

**MILITARY
CAPABILITIES**

**Stronger Joint Staff
Role Needed to
Enhance Joint Military
Training**



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**National Security and
International Affairs Division**

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July 6, 1995

The Honorable Robert K. Dornan
Chairman
The Honorable Owen B. Pickett
Ranking Minority Member
Subcommittee on Military Personnel
Committee on National Security
House of Representatives

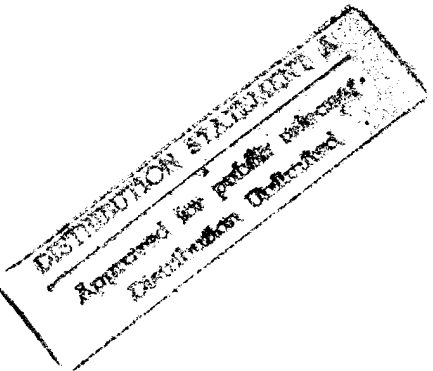


The Honorable Herbert H. Bateman
Chairman
The Honorable Norman Sisisky
Ranking Minority Member
Subcommittee on Military Readiness
Committee on National Security
House of Representatives

The Honorable Ike Skelton
House of Representatives

This report responds to a request that we review the effectiveness of the Department of Defense's (DOD) management of joint training activities. We found that, although some actions have been taken to improve joint training, DOD has not taken the full range of actions needed to correct long-standing program weaknesses.

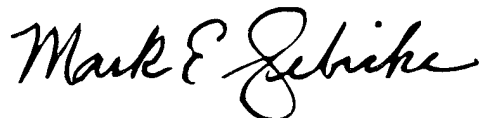
We are sending copies of this report to the Chairmen and Ranking Minority Members, Senate and House Committees on Appropriations and Senate Committee on Armed Services; the Secretary of Defense; the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; and the Director, Office of Management and Budget and other interested parties. Copies will also be made available to others on request.



July 1995
GAO/NSIAD-95-109

Military Capabilities, Stronger Joint Staff
Role Needed to Enhance Joint Military
Training

Please contact me at (202) 512-5140 if you have any questions. The major contributors to this report are listed in appendix II.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark E. Gebicke". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping "G" at the end.

Mark E. Gebicke
Director, Military Operations
and Capabilities Issues

Executive Summary

Purpose

Today, U.S. military strategy emphasizes that air, land, sea, and special operations forces must be capable of working together in large-scale combat and noncombat operations. The major regional conflict represented by Operation Desert Storm, the humanitarian relief efforts in Rwanda and Somalia, and the operation to restore democracy in Haiti illustrate the diverse missions U.S. forces can expect to perform.

Because U.S. forces must be adequately prepared for joint operations, the former Chairmen and Ranking Minority Members, Subcommittees on Military Forces and Personnel and Readiness, House Committee on Armed Services (now the Committee on National Security), asked GAO to determine (1) the scope of the Department of Defense's (DOD) joint training activities, (2) the effectiveness of the management of these activities, and (3) the actions that have been taken and any additional actions needed to improve joint training.

Background

Although the program has multiple purposes, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) Exercise Program is the primary method DOD uses to train its forces and staff for joint operations. In fiscal year 1994, the regional commanders in chief (CINCPAC) conducted about 200 live and computer-simulated military exercises under this program. Some exercises are conducted primarily to train U.S. forces for joint operations, while others are done for different reasons, such as to gain U.S. access to a region or foster relationships between U.S. military forces and those of other nations.

Responsibilities for joint training are divided among various DOD entities. The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness provides overall policy and program review of all military training programs. Two entities of the Chairman's Joint Staff have key roles. First, the Operational Plans and Interoperability Directorate (J-7) is the Joint Staff's focal point for joint training and, as such, monitors and coordinates the joint training activities of CINCPAC, formulates joint training policies, and advises the Secretary of Defense on joint training priorities. Second, the Joint Warfighting Center assesses existing joint doctrine, establishes the need for new doctrine, and helps the regional CINCPACs develop training programs for their overseas forces.

The U.S. Atlantic Command trains most U.S.-based forces and provides the other regional CINCPACs with forces for joint operations and exercises as needed. Each of the regional CINCPACs determines joint training requirements

and then plans, conducts, and evaluates joint exercises in its respective areas of operation. The services train their forces in basic service skills and provide forces to the CINCS for use in their joint exercises.

GAO reviewed DOD's joint training in 1979 and 1985 and found both times that program effectiveness was impaired by inadequate Joint Staff oversight.¹

Results in Brief

Although the CJCS Exercise Program is the primary means to train U.S. forces for joint operations, inadequate Joint Staff oversight has led to perpetuating a program that provides U.S. forces with little joint training. The vast majority of the exercises was conducted for reasons other than to provide joint training. These reasons were to maintain U.S. access or presence in a region or to foster relations with foreign military forces. Although these objectives are important, they have taken precedence over training U.S. forces for joint operations.

The J-7 has not provided the strong leadership needed to ensure that the full range of program management tasks required for an effective joint training program are carried out and coordinated. It has not (1) critically reviewed planned exercises to ensure that the program provides joint training benefits to the fullest extent possible, (2) ensured that problems surfacing in the exercises are identified and addressed, or (3) monitored enough exercises to gain first-hand knowledge of the problems. The diffusion of responsibilities among several entities heightens the importance of a stronger J-7 coordinating role for joint training.

The Secretary of Defense and the Joint Staff have recently taken steps aimed at improving joint training. Notably, they have strengthened the roles of the U.S. Atlantic Command and the Joint Warfighting Center. However, other CINCS have voiced concerns about the U.S. Atlantic Command's new joint training program and operational strategy and appear reluctant to use the Joint Warfighting Center's technical assistance. A stronger J-7 role is needed to ensure that these concerns are adequately addressed if more uniformity in joint training is to be achieved and if the U.S. Atlantic Command's new strategy is to effectively prepare U.S. forces for joint operations.

¹Improving the Effectiveness of Joint Military Exercises—An Important Tool for Military Readiness (GAO/LCD-80-2, Dec. 11, 1979) and Management of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Exercise Program Has Been Strengthened but More Needs to be Done (GAO/NSIAD-85-46, Mar. 5, 1985).

Principal Findings

CJCS Exercises Provide Little Joint Training Opportunities

In 1994, DOD spent over \$400 million to conduct over 200 exercises under the CJCS Exercise Program, yet less than one-third of the exercises had joint training as their primary focus. The major reason for the small number of joint training exercises being conducted was that the program's other objectives—gaining access to foreign seaports and airstrips, showing a U.S. military presence in a region, and enhancing military-to-military relationships—have taken precedence over those related to joint training. Of 121 exercises conducted by the commanders of the Central, European, and Pacific theaters in fiscal year 1994, GAO found that 73 percent of the exercises were designed to meet objectives such as a show of U.S. military presence in a region. Only 27 percent of the 121 exercises were designed to train forces or commanders for joint operations. Moreover, almost 60 percent of the exercises involved only a single service and should not be characterized as joint.

A Joint Staff working group, which reviewed the CJCS Exercise Program in late 1994, had similar findings. It found that only 17 percent of the exercises had joint training of U.S. forces as their primary focus.

Stronger J-7 Oversight Role Is Needed

Inadequate oversight by the J-7 has been a major factor contributing to the limited amount of joint training being conducted for U.S. forces. The J-7 has not reviewed the CINCS' planned exercises to ensure that they provide joint training benefits or that they focus on correcting past problems.

The process for analyzing exercise results is also flawed. The J-7 has relied on CINCS to evaluate their own joint exercises, but has not implemented meaningful standards to guide their evaluations. The J-7 has not been aware of some problems because it has conducted few independent exercise evaluations: it only evaluated 4 of the 200 exercises conducted in fiscal year 1994. Moreover, the J-7 has permitted remedial action projects, which are aimed at correcting identified problems, to be closed before their corrective actions were tested in joint exercises. As a result of these deficiencies, not all serious problems have been reported and those that were reported have frequently recurred.

DOD Has Taken Steps to Improve Joint Training, but Stronger Consensus on Approach Is Needed

In recent years, numerous actions have been taken aimed at improving joint training. For example, the Secretary of Defense, upon the recommendation of the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), increased the joint training and operational responsibilities of the U.S. Atlantic Command. The Joint Staff has also developed and issued numerous joint doctrinal publications and additional joint policy guidance. It has also increased the capabilities of its Joint Warfighting Center to provide technical assistance to CINCS in planning and evaluating their joint training programs.

The U.S. Atlantic Command has developed a field training program for U.S.-based forces; a simulated training program for U.S.-based commanders, which began in 1995; and a new joint force deployment strategy for the regional CINCS' use. In fiscal year 1995, the Joint Warfighting Center plans to provide technical assistance to the CINCS on 11 exercises and to assess 30 joint doctrinal publications.

Despite these efforts, additional actions are needed to ensure that the full benefits of recent changes are achieved. For example, other CINCS were concerned about accepting forces trained by the U.S. Atlantic Command due to the differences in tactics, terrain, and procedures. They were also concerned that the Command, in focusing its training on U.S.-based officers as joint task force commanders, was targeting the wrong audience. They said they would select commanders from their own theaters, not from U.S.-based forces.

Other CINCS were also skeptical about the soundness of the U.S. Atlantic Command's new joint force strategy, which requires integrating forces from the individual services in nontraditional ways. They questioned whether these force packages would provide the necessary military capabilities. They also feared that problems would arise since there may be insufficient time to train these forces with others in the theater before an operation began.

Finally, although Joint Warfighting Center officials believe that their technical assistance will help make the regional CINCS' joint training programs more uniform, some CINCS doubted that they would use this assistance since they considered themselves able to develop their own programs. Two CINCS said they had their own simulated training capability, and therefore, did not need such assistance from the Center. On this latter point, GAO noted that DOD was proceeding to develop two simulation centers in the Tidewater, Virginia, area—one at the U.S. Atlantic Command

and one at the Joint Warfighting Center—despite questions about possible duplication.² No consensus on any of these matters had been reached at the time of GAO's review.

Recommendations

GAO recommends that the Secretary of Defense, in concert with the Chairman, JCS, improve oversight of joint training activities by ensuring that a full range of specific management actions related to joint training are taken by the appropriate DOD entities. It also recommends that the Secretary and Chairman seek a stronger consensus among CINCS with respect to the U.S. Atlantic Command's new joint training and force deployment strategies. GAO's specific recommendations are included in chapters 3 and 4.

Agency Comments

DOD agreed with many of GAO's findings, but did not agree to take the full range of actions GAO recommended. Its position was that (1) the level of joint training exercises being conducted was adequate to achieve proficiency in joint operations, (2) current Joint Staff oversight of joint training would continue but not be increased, and (3) the concerns of the CINCS about the new joint training and operational strategies had been addressed. GAO continues to believe that the problems that have hindered joint training in the past are likely to recur without increased program oversight by the Joint Staff.

²This potential overlap was the subject of a GAO inquiry to the Secretary of Defense, Joint Simulation Training (GAO/NSIAD-94-249R, Aug. 18, 1994).

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Abbreviations

CINC	Commander in Chief
CJCS	Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
DOD	Department of Defense
GAO	General Accounting Office
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
USACOM	U.S. Atlantic Command
RAP	Remedial Action Project
REFORGER	Return of Forces to Germany

Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War, U.S. military forces have conducted numerous joint operations. These operations have involved a wide range of military missions, such as the Persian Gulf War; humanitarian relief missions in Rwanda and Somalia; response to natural disasters, such as Hurricanes Andrew and Iniki; and the deployment to restore the government of Haiti. However, after-action analyses of these events have continued to identify many weaknesses in U.S. forces' capability to effectively operate together as a joint force, suggesting the need for increased joint training. Joint training uses joint doctrine to prepare joint forces and staffs to respond to the operational requirements of the regional commanders in chief (CINC).

The services have historically emphasized the need to train their various components together to ensure that their tactics are synchronized. However, the complexity of current joint operations, which often involve the integration of diverse land, sea, and air assets from all military services, makes joint training even more essential to the effective execution of joint military operations. In addition, U.S. military forces have been substantially reduced—from a total of 3.3 million personnel in fiscal year 1989 to 2.7 million personnel in fiscal year 1994. The Department of Defense (DOD) plans to further reduce its forces to 2.4 million personnel by the end of fiscal year 1997.

Another significant change is that most military personnel will now be stationed in the United States. In the past, large combinations of forward-based forces responded to meet the operational requirements of the regional CINCS. With a smaller, predominantly U.S.-based force, CINCS are highly dependent on forces being deployed from the United States to provide operational support. Future operations will increasingly be joint, and U.S.-based forces will need to train together to provide the needed joint force capability to the CINCS. Finally, given the much smaller force, the services may have to integrate their forces in new ways, such as the deployment of Army forces aboard a Navy aircraft carrier in Haiti. Joint training is essential if such innovations are to succeed.

