

Analysis of Lessons from Exercises STEADFAST DETERRENCE 2025 and STEADFAST DUEL 2025 in support of the 2026 Exercise Campaign

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In this factsheet you can read about some of the key findings in the JALLC's report on Analysis of Lessons from Exercises STEADFAST DETERRENCE 2025 (STDC25) and STEADFAST DUEL 2025 (STDU25) in support of the 2026 Exercise Campaign. Download a full copy of the report from the classified version of the NATO Lessons Learned Portal, or contact the JALLC to obtain a copy.*

Introduction

The JALLC analysed lessons from two key NATO exercises for this report: Exercise STDC25, which certified SHAPE as a strategic warfighting headquarters for NATO and saw SHAPE and the United States European Command (USEUCOM) training together at the strategic and operational levels for the first time in history; and Exercise STDU25, NATO's largest computer-assisted command post exercise of the year and the first Article 5 exercise involving all 32 Allied Nations.

Overview

The JALLC was tasked to provide a report in support of the 2026 Exercise Campaign by analysing lessons in the NATO Lessons Learned Portal (NLLP) from exercises STDC25 and STDU25. The intent of the study was to provide NATO leadership with an overview of key findings from the reviewed lessons and NATO staff with more in-depth granularity of the content of the lessons to ensure holistic and rapid exploitation of the information.

Exercise STDU25 tested the full suite of NATO's Deterrence and Defence of the Euro-Atlantic Area (DDA) family of plans. The exercise focused on transforming strategic guidance into coordinated regional defence across land, air, maritime, cyber, and space domains. While Exercise STDC25 involved a broad training audience, with additional participation from the NATO Command and Force Structure headquarters, including Allied Land Command, Allied Maritime Command, Allied Air Command, Special Operations Forces Command, Joint Support and Enabling Command, Allied Nations, as well as other commands under USEUCOM and non-military entities.

Pictures used in this factsheet are courtesy of the [JWC](#), [AIRCOM](#), and [Joint Force Command Brunssum](#). Visit their websites for more information on Exercises STDC25 and STDU25.



Key Findings

This type of analysis sees the JALLC analysts collate, summarize, and identify key aspects from relevant information in the NLLP into tailor made reports for a specific customer or community. Below are some highlights from the report that reflect pertinent lessons identified by the project team:

Campaign Synchronization

Several key areas were identified requiring additional efforts to enhance operational coherence, situational awareness, and campaign effectiveness across the theatre.

Joint Targeting

Structural and procedural modernization is required to achieve campaign-level coherence and effectiveness.



Logistics

It is important to coordinate the protection of sustainment flows, enhance the need for operational realism of Enablement and Sustainment activities, as well as the need to continue fostering the involvement of Nations during exercises.

DDA

Adequately assessing escalation indicators and empowering the NATO forces with the adequate authorities is important.



Interoperability

SHAPE and USEUCOM have progressed in their ability to be interoperable, however, some areas require improvement to enhance efficiency of information flows and operational readiness.

Cyberspace and Space domains

There is a need to continue fostering structural, procedural, and workforce enhancements to better integrate the Cyberspace and Space domains to ensure effective Multi-Domain Operations.



You can download a copy of the report from the JALLC Analysis Community of Interest in the classified version of the NLLP subject to access and appropriate security clearances.