

# NEWS FROM THE FRONT



March 2019



## Joint Force Land Component Command – Synchronization of the Land Domain

CPT William P. Abbott, U.S. Army South G55  
Mr. Paul K. Warman, CALL Military Analyst (Forward) at Fort Sam Houston

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## News from the Front: Joint Force Land Component Command

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**United States Army South  
Joint Force Land Component Command Planning Conference  
5-8 November 2018**

*Synchronization of the Land Domain in FY2020-2023*

**Overview**

United States Army South (USARSOUTH), serving as the U.S. Southern Command's (USSOUTHCOM) Joint Force Land Component Command (JFLCC), hosts a conference at Joint Base San Antonio (JBSA)/Fort Sam Houston to plan and collaborate on complex mission sets, prioritize resources, establish timelines, and set the conditions for current and future operations. Attended by USARSOUTH action officers, army section chiefs, security cooperation officers, senior defense officials/defense attachés (SDO/DATT), other service component representatives, and aligned National Guard State Partnership Program (SPP) operations officers, the meeting has themes that are looked at in depth in order to synchronize land component operations, activities, and investments (OAI) - critical to contingency preparation within a Combatant Command's campaign plan. The first JFLCC Planning Conference in May 2018 centered on "Illuminating the Blue and Green Networks."

In November 2018, the second conference focused on "Synchronization of the Land Domain." The event brought together key land domain stake holders across the USSOUTHCOM area of responsibility (AOR). The focus was on planning, coordinating, and preparing to employ land forces in support of the JFLCC Commander's priority objectives and activities, in direct support of the Army and Joint Force Commander's guidance.

**Designating a JFLCC, with an experienced land oriented staff,  
enhances the detailed planning, coordination, and execution of  
joint land operations.**

**JP 3-31**

**Command and Control for Joint Land Operations, Page I-9**

**24 February 2014**

## Purpose

To synchronize land component activities enabling the JFLCC Commander to maintain land domain situational understanding and coordinate authority for forces operating in the land domain. Conference dialog and outputs proved essential to USARSOUTH continuing involvement as a standing JFLCC and may well benefit other Army Service Component Commands (ASCCs) designated this role and going through this process.

## United States Army South Aligned with Higher Headquarters

In 2017, USSOUTHCOM directed USARSOUTH to serve as a standing JFLCC in addition to performing functions as the ASCC. With its newly assigned mission and recent reorganization to execute as a JFLCC, USARSOUTH assumed the responsibility of coordinating all activities within the land domain including synchronizing efforts across service components.

One of the most tangible ways USARSOUTH creates competitive space within the operational environment is by aligning its enterprise priorities with higher headquarters guidance. To fulfill the responsibilities as an ASCC and JFLCC, USARSOUTH has remained tightly nested to both the USSOUTHCOM and Army Strategies.



Army Section Chief, El Salvador  
Addressing Conference Attendees

In October 2018, the Army published its strategy outlining how the total Army achieves its objectives defined by the Army Vision and fulfills its Title 10 duties. Integrated within this strategy, the Army mission remains constant: “To deploy, fight, and win our Nation’s wars by providing ready, prompt, and sustained land dominance by Army forces across the full spectrum of conflict as part of the Joint Force.” 1. “The Army Strategy,

establishes four lines of effort with specific objectives to chart a path of irreversible momentum towards 2028. These lines of effort are: Build Readiness, Modernization, Reform, and Strengthen Alliances and Partnerships.” 2. “In line with the Army Strategy, USARSOUTH published its JFLCC OAI to nest within these lines of effort (LOE), while simultaneously supporting the USSOUTHCOM Campaign Plan, in order to achieve strategic objectives within the USSOUTHCOM AOR.”

The USARSOUTH builds readiness, lethality, and enhances multinational interoperability by prioritizing engagements that will achieve combined readiness with our partners in the land domain. To resource and shape the team, the headquarters leverages the total Army to build readiness across the Regular Army, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve through readiness focused engagements (RFE).

