

Analysis of Microsoft 365 Applications

Report published 27 November 2025

In this factsheet you can read about some of the key findings in the JALLC's report on the analysis of the use of Microsoft 365 Applications throughout the NATO Command Structure. Download a copy of the full report from the classified version of the NATO Lessons Learned Portal, or contact the JALLC to obtain a copy.*

Introduction

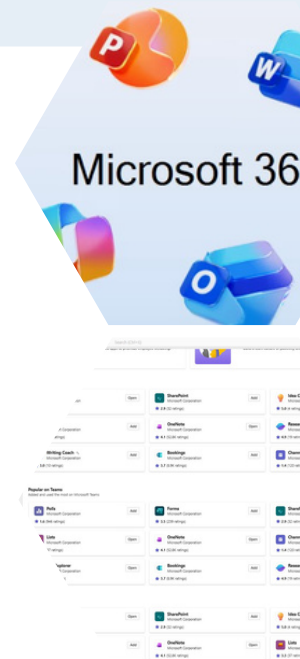
NATO is always looking at ways to modernize and lean into its Digital Transformation. 2025 saw the roll out of NATO's own digital cloud environment: the NATO Public Cloud (NPCL). The rollout included the implementation of multiple Microsoft 365 Application (M365 Apps) which offer the potential for increased staff collaboration, coordination, communication, and productivity.

Overview

The rollout of the NPCL and the associated M365 Apps began with HQ Supreme Allied Commander Transformation (SACT), followed the Allied Command Transformation subordinate commands, and then the Allied Command Operations HQs. As many of the M365 Apps offer the potential for increased staff collaboration, coordination, communication, and productivity, HQ SACT was keen to understand how users experienced the M365 Apps and how they were potentially improving the way staff were able to work.

The JALLC was tasked with carrying out an analysis project that would capture M365 App user experiences and provide recommendations to support development of guidance/advice on the best use of these applications. The JALLC published preliminary findings earlier this year at the end of July, with the final key findings being published in the JALLC's report dated 27 November 2025.

The JALLC's analysis has been based on extensive data collected through surveys and interviews across ACT and ACO as well as research into the M365 Apps themselves. The report not only contains key findings, best practices, and recommendations, but also user stories and a detailed description of the tasks each M365 App can support and some challenges and concerns noted by users.



Key Findings

Overall, M365 users in Allied Command Transformation (ACT) and Allied Command Operations (ACO) supported the rollout of the NPCL and showed an interest in the M365 Apps and the potential benefits for a more organized, efficient, and collaborative work environment. However, there is still some way to go regarding full awareness of the nuances of the M365 Apps and goes on to recommend that Copilot (which is currently restricted) be fully implemented to further enhance staff productivity within the NPCL environment and in accordance with NATO Policy.

The M365 Apps are divided into three categories: Collaboration Apps, Planning Apps, and Communication and Automation Apps and highlights some good practices as well as challenges and concerns from ACT and ACO users.



The JALLC produced a short summary video of the report using M365 apps. Click on the image to view the video or visit our YouTube Channel.

👉 We must accelerate cloud adoption - or we will fall behind

Mark Rutte, NATO Secretary General
3rd NATO Cloud Conference
24 November 2025

Good Practices

Good practices include, for example, how Teams allowed users to conduct unclassified online meetings with internal and external stakeholders on a more ad hoc basis, enhancing responsiveness and coordination with project stakeholders. Some users also noted enhanced situational awareness from accessing various threads on NATO Engage, helping them to stay informed of activities and initiatives of their colleagues and gaining easier (informal) access to subject matter experts across ACT and ACO.

Challenges

Challenges noted include issues finding files, a sense of too many communications channels, and lack of guidance and/or training on how to use some of the more technical M365 Apps.

Overarching Guidelines

Further, developing Overarching Guidelines for the effective implementation of M365 Apps across ACT and ACO will be important. This includes the need for an M365 Adoption Strategy and comprehensive M365 Direction and Guidance.

Project Team

Mr. Stefan Olaru is one of the JALLC's Research Analysts. He has contributed to multiple analysis projects, including in the area of Command and control, interoperability verification & validation, multi domain operations, and future operating environment. He was involved in several LL events and currently leads the LL work strand within the capability development efforts for the future NATO LL Toolset delivery. Mr. Olaru has a master's degree in Private Law, a post-graduated diploma in management, and several certifications in innovation and digital transformation.

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