Responsibility for Joint Training Is Divided Among Several DOD Organizations

Title 10, United States Code, as amended by the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 (P.L. 99-433), defines the responsibilities of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), CINCS, and individual military services for joint training. DOD and Joint Staff policies have further defined their respective roles as follows:

Table 1.1: Joint Training Activities of DOD Entities

Joint training activity	DOD organization					
	OSD ^a	Joint Staff		USACOM	Other CINCs	Services
		J-7	JWFC			
Planning						
Determining joint training needs				X	X	
Establishing and implementing joint training policy		X		X		
Planning joint exercises				X	X	
Providing technical assistance in exercise design			X			
Conducting exercises and providing resources						
Conducting joint exercises				X	X	
Providing forces and equipment						X
Providing opposition forces			X	X	X	
Funding transportation		X				
Funding operational costs						X
Providing computer simulation training for CINC forces overseas			X		X	
Providing computer simulation training for U.S.-based forces				X		X
Evaluating						
Conducting assessments of performance during exercises				X	X	
Conducting independent assessments of CINC exercises		X	X			
Documenting joint problems			X	X	X	X
Correcting joint problems	X	X		X	X	
Performing program oversight	X	X				

^aOffice of the Secretary of Defense.

Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff Exercise Program Established to Meet Joint Training and Other Needs

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) Exercise Program is the primary method used to train forces and staff for joint operations. The joint training objectives of this program, which began in the early 1960s, include (1) preparing U.S. forces to conduct war and other lesser operations; (2) helping the Chairman, JCS assess the readiness of the CINCs' forces; and (3) validating the adequacy of joint doctrine, strategies, tactics, material, and forces. Besides these joint training objectives, the program is also used for other purposes, such as to support military objectives

resulting from U.S. treaty obligations with other nations, support regional security by demonstrating the capability of U.S. military forces, or foster relationships between U.S. military forces and those of foreign nations. Under the program, approximately 200 exercises are conducted annually throughout the world. The regional CINCS plan and conduct the actual exercises, which consist of both live and simulated exercises aimed at training forces in joint operations. These range from a show of force in a region to operations that would be associated with a major regional conflict.

The J-7 directorate apportions available airlift and sealift transportation funding among the various exercises and pays these costs out of funds designated for the exercise program. The services absorb the operating costs associated with their participation in the exercises and do not report these costs to the J-7. There is no separate appropriation specifically for the CJCS Exercise Program. According to a J-7 budget official, funding for the program is included in two budget accounts: (1) Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide [Agencies] and (2) Military Construction, Defense-Wide [Agencies]. The official said that because there are no separate budget line items for this program, the J-7 does not know precisely how much it costs. The official estimated that it cost \$420 million in fiscal year 1994 to conduct joint exercises, about 75 percent of which was the cost of transporting forces and equipment to and from the exercises. However, the official emphasized that this should be considered only a rough estimate of the program's cost.

Our Prior Reviews Noted Weaknesses in Joint Staff Program Oversight

We conducted two prior reviews of the CJCS Exercise Program in 1979 and 1985 and in both instances pointed to the need for stronger Joint Staff program oversight.³ We noted that DOD could not be assured that the program was effectively training forces for joint operations due to a complex and fragmented management system with insufficient oversight by the Joint Staff. In both instances, we recommended that the Joint Staff assume a stronger management role and, specifically, that it critically evaluate planned exercises.

³Improving the Effectiveness of Joint Military Exercises—An Important Tool for Military Readiness (GAO/LCD-80-2, Dec. 11, 1979) and Management of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Exercise Program Has Been Strengthened But More Needs to Be Done (GAO/NSIAD-85-46, Mar. 5, 1985).

Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

The former Chairmen and Ranking Minority Members, Subcommittees on Military Forces and Personnel and Readiness, House Committee on Armed Services (now the Committee on National Security), requested that we provide a current assessment of DOD's joint training program. Our objectives were to determine (1) the scope of DOD's joint training activities, (2) the effectiveness of the management of these activities, and (3) the actions that have been taken and any additional actions needed to improve joint training.

To determine the scope of DOD's joint training program, we gathered information on the CJCS Exercise Program and analyzed the exercises conducted by the Central, European, and Pacific combatant commands under this program. These three commands conducted 65 percent of the joint exercises held in fiscal year 1994. We examined the exercises conducted in fiscal year 1994 and those planned for fiscal year 1995 to determine whether the three commands included tasks in their exercise plans to deploy forces as a joint task force or train commanders and staffs in joint operations. J-7 and CINC officials identified these two criteria as critical in training forces for joint operations and agreed that this was an appropriate basis for assessing the joint training value of the exercises. We did not analyze whether these planned tasks were actually performed. To confirm our analyses, we provided summaries of our work to the CINCS' staffs.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the management of joint training activities, we identified the roles and responsibilities associated with joint training by reviewing the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, prior legislation, and Office of the Secretary of Defense and Joint Staff guidance. We also discussed joint training responsibilities with officials in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, the Joint Staff's J-7 directorate and Joint Warfighting Center, and CINC training and operations officials. To assess what problems have recurred in joint training exercises and operations and how these problems were addressed, we analyzed information in the Joint Universal Lessons Learned System and J-7's Remedial Action Project Status Report for 10 recent joint exercises and operations, including Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

To determine what actions have been taken to improve joint training and what further actions might be needed, we collected documentation on actions taken by USACOM, the Joint Staff's J-7 directorate and Joint Warfighting Center, and CINCS and discussed these changes with

Chapter 1
Introduction

appropriate officials. In particular, we examined recent initiatives to improve management and emerging issues and concerns stemming from USACOM's recent changes in joint training strategy.

We conducted our work from October 1993 to December 1994 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

CJCS Exercise Program Has Provided Marginal Joint Training Benefits

A key training principle is for U.S. forces to train as they will fight. Because current U.S. military strategy is based on forces operating together as joint teams, Joint Staff training guidance emphasizes the need for the services to train jointly. The CJCS Exercise Program is the primary method used to train forces and commanders for joint operations. However, this program has multiple objectives and, in reviewing the exercises conducted by three CINCS in 1994 and those planned for 1995, we found that nearly 75 percent did not have joint training objectives. Instead of training forces and commanders for joint operations, the majority of the exercises were conducted for other reasons, such as maintaining U.S. access or presence in a region. More than half of the exercises involved only a single service. A recent Joint Staff Working Group review of this program identified findings similar to ours.

Majority of CJCS Exercises Do Not Have Joint Training Objectives

Hundreds of exercises have been conducted under the CJCS Exercise Program. However, the majority of the exercises provided little joint training value for U.S. forces because they (1) were designed to meet nontraining objectives or (2) involved only a single service.

Most CJCS Exercises Are Held to Achieve Presence or Access Objectives

Exercises included in the CJCS Exercise Program are conducted for several reasons. Although some exercises are conducted to train forces and commanders in joint operations, the vast majority are carried out to gain or maintain U.S. access or presence to seaports and airstrips, promote regional stability by a show of U.S. military forces, or foster relationships with other nations' military forces (hereafter referred to as presence or access exercises). As such, these exercises do not have joint training objectives and, accordingly, many involve only a single military service. For example, U.S. participation in some CJCS exercises involves only a single Navy ship.

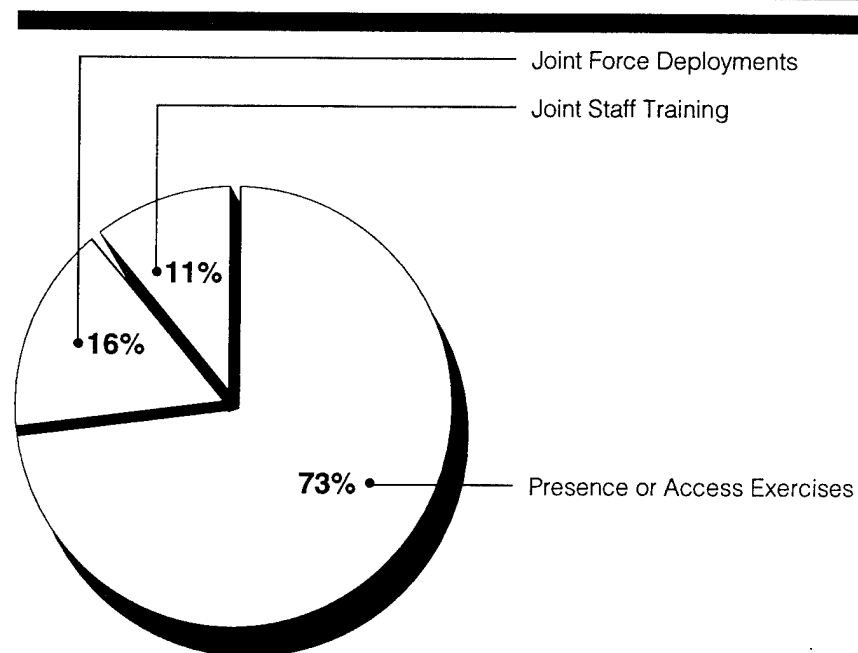
In contrast, exercises designed to train joint forces involve assembling units from two or more services so that they can perform joint tasks. Examples of such joint tasks include attacking enemy targets with air, naval, or ground cannons, rockets, and missiles; conducting deceptive tasks to give the enemy a false picture of reality; and constructing obstacles to delay the enemy.

J-7 training guidance specifies that a critical element of effective joint operations is a well-trained staff that is proficient in the various tasks

required. Exercises designed to train commanders and staff in joint operations consist of such tasks as forming a joint staff to plan the operation; conducting command and control procedures; and collecting, disseminating, and analyzing intelligence data. During the course of our work, J-7 and CINC officials also stressed the importance of a highly trained joint task force staff to successful joint operations.

Although it is important to accomplish both training and other objectives, we found the vast majority of the exercises conducted by the U.S. Central, European, and Pacific Commands for fiscal year 1994 and planned for fiscal year 1995 were designed to demonstrate presence or access rather than to provide joint training for U.S. forces. In 1994, 88 of 121 exercises (73 percent) conducted by the 3 CINCs were done for reasons other than for joint training. Of the remaining 33 exercises designed to provide joint training, 20 deployed a joint task force. Figure 2.1 shows a breakdown of the exercises conducted by the Central, European, and Pacific Commands in fiscal year 1994.

Figure 2.1: Breakdown of Exercises Conducted by the Central, European, and Pacific Commands in Fiscal Year 1994 by Major Purpose

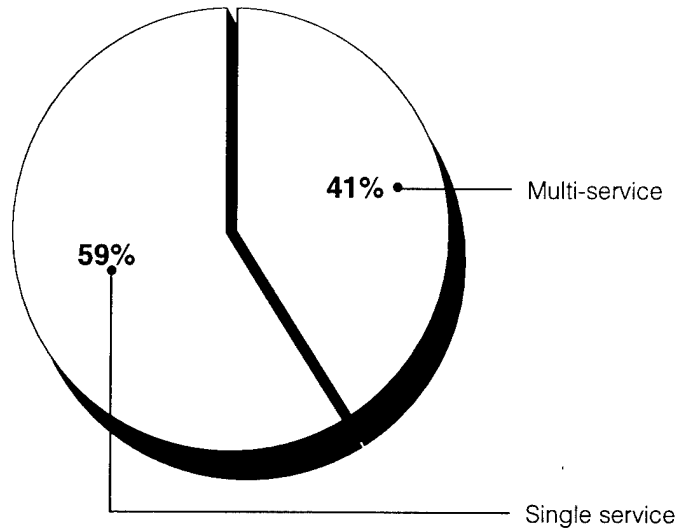


For fiscal year 1995, 113 of the 150 exercises (75 percent) planned by these CINCS were to be carried out for presence or access purposes. Similarly, despite the importance of training commanders and staff to conduct joint operations, CINC exercises have provided relatively few such training opportunities. Of the 33 exercises conducted in 1994 that provided joint training, 13 exercises trained commanders and their staff in joint operations. Of 37 joint training exercises planned for fiscal year 1995, 19 will provide joint staff training.

The lack of adequately trained joint task force staffs has hindered the effectiveness of exercises and operations since 1987. For example, Joint Universal Lessons Learned reports from Reforger exercises in 1987, 1988, and 1992; and Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm in 1990-91; and Restore Hope in Somalia in 1992-93 noted that joint task force staffs were not adequately trained prior to deployment to the theaters of operation, thereby hindering operational effectiveness. The problem had not been corrected at the time we completed our fieldwork in December 1994, although efforts are underway to improve joint task force training. (See ch. 4).

