Conference we looked at how LL practitioners can structure NATO’s learning process to ensure that it is continuous. This concept of continuous learning was echoed by General Paloméros, Supreme Allied Commander Transformation, in his description of his vision of Transformation: “a golden thread which binds NATO’s past, present, and future”.

The NATO LL Capability is now mature enough to maintain the proper mindset and leadership engagement but requires constant effort in order to make it work efficiently. There is a strong will from LL key stakeholders to highlight the importance of their contribution to NATO’s Transformational Agenda.

The 2015 NATO Lessons Learned Conference will aim to assess how NATO’s Lessons Learned Capability supports the Alliance’s ability to prepare for, and conduct, current and future military operations. It will explore new approaches to embed lessons from non-NATO entities and will investigate parallels with the way other organizations/companies are managing their LL process.
The Exercise Corner

The NATO EXTRA Portal: Developing a useful tool for NATO

LTC (OF-4) Nerijus Stankevicius LTU A
JALLC Military Analyst

When I received a project mandate nine months ago with the task of analysing the knowledge and lessons-sharing process in the NATO Exercise, Training, Reporting and Analysis (EXTRA) COI, I did a quick situation analysis and determined the following facts:

- There was no such thing as a single exercise and training related-information sharing tool within NATO. The main actors in the exercise concept—and specification—development and planning—and execution—processes each maintained their own websites for information sharing and working space purposes. As a result, each exercise was recorded and tracked on at least four different sites;
- Existing sites duplicated about 80% of the same information while none of these sites had 100% of information on the same exercise or training event. Each site had a different structure, stored information differently, and organized and managed formats differently. It was not possible to group and filter Lessons Identified and Lessons Learned by Stages, Phases, and Sub-Phases of an exercise in the NATO Lessons Learned Portal (NLLP);
- The Bi-SC Collective Training and Exercise Directive 075-003 identified the need for the centralized lessons and knowledge sharing tool for the EXTRA COI.

All this made it time consuming to find the latest version of specific exercise or training event-related documents and, especially, to access archived documents and other products from exercises and training events that had ended. These findings clearly indicated that the information-sharing process across the EXTRA COI had to be improved, and pointed to the need to enhance knowledge and lessons-sharing tools.

The initial requirements for the NATO EXTRA Portal came from a review of Bi-SC 075-003. However, for any such portal to be truly useful for its target audience the team had to understand the expectations and requirements of its users. The project team therefore conducted interviews with personnel in the EXTRA COI in order to refine the existing needs and highlight new requirements. The data collected from the document review and interviews were collated, categorized, and the functional requirements for the NATO EXTRA Portal were identified. The NATO EXTRA Portal was then designed and developed based on these identified requirements.

The first version of the NATO EXTRA Portal prototype was brought online in early 2014. However, it required testing and further development to fully satisfy user requirements. Today, the NATO EXTRA Portal, hosted on the JALLC’s Servers, is available for use by all NCS/NFS HQs and NATO Nations.

The NATO EXTRA Portal: a one-stop-shop for NATO exercise information

By Gp Capt Adrian Hill GBR F

The Bi-SC Collective Training and Exercise Directive 075-003, Annex S, provides guidance for Information Sharing across the EXTRA COI, enabling the development of shared knowledge, best practices and exercise/training related lessons. Information Sharing takes place internally during the planning and execution phases of exercises and training events but, often, important observations and lessons are not shared more widely to others in the NATO EXTRA COI until the Final Exercise Report and Lessons Identified Action Plan are disseminated. In some cases, this can result in important information and lessons not being shared across the EXTRA COI up to 12 to 18 months after initial observations were made.

The JALLC recently launched the appropriately named EXTRA Portal to facilitate immediate, simple, and open sharing of information across the entire NATO EXTRA COI. The EXTRA Portal is the single centralized exercise and training related information sharing platform in NATO and is hosted on the existing NLLP on the NATO Secret (NS) Network. The EXTRA Portal is available for use by all individuals in the NATO EXTRA COI who are engaged with exercises & training reporting and analysis, including Exercise Planning Groups, Core Planning Teams, Exercise Control, and other exercise, analysis and training teams/organizations.

Use of the EXTRA Portal is simple: individuals with access to the NLLP on the NS Network will automatically have access to the EXTRA Portal. No additional log-in details or passwords are required. Once you enter the NS NLLP you can access the EXTRA Portal simply by a click of the mouse. Perhaps more importantly, use of the EXTRA Portal does not increase an individual's workload; the products loaded onto the EXTRA Portal are those that are already required for Exercise Planning. The EXTRA Portal was developed to make the job of the Exercise Planner, and all those in the EXTRA COI, much easier by storing all the information required for exercise planning in one central location. This information includes all key exercise planning documents (including EXSPEC, EXPLAN, etc.), an Exercise and Training Lessons Database (by Exercise), a list of EXTRA COI contacts, including access to an exercise forum, and links to other key websites. Widespread use of the Portal by the EXTRA COI will improve and speed up the overall information sharing process between different exercise planners by connecting all players in a single space to allow easier communication and the rapid exchange of best practices and Lessons Identified. Observations and lessons can be uploaded onto the Portal at any stage of the Exercise Planning Process and can be viewed and implemented by others in the EXTRA COI immediately.