**Security cooperation provides the means to build partner capacity and achieve strategic objectives. These objectives include:**

- **Building defensive and security relationships that promote specific U.S. security interests**
- **Developing capabilities for self-defense and multinational operations**
- **Providing U.S. forces with peacetime and contingency access to host nations to increase situational understanding of an operational environment**

**ADRP 3-0**

**Military Operations, Page 1-5**

**6 October 2017**

The enterprise supports reform by returning the structure to that of a standard ASCC reducing the number of deviations from the authorized modified table of organization and equipment (MTOE). The command maximizes tailored research, development, and modernization efforts with the intent of streamlining intelligence processes within authorities under Operation King Griffin- an exercise employing a layered defense of the

U.S. homeland through synchronized Joint OAI. The goal is to increase both border and civilian security while simultaneously disrupting transnational threat networks throughout Central America.

Finally, USARSOUTH leverages the strengthening of alliances and partnerships at the heart of all planning efforts. From operations out of Soto Cano Airbase, Honduras, in support of seven interagency country teams in Central America, to increasing opportunities for partner nation personnel to attend international military education and training (IMET) and participate in the Military Personnel Exchange Program. The USARSOUTH continues to capitalize on these initiatives to advance the enterprise into the future time horizon.

Through a robust set of Theater Security Cooperation (TSC) OAI, USARSOUTH supports USSOUTHCOM LOEs of countering transnational and transregional threat networks, support national military strategy challenges, and enable rapid response.

Enabled by a complex data analysis process, the Operations Research and Systems Analysis (ORSA) team develops assessments and decision support products to gauge the effectiveness of operations within the command. Following the Commander's guidance, as an output of the effects and assessment boards, planners work towards synchronizing efforts across the land domain. Synchronization of the land domain OAI is critical to prevent cascading effects with the emergence of external state actors, failed socialist states, mass migrations, and narco-terrorist organizations. Through the synchronization process driven by the JFLCC for all OAI occurring within the land domain, conditions are set for the United States to remain the partner of choice for all partner nations within the USSOUTHCOM AOR.

The USARSOUTH strategy outlines the Commander's priorities for readiness of the total force, strengthening alliances, building partner nation capacity, and conducting reintegration. These command priorities, in line with the USARSOUTH Vision 2023, outline how USSOUTHCOM's JFLCC supports designated lead federal agencies and partner nation security forces. Moreover, the vision describes how the JFLCC synchronizes events within the land domain and deploys forces across the AOR in response to contingencies and other national security objectives unilaterally, or in cooperation with international organizations to promote support of regional security and defense of the southern approaches of the U.S. homeland.

In order to set conditions for the JFLCC to synchronize strategic efforts aligned with higher headquarters priorities, strategists developed a structural framework centered on six priority operations and activities resulting in a cogent and succinct path towards successful execution of strategic objectives. These include: 1) Operation Southern Vanguard/Together Forward, 2) Operation King Griffin, 3) joint exercise program, 4) operational support, 5) integration and synchronization of the land domain, and 6) enable strategic initiatives. These priority operations and activities provide the necessary framework on how this headquarters utilizes resources to achieve strategic objectives in the long term planning horizon.

## Synchronization of the Land Domain

To combat the growing complexities that exist in the current security environment, Day 1 of the conference had two plenary panels discussing Joint Futures and Competition in the Gray Zone. The JFLCC Commander's desired effects for these panels were the integration of concepts across the Joint force into strategic documents and ways to improve the enterprise's capability to compete at levels below conflict.

In pursuit of the aforementioned desired effects, USARSOUTH assembled an impressive cast to lead both plenary panels and drive working group discussion. Conference attendees greatly benefitted from their experience, perspectives, and insights. Serving on the Joint Futures Panel were LTG Eric Wesley, Deputy Commanding General, Futures/Director, Army Capabilities Integration Center (ARCIC) (Now Futures and Concepts, U.S. Army Futures Command); Maj Gen David Bellon, former Marine Forces South (MARFORSOUTH) Commander and current USSOUTHCOM J5 Strategy, Policy, and Plans; and MG (Ret) William Hix, former Headquarters Department of the Army (HQDA), Deputy Chief of Staff (DCS) G-3/5/7, Director of Strategy and Plans.



LTG Wesley and MG (Ret)  
Hix Addressing Conference  
Attendees during Joint  
Futures Panel

Serving on the Competition in the Gray Zone Panel were Mr. Nathan Freier, Associate Professor of National Security Studies, Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) and COL (Ret) Kevin Benson, former Combined Forces Land Component Command (CFLCC) C/J5 during Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and current seminar leader at the University of Foreign Military and Cultural Studies (UFMCS) at Fort Leavenworth, KS.