In reviewing these same exercises conducted by the Central, European, and Pacific Commands in 1994, we also found that about 60 percent of them involved only a single service, as shown in figure 2.2. Although included in the CJCS Exercise Program, such exercises could hardly be classified as joint.

Figure 2.2: Breakdown of Single and Multiservice Exercises Conducted by the Central, European, and Pacific Commands in Fiscal Year 1994



Most Exercises Do Not Provide Challenging Training for U.S. Forces

J-7 and CINC officials offered two main reasons to explain why so little joint training has been done. First, the objectives of gaining access to seaports and airstrips, maintaining presence in regions, and fostering relations with foreign nations' forces have taken precedence over training U.S. forces for joint operations. Second, because foreign forces have varying levels of operational capability, the complexity of tasks included in exercises with these forces must frequently be matched to the capabilities of the foreign forces rather than the capabilities of U.S. forces. In some regions, foreign forces are simply not prepared to participate in large-scale joint exercises, according to the officials.

In a September 1994 speech before the Association of the U.S. Army's Institute of Land Warfare, the Chairman, JCS, commented on the status of joint training exercises and the need for improvements. The Chairman noted that joint doctrine was not being used in the training exercises and that the quality of the training had frequently embarrassed him. He added that current joint exercises reminded him of the types of exercises the services had engaged in many years ago.

Recent Joint Staff Review Surfaced Similar Findings

Based on concerns of the Chairman, JCS, that the exercise program might not be providing efficient and effective training despite a growing number of exercises in the program, a Joint Staff working group initiated a review of the exercise program in October 1994.¹ The review covered the exercises conducted by the five geographical CINCS—USACOM, and the Central, European, Pacific, and Southern Commands—and the five functional CINCS—the North American Air Defense, Space, Strategic, Special Operations, and Transportation Commands.

During the first phase of the study, which was conducted from October through December 1994, the working group analyzed the purpose of the exercises and the type of training they provided. Similar to our findings, the review showed that most exercises were being held primarily for presence or access purposes or other nontraining purposes, rather than for joint training. Of the 174 program exercises planned for fiscal year 1995 by the 5 geographical CINCS, the review showed that only 17 percent of the exercises had joint training as their primary focus.² The working group made the following recommendations to the Joint Staff:

- Stem the increase in the number of exercises.
- Assess the impact of treaty and politically arranged exercises on joint operations training.
- Continue to review the joint exercise program to ensure that the exercises support operational plans and cancel or revise those exercises not meeting this objective.
- Review the process for evaluating joint exercises to ensure that CINCS design exercises that address prior lessons learned.

The Joint Staff had planned to conduct a second phase of the study, which would implement the recommendations of the first phase. However, J-7 and USACOM officials told us the Chairman was not satisfied with the depth of the first phase. It now appears that a more detailed review of the program will be made before the recommendations are implemented.

¹The working group consisted of representatives from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, J-7, and services.

²In commenting on our report, DOD stated that over 88 percent of the fiscal year 1995 exercises would use joint forces in the execution of the National Military Strategy. It should be noted that the majority of these exercises are done for presence or access reasons and do not have joint training as their primary focus.

Agency Comments

DOD concurred with our findings regarding the percentages of exercises in the CJCS Exercise Program devoted to joint training. However, it disagreed that the reason for the small number of joint exercises was that other program objectives had taken precedence over those related to joint training. DOD maintained that the number of exercises conducted in 1994 was adequate to meet joint training needs.

We found no basis to support DOD's assertion. During our fieldwork, J-7 and CINC officials acknowledged that no formal analyses had been conducted to determine the number of joint exercises needed to achieve proficiency in joint operations. In contrast to DOD's assessment that the current level of joint training is adequate, the May 1995 report of the Commission on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces concluded that joint training was not being done well and needed more emphasis.³

³Directions for Defense, Report of the Commission on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces (May 24, 1995).

Stronger Joint Staff Oversight Needed to Improve Joint Training

Inadequate oversight by the Joint Staff's J-7 directorate has been a major factor contributing to the limited amount of joint training being done under the CJCS Exercise Program. Although 10 U.S.C. gives the regional CINCS responsibility for conducting joint training, the J-7 has been designated as the focal point for overseeing the CINCS' joint training activities. Despite this oversight responsibility, the J-7 directorate has not conducted the range of activities that this responsibility entails. For example, it has not

- critically evaluated the content of CINC-developed joint exercise plans on a routine basis to ensure that their exercises provide beneficial training and address past problems,
- developed meaningful standards to assist CINCS in evaluating their exercises, or
- conducted a sufficient number of independent exercise evaluations to ensure that problems are identified and addressed.

The diffusion of responsibilities among several DOD entities heightens the importance of a stronger J-7 coordinating role.

The J-7 Staff Has Not Critically Reviewed the Content of CINC Training Plans

Although the Joint Staff has taken some limited actions based on our prior recommendations, many of the problems we noted 16 years ago have continued. For example, instead of independently analyzing the planned CINC exercises as we recommended, the Joint Staff assigned this responsibility to CINCS. The J-7 staff, which has oversight responsibility for joint training, has limited its reviews of CINC training plans to (1) evaluating the CINCS' need for transportation—airlift and sealift—and other resources, such as ammunition, fuel, and equipment, to conduct the exercises and (2) ensuring that these needs were met.

J-7 officials said that they have not routinely reviewed the content of the exercises because CINCS are in a better position to determine their training needs and design joint exercises. However, as our analysis showed, this system has permitted a large number of exercises to be conducted that provide marginal joint training opportunities for U.S. forces. Following our 1979 report, the Joint Staff issued guidance requiring CINCS to submit detailed descriptions of their training objectives. However, by 1985, we were once again reporting that because of insufficient oversight by the Joint Staff, CINCS were either not submitting the required information or providing general information that was not helpful in assessing the merits of the exercises.

Similarly, as previously noted, until the Joint Staff reviewed the exercise program in the fall of 1994, it had little knowledge of how much the program provided in the way of joint training experiences. This was the first critical review that the Joint Staff had conducted of the program. Although our position has been that these reviews should be routinely conducted, the Joint Staff views its assessment of the exercise program as a special effort that will terminate in 1995.

The J-7 Staff Has Not
Ensured That Past
Problems Were Addressed

Because the J-7 staff has not routinely or critically reviewed CINC training plans, it also has no assurance that actions taken to address past problems have, in fact, corrected them. Under its Remedial Action Project (RAP) program, the J-7 staff identifies problems and has the appropriate organization try to correct the problems. For example, the Joint Warfighting Center would be charged with correcting problems stemming from weaknesses in joint doctrine. In fiscal year 1994, the J-7 began using its Joint Universal Lessons Learned System to prepare annual summaries of problems identified in joint exercises and operations; CINCS then are to use these summaries to plan future exercise tasks. Although J-7's efforts to identify and correct problems are steps in the right direction, its failure to review the CINCS' planned exercises prevents it from ensuring that common problems identified in the past are tested or that actions taken to correct them are effective.

Once the J-7 staff is satisfied that a designated entity has taken a corrective action, it closes the RAP item and considers the problem to be corrected. Joint Staff guidance states that the most common method to assess the effectiveness of corrective actions is through joint exercises. However, such testing is not required, and the J-7 permits RAP items to be closed through other means, such as conducting a study of the action taken or performing some other type of evaluation.

CINC officials said that they seldom test whether prior problems have been corrected in their exercises because (1) the Joint Staff has not required them to do so and (2) they had insufficient time to analyze past problems before planning future exercises. One CINC training official stated that joint exercises consist merely of accomplishing events rather than training and that problems identified during prior exercises may be "lessons recorded" but not necessarily "lessons learned." The views of this official reflect a systemic problem in planning joint exercises that surfaced in a 1990 joint exercise. The lessons learned report noted the following:

"Players generally had no awareness of Joint Universal Lessons Learned or Remedial Action Projects from previous exercises. The apparent absence of continuity or long-term perspective on the part of exercise planners and players tends to cause repetitious [lessons learned items] and a lack of focus of exercise objectives."

Despite the report's recommendation, the Joint Staff has not required that exercise objectives be focused on RAP items from previous exercises. The lack of a requirement may contribute to the fact that problems in joint operations have tended to recur. For example, those conducting the first phase of the Joint Staff working group exercise review reported that lessons learned from prior exercises had not been sufficiently analyzed. They noted that inadequate training of joint force commanders was cited as a key problem in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm and the Somalia relief effort. Yet, our review showed that less than 15 percent of the exercises conducted in fiscal year 1994 and those planned for fiscal year 1995 would focus on training joint task force commanders.¹ Although the Joint Staff is attempting several solutions to improve proficiency in joint operations, such as USACOM's new joint training strategies, it has not increased the number of exercises to test the effectiveness of these efforts.

Objective Standards to Measure Joint Exercise Results Have Not Been Set

The Chairman, JCS, delegated responsibility for evaluating joint exercises to the regional CINCS. After completing the exercises, CINCS must report whether they achieved the training objectives. The J-7 staff uses the CINCS' evaluation reports to determine what actions are needed to address joint training problems. However, the J-7 staff has not provided CINCS with any objective standards to evaluate joint exercises. As a result, CINC evaluations tend to be subjective and do not critically assess their forces' readiness for joint operations.

In 1993, the Joint Staff developed a list of common joint tasks for CINCS to use in planning joint exercises and operations. However, these tasks were broad—for example, deploying joint forces and employing theater strategic firepower. Joint Staff training guidance cites the importance of linking these broad joint tasks to more specific performance standards to assess how well the tasks are performed. Although it has issued some general guidance on setting the standards, the Joint Staff has let CINCS develop these standards. J-7 officials provided examples of the types of objective standards that CINCS could use to measure force deployment and firepower tasks. Standards for force deployment could include whether

¹The Joint Staff working group's study of the CJCS Exercise Program did not analyze the amount of training devoted to joint task force commanders. However, the study showed that 17 percent of all the exercises planned for fiscal year 1995 would provide joint training.

the correct types of forces were deployed and whether they arrived at their theater of operations on time. Training standards for strategic firepower could assess whether the proper amount of firepower was available, how quickly it was delivered, and how long it could be sustained.

The problem of assessing exercises without clearly defined standards was noted in a 1992 report by the Center for Army Lessons Learned based on its observations of U.S. Army forces that participated in the Return of Forces to Germany (REFORGER) joint exercise. The training objectives for Army units were to

- exercise corps land/air battle staff in a mobile environment,
- train brigade through corps battle staffs,
- exercise and understand emerging North Atlantic Treaty Organization strategy,
- train multinational corps in command and control procedures, and
- reduce the burden on the host country.

In assessing the results of the exercise, the Center noted the following:

“The majority of exercise objectives did not have measurable, objective standards associated with them; rather the exercise objectives were subjective in nature. The majority of exercise objectives in REFORGER 92 could be easily accomplished solely as a function of time and posture of units (i.e., all unit players participate from 26 SEP to 9 OCT). . . . None of these exercise objectives can be measured in a negative manner. Since no accompanying standards were included, automatic success was achieved through these objectives. As long as all REFORGER player units participated from [the] start of the exercise to [the] end of the exercise, all of the Army objectives were met. This is . . . hardly a fair and objective measure of success.”

The Center recommended that large exercises not be planned or conducted without measurable training objectives. A Center official who wrote the report told us that he briefed U.S. Army officials on his findings and recommended actions in an after-action meeting to discuss exercise results. He also prepared a lessons learned report for submission to the Joint Staff. However, Army officials did not submit the report to the J-7 directorate.

J-7 and CINC officials told us that the situation described in the Center’s 1992 report continues to exist. CINCS often set subjective standards and consider training objectives to be met if forces merely participate in

exercises and perform their assigned tasks. Without measurable standards, exercise evaluations are of little value in judging the readiness of U.S. forces to conduct joint operations, according to these officials.

The J-7 staff recognizes the need for objective training standards and is working with CINCS to develop a universal joint task list that would assist them in developing such standards. An example of a revised task with a measurable standard would be to "conduct long-range fires with a certain percent of attrition rates for threat forces." The J-7 staff expects the revised tasks and standards to be developed by December 1995 but does not believe they can be integrated into exercises until fiscal year 1998.

Few Independent Evaluations of Joint Exercises Are Made

The J-7 staff relies on CINCS to evaluate their own exercises and observes few exercises to gain first-hand knowledge of the problems that occur. As a result, the J-7 staff is not aware of all the problems, some of which could have serious implications. For example, in fiscal year 1994, J-7 staff observed only 4 of the 200 exercises conducted (2 percent). J-7 staff officials told us that they cannot observe more exercises at current staffing levels. The Evaluation and Analysis Division in the J-7 has only three personnel assigned to observe CINC exercises.

