

# Sustaining Division Readiness Through Existing Training Opportunities



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## Purpose

This article describes how the 1st Infantry Division (1ID) headquarters and select subordinate units built and sustained mission command readiness while providing a forward-deployed headquarters (1ID Forward) in support of U.S. Army Europe's (USAREUR's) Operation ATLANTIC

RESOLVE. 1ID's training plan capitalized on existing Title 10 opportunities and USAREUR's exercise campaign to maintain a trained division staff during periods of high personnel turnover. Specifically, this article examines Exercise SABER JUNCTION 19, executed at Hohenfels Training Area, Germany, as a demonstrative event of the greater training effort.

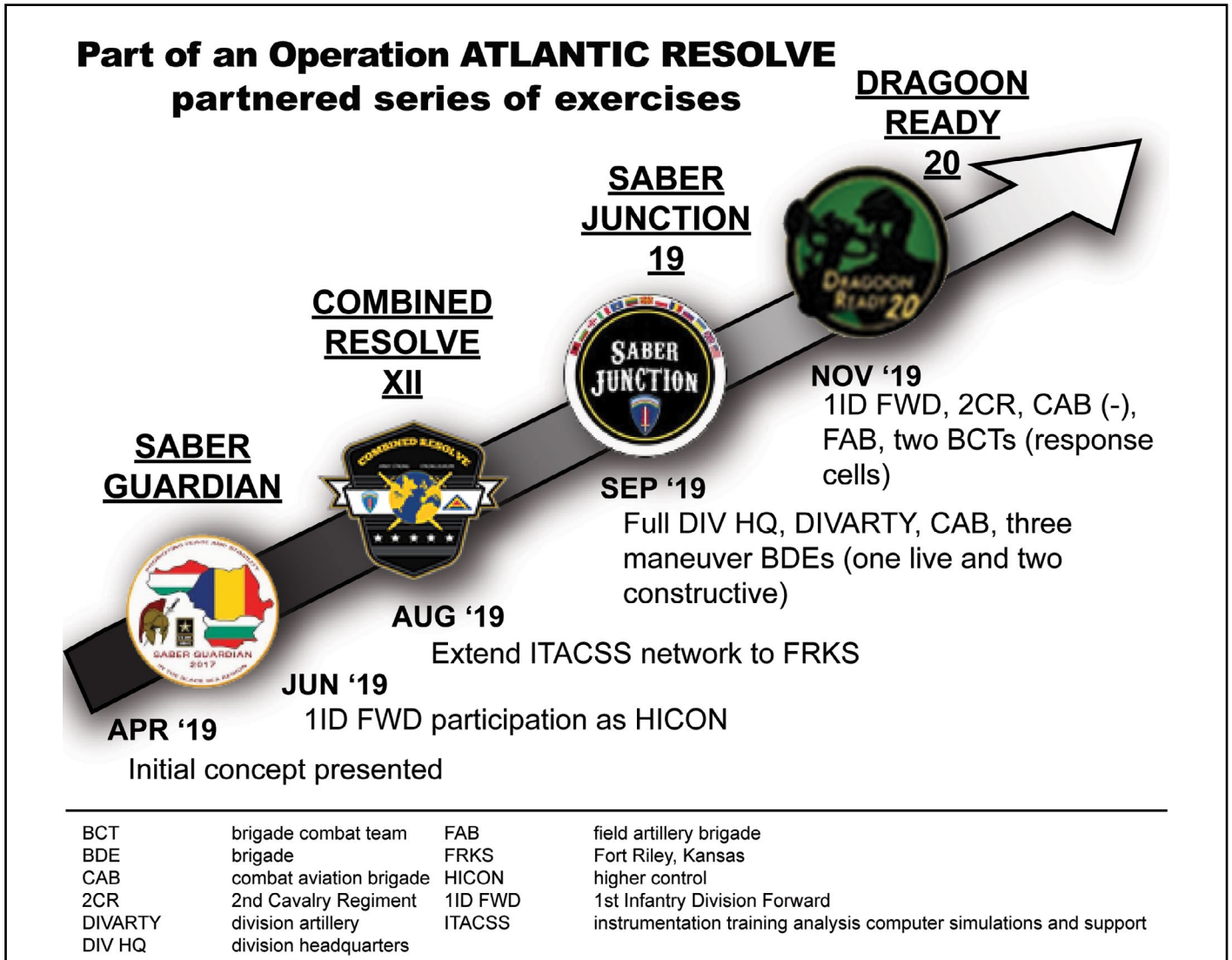


Figure 1. Operation ATLANTIC RESOLVE partner exercises

## Background

A Warfighter results in the culmination of a Soldier's 18- to 24-month division training progression, which externally evaluates a headquarters' mission command readiness. Warfighters test a staff's ability to rapidly assess and plan in the face of unfamiliar terrain, civil considerations, and adversaries. Within the 24-month Warfighter training progression, a division staff will likely undergo significant personnel turnover and require multiple training repetitions to mitigate knowledge loss and maintain readiness. For example, 1ID experienced a 70-percent division primary staff changeover during the 19-02 assignment

cycle (April through October 2019). Supporting Operation ATLANTIC RESOLVE provided a unique opportunity for 1ID to leverage USAREUR's exercise campaign through the expansion of live, virtual, and constructive (LVC) environments to build division-level readiness and strengthen interoperability with U.S. allies and partners. This exercise campaign, highlighted in Figure 1, consisted of four primary training events and multiple small-scale exercises. Units training in the U.S. can achieve similar conditions and outcomes by expanding on combat training center rotations or large-scale, home-station training events.

