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A New Era in Combating WMD

By JAMES A. TEGNELIA



U.S. Navy (Justin Thomas)

The President's *National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction* describes such weapons in the hands of hostile states and terrorists as one of the greatest security challenges facing the United States. This strategy reinforces the need for the Department of Defense (DOD) to continue developing an integrated and comprehensive approach to counter the weapons of mass destruction (WMD) threat. As an essential step toward that approach, the Secretary of Defense assigned the commander, U.S. Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM), as the lead combatant commander for integrating and synchronizing DOD efforts in combating WMD.

The combating WMD mission entails the integration and synchronization of DOD-wide efforts across the doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership, personnel, and facilities (DOTMLPF) spectrum. The President further codified responsibilities and authorities assigned to the USSTRATCOM commander in the Unified Command Plan of May 5, 2006. In answer to this assignment, the commander established the USSTRATCOM Center for Combating Weapons of Mass

Destruction (SCC-WMD), which is collocated with the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. To support this vital mission further, the Secretary of Defense dual-hatted the director of DTRA as the director of the SCC-WMD. This mission and collocation allow USSTRATCOM and SCC-WMD to leverage DTRA's vast technical expertise.

At the strategic level, preventing hostile states and nonstate actors from acquiring or using WMD is one of the four priorities identified in the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR). This is the first time a QDR has devoted such attention to the threat of WMD. Also at the strategic level, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on February 13, 2006, issued the first-ever *National Military Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction*. This strategy builds on the three-pillar structure of the 2002 national strategy. As defined in the national military strategy, these pillars are:

- **Nonproliferation:** actions to prevent the proliferation of WMD by dissuading or impeding access to, or distribution of, sensitive technologies, materiel, and expertise

- **Counterproliferation:** actions to defeat the threat or use of WMD against the United States, U.S. Armed Forces, allies, and partners
- **Consequence Management:** actions taken to mitigate the effects of a WMD attack or event and restore essential operations and services at home and abroad.

At the next level, the national military strategy identifies eight mission areas that span the pillars in the national strategy: offensive operations, elimination, interdiction, active defense, passive defense, consequence management, security cooperation and partner activities, and threat reduction cooperation. This new strategic framework is the DOD vehicle for dividing the broad combating WMD mission into specific, definable military activities that better address the DOTMLPF spectrum with more focus on the budget, training, doctrine, and policy processes.

Initially established in August 2005, the SCC-WMD develops and maintains global situational awareness of WMD activities, advocates for combating WMD capabilities, and assists with WMD planning, while shifting emphasis from a DOD-centric approach toward interagency solutions.

The SCC-WMD has faced and overcome many of the challenges associated with standing up a new organization and is making significant progress. It continues to forge enduring relationships throughout DOD and other governmental organizations and has

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embraced DTRA's existing capabilities and expertise by capitalizing on its traditional areas of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear expertise and its longstanding relationships with the combatant commands, Services, national agencies, and other governmental organizations.

The SCC-WMD was declared "fully operational capable" on December 31, 2006, with initial emphasis on the WMD elimination and interdiction mission areas. *Elimination* supports the systematic seizure, security, removal, disablement, or destruction of a

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hostile state or nonstate actor's capability to research, develop, test, produce, store, deploy, or employ WMD, delivery systems, related technologies, or technical expertise. *Interdiction* is defined as operations to track, intercept, search, divert, seize, or stop trafficking of WMD, delivery systems, related materials, technologies, and expertise to/from state or nonstate actors of proliferation concern.

SCC-WMD successes in the elimination mission area include the development of a concept of operations that describes the overarching mission area at the strategic level and defines the desired capabilities for both a Joint Task Force-Elimination and the Joint Elimination Coordination Element. A capabilities-based document designed to support policy and combatant command planning in the near term (2-7 years), the elimination concept of operations enumerates the roles and responsibilities of DOD components and interagency partners while outlining a construct for operational planning for the elimination mission. The elimination concept is currently out for final general officer/flag officer review and should be published as a handbook in the spring or summer of 2007 by the director of the Joint Staff.

The 2006 QDR directed DOD to establish a deployable joint task force headquarters for WMD elimination that is able to provide immediate command and control for forces executing those missions, as well as expand the Army's 20th Support Command's capabilities to enable it to serve as a joint task force capable of rapid deployment to command and control WMD elimination and site exploitation missions. In support of this task, the SCC-WMD successfully executed the Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System DOTMLPF Change Recommendation process to gain Joint Requirements Oversight Council recommendation for the Joint Elimination Coordination Element, which will be a rapidly deployable, 30-person command and control component capable of augmenting either an established joint force

component command or joint task force headquarters specifically tasked to conduct WMD elimination operations. It will also coordinate with combatant commands, components, Services, Defense agencies, and units that may conduct WMD elimination missions on a