Before submitting evaluation reports to the J-7, the CINCS' staffs discuss exercise results and the problems that occurred. Among other things, the staffs decide on the nature of problems, determine any joint implications, and recommend corrective actions. The staffs also decide whether CINCS should report the problems to the J-7 directorate for inclusion in the lessons learned system or if CINC staff should correct them on their own. J-7 officials told us that the CINCS' process of screening problems from joint exercises could allow some serious problems to go unreported. As noted above, this lack of reporting was demonstrated in the Center for Army Lessons Learned report on the lack of measurable exercise objectives in the 1992 REFORGER exercise. The Center documented the problem and prepared an evaluation report; however, the matter was not forwarded to the J-7 and, consequently, could not be entered into the tracking system. Although J-7 officials observed this exercise, they did not attend the briefing of Army officials and consequently were not aware of the problem.

Stronger J-7 Coordinating Role Is Needed

A major factor contributing to the lingering problems in joint training is the diffusion of joint training responsibilities among several DOD entities without a strong Joint Staff focal point. As noted in chapter 1, joint training responsibilities are divided among the Office of the Secretary of Defense, two Joint Staff entities (J-7 directorate and the Joint Warfighting Center), USACOM, the remaining regional CINCS, and the individual military services.

J-7 Staff Must Delegate Tasks Due to Its Small Size

The Joint Staff designated its J-7 directorate the responsible entity for coordinating joint training activities; however, this entity lacks the staff to effectively conduct all desirable management tasks commensurate with its oversight role. As a result, it has had to delegate some responsibilities to other DOD entities, thereby heightening its coordinating role. For example, in fiscal year 1995, the two J-7 offices responsible for joint training—the Joint Exercise and Training and the Evaluation and Analysis Divisions—have 35 staff. The J-7 suboffice responsible for observing CINC exercises has only three staff. Although officials in this latter J-7 office believe they should conduct additional independent evaluations, it was not possible because the process of independently evaluating a single CINC exercise takes about 6 months.

The J-7 staff acknowledged that a broader range of oversight responsibilities was desirable, but not possible because of their limited staff. Therefore, they have limited their role to developing joint doctrine and policy, coordinating exercise schedules, and entering data into the lessons learned system and delegated other responsibilities to the Joint Warfighting Center and CINCS. This approach appears reasonable, given the current budgetary climate that makes it unrealistic to assume that additional resources would be forthcoming to increase the J-7 staff.

Shifting Coordinating Role to the Joint Warfighting Center or USACOM Does Not Appear Practical

At first glance, it would appear that either the Joint Warfighting Center or USACOM might be better equipped than J-7 to provide more comprehensive oversight of joint training. However, reassigning this role to either entity would have drawbacks. For example, the Joint Warfighting Center has been given increased responsibilities for joint training, with responsibility for helping CINCS develop their exercise programs and integrate computer simulations into the actual exercises. With the merger of two separate organizations, the Center has had a substantial personnel increase and would appear to be able to assume more authority. However, 145 of the 202 staff at the Center are contractors that provide technical and other

support—personnel who would not be well-suited to conducting the range of oversight responsibilities required.

Joint Warfighting Center personnel were not anxious to assume additional responsibilities for critically reviewing CINC joint training plans since the Center—headed by a major general—might not command sufficient authority to oversee the activities of CINCS, who are 4-star general officers. Also, the Center has not yet established credibility with CINCS, who will have to be convinced of the value of the Center's services before they will use the assistance offered to them. (See ch. 4.) Similarly, USACOM, having been given a major role in joint training and a substantial staff, would appear to be in a better position than the small J-7 staff to coordinate joint training activities and provide the needed program oversight. However, J-7 and USACOM officials felt that, given USACOM's current responsibilities to train U.S.-based forces, provide forces to CINCS, and function as a combatant CINC for the Atlantic region, an expanded role would not be feasible. Such a role would concentrate too much authority in one CINC, reinforce already strained relations between USACOM and the remaining CINCS, and remove training and operational responsibilities that are rightfully assigned to each of the warfighting CINCS, according to the officials.

The Commander of the Center and the USACOM Director of Training both agreed that joint training needed closer oversight. However, they disagreed on how to accomplish this objective. The USACOM Training Director believed that oversight responsibility should not be centralized under one organization and felt that CINCS were in the best position to perform the task. The Center Commander stated that a stronger focal point for joint training was needed but that, given resource constraints, it would be unrealistic to expect the J-7 directorate to assume the role. He concluded that J-7's current approach of assigning responsibilities to the other entities and then attempting to coordinate the activities was, in effect, the only practical way to manage joint training activities.

Conclusions

We have reviewed DOD's joint training activities two other times over the last 16 years. Both times, we found weaknesses in the program and recommended that the Joint Staff be directed to play a stronger role in overseeing joint training activities. Although the Joint Staff has taken steps aimed at strengthening joint training, it has neither ensured that the full range of management initiatives needed to correct long-standing problems were carried out nor that they were adequately coordinated.

In our opinion, effective Joint Staff oversight should include a routine, critical review of the content of planned CINC exercises. The purpose of this review would be to ensure that the exercises contain the maximum number of activities that provide joint training, even though the primary objectives for conducting them may be for other than joint training purposes. In addition, such reviews would enable the Joint Staff to ensure that planned exercises test whether past problems have been overcome and that joint training remedial action items are not closed without problems having been corrected. Integrating measurable evaluation standards into joint exercises and independently evaluating the exercises are also essential elements of an effective oversight program.

The full-range of program oversight needed goes beyond the current capability of the Joint Staff's J-7 directorate or any other single organization. The J-7 directorate would need a large increase in its staff to perform all necessary functions. However, because the J-7 is responsible for overseeing joint training activities, it is in the best position to advise DOD on which organization—Joint Warfighting Center, USACOM, or the other regional CINCS—should be assigned responsibilities that were currently not being performed. Assigning responsibilities to other organizations does not absolve the J-7 directorate from its oversight responsibility for joint training. If the United States is to effectively carry out joint military operations in the future, the J-7 staff must be proactive in ensuring that all delegated responsibilities are effectively carried out and coordinated.

Recommendations

We recommend that the Secretary of Defense, in concert with the Chairman, JCS, improve the oversight of joint training activities by ensuring that the appropriate DOD entities take the following management actions:

- Routinely review the CINCS' plans for the CJCS Exercise Program to ensure that each exercise (1) provides maximum joint training value without compromising its primary purposes and (2) includes tasks that test the effectiveness of actions taken to correct previously identified problems.
- Ensure that exercises held to achieve presence or access or other objectives include joint training tasks, to the extent possible.
- Ensure the development of measurable joint training standards and expedite their integration into joint training exercises so that the exercises can be more effectively evaluated.
- Examine what additional resources might be used to permit more independent exercise evaluations to be made.

- Close remedial action projects only after the effectiveness of corrective actions are demonstrated either in joint exercises or, if this is not appropriate, through alternative means.

We also recommend that, once these specific responsibilities have been assigned, the J-7 increase its monitoring of the related activities to ensure that the full range of desirable management activities are effectively carried out.

Agency Comments

DOD concurred with our finding on the need to improve Joint Staff coordination of joint training activities. However, it only partially concurred with our recommendation that additional Joint Staff oversight was needed. DOD stated that, rather than increasing oversight, it needed more time for actions aimed at improving joint training to mature. DOD pointed to many of the ongoing Joint Staff initiatives we discussed in our report as evidence that progress is being made.

While we agree that these initiatives are steps in the right direction, we continue to believe that the Joint Staff must improve oversight of joint training activities if lingering problems are to be corrected. For example, DOD implied in its response that the Joint Staff is currently conducting critical reviews of planned joint exercises. However, as our report notes, the primary focus of these reviews has not been to critique the exercise plans but rather to determine what resources were needed to conduct them. Routine critical reviews of the exercise plans would permit the Joint Staff to (1) assure itself that the exercises include tasks testing whether past problems have been corrected, (2) suggest inclusion of tasks where common proficiency across the force is important, and (3) suggest how exercises done primarily for presence or access reasons might include some tasks with joint training value.

With respect to presence and access exercises, DOD said that most of these exercises include some joint training. However, when we asked for documentation to support this position, we were advised that DOD would have to query CINCS for this data—a step we had already taken when making our own analysis of the exercises. According to the CINCS' own assessments, the vast majority of these presence and access exercises do not include joint training tasks. DOD said that it is currently categorizing the planned exercises according to their primary purposes and would begin to balance the training and strategic requirements of the program.

DOD further stated that it will continue to emphasize the need to achieve joint training whenever possible.

With respect to our recommendation on measurable joint training standards, DOD said that developing such standards is a CINC responsibility and that current joint doctrine is intended to guide them in this process. DOD added that the Joint Staff's current effort to develop a universal joint task list would be a useful tool to CINCS in developing standards. We recognize the importance of joint doctrine, essential tasks, and the CINCS' input in developing standards for assessing joint exercises. However, as we point out, unless these standards are made so that performance in joint exercises can be objectively and uniformly measured, DOD may never have a true picture of how prepared U.S. forces are to engage in joint operations. In our opinion, the Joint Staff is in the best position to develop common joint training standards. Although we recognize that such standards would need to be adapted for theater-unique factors, such standards would provide a basis for objectively and uniformly determining the proficiency of U.S. forces in critical joint tasks.

With respect to our recommendation that more exercises be independently evaluated, DOD stated that the J-7 staff would continue to independently review selected CINC-sponsored exercises even though there was no requirement to do so. As our report notes, due to its small staff, the J-7 staff was only able to observe 4 of 200 exercises held in fiscal year 1994. We believe that this small number of evaluations is insufficient to provide assurance that problems surfacing in exercises are promptly and accurately reported. We have revised our recommendation to suggest that the Joint Staff examine what additional resources might be used to permit more independent exercise evaluations to be made.

DOD did not agree with our recommendation to close remedial action projects only after demonstrating their effectiveness in joint exercises. It opposed focusing exercises objectives on RAP items from previous exercises. DOD stated that exercise objectives should focus on those missions that CINCS must accomplish to support national security and military strategies and plans. Further, it stated joint exercises were only one method of validating a RAP or corrective action. We recognize that testing the effectiveness of some RAP solutions—such as absence of a training policy in a particular area—is not always feasible in joint exercises. However, according to Joint Staff training guidance, testing RAP solutions in joint exercises is a common method to validate the effectiveness of corrective actions. As our report notes, CINCS seldom

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conduct such tests because they are not required to do so. In our opinion, testing RAP items in joint exercises is a vital part of assessing the CINCS' capabilities to support national security strategies and meet operation plan requirements. Further, the failure to require such testing, when appropriate, reduces the effectiveness of collecting data on problems and, in our opinion, is a major reason contributing to recurring joint training and operational problems. We continue to stress the importance of testing remedial actions through the joint exercise program. However, we have modified our recommendation to recognize that, in some instances, it may be appropriate to close remedial action projects if their effectiveness can be demonstrated through alternative means.

Actions Are Being Taken to Improve Joint Training, but Greater Consensus on Strategies Is Needed

The procedures for managing and conducting joint training and operations are evolving. Over the last few years, the J-7 staff has developed and issued numerous joint doctrinal publications, issued additional joint policy guidance, and increased the capabilities of the Joint Warfighting Center to provide technical assistance to CINCS in their joint training programs. The Secretary of Defense, upon the recommendation of the Chairman, JCS, increased the joint training and operational responsibilities of USACOM. To discharge these new responsibilities, USACOM developed a new joint training program for U.S.-based forces and revised the operational strategy for deploying them to the regional CINCS.

These actions—aimed at correcting past problems—are steps in the right direction. However, CINCS have reservations about USACOM's new joint training program and operational strategy and appear reluctant to use the Joint Warfighting Center's technical assistance. A stronger Joint Staff role is needed to ensure that these concerns are adequately addressed.

The Joint Staff Is Actively Working to Improve Joint Training

The Joint Staff's J-7 directorate and Joint Warfighting Center have issued joint doctrine, developed common terminology, and enhanced their technical assistance to CINCS. Additional actions are planned, but their impact will not be realized for several years.

The Joint Staff Has Developed Much Joint Doctrine and Common Terminology

Sound joint doctrine is essential to successful joint operations since it establishes the fundamental principles to guide military actions, provides the common perspective from which forces can plan and operate, and fundamentally shapes the way U.S. forces train for war. Common terminology is critical to the individual services communicating effectively with each other and avoiding confusion on the battlefield. Yet, lessons learned reports from past operations and exercises revealed that joint operations were being hindered by a lack of joint doctrine and common terminology.