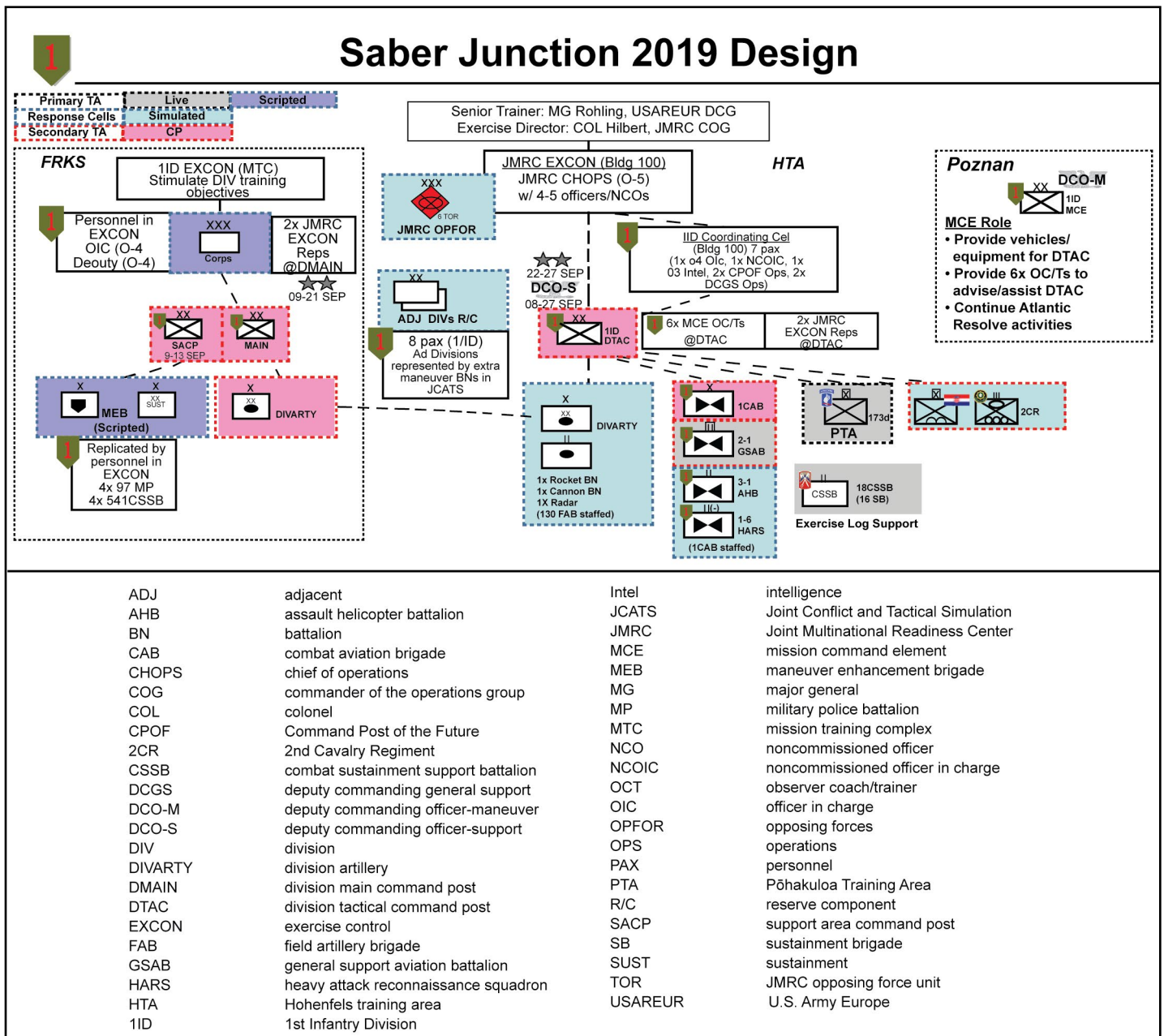


Figure 2. Exercise SABER JUNCTION 2019 design



## Exercise SABER JUNCTION 19

Exercise SABER JUNCTION 19 served as a proof of concept for an opportunistic expansion of a training environment established for a brigade rotation at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center (JMRC) in Hohenfels, Germany. The 11D's division tactical command post (DTAC), the 1st Combat Aviation Brigade (1CAB), and 11D division artillery (DIVARTY) participated live from the training area in Hohenfels. Additionally, the 11D main command post, support area command post (SACP), and the 11D Sustainment Brigade (1SB) participated live, but distributed from Fort Riley, Kansas. The implementation of the wraparound construct with participation from the 11D DTAC, division main command post, and SACP presented multiple opportunities to build readiness at echelon. First, it provided the division headquarters an opportunity to train and achieve its own internal training objectives for a large-scale training exercise. Second, the DTAC's forward positioning in Europe presented a unique opportunity for it to serve as the exercise higher control (HICON). By assuming the HICON role, the division gained the capability to stimulate specific subordinate-unit training objectives at strategic points during the exercise. Future

iterations could implement different constructs, such as having another division replicate a corps headquarters or corps tactical assault command post.

The live and constructive participation of 1CAB, 1SB, and 11D DIVARTY allowed several repetitions of the division targeting cycle and application of division deep/shaping operations throughout the exercise. In particular, the exercise design enabled three battalions from the 1CAB to execute several air assault and deep attack missions in live and constructive environments. In the Hohenfels maneuver area, the presence of a genuine division headquarters not only stimulated an environment more closely tied to large-scale ground combat operation employment modes, it also enabled additional maneuver brigade training events in Grafenwoehr, Germany, and Zagreb, Croatia. Integration of higher-level training audiences and LVC environments allows units to capitalize on the vast training opportunities presented in USAREUR. However, increasing exercise size and complexity has the propensity to reduce training value at lower echelons. If not carefully managed, battalion- and company-level units are subject to an increased risk of becoming live training aids for higher echelons, rather than focusing on their own training objectives.