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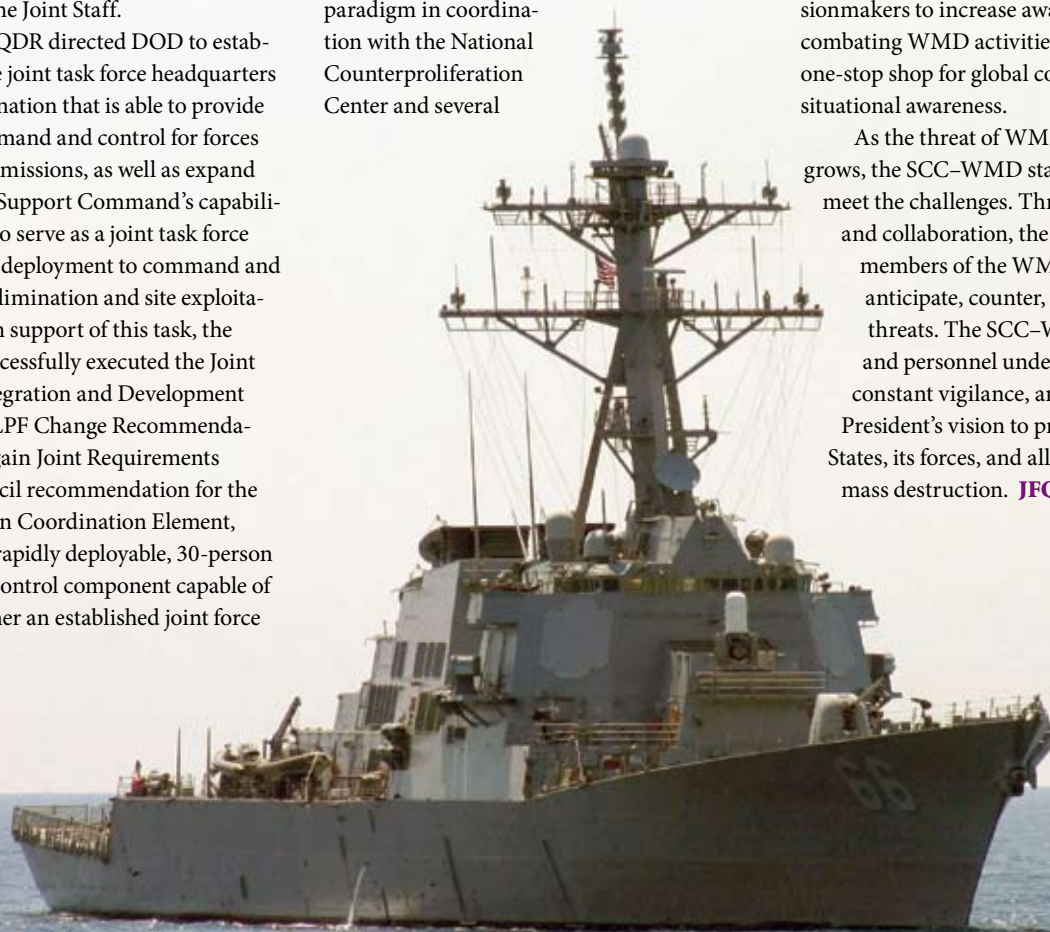
day-to-day basis for WMD elimination training and exercise support.

The SCC-WMD is also leading USSTRATCOM support for the WMD interdiction mission and Proliferation Security Initiative activities. In support of the WMD interdiction mission, center personnel provide support to the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy), Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and combatant commands to implement the 2006 QDR unity of effort paradigm in coordination with the National Counterproliferation Center and several

National Security Council-established interagency forums focused on the WMD interdiction mission. The center also provides operational and exercise support for Proliferation Security Initiative activities and exercises, most recently as a participant in Exercise Leading Edge 07, which focused on maritime interdiction.

To track all of these efforts, the SCC-WMD maintains 24-hour situational awareness of critical combating WMD efforts and information. Combating WMD situational awareness is achieved through fusing regional expertise, open source knowledge, and technical information; connecting evidence, knowledge, and information related to past and current events; then applying analytical rigor to anticipate future events. The DTRA Operations Center's 24/7 collaborative environment supports the SCC-WMD and facilitates tracking of WMD operations by depicting these events globally through a common operational picture, which went online at the classified level in the spring of 2007. The combating WMD common operational picture will provide a Web-based forum for community planners, analysts, and decisionmakers to increase awareness of global combating WMD activities and to serve as a one-stop shop for global combating WMD situational awareness.

As the threat of WMD proliferation grows, the SCC-WMD stands ready to meet the challenges. Through innovation and collaboration, the center is helping members of the WMD community to anticipate, counter, and respond to threats. The SCC-WMD leadership and personnel understand the need for constant vigilance, and they share the President's vision to protect the United States, its forces, and allies from weapons of mass destruction. **JFQ**



U.S. Navy (Stephen Weaver)

USS Gonzalez participates in exercise as part of Proliferation Security Initiative