In response to these findings, the Joint Staff has issued numerous joint doctrinal publications over the last 2 years and recently prepared a dictionary of common terms that should be used in joint operations. As of March 1995, the Joint Staff had issued 59 of 102 planned joint doctrinal publications; it expects to issue the remainder by the end of fiscal year 1996. These publications cover a wide range of joint operations, from the

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use of nuclear weapons to humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping missions.

To help overcome the problem of inconsistent terminology for joint training and operations, the Joint Staff issued a Universal Joint Task List in October 1993. The list represents a compilation of all joint tasks that forces must be capable of performing. It also provides a common basis for CINCS to use in planning, conducting, and assessing joint exercises and operations. Examples of joint tasks include conducting operational maneuvers, such as deploying forces to a theater, employing them, and overcoming obstacles; conducting intelligence, such as collecting information on the enemy threat and vulnerability; and providing combat service support, such as repairing equipment, providing health services, and conducting prisoner-of-war operations.

New Responsibilities
Assigned to the Joint
Warfighting Center

In May 1993, the Chairman, JCS, gave new joint training responsibilities to the Joint Warfighting Center. The Center was created in 1993 by merging two existing Joint Staff organizations—the Joint Warfare Center located at Hurlburt Field, Florida, and the Joint Doctrine Center located at the Naval Air Station, Norfolk, Virginia.¹ The new Center is responsible for (1) providing training assistance to CINCS in joint exercise design, execution, and assessment and (2) assisting the Joint Staff in developing and assessing joint doctrine and establishing the need for new doctrine.

In fiscal year 1994, most of the Center's activities focused on relocating to newly refurbished facilities at Fort Monroe, Virginia, and defining the roles and responsibilities of the new organization. A technical staff of military and contractor personnel began assessing the CINCS' needs for computer simulation support for joint exercises and designing computer simulation packages to train CINC forces and staff in their theaters of operations.

At the CINCS' invitation, the Center plans to help train overseas forces and staff in joint operations. To provide more uniform training, the Center plans to help CINCS design exercises based on the Joint Staff's universal list of joint tasks. The Center will also offer its technical support in using simulation models in the CINCS' joint training activities.

For fiscal year 1995, CINCS have requested the Center's technical assistance on 11 of the 212 planned exercises. For these exercises, the Center will

¹The Joint Warfare Center's former mission was to provide computer simulation support for joint exercises. The Joint Doctrine Center's mission was to assess and develop joint doctrine.

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(1) identify training requirements and develop joint exercise plans, (2) provide observers and controllers to the CINCS' exercises, and/or (3) assess exercise results. The Center also plans to assess the adequacy of 30 joint doctrinal publications covering such topics as joint operations, peacekeeping, and airspace control.

In commenting on our report, DOD noted that it remains to be seen how much computer-driven simulations can replace field training exercises. To the extent that such substitutions become possible, DOD suggested that the future CJCS Exercise Program may not be representative of the past program.

**USACOM Assigned to
Train Most Forces**

Given new responsibilities for joint training of U.S.-based forces, USACOM is now responsible for training about 2 million military personnel—more than 75 percent of all U.S. forces. It developed a new joint training program and introduced an innovative operational strategy based on joint force packages.

**USACOM Has Developed a
New Joint Training
Program**

The joint training program consists of three levels of training. Under the first level, the services train their own personnel in the basic skills needed to conduct military operations, such as infantry tactics, armor, aviation, or support skills. Under the second level, USACOM trains five major force groups in joint tasks through field and computer-simulated exercises. These forces include those in the Army's 18th Airborne Corps and II Corps, 8th Air Force, II Marine Expeditionary Force, and the Navy's 2nd Fleet. This level of training will begin with six exercises in fiscal year 1995 and increase over time to eight exercises annually.

USACOM is also responsible for the third level of training, which uses a combination of academic seminars and computer-assisted exercises to train staffs in commanding joint task forces. Using a hypothetical real-world scenario, a joint task force team is assembled to plan and direct a mission from deployment to redeployment. The training emphasizes joint planning, decision-making, and the application of joint doctrine. USACOM began some portions of the training in fiscal year 1994 and plans to conduct its first complete program in fiscal year 1995. By fiscal year 1998, USACOM expects to conduct six such exercises.

USACOM's New Operational Strategy Is Based on Joint Force Packages

In 1993, USACOM also developed a new strategy for deploying forces to regional crises. A key principal of this new strategy is to develop packages of U.S.-based forces from the various services, which USACOM could provide to the warfighting CINCS based on the specific situation. These joint force packages would provide varying levels of capability that could be tailored to the specific conflict scenario. By planning these packages in advance, USACOM officials believe that they will be able to quickly provide the forces CINCS need. In developing the packages, USACOM asked the other CINCS to assess what capabilities are needed for various missions. In a crisis, USACOM, in concert with the affected CINC, would identify and deploy the appropriate force package to the CINC's area of operation. USACOM will focus on training these packages in joint operations since some packages will entail deploying forces in nontraditional ways.

USACOM expects this strategy to help overcome past problems of forces being inadequately trained for joint operations. In the past, CINCS requested forces directly from the services when crises arose. This created problems because forces from the various services had not always trained together prior to their deployment. Even if they had, there might have been significant differences in the tasks performed, as well as the procedures and terminology used.

An advantage of USACOM's strategy is that when a crisis occurs, CINCS will have a predetermined list of forces available as a starting point, which they can then tailor as needed to the specific situation. For example, if the predetermined forces are too large for the operation, a CINC could select a portion of the force package or a smaller force package more appropriate to the situation. Although USACOM hopes that CINCS will request its predetermined force packages, they are not required to do so. It remains the CINCS' prerogative to mix and match forces. USACOM is developing standard joint task force packages for foreign disaster relief, seaport operations, and crisis response. However, as of January 1995, it did not have an estimated time for completing these packages. Appropriate training will follow this planning effort.

CINCS Have Expressed Concerns About New Joint Training Initiatives

CINCS have raised serious concerns about USACOM's new joint training program and operational strategy and appear reluctant to use the Joint Warfighting Center's technical assistance. J-7, Joint Warfighting Center, and USACOM officials are aware of the concerns and believe that, over time, they will be resolved. However, the disagreements among CINCS, USACOM, and the Center were at an impasse at the time of our review.

Reservations Over USACOM's Joint Training Programs

CINC officials expressed strong concerns about the soundness of USACOM's joint training program. The concerns focus on whether USACOM (1) can adequately train U.S.-based forces for overseas CINCS and (2) is targeting its joint staff training toward the correct audience.

In a March 1994 testimony before the Senate Committee on Armed Services, the former USACOM commander stressed the importance of developing a program that provides CINCS with highly trained forces. However, officials from the European and Pacific Commands told us they questioned whether USACOM could adequately train U.S.-based forces for their use. They cited two reasons that will make it difficult for USACOM to train forces for overseas CINCS: (1) the increasingly diverse missions that forces are expected to conduct and (2) the CINCS' different terrain, tactics, and procedures. In the past, CINCS had large forces permanently assigned to them and trained these forces. Thus, the forces were familiar with the CINCS' terrain and operating procedures, and CINCS had first-hand knowledge of their readiness. Now that CINCS will have to rely more on forces stationed in the United States, they have less assurance of force readiness and are reluctant to use U.S.-based forces without further training. Because of these concerns, one CINC issued instructions requiring that all forces deployed to his theater train with forces already in the theater prior to undertaking any mission.

Central and European Command officials stated that USACOM's program to train personnel to command joint forces is also targeting the wrong audience. The program focuses on training commanders and staffs from the U.S.-based forces under USACOM's control. However, CINC officials said that joint task force commanders are typically selected from their own theaters of operation. One CINC issued guidance to this effect. CINC officials cited recent operations by the European Command in Rwanda and Somalia and USACOM's efforts in Haiti to demonstrate their point. In those instances, the joint force commanders were selected from European and Atlantic Command personnel, respectively.

The Commander of the Joint Warfighting Center agreed that commanders are generally selected from the affected theater of operation. However, the Commander believed that as personnel rotate between assignments in the United States and the regional commands and become familiar with the differing missions, terrain, and procedures, this matter will resolve itself.

USACOM officials are aware of the CINCS' concerns about the new joint training strategies but also believe that, over time, their concerns will be

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allayed. They agreed that (1) USACOM could not train U.S.-based forces for every conceivable task and condition in the various CINC theaters and (2) joint force commanders would usually come from the affected region. USACOM officials emphasized that CINCS, not USACOM, were responsible for training their forces stationed in their areas to their regional-unique needs but believed that the additional training required for new forces would be minimal. These officials, including the USACOM Training Director, noted the following:

- The recent changes to joint training and operational planning, such as the identification of a common set of joint tasks and preplanned joint force packages, should enhance training and minimize training differences.
- The new strategies are an improvement over past CINC training approaches that lacked uniformity and did not train forces for joint tasks.
- The Joint Warfighting Center is available to CINCS to help train their forces and commanders to joint standards.

The strategy is too new to evaluate how much additional training time forces and commanders trained by USACOM will need before CINCS can effectively integrate USACOM-trained forces into their joint operations. Upcoming USACOM joint exercises are designed to test the validity of the new training strategy.

**Concerns Over USACOM's
Joint Force Packaging
Concept**

Officials at all three CINCS we visited were concerned about the soundness of USACOM's plan to provide predetermined joint force packages. Their concerns focused on whether the strategy provides CINCS with sufficient capabilities to conduct joint operations.

The United States used to have the capability to form large amphibious joint task forces to augment the CINCS' forces. Typically, these forces centered around an aircraft carrier and its associated destroyers, guided missile frigates, and submarines and an amphibious ready group housing a large complement of ground forces and their associated equipment. The Navy had a large complement of nearly 600 ships available to form large task forces. For example, the European Command used to have about 320,000 forces stationed overseas and could form large task forces of up to 19 ships for year-round deployment. In 1994, the Command had only about 146,000 forces stationed overseas and will have only 100,000 forces by fiscal year 1996. Further, because the Navy has only about 390 ships available (a 35-percent reduction), it can no longer support CINCS with large task forces. For example, USACOM joint forces, to be deployed in 1995

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to the European Command, will consist of only 11 to 14 ships and will be available for only 9 months—a 25-percent reduction.

In a March 1994 testimony before the Senate Committee on Armed Services, CINCS from both the Central and European Commands stated that the joint force packages provided by USACOM so far had failed to fully support mission requirements. With smaller joint forces, they had to make trade-offs in the types of capabilities available. They each cited examples of two USACOM deployments in 1993. As part of the first deployment—an exercise in the Persian Gulf—USACOM placed Marines on board a Navy aircraft carrier. The former Central Command commander, said that when the carrier deployed to the coast of Iraq, not enough Marines and equipment were on board. Further, carrying the Marines forced the carrier to displace the normal complement of F-14s and other aircraft, thereby reducing air combat capabilities, according to the former CINC.

In a second deployment, a carrier battle group and an amphibious group traveled from the Mediterranean area to conduct operations in Bosnia and Somalia. However, according to the former Central Command CINC, the joint force was reorganized from its standard package, some Marines and aircraft were removed, and the battle and amphibious groups were separated. One group deployed for operations in Bosnia and the other went to Somalia—an action that resulted in neither group having the capabilities to meet their missions, according to the Central and European Command CINCS. Both CINCS felt that separating the two groups was not sound and that the new joint forces provided only limited air and ground capabilities. The Central Command CINC was also concerned about USACOM's joint force strategy in an August 1994 letter to the Chairman of DOD's Commission on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces. He stated that

“the concept . . . is not the panacea for forward presence, deterrence, and crisis response. Force structure, roles, missions, and functions decisions should not count so heavily on this concept; rather, [such decisions should count on] joint synergism in general, so that we may reduce forces to a point where they are strategically flexible but not operationally hollow.”

CINC officials expressed similar concerns during our visits. They said that USACOM's joint force packaging strategy represents a threat to command capabilities when forces deviate from their traditional configurations. According to the Central Command Deputy Director for Operations, units separated and combined with portions of other units provide less than

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their normal capability. Although the joint forces deployed by USACOM are based on the CINCS' determination of their needs, CINC officials stated that USACOM's guidance had not enabled them to accurately determine their joint force requirements.

USACOM officials were aware of the CINCS' concerns about the new joint force packaging strategy and explained that the strategy is an attempt to meet the CINCS' needs with smaller forces. Further, the reality is that the United States no longer has the capability to operate in the configuration of the large amphibious groups. They said that the Command's operational strategy is evolving and that they are working with CINCS to define more precise joint force requirements.