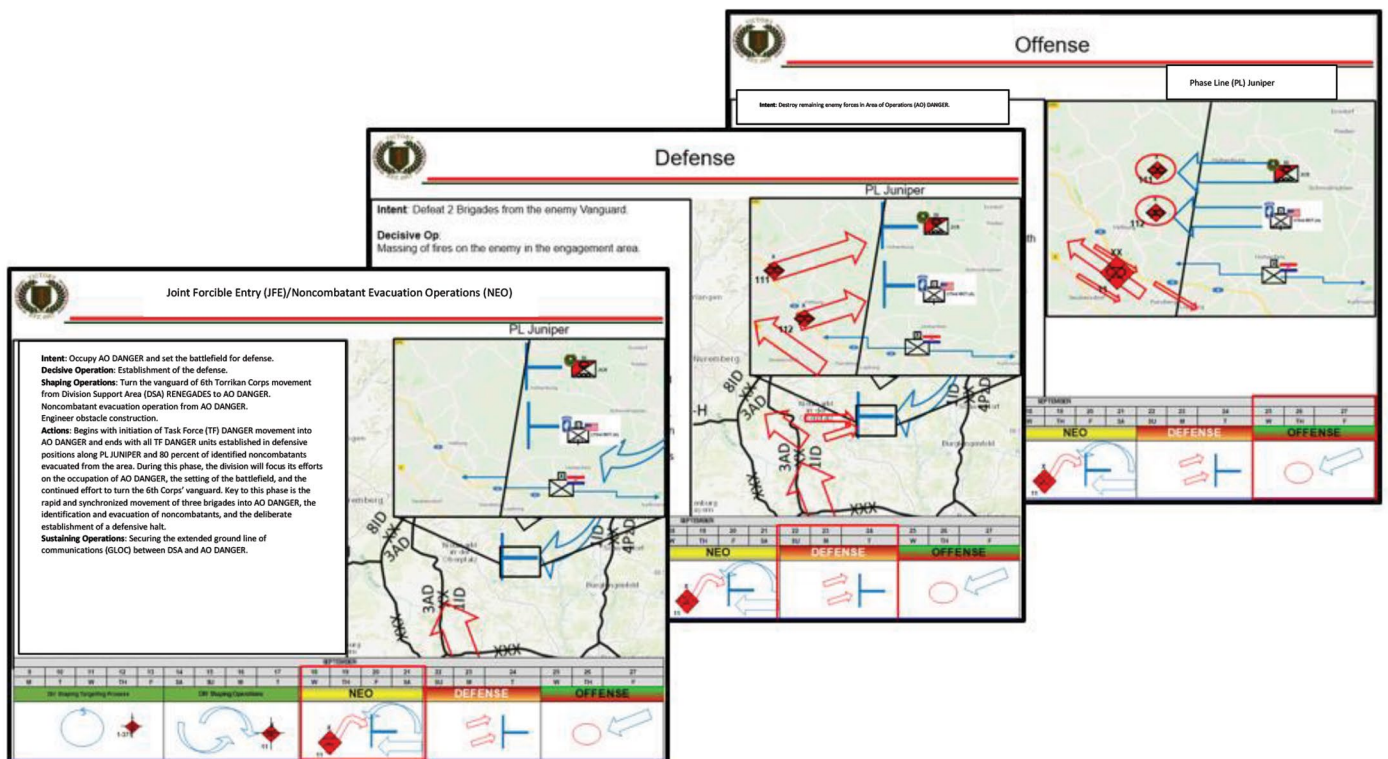


Figure 3. Exercise SABER JUNCTION exercise tactical plan

In order to achieve the integration of a robust division echelon during Exercise SABER JUNCTION 19 with minimum disruption to the live training audience, the 7th Army Training Command, JMRC, and IID explored constructive expansion over a highly distributed environment. By building additional depth into the “wraparound” environment and focusing division-level effects into areas outside the rotational brigade combat team training audience’s area of operations, IID generated several additional repetitions of essential competencies, including special operations forces integration, CAB deep attack, and joint fires integration.

Furthermore, the repetitions of these key events were modulated during the conduct of the exercise without influencing brigade-level operations. In the close fight, the addition of a division echelon over the four participating brigade headquarters (one live, one local-constructive, and two distributed-constructive) enabled training repetitions on mission command mission essential tasks.

## **Conclusion**

Exercise SABER JUNCTION 19 serves as an example of multi-echelon readiness generating opportunities resident in the USAREUR Operation ATLANTIC RESOLVE mission. Through the implementation of a wraparound exercise construct, focused primarily on further integration and expansion of LVC environments, IID leveraged USAREUR’s exercise campaign to generate and build division-level readiness. Further adjustments to exercise design, combat training center simulations capacity, and administrative support can only expand the utility of these training events.