However, the EXTRA Portal will only be successful if it is widely adopted and used to its full potential; this will require active participation and contribution by all in the EXTRA COI.

Interested in reading more about this Portal? …A JALLC Report detailing the development and testing of the EXTRA Portal as well as an EXTRA Portal User manual can be found on the JALLC’s NATO Secret WAN site. To visit and use the EXTRA Portal use the following link on the same site:

nllp.jallc.nato.int/cmnt/extra (only available on NS side)
The Project Corner

Cyber Defence

The JALLC was tasked to conduct a study analysing Cyber Defence Situational Awareness and Information Sharing within NATO. The study maps the key Cyber Defence actors within NATO and their connections, identifying the key information exchange requirements to be shared within NATO for Cyber Defence in the NCS, and identifying any gaps and shortfalls in NATO's Cyber Defence Situational Awareness. One of the main findings from the study is that within the NCS there is a lack of clarity about who is actually responsible for Cyber Defence and what information should be shared and with whom. Many of the main findings and recommendations from this study have since been addressed within NCS.

Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) Command & Control (C2)

The Turkish Government called upon the Alliance to augment Turkey's air defence capabilities in 2012. As this was the first time NATO used available C2 capabilities to control a mission of this type, SHAPE saw benefit in analysing Lessons from the mission to support the refinement of relevant doctrine. NATO policies and guidelines go to great lengths to differentiate between two types of missile defence – BMD and Theatre BMD (TBMD). With regard to roles and C2 arrangements, they are indeed quite different. However, many of the technical capabilities of BMD and TBMD are quite similar. Analysis indicates that the efforts to define the BMD and TBMD as different capabilities have been counter-productive, leading to a recommendation in this report that NATO recognize missile defence as a single set of capabilities that can be used in different roles.

Civilian Casualties

The JALLC was tasked to analyse how ISAF significantly reduced civilian casualties (CIVCAS), and encouraged the Afghan National Security Forces to do the same. During the study, the team interacted with several International Organizations (IOs) and NGOs. A combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis showed that ISAF reduced incidents of CIVCAS and that a successful CIVCAS reduction process can be broken down into various activities, which can be grouped into three main stages:

- Prevention
- Mitigation
- Learning

Being an iterative process, the Learning stage closes the cycle and brings together the lessons and best practices that have been captured during the Prevention and Mitigation using both internal and external Lessons Learned Processes.

Lessons from Two Decades of Operations

The JALLC was tasked by SACT to identify key strategic Lessons from the last 20 years of NATO operations and exercises, in order to make recommendations that will facilitate SACT's strategic military input for ongoing initiatives to transform NATO. The main findings have been grouped in the context of four key Strategic Focal Areas:

- **Managing the Force**: relating to Preparation – Training of Forces, Force Generation, and Interoperability.
- **Managing the Operation**: relating to Command and Control, Joint Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance, and Knowledge Development.
- **Managing the Narrative**: relating to Strategic Communications.

A follow-on study entitled “Two Decades of Lessons from Operations and Exercises – Commander’s Insights” is currently being conducted by the JALLC which will include the experiences and insights from over 40 term NATO 3- and 4-star commanders and capture their view of NATO’s post-Cold War activities.
New COIs

In the context of the NLLP, a COI is a group of users from different organizations working on related topics. Since they are involved in common activities, these users have a common interest in sharing information, lessons, and experiences for the benefit of the whole NATO community as well as in promoting that organization.

A COI is a place where those working within the same area of expertise can:
- Meet and network;
- Find and share information and lessons;
- Discuss and share solutions; and
- Promote related events.

Characteristics that define a suitable COI are: more than one organization, with a common interest in sharing (specific areas of knowledge), are created under a formal agreement term of references, and are self-administrated (appointed manager). The advantages that COIs get from the NLLP are a customized working space, a dedicated library, a list of contacts, a newsroom (to announce future and past events), and space for links and a calendar.

Any group of organizations related to NATO and sharing common interests may become a COI as long as they fulfill HQ SACT’s requirements:
- COIs should be part of the NLLP.
- There should be a standardized layout provided by the JALLC.
- A content manager, which should be a COE where possible, should provide clear ownership of the content.
- The COI’s document library should be shared across the whole NLLP.
- Lessons and documents should be accessible from both the COI and the main library.

There are a total of 13 COIs deployed on both networks (NS and NU). The most recent two to be established are the Geospatial COI and NATO Maritime Interdiction and Security Operations (NMIOTC) COI.