**CINCS Are Reluctant to
Request Joint Warfighting
Center Assistance**

It is too early to tell what impact the Joint Warfighting Center will have on the CINCS' joint training programs. Officials at two regional commands stated that they are capable of developing their own joint training programs and, therefore, do not plan to extensively use the Center's services. Further, two of the three regional commands that we visited have developed their own simulation centers to support their training, and command officials stated that they did not need the Center's services. Nevertheless, Center officials pointed out that the CINCS' use of their services could help make joint training more uniform across the force and that the CINCS' approach of "going it alone" could simply perpetuate past problems.

Our review showed that each CINC trains its staff differently for joint operations. The Pacific Command has a formal training program built around a permanent force of personnel trained in joint operations. A team of 30 personnel from all services trains twice a month. The training includes classes on crisis action planning and development of operational plans and orders. When a mission begins, the Pacific Command joint task staff assists the joint task force commander in the initial phases of the operation.

Neither the Central nor European Commands conduct a similar training program for joint task force staff. The European Command uses joint exercises to train staff. Command officials told us that in 1994, it revised three exercises to include training staff in joint operations. In fiscal year 1995, the Command plans to significantly increase this training by conducting 12 such exercises. The Central Command does not have a formal joint training program for its staff, and it has not revised any

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exercises to provide better training opportunities. In fiscal year 1994, the Command conducted two exercises that trained staff in joint operations.

CINCS do not plan to extensively use the Center for simulation support because they either have their own simulation centers or place little priority on simulated training. Both the European and Pacific Commands have centers with the capability to conduct large-scale simulation exercises, for both live exercises and exercises to train staff in joint operations. The Central Command does not have a simulation center and has used the former Joint Warfare Center to support its training. However, the last exercise the Center conducted for the Central Command was in 1990. According to Central Command officials, they conduct few simulation exercises because they train extensively with forces from other nations, which have little experience with or capability to use simulation. Finally, USACOM is developing its own simulation training facilities in the Tidewater, Virginia, area, even though the Center is developing its simulation facility nearby.²

The Commander of the Center recognized the CINCS' limited use of the Center, but stated that CINCS are not required to use the Center. The Commander hopes that by extensively marketing the Center's services, CINCS will use it more.

Conclusions

Numerous actions have been taken aimed at improving joint training. However, they will not be effective unless the Chairman, JCS, exerts a strong leadership role and resolves the impasse over USACOM's joint training and operational strategies and the role of the Joint Warfighting Center. The new strategies are vast departures from past practices, which gave virtually all decision-making authority for joint training and force deployment to CINCS. Accordingly, some resistance by CINCS is understandable. However, the CINCS have raised basic concerns about the soundness of the new strategies. The success of the new strategies is questionable—unless CINCS feel confident that their concerns have been addressed and the strategies have been adequately tried and tested. Moreover, a lack of consensus among the CINCS could perpetuate past problems in joint training and operations. In our opinion, top-level DOD officials must address the CINCS' concerns if the strategies are to succeed.

²This potential overlap was the subject of our inquiry to the Secretary of Defense, Joint Simulation Training (GAO/NSIAD-94-249R, Aug. 18, 1994). DOD did not respond to our inquiry requesting it reconsider the need for two centers and has proceeded to construct them.

Similar attention must be paid to the CINCS' reluctance to use the Joint Warfighting Center's services. Uniform training is important given the substantially reduced size of DOD's forces and the flexibility needed to deploy forces anywhere in the world. The Center can fulfill an important role in making CINC training efforts more uniform across the force, but only if CINCS use its services.

Recommendation

To improve the uniformity of joint training and promote USACOM's efforts to strengthen joint training and operational capabilities, we recommend that the Secretary of Defense, in concert with the Chairman, JCS, take appropriate actions to achieve a stronger consensus among the CINCS about (1) USACOM's new strategies for training joint task force commanders and their staffs and the use of joint force packages and (2) the merits of the Joint Warfighting Center's technical assistance.

Agency Comments

DOD concurred with our recommendation but said that the CINCS' concerns about USACOM's joint training and force deployment strategies had already been addressed. DOD supported its position by citing a draft response from one CINC to questions submitted for the record in testimony before the House Committee on National Security in March 1995. In his response, the CINC said that he had reached agreement with USACOM on how forces provided to his theater would be trained. However, he did not comment on the overall soundness of the training and operational strategies that this CINC's staff told us during our work. With regard to joint force packaging, he emphasized that he must continue to have a strong influence over the forces deployed for joint operations and that these packages must be robust and responsive to deal with anticipated missions and unforeseen contingencies.

These were the same reservations that the CINCS' staffs voiced during our review. Further, contrary to DOD's position that it had addressed the CINCS' concerns about the new joint training and operational strategies, the Commission on Roles and Missions, in its May 1995 report, noted that the CINCS' concerns had not been resolved. For example, the Commission noted improvements were needed for evaluating joint training and assessing joint readiness and that CINCS must have greater influence over training and packaging the forces used in joint operations. It also found that USACOM's new capacity as "joint force integrator" has not been adequately developed and defined and CINCS must adequately understand and accept this concept. Based on these lingering concerns, we have

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retained our original recommendation that would focus top-level attention on achieving a stronger consensus on these strategies.

DOD disputed our finding that CINCS appeared reluctant to seek assistance from the Joint Warfighting Center. It said that the Center would support 17 joint exercises during fiscal years 1995 and 1996. It should be noted that these exercises represent only about 4 percent of the 400 exercises planned and may suggest the CINC's continuing reluctance to extensively use the Center's technical assistance.

Comments From the Department of Defense



PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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MAY 22 1995



Mr. Mark E. Gebicke
Director, Military Operations and Capabilities Issues
National Security and International Affairs Division
U.S. General Accounting Office
Washington, DC 20598

Dear Mr. Gebicke:

This is the Department of Defense (DoD) response to the General Accounting Office (GAO) draft report, "MILITARY CAPABILITIES: Stronger Joint Staff Role Needed to Enhance Joint Military Training," dated March 20, 1995 (GAO Code 703041), OSD Case 9893. The DoD partially concurs with the report.

It is important to recognize that the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) Exercise Program, which is the focus of the draft report, has multiple purposes. The Department of Defense trains, as well as assesses, its joint military capability to satisfy national security requirements across the operational continuum -- from peacetime presence through show of force into regional and global conventional and nuclear war. While the Chairman's Transportation Funds will be utilized for only 65 percent of the exercises in the FY 1995 program, (the remaining 35 percent will be funded by the Services), over 88 percent of those exercises will employ joint forces in the execution of the National Military Strategy. The overall DoD goal is to maintain a balance, not equality, of the two objectives (training and assessing) of the CJCS Exercise program.

It is also important to recognize that doctrine for conducting joint operations and the procedures for managing and conducting joint training are evolving rapidly. It remains to be seen, for example, to what degree computer driven simulations can replace field training exercises. United Endeavor 95 (UE-95), recently completed by the U.S. Atlantic Command, was a highly successful joint training exercise that trained a commander (III CORPS) and over 4,500 staff personnel without deploying a single troop to the field. Thus, the CJCS Exercise Program of the past is not likely to be representative of the CJCS Exercise Program of the future.

Detailed DoD comments on the draft report findings and recommendations are provided in an enclosure. The DoD appreciates the opportunity to comment on the GAO draft report.

Sincerely,

Edwin Dorn



Enclosure

GAO DRAFT REPORT - DATED MARCH 20, 1995
(GAO CODE 703041) OSD CASE 9893

"MILITARY CAPABILITIES: STRONGER JOINT STAFF ROLE NEEDED
TO ENHANCE JOINT MILITARY TRAINING"
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE COMMENTS

FINDINGS

- o **FINDING A:** The GAO reported that the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) Exercise Program is the primary method the DoD uses to train forces for joint operations, although the program has multiple purposes. The GAO noted that in FY 1994, the regional commanders in chief (CINCs) conducted about 200 live and computer-simulated military exercises under the program. The GAO reported that the responsibilities for joint training are divided among various DoD entities. The GAO explained that the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)) provides overall policy and program review of all military training programs. The GAO noted that the Joint Staff's Operational Plans and Interoperability (J-7) Directorate monitors and coordinates the joint training activities of the CINCs, formulates joint training policies, and advises the Secretary of Defense on joint training priorities. The GAO further noted that the Joint Staff's Joint Warfighting Center develops joint doctrine and helps the regional CINCs develop training programs for the overseas forces.

The GAO determined that the U.S. Atlantic Command (USACOM) trains most U.S.-based forces and provides the other regional CINCs with forces for joint operations. The GAO pointed out, however, that each of the regional CINCs determine their joint training requirements and then plan, conduct, and evaluate joint exercises in their respective areas of operation. The GAO also pointed out that the Services train the forces in basic service skills.

The GAO previously reviewed the DoD joint training in 1979 and 1985 and found both times that program effectiveness was impaired by inadequate Joint Staff oversight (OSD Cases 5257 and 6640). (pp. 2-4, pp. 13-21/GAO Draft Report)

DoD RESPONSE: Concur. It should be noted, however, that the Joint Warfighting Center does not develop joint training doctrine, but assesses existing joint training doctrine and establishes the need for new doctrine.

Enclosure

Now on pp. 6 and 19-22.

- o **FINDING B: Majority of Exercises Do Not Have Joint Training Objectives.**
The GAO reported that in 1994, the DoD spent over \$400 million to conduct over 200 exercises under the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) Exercise Program, yet less than one-third of the exercises had joint training as their primary focus. The GAO found that, of 121 exercises conducted by the commanders of the European, Pacific, and Southwest Asia theaters in FY 1994, 73 percent of the exercises were designed to meet objectives, such as a show of U.S. military presence in a region. The GAO pointed out that (1) only 27 percent of the 121 exercises were designed to train forces or commanders for joint operations, and (2) that almost 60 percent of the exercises involved only a single Service and could not be characterized as joint. (pp. 5-6, pp. 24-29/ GAO Draft Report)

DoD RESPONSE: Concur. As pointed out earlier, the CJCS Exercise Program has two elements. The real question is whether the number of exercises devoted to joint training satisfy the requirement to train joint U.S. forces, not what percentage of the total number of exercises conducted were allocated to joint training. The DoD maintains that the number of joint training exercises conducted in FY1994 was adequate to meet the joint training needs.

- o **FINDING C: Most Exercises Do Not Provide Challenging Training For U.S. Forces.** The GAO explained that the major reason for the small number of joint training exercises being conducted is that the other program objectives of gaining access to foreign seaports and airstrips, showing a U.S. military presence in a region, and enhancing military-to-military relationships have taken precedence over those related to joint training. The GAO noted that, in a September 1994 speech before the Association of the U.S. Army Institute for Land Warfare, the Chairman, JCS commented on the status of joint training exercises and the need for improvements. (pp. 5-6, p. 30/GAO Draft Report)

DoD RESPONSE: Nonconcur. The reason that a small number of joint exercises were conducted is not because the other element of the CJCS Exercises Program has taken precedence over joint training, but because that number of joint exercises was all that was needed to satisfy the joint training requirements. Again, most of the CJCS Exercise Program funds are spent on joint training.

- o **FINDING D: Recent Joint Staff Working Group Review of Exercise Program Surfaced Similar Findings.** The GAO found that a recently completed Joint Staff Working Group review of all the exercises conducted by the CINCs under the CJCS Exercise Program showed similar results. The GAO noted that the Review found that only 17 percent of the exercises had joint training for U.S. forces as their primary focus. The GAO pointed out that the variances between the Joint Staff and

Now on pp. 6 and 22.

Now on pp. 6 and 23-24.

GAO analyses were due to differences in the scope of the studies and the period reviewed. (pp. 5-6, pp. 31-32/GAO Draft Report)

DoD RESPONSE: Concur.

- o **FINDING E: Stronger Joint Staff Oversight Needed to Improve Joint Training.** The GAO reported that inadequate oversight by the Joint Staff has been a major factor contributing to the limited amount of joint training being conducted for U.S. forces. The GAO noted that, although 10 U.S. Code gives the regional CINCs responsibility for conducting joint training, the Joint Staff is responsible for overseeing the activities of the CINCs. The GAO further noted that, despite this oversight responsibility, the Joint Staff has not conducted the range of activities that this responsibility entails. The GAO explained, for example, that the Joint Staff has not (1) evaluated the content of the CINC-planned joint exercises on a routine basis to ensure that beneficial training is conducted or that exercises focus on correcting past problems; (2) developed meaningful standards to assist the CINCs in evaluating exercises; or (3) conducted a sufficient independent evaluation to ensure that problems are identified and addressed.

The GAO concluded that stronger Joint Staff oversight is required to ensure that the full range of activities needed to improve joint training are effectively carried out and coordinated. The GAO pointed out that the diffusion of responsibilities among DoD entities heightens the importance of a stronger Joint Staff coordinating role. (pp. 6-7, pp. 33-34/GAO Draft Report)

Now on pp. 6 and 30-31.