Following the plenary sessions, Mr. Drew Blakeney, USARSOUTH Political Advisor provided an in-depth analysis on how the enterprise can leverage the means in the USSOUTHCOM AOR through resourcing, capability building, and alignment of activities to achieve national military objectives. Conference participants also received a USARSOUTH FY 20-23 Campaign Support Plan (CSP) briefing. The CSP implements and operationalizes the Theater Army strategy and fulfills planning requirements outlined in the combatant command campaign plan (CCP) as derived from the Guidance for Employment of the Force and the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan. The CSP provides Commander's guidance to direct, coordinate, and prioritize plans, operations, and activities in the four year time horizon to achieve combatant commander objectives. The document serves as the primary linkage between the CCP and JFLCC plans and orders that direct activities in support of the campaign plan. The CSP also supports key operations and activities of other component commands and U.S. Government (USG) agencies to address transregional issues.

**Planning and consulting with stakeholders optimizes the instruments of national power to achieve operational objectives and attain strategic end states in support of U.S. regional goals in support of global security priorities.**

**JP 3-08**

**Interorganizational Cooperation, Page I-15**

**12 October 2016 (Validated, 18 October 2017)**

The final briefings on Day 1 were provided by MARFORSOUTH planners. By incorporating briefings from other service components the enterprise builds the capacity to develop and become innovative thinkers capable of enabling strategic objectives.

**Insight Vignette:** Providing pre-conference planning documents enabled participants the sufficient time to identify capability gaps within the priority operations and activities supporting the JFLCC headquarters

The next two days were reserved for planners to conduct mission analysis on priority operations and activities with key stakeholders present. The JFLCC regional planners provided staff briefings on future operations that served as the main planning effort for



the remainder of the conference. Readiness Focused Engagements (RFE) provide an opportunity to increase the capability and capacity of the total force while advancing regional security and stability through interoperability and mutually beneficial training. With the support of Army National Guard and Army Reserve forces, USARSOUTH innovates defense partnerships with nations committed to human rights, gender integration, noncommissioned officer development, and regional security initiatives. For example, Operation Southern Vanguard provides a significant benefit to the Army by producing live-fire training opportunities for units in the Objective-T Cycle (training readiness reporting system) building readiness for Stryker and Infantry platoons, companies, and battalion mission command elements in mountain, desert, and jungle environments. As a result, the U.S. Army is provided Western Hemisphere access in an era of increased global competition and allowed entrée to our strategic partner nations' premier training facilities. Bringing together key stakeholders from around the USSOUTHCOM AOR, JFLCC planners were able to effectively identify frictions points and synchronize events in the future time horizon.

**Insight Vignette:** Integrating theater Army Section Chiefs' requirements allowed the JFLCC to garner the necessary audience required for planning

On the final day of the conference, the JFLCC staff, service component representatives, and SDO/DATTs provided a consolidated out-brief to the JFLCC Commander enabling planners to receive guidance to set the theater for the future time horizon. Additionally, a conference survey was completed by participants with draft results released before departing. Feedback from the assembled JFLCC planning enterprise is vital to ensure an improved upon product.

## Conclusion

The first annual JFLCC conference, in May 2018, set the conditions for this follow on iteration. It established a shared understanding as the stepping stone to synchronization. Additionally, the focus of the first conference centered on generating an understanding amongst stakeholders for developing the long range planning calendar, production of major FY19 exercise concepts, and mission analysis for FY19-22 regional plans.

As a result of the second conference, the JFLCC staff was able to gain a more robust situational understanding of the AOR in order to reduce redundancies and generate efficiencies. The FY20-26 planning efforts for the headquarters will focus on maximizing a return on investment and generating other readiness focused engagements.



JFLCC Commander Addressing Conference Attendees  
at the Out-Brief

In closing remarks, MG Mark Stammer, JFLCC Commander emphasized the significance of long range vision, importance of mission command, and value of relationship building between staffs. The next USARSOUTH JFLCC Planning Conference is tentatively scheduled for 4-7 November 2019.

#### Endnotes

- 1 Headquarters Department of the Army News Release, "The Army Vision," 7 May 2018, retrieved at [https://www.army.mil/e2/downloads/rv7/vision/the\\_army\\_vision.pdf](https://www.army.mil/e2/downloads/rv7/vision/the_army_vision.pdf)
- 2 Headquarters Department of the Army, U.S. Army STAND-TO! "The Army Strategy," 25 October 2018, retrieved at <https://www.army.mil/standto/2018-10-25>