The Geospatial COI, available on the NU and NS NLLP, is focused on Geospatial information, the foundation for any operational picture, as exemplified by the traditional situation map. It is essential for assessments, planning, situation awareness, maneuver and coordinated action including strikes.
JALLC Member in the Spotlight

LTC Nerijus Stankevicius
Lithuanian Army

LTC Stankevicius has served in the Lithuanian Army since 1994. After graduating from the Lithuanian Military Academy, he served in various positions, including light infantry platoon commander, motorized infantry coy commander, intelligence officer, mechanized infantry battalion commander, and ISAF PRT commander. LTC Stankevicius attended the Joint Command and General Staff Officers course at the Baltic Defence College, and holds a Bachelor's Degree in Personnel Management, a Master's Degree in Public Administration, and a Master’s Degree in International Relations and Diplomacy. In 2012, LTC Stankevicius was posted to the JALLC where he has made significant contributions to a variety of analysis projects such as Evaluating the Impact of NATO’s Public Diplomacy, Dashboard of NDPP Indicators, and NCS and NFS Integration. He has also worked as a Project Manager for the NATO EXTRA project, and has developed the NATO EXTRA Portal.

JALLC Programme of Work

The JALLC is NATO’s lead agent for Joint Analysis. The projects assigned to the JALLC, through its POW, focus on some of the most important, highly prioritized and complex problems of the Alliance. The upcoming Bi-SC Directive 80-91 describes the procedure to be followed for submitting proposed analysis requirements (AR). The JALLC can contribute to, and effectively enhance, NATO’s efforts in transformation and doctrine development, when it is timely and properly addressed. In the upcoming months the JALLC will deliver a number of new reports. These reports will be dealing with Operational Commanders’ Insights from the past two decades, NATO Standing Naval Forces, NATO’s deployability concept, and a comprehensive study on the Strategic Lessons from ISAF.

LL News

On 18 March 2015, a Memorandum of Intent (MOI) was signed between HQ SACT and US Joint Chiefs of Staff, Directorate for Joint Force Development (J7). This document describes the intent of both entities to increase the exchange of information and to establish a collaborative interaction concerning Joint Analysis Projects. This MOI paves the way for a closer relationship between the JALLC and US Joint & Coalition Operational Analysis Division (JCOA) in the very near future.

Penta-J Meeting

On 13 February 2015, the JALLC hosted the Penta-J meeting involving the NATO Command Structure’s exercise and training community: HQ SACT Joint Force Trainer; SHAPE J7; Joint Warfare Centre; Joint Force Training Centre; and the JALLC. The meeting, chaired by VADM Gonzalez-Huix ESP N, ACOS JFT, laid the groundwork for the following week’s exercise synchronization conference, by exploring the relationship between NATO’s newest concepts for ready forces and the exercise programme needed to support them.

LL OPR Course

Training of Lessons Learned Staff Officers (LLSOs) and Lessons Learned Officers of Primary Responsibility (LLOPRs) is an extremely important aspect of NATO’s Lessons Learned Capability. However, in March 2014, following several LLOPR training events, it was noted that availability and suitability of NATO’s LL training in place was not adequate to meet the needs of LLOPRs. Therefore a team from the JALLC, supported by and in close coordination with ACT/Joint Force Trainer, has developed an online course for LLOPRs. Course benefits to Nations and HQs include accessible and free LL training for LLOPRs. The course is available on the Joint Advanced Distributed Learning (JADL) platform (https://jadl.act.nato.int) at Courses – NATO Courses – Allied Command Transformation (ACT) – JALLC with ID: ADL 138.
Outreach Corner

ISAF/KFOR/RS- JATT Support to Ongoing Operations

The JALLC’s Advisory and Training Team (JATT) continues to fulfill its mandate to provide NATO-based Lessons Learned subject matter expertise and training to ongoing Operations. JATT members traveled to Kabul, Afghanistan from 11–17 Dec 2014 and to Pristina, Kosovo from 28–30 Jan 2015 in direct support of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and the NATO Liaison and Advisory Team at Headquarters Kosovo Force (KFOR), respectively. During both visits, the JATT trained LLSOs and LL OPRs on how to properly draft Observations and how to conduct basic analysis in support of creating Lessons Identified (LI). The training also included practical application of LL concepts through the study of a real-life based problem set. From 10-18 Mar 2015, JATT members returned to Kabul, Afghanistan as subject matter experts advising RESOLUTE SUPPORT (RS) personnel and their Afghanistan National Army (ANA) counterparts on how to best create an indigenous, self-sustaining Lessons Learned capability.

AZE/EUFOR JATT Support to Partner Nations

JATT also devoted considerable attention to supporting NATO partner nations and non-NATO entities. In 2015, JATT members also traveled to European Forces Headquarters (EUFOR) in Sarajevo, Bosnia from 31 Jan–04 Feb and to the Azerbaijan Ministry of Defense (AZE MOD) in Baku, Azerbaijan from 01-07 Mar to illustrate the NATO way of using a Lesson Learned capability within a learning organization. In both instances, JATT members provided introductory briefings on the NATO LL process and capability and offered LL training on how to conduct basic analysis when presented with a real-life problem scenario. JATT members also offered subject matter advise to their LL counterparts in EUFOR and the AZE MOD to assist with maintaining their own LL capability.

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