DoD RESPONSE: Nonconcur. The DoD does not agree that inadequate oversight by the Joint Staff is a major factor contributing to the limited amount of joint training being conducted. The CJCS Exercise Program, including that element devoted to joint training, is approved by the CJCS and forwarded to the Secretary of Defense for inclusion in the President's Budget. In the opinion of the CJCS and the Secretary of Defense the joint training program is not limited, but is, in fact, satisfactory.

What is needed to improve joint training is not more joint staff oversight, but time for the actions already put into place to mature. The development of universal joint task lists (UJTLs) leading to the development of joint mission essential task lists (JMETLs) by the Warfighting Commanders in Chief (CINCs) will put joint training on a requirements basis, rather than an event-driven basis. The roles, missions, and responsibilities of both the Joint Warfighting Center and the USACOM in support of joint training are also evolving. In the near future, the products of these activities will have a major, positive impact on joint training.

- o **FINDING F: The Joint Staff Has Not Critically Reviewed the Content of CINC Training Plans.** The GAO reported that, although the Joint Staff has taken some limited actions based on the prior recommendations by the GAO, it appears that many of the problems the GAO noted 15 years ago have continued. The GAO noted, for example, that instead of performing an independent analysis of planned CINC exercises as the GAO recommended, the Joint Staff assigned CINC responsibility for analyzing the content of their own exercises. The GAO also noted that the Joint Staff has limited its reviews of CINC training plans to (1) evaluating the need of the CINC for transportation--airlift and sealift--and other resources, such as ammunition, fuel, and equipment to conduct the exercises and (2) ensuring that those needs were met.

The GAO reported that, because the Joint Staff has not reviewed the CINC training plans, it also has no assurance that actions taken to address past identified problems have, in fact, corrected them. The GAO noted that the Joint Staff--under its Remedial Action Project program--identifies problems and assigns responsibility to the appropriate organization to correct the problems. The GAO stated, for example, that the Joint Warfighting Center would be charged with correcting problems stemming from weaknesses in joint doctrine. The GAO determined that in FY 1994, the Joint Staff began preparing annual summaries of problems identified in joint exercises and operations from its Joint Universal Lessons Learned System and provides the information to the CINC, who are supposed to use that information to plan future exercise tasks. The GAO pointed out that, although those Joint Staff efforts to identify and correct problems are steps in the right direction, the failure of the Joint Staff to review the planned exercises of the CINC does not provide the needed assurance that common problems identified in the past are tested or that actions taken to correct them are effective.

The GAO reported that CINC officials seldom test whether prior problems have been corrected because (1) the Joint Staff has not required them to do so and (2) they had insufficient time to analyze past problems before planning future exercises. The GAO further reported that, despite the prior GAO report recommendation, the Joint Staff has not required that exercise objectives be focused on Remedial Action Project items from previous exercises. The GAO concluded that the lack of the requirement may contribute to the fact that problems in joint operations have tended to recur. The GAO stated, for example, that those conducting the first phase of the Joint Staff exercise review reported that lessons learned from prior exercises had not been sufficiently analyzed. The GAO also stated that inadequate training of joint force commanders was cited as a key problem in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, as well as the Somalia relief effort. The GAO pointed out that, although the Joint Staff is attempting several solutions to improve proficiency in joint operations, such as the USACOM new joint training

Now on pp. 6 and 25-27.

strategies, the number of exercises has not been increased to test the effectiveness of the efforts. (pp. 6-7, pp. 34-37/GAO Draft Report)

DoD RESPONSE: Partially concur. The DoD does not agree that a primary objective of the CJCS Exercise Program should be to verify that the proposed solutions to Remedial Action Projects (RAP) are valid. If the verification of a RAP solution can be accommodated in an exercise, without compromising the primary objectives, then it should be done. The Joint Staff is not the organization to decide the issue on a case by case basis.

- o **FINDING G: The Joint Staff Has Not Set Objective Standards to Measure Joint Exercise Results.** The GAO reported that the Chairman, JCS delegated responsibility for evaluating joint exercises to the regional CINCs. The GAO observed that, after completing the exercises, the CINCs must report whether the training objectives were achieved. The GAO noted that the Joint Staff uses the CINC evaluation reports to determine what actions are needed to address joint training problems. The GAO found, however, that the Joint Staff has not provided the CINCs with any objective standards to evaluate joint exercises. The GAO concluded that as a result, the CINC evaluations tend to be subjective and do not critically assess forces readiness for joint operations.

The GAO reported that the problem of assessing exercises without clearly defined standards was noted in a 1992 report by the Center for Army Lessons Learned, based on observations of U.S. Army forces that participated in the Return of Forces to Germany (REFORGER) joint exercise. The GAO explained that, in assessing the results of the exercise, the Center noted that the majority of exercise objectives did not have measurable, objective standards--rather the exercise objectives were subjective in nature. The GAO reported that according to the Center, the majority of exercise objectives in REFORGER 92 could be easily accomplished solely as a function of time and posture of units and that none of the exercise objectives could be measured in a negative manner. In addition, the GAO reported that the Center observed that since no accompanying standards were included, automatic success was achieved through the objectives--as long as all REFORGER player units participated from the start to the end of the exercise.

The GAO stated that the Center recommended that large exercises not be planned or conducted without measurable training objectives. The GAO acknowledged that the JCS recognizes the need for objective training standards and is working with the CINCs to develop them. (pp. 6-7, pp. 38-40/GAO Draft Report)

Now on pp. 6 and 27-29.

DoD RESPONSE: Partially concur. There is no requirement for the CJCS to provide the CINCs "objective standards" to evaluate their joint exercises. The single, fully coordinated and agreed upon "standard" is Joint Doctrine. The development of the UJTL and associated conditions for use by the CINCs to build their respective JMETLs, is an early effort to standardize terminology and tasks. However, the CINCs must set their own standards because each Operational Plan or Contingency Plan is different, depending on the CINCs area of responsibility. The Joint Staff is providing the CINCs the tools to help develop "standards" on the joint operational level of warfare.

- o **FINDING H: The Joint Staff Monitors Few Joint Exercises.** The GAO reported that the Joint Staff relies on the CINCs to evaluate their own exercises and observes few exercises to gain first-hand knowledge of the problems that occur. The GAO noted that, as a result, the Joint Staff is not aware of all problems that occur, some of which could have serious implications, because it conducts few independent exercise evaluations--just 4 of the 200 exercises conducted in FY 1994. The GAO noted that Joint Staff officials advised that it does not have sufficient staff to observe more exercises. The GAO determined, moreover, that the Joint Staff permits remedial action projects, which are aimed at correcting identified problems, to be closed before their corrective actions are tested in joint exercises. The GAO concluded that, as a result of those deficiencies, not all problems are reported and those that are, frequently recur. (pp. 6-7, p. 41/GAO Draft Report)

DoD RESPONSE: Concur. There is no requirement under joint training auspices for the Joint Staff to monitor CINC-sponsored exercises. Under the CJCS Evaluation Program J-7 observes both selected joint operations and exercises. During those field evaluations, the incorporations and attainment of joint training objectives is one of the many areas that evaluators focus on.

- o **FINDING I: Stronger Joint Staff Coordinating Role Is Needed.** The GAO reported that a major factor contributing to the lingering problems in joint training is the diffusion of responsibilities among several DoD entities for various aspects of joint training, without a strong Joint Staff focal point to ensure proper coordination of the activities. The GAO reemphasized that joint training responsibilities are divided among the Office of the Secretary of Defense; the Joint Staff, and its subordinate entities--its J-7 directorate and the Joint Warfighting Center; the USACOM; the remaining regional CINCs; and the individual Military Services.

The GAO reported that the Joint Staff has assigned its J-7 directorate as the responsible Joint Staff entity for coordinating joint training activities; however, that

entity has not been sufficiently staffed to exercise a strong oversight role. The GAO stated that the J-7 staff acknowledged that a broader range of oversight responsibilities was desirable; however, they recognize that with their limited staff, such oversight is not possible. The GAO observed that the J-7 staff have instead limited their role to developing joint doctrine and policy, coordinating exercise schedules, and entering data into the lessons learned system, rather than performing broad program oversight. The GAO pointed out that, because it could not realistically assume all the tasks necessary to achieve an effective joint training program, the J-7 has had to delegate certain tasks to the other DoD and JCS entities. The GAO concluded that is not unreasonable and, given the current budgetary climate, it is unrealistic to assume that additional resources would be forthcoming to increase the J-7 staff to assume those tasks.

The GAO explained that, at first glance, it would appear that either the Joint Warfighting Center or the USACOM might be better equipped than the J-7 to provide more comprehensive oversight of joint training; however, there are drawbacks to reassigning the role to either entity. The GAO further explained that the Joint Warfighting Center has been given increased responsibilities for joint training and a substantial personnel increase; however, the GAO found that 145 of the 202 staff at the Center are technical contractors associated with the simulation program--personnel who would not be well-suited to conduct the range of oversight responsibilities required of that role.

The GAO pointed out that the Joint Warfighting Center personnel were not anxious to assume additional roles for critically reviewing CINC plans, since the Center--headed by a major general--might not command sufficient authority in overseeing the activities of the CINCs, who are 4-star general officers. The GAO further pointed out that the Center has not yet established credibility with the CINCs, who will have to be convinced of the value of the Center's services before using the assistance offered.

The GAO also noted that, similarly, the USACOM--having been given a major role in joint training and a substantial staff--would appear to be in a better position to coordinate joint training activities and provide the needed program oversight than the small J-7 staff. The GAO pointed out, however, that JCS and USACOM officials felt that, given the USACOM current responsibilities to train U.S.-based forces, provide forces to the CINCs, and function as a combatant CINC for the Atlantic region, an expanded role would not be feasible. The GAO indicated that, according to the officials, such a role would concentrate too much authority in one CINC, reinforce already strained relations between the USACOM and the remaining CINCs, and remove training and operational responsibilities that are rightfully assigned to each of the warfighting CINCs.

The GAO stated that the Commander of the Center and the USACOM Director of Training both agreed that closer oversight of joint training was needed; however, they disagreed on the strategy to accomplish that objective.

The GAO noted that the USACOM Training Director believed that responsibility for oversight should not be centralized under one organization and felt that the CINCs were in the best position to perform the task. The GAO also noted that the Center Commander stated that a stronger focal point for joint training was needed, but that given resource constraints, it would be unrealistic to expect the J-7 to be given additional staff to perform the range of activities needed. The GAO noted that the Center Commander concluded that the current J-7 approach of assigning responsibilities to the other entities and then attempting to coordinate the activities was, in effect, the only practical way to manage joint training activities. (pp. 6-7, pp. 42-45/GAO Draft Report)

DoD RESPONSE: Concur.

- o **FINDING J: The Joint Staff is Actively Working to Improve Joint Training.**
The GAO reported that, over the last few years, the Joint Staff has developed and issued numerous joint doctrinal publications, issued additional joint policy guidance, and increased the capabilities of the Joint Warfighting Center to provide technical assistance to the CINCs in their joint training programs. The GAO concluded that, although additional actions are planned, their impact will not be realized for several years.

The GAO reported that sound joint doctrine is essential to successful joint operations, since it establishes the fundamental principles to guide military actions, provides the common perspective from which forces can plan and operate, and fundamentally shapes the way U.S. forces train for war. The GAO observed that common terminology is critical to the individual Services communicating effectively with each other and avoiding confusion on the battlefield. The GAO pointed out that the lessons learned reports from past operations and exercises revealed that joint operations were being hindered by a lack of joint doctrine and common terminology.

The GAO reported that the Joint Staff has issued numerous joint doctrinal publications over the last 2 years, and recently prepared a dictionary of common terms that should be used in joint operations. The GAO noted that, as of March 1995, the Joint Staff had issued 59 of 102 planned joint doctrinal publications and expects to issue the remainder by the end of FY 1996. According to the GAO, the

Now on pp. 6 and 30-31.

publications cover a wide range of joint operations, from the use of nuclear weapons to humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping missions.

The GAO pointed out that to help overcome the problem of inconsistent terminology for joint training and operations, the JCS issued a Universal Joint Task List in October 1993. The GAO noted that the list represents a compilation of all joint tasks that forces must be capable of performing, and also provides a common basis for the CINCs to use in planning, conducting, and assessing joint exercises and operations. According to the GAO, examples of joint tasks include conducting operational maneuvers, such as deploying forces to a theater, employing them, and overcoming obstacles; conducting intelligence, such as collecting information on the enemy threat and vulnerability; and providing combat service support, such as repairing equipment, providing health services, and prisoner-of-war operations. The GAO acknowledged that the Joint Staff is in the process of linking the joint tasks to measurable performance standards to more accurately assess performance in joint exercises.

