

NATO Lessons Learned Conference 2016

Since 2003, the JALLC has hosted the NATO Lessons Learned Conference (NLLC) on behalf of Supreme Allied Commander Transformation (SACT). This event brings together participants from far and wide; from NATO and non-NATO nations; and from all types of organizations, to discuss a number of topics based around the Conference theme and provides an opportunity to exchange knowledge, experience, and expertise within the Lessons Learned Community, enabling the continuous transformation of the Alliance. This year's Conference focussed on the theme:

The Future of Lessons Learned: Innovation and Improvement.

This factsheet presents the key takeaways from this year's Conference and some of the highlights.

Conference Key Takeaways

SACT's Key Focus Areas

The Lessons Learned Community has really taken SACT's six key focus areas—C2, Logistics & Sustainability, Training and Exercises, Partnerships, Capabilities and Human Capital—to heart and much is being done to channel efforts towards improving and innovating in these areas. We must continue this momentum as the Alliance prepares for the future.

NATO's Readiness Action plan (RAP) - Assurance and Reassurance

Lessons can, and do, contribute to the implementation of the RAP, whether they come from operations or from training and exercises. Learning allows us to improve, and if we are improving then we feel assured and can reassure our Allies and Partners. This is why the Lessons Learned Process is key to NATO's military adaptation, allowing us to respond swiftly and firmly to the changing global security threat environment.

Innovative Ideas for the Future of Lessons Learned

NATO as an organization can learn much from its non-military partners, in particular we can learn about learning. We call ourselves a learning organization, but this concept was challenged a number of times during the conference. In particular, it was suggested that the Alliance is perhaps more geared to looking inwards, rather than outwards; which, as our non-military partners point out, might be slowing us down. It is our responsibility then to address this challenge and ask ourselves what type of learning organization we want to be in the future and then act upon it.

Improving NATO Lessons Learned Support to Member Nations

The Alliance is well known for its standards, and these standards are effectively what NATO exports to its Members and Partners to ensure not only interoperability, but also the development of a collective mindset. However, the difference between formal and informal learning must be respected; although standards may help the Alliance in many areas, the organization must retain a degree of flexibility and diversity to be able to respond to the full range of threats, from wherever they may come.



“Improvement and innovation must not stop here. We are the future of the Lessons Learned Process and it is our responsibility to contribute to that future”

Conference Key Takeaways (continued)

NATO - Centre of Excellence (COE) Interaction

COEs support the Alliance in its transformation, experimenting with and developing new concepts. Interaction between NATO and the COEs—a mutually beneficial relationship—must be fostered if it is to ultimately contribute to Lesson Learned, Education and Training, Concept Development and Experimentation, and Doctrine Development. These four pillars are then the focus of NATO's COEs, feeding into NATO's key concepts and documents such as the RAP and ensuring improvement and innovation for the future of the Alliance.

Improving Member Nation Lessons Learned Support to NATO

NATO's Lessons Learned process is a two-way conduit: NATO needs the support of its members if its Lessons Learned capability is to continue to evolve and transform to meet the Allies' own needs. Learning from the successes and failures of our members and partners, and, more importantly, about how they learn from these successes and failures, will act as a catalyst to the Alliance's own learning curve, exponentially increasing our chances of success and minimizing the risk of failure.



Highlights

SACT, General Denis Mercier, opened the Conference by video, welcoming participants and reminding them that the Conference is an opportunity to, *"take stock of our current lessons learned policy and explore new ideas."*

Both strategic commands provided the Conference participants with relevant updates. Lieutenant Colonel Andrea Scarabotto (HQ SACT CAPDEV CEI IDLL) provided an update on Current developments in Lessons Learned and Brigadier General Von Sandrart (SHAPE ACOS J7) provided an update on the NATO Exercise Programme review.

Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Transformation, Admiral Manfred Nielson, addressed the Conference, confirming, *"Learning Lessons is an essential part of the continuous adaptation, innovation, and transformation of the Alliance."* He went on to thank the JALLC for its efforts in organizing and hosting the Conference, and confirmed that the JALLC will continue to play a crucial role in the Alliance's learning process as well as in shaping NATO's future.

The JALLC: Supporting Intelligent Change

The JALLC is NATO's centre for performing joint analysis of current operations, training, exercises, and experimentation. Reporting directly to SACT, the JALLC includes recommendations in its reports that influence or contribute to the development or improvement of concepts, doctrine, and capabilities. The JALLC also maintains and manages the NATO Lessons Learned Portal and supports Allied Command Transformation outreach activities in the Lessons Learned domain. Operational since 2002, the JALLC is located in Lisbon and has a permanent staff of 50 military and civilian personnel. Find out more about the JALLC and how your organization can request support at our website: www.jallc.nato.int.

Conference Statistics

Total Attendance: 275

- NATO: 147
- NATO National Bodies: 101
- Partner National Bodies: 25
- Attendees from IOs: 2

Total Nations Represented: 36

NATO Representation:

- NATO HQ: 7
- Agencies: 1
- NCS HQs: 89
- NFS HQs: 24
- COEs: 26



Phone: +351 21 771 7007/8/9

Fax: +351 21 771 7098

E-mail: jallc@jallc.nato.int

www.jallc.nato.int

Avenida Tenente Martins – Monsanto

1500-589 Lisbon

Portugal