The GAO reported that, in May 1993, the CJCS gave new joint training responsibilities to the JCS Joint Warfighting Center. The GAO explained that the Center was created in 1993 by merging two existing CJCS organizations--the Joint Warfare Center located at Hurlburt Field, Florida, and the Joint Doctrine Center located at Norfolk Naval Base, Virginia. The GAO further explained that, in addition to continuing its former responsibility to provide computer simulation support for joint exercises, the new mission of the Center was expanded to also include (1) providing training assistance to the CINCs in joint exercise design, execution, and assessment and (2) assisting the JCS in developing and assessing joint doctrine.

The GAO reported that, at the CINCs' invitation, the Center plans to assist in training overseas forces and staff in joint operations. The GAO noted that, to provide more uniform training, the Center will offer to help the CINCs design joint exercises, based on the mission tasks included in the Joint Staff universal list of joint tasks. The GAO also noted that the Center will offer technical support in using simulation models in the joint training activities of the CINCs.

The GAO pointed out that for FY 1995, the CINCs have requested the technical assistance of the Center on 11 of the 212 exercises planned. According to the GAO, for those exercises, the Center will (1) identify training requirements and develop joint exercise plans, (2) provide observers and controllers to the exercises, and/or (3) assess exercise results. The GAO noted that the Center also plans to assess the adequacy of 30 joint doctrinal publications covering such topics as joint operations, peacekeeping, and airspace control. (pp. 7-9, pp. 49-53/GAO Draft Report)

DoD RESPONSE: Concur.

- o **FINDING K: The U.S. Atlantic Command Assigned to Train Most Forces.** The GAO reported that, given new responsibilities for joint training of U.S.-based forces, the USACOM is now responsible for training about 2 million military personnel--more than 75 percent of all U.S. forces. The GAO noted that the USACOM has developed a new joint training program and introduced an innovative operational strategy based on joint force packages.

The GAO determined that the joint training program consists of three levels of training. The GAO reported that in the first level the Services train their own personnel in the basic skills needed to conduct military operations, such as infantry tactics, armor, aviation, or support skills. The GAO reported that in the second level, the USACOM trains five major force groups in joint tasks through field and computer-simulated exercises. In the third level the GAO reported the USACOM is responsible for training using a combination of academic seminars and computer-assisted exercises to train staffs in commanding joint task forces. The GAO noted that training under the third level emphasizes joint planning, decision-making, and the application of joint doctrine. The GAO pointed out that the USACOM began some portions of the training in FY 1994, and plans to conduct its first complete program in FY 1995.

The GAO reported that in 1993, the USACOM also developed a new strategy for deploying forces to regional crises. The GAO determined that a key principal of the new strategy is to develop packages of U.S.-based forces from the various Services, which the USACOM could provide to the warfighting CINCs based on the specific situation at hand. The GAO noted that those joint force packages would provide varying levels of capability that could be tailored to the specific conflict scenario. The GAO pointed out that the USACOM expects the strategy to help overcome past problems of forces being inadequately trained for joint operations.

The GAO also pointed out that an advantage of the USACOM strategy is that when a crisis occurs, the CINCs will have a predetermined list of forces available as a starting point, which it can then tailor as needed to the specific situation. The GAO stated, for example, if the pre-determined forces are too large for the operation, a CINC could select only a portion of the force package or a smaller force package more appropriate to the situation. The GAO further pointed out that, although the USACOM hopes that the CINCs will request its predetermined force packages, the CINCs are not required to do so--it remains the prerogative of the CINCs to mix and match forces as they have done in the past. The GAO asserted that the USACOM is in the process of developing three standard joint task force packages for foreign

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disaster relief, seaport operations, and crisis response; however, as of January 1995, it did not have an estimated time for completing those packages. (pp. 7-9, pp. 53-56/GAO Draft Report).

DoD RESPONSE: Concur.

- o **FINDING L: The CINCs Have Expressed Concerns About New Joint Training Initiatives.** The GAO reported that the CINCs have raised serious concerns about the USACOM new joint training program and operational strategy and appear reluctant to use Joint Warfighting Center technical assistance. The GAO noted that those concerns focus on whether the USACOM (1) can adequately train U.S.-based forces for use by the overseas CINCs, and (2) is targeting its joint staff training on the correct audience. The GAO also noted that CJCS and USACOM officials are aware of the concerns and believe that, over time, they will be resolved; however, the disagreements among the CINCs, the USACOM, and the Center were at an impasse at the time of the GAO review.

In addition, the GAO reported that officials at all three CINCs visited by the GAO also expressed strong concerns about the soundness of the new USACOM strategy for conducting joint operations based on predetermined joint force packages. The GAO noted that those concerns focus on whether the strategy provides the CINCs with sufficient capabilities to conduct joint operations.

The GAO acknowledged that, in March 1994 testimony before the Senate Committee on Armed Services, the former USACOM Commander stated that with the reductions in overseas force levels, better and different ways must be found to meet the needs of the CINCs without overextending forces. The GAO pointed out that tailored joint force packages are the USACOM attempts to balance requirements and resources by tailoring needed capability to actual situations. The GAO also pointed out that, in that same testimony, the CINCs for the Central and European Commands agreed that the USACOM tailored force packages had merit; however, they believed that the force packages provided to them in an exercise in the Gulf, and in actual operations in Bosnia and Somalia, had not provided them with sufficient forces to fully support mission requirements.

The GAO asserted that, in the past, the U.S. had the capability to form large amphibious joint task forces to augment the CINC forces. The GAO noted that, typically, those forces centered around an aircraft carrier and its associated destroyers, guided missile frigates, and submarines and an amphibious ready group housing a large complement of ground forces and their associated equipment. The

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GAO also emphasized that the Navy had a large complement of nearly 600 ships available to form large task forces.

The GAO reported that it is too early to tell what impact the Joint Warfighting Center will have in improving the CINCs joint training programs. The GAO acknowledged that officials at two CINCs stated that they are capable of developing their own joint training programs and, therefore, do not plan to extensively use the services of the Center. The GAO noted that two of the three CINCs visited by the GAO have developed their own simulation centers to support their own training, and CINC officials stated that they did not need the Center services. According to the GAO, Center officials pointed out that use of their services by the CINCs could help make joint training more uniform across the force and that the CINC approach of "going it alone" could simply perpetuate past problems in joint training and operations.

The GAO found that each CINC trains its staffs differently for joint operations. The GAO noted that (1) the Pacific Command has a formal training program built around a permanent force of personnel trained in joint operations; (2) neither the Central, nor European Commands, conduct a similar training program for joint task force staff; (3) the European Command uses joint exercises to provide its staff with experience in guiding joint operations; and (4) Central Command officials stated that no formal joint training program for its staff exists and that it has not revised existing exercises to provide better training opportunities in conducting joint operations.

The GAO concluded that the CINCs do not plan to extensively use the Center for simulation support of joint training, primarily because they either have their own simulation centers or place little priority on simulated training. The GAO acknowledged that the Commander of the Center recognized that the CINCs had not extensively relied on it for simulation support in the past and stated that they cannot require the CINCs to use its services. The GAO asserted that the Commander hopes that by extensively marketing the Center services, the CINCs will use more of the Center services in the future. (pp. 7-9, pp. 56-65/ GAO Draft Report)

DoD RESPONSE: Concur. The CINCs are skeptical about the new joint training initiatives because, in fact, they are new. It is not at all surprising that the CINCs have reservations about the efficacy of these initiatives.

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40-44.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- o **RECOMMENDATION 1:** To strengthen joint training, the GAO recommended that the Secretary of Defense direct the Chairman, JCS to improve program oversight by assigning clear responsibility for the following activities to the appropriate JCS or DoD entities and strengthen the monitoring of those activities to ensure that they are effectively carried out:
 - Conduct routine reviews of exercises to be held under the Chairman, JCS Exercise Program to ensure that they (1) provide maximum joint training value and (2) include tasks that test the effectiveness of actions taken to correct previously identified problems;
 - Redirect the nature of exercises held to achieve presence or access or other objectives to ensure that they include joint training tasks, to the extent possible;
 - Expedite the integration of measurable joint training standards into joint training exercises so that they can be more effectively evaluated;
 - Assign personnel independent from the CINC staffs to evaluate joint exercises to ensure that significant problems are identified and reported; and
 - Close remedial action projects only after the effectiveness of corrective actions are demonstrated in joint exercises, as appropriate (pp. 9-10, pp. 47-48/GAO Draft Report)

DoD RESPONSE: Partially Concur.

- Conduct routine reviews of exercises to be held under the Chairman, JCS Exercise Program to ensure that they (1) provide maximum joint training value and (2) include tasks that test the effectiveness of actions taken to correct previously identified problems.

Periodic reviews of selected major CINC-sponsored exercises will continue as part of the overall preparedness evaluation effort, of which joint training is but one aspect. These evaluations are conducted by Joint Staff subject matter experts independent from CINC staff.

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Further, for all significant military exercises, the sponsoring CINC submits a Significant Military Exercise Brief (SMEB) to Joint Staff J-7. SMEB is a detailed description of the exercise including objectives, joint mission essential tasks (JMETs) to be accomplished, and forces. The SMEB is reviewed by Joint Staff to assess consistency between exercise objectives and JMETs, adherence to politico-military objectives, consistency with deliberate plans, and to review forces being deployed in support of the exercise. Additionally, Joint Staff J-7 briefs the CJCS and Joint Staff Directors weekly on upcoming and ongoing significant military exercises. These briefs include the exercise objectives and JMETs.

- Redirect the nature of exercises held to achieve presence or access or other objectives to ensure that they include joint training tasks, to the extent possible.

Presence and access exercises remain instrumental to our National Military Strategy. Most access and presence exercises include some joint training. The other exercises are included in the CJCS Exercise Program to comply with the Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) requirements. USACOM, as executive agent for CJCS, is currently categorizing joint exercises as presence and access, or joint training (see executive agent details below). Following completion of the categorization, we will begin balancing training and strategic requirements in our exercise program. We will continue to emphasize the need to achieve joint training, whenever possible.

- Expedite the integration of measurable joint training standards into joint training exercises so that they can be more effectively evaluated;

CJCS appointed CINCUSACOM his executive agent for the development of common Joint Mission Essential Task (JMET) requirements and an exercise prioritization and scheduling process to achieve CJCS goal, above. Working group met initially from 27-31 March 95. Subsequent meeting is scheduled for 16-18 May 95. ACOM, as the CJCS executive agent for exercise requirements development process, is currently working with the CINCs, Services, and Joint Staff to develop joint mission essential tasks (based on each CINC's assigned missions). The goal is the development of a common language and process to facilitate the development of a requirements based exercise program with conditions and standards for each CINC's essential tasks. CINCs' consensus on JMET usefulness for joint exercise structuring and as a tool for assessing joint capabilities will be sought at the July CINCs' conference. Prioritization and synchronization of exercises will also be addressed at the August CINC's conference.

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- Assign personnel independent from the CINC staffs to evaluate joint exercises to ensure that significant problems are identified and reported; and

The Joint Staff J-7 Evaluation and Analysis Division conducts independent reviews of selected major CINC-sponsored exercises. These evaluations are conducted by Joint Staff subject matter experts independent from CINC staffs. This effort will continue as part of the overall preparedness evaluation effort, of which joint training is but one aspect.

- Close remedial action projects (RAPs) only after the effectiveness of corrective actions are demonstrated in joint exercises.

The Department does not agree that RAPs should be closed out after demonstrating effective fixes in joint exercises. Exercise objectives are not, and should not be, focused on Remedial Action Project items from previous exercises. Exercise objectives are focused on those missions and taskings the CINCs must accomplish to support National Security Strategy, National Military Strategy, and the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan. While joint exercises provide one method of validating a RAP, they are by no means the only way of demonstrating a fix.

- o **RECOMMENDATION 2:** To improve the uniformity of joint training and the chances of success of USACOM efforts to strengthen joint training and operational capabilities, the GAO recommended that the Secretary of Defense direct the Chairman, JCS to address the concerns of the CINCs about (1) the new USACOM strategies for training joint task force commanders and their staffs and the use of joint force packages and (2) the merits of the Joint Warfighting Center technical assistance. (p. 9-10, pp. 67/GAO Draft Report)

DoD RESPONSE: Concur. CINCs' concerns have already been addressed. Recent testimony (House National Security Committee) indicate that, contrary to GAO's findings, the CINCs (CENT, EU, and SOUTH testimony reviewed) are satisfied with the training being conducted by USACOM.

Although GAO asserts that the CINCs have concerns about the merits of JWFC that the CJCS should address, the record reflects otherwise. JWFC has supported or will support 17 joint exercises during FY 95/96. This represents multiple exercises with the 5 regional CINCs.

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