

# NEWS FROM THE FRONT

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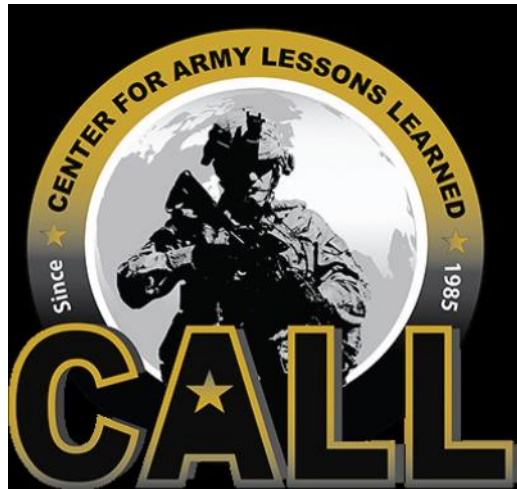


## Theater Army as a CJTF: ARCENT in Eager Lion

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Colonel Jason M. Awadi  
Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL)  
Military analyst (FWD), USARCENT, Shaw AFB

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When Jordanian Armed Forces Brigadier Staff General (BG) Mohommad Al -Thalji and U.S. Air Force Major General (MG) Jon Mott, co-directors of Exercise Eager Lion 2018 announced the beginning of the exercise on 15 April, more than 7,200 military personnel from the United States military and their Jordanian counterparts had already begun responding to exercise scenarios. These scenarios involved border security and individually displaced people, command and control, cyber defense and battlespace management.

“Exercise Eager Lion provides an opportunity to reassure the people of Jordan, its uniformed services, its allies, and international partners as well that we are ready to protect Jordan from harm,” said Al Thalji.



Figure 1

BG Mohommad Al-Thalji and MG Jon Mott  
Courtesy Photo | U.S. Central Command  
Public Affairs | April 16, 2018

Eager Lion 2018 is a U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) level Bi-Lateral Exercise conducted between the United States and Jordan to foster alliance and regional relations and preserve intra-theater lines of communication (LOCs). Eager Lion is a culminating annual “readiness” exercise for U.S. Army Central (USARCENT) and consists of a large scale command post exercise (CPX) that ranges from the combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) to the Brigade Combat Team level linked to a Field training exercise (FTX) and culminates with a mechanized company combined arms live fire exercise (CALFEX.)

Eager Lion is critical to regional mission success as it validates the deployment, employment, and redeployment of the United States Army Central (USARCENT)

contingency command post (CCP) which executes the scenario based on the "most likely" and "most dangerous" crisis/contingencies in the area of operation (AOR). This year, the USARCENT CCP participated as the CJTF in charge of a joint/coalition task force tasked to expel an asymmetric threat, conduct a defense, and attack with a near peer competitor in a contested air environment. The hub of steady-state operations for the 10-day exercise was the CCP. It managed subordinate component commands from the Marine Corps Forces Central Command (MARCENT) assigned as the Combined Land and Maritime Component Command or CFLMCC. The 28th Infantry Division (Task Force Spartan) was the subordinate division defeating the notional enemy – M9, taking control of the besieged city of Al Ashkaf; and destroying Redland offensive military capabilities while conducting humanitarian operations in and around Al Ashkaf. Essentially, the CJTF was fighting a "Three Block War."

The "Three Block War" concept was briefly used as a military metaphor by the US Marine Corps leadership at the end of the 20th Century. It was resurrected by the Canadian Forces (CF) in 2004-2005 and touted as the new model for Canadian field operations. The core idea is that military forces conduct humanitarian, peacekeeping/stabilization, and combat operations simultaneously on three separate city blocks. (Source: The Rise and Demise of the "Three Block War" by Doctor A. Walter Dorn and Michael Varey)

### **Exercising Joint and Coalition Mission Command Systems**

As an Army Service component command (ASCC), USARCENT's CCP personnel are trained as a CJTF and have full command of their Army Mission Command System (AMCS). Along with the CENTCOM partner network - Jordan (CPN-J), that allows Jordan Armed Forces (JAF) to participate alongside their U.S. partners, Eager Lion provides a realistic and relevant training opportunity. The use of existing command, control, communications, computers, and intelligence (C4I) systems allowed live, virtual, and simulated means to effectively communicate with subordinate forces. As a CJTF, USARCENT effectively combined the use of the command post of the future (CPOF) and Agile Client platforms as the primary command and control (C2) system.

"USARCENT is committed to integrating our host nation partners in everything we do; I want our Soldiers to interact with their host nation counterparts in order to make our friendships stronger." LTG Michael Garrett, USARCENT Commanding General

### **Partner Interoperability**

Each year, the planning for Eager Lion alternates between the JAF and U.S. forces. This year the U.S. took the lead in planning the exercise with JAF providing additional intent to help prepare their military formations. Eager Lion presents a unique opportunity

for the U.S. and Jordan. The annual exercise strengthens our longstanding relationship with Jordan and enhances our ability to refine our procedures, ensuring we are ready for future regional conflicts. For the Jordanian Forces, Eager Lion strengthens partnerships and helps secure the region.



Figure 2

An indirect fire infantryman with 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry Regiment, observes a Jordan Armed Forces 11th Border Security soldier during a 60 mm mortar live fire outside of Amman, Jordan. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Whitney Hughes).

Partner interoperability was not solely focused on the kinetic fight. This year's bilateral exercise incorporated a great deal of civil-military operations, and non-lethal targeting, focused on the de-legitimization of the terror group M9 among the displaced population. Among these non-lethal initiatives was the collaboration and participation in combined joint religious discussions and exchanges. Jordan Armed Forces Imams and U.S. military chaplains met frequently to develop unified messages in support of the exercise objectives.



Figure 3

“The main benefit of civil and military Imams working together is that there is one message being (broadcast) from the top Imams within Jordan. The civilian Grand Mufti and the Jordan Armed Forces Grand Mufti are in one accord in providing leadership to the (subordinate) Imams,” said the U.S. Army Central Contingency Command Post chaplain. (Source: Courtesy Story | U.S. Army Central | May 03, 2018)

*“The more a general is accustomed to place heavy demands on his soldiers, the more he can depend on their response.” Carl von Clausewitz*

## **Opportunities to Improve In Complex Large Scale Exercises**

Success is where preparation and opportunity meet. With everything the U.S. military does, lessons learned from exercises of this magnitude adequately helps prepare our forces, and Eager Lion is no exception. Some of the lessons USARCENT will take with them include the ability to conduct current operations (CUOPS) and future operations planning (FUOPS) concurrently, develop measures of performance (MOPs) and measures of effectiveness (MOEs) for external cooperation and develop a standard operating procedure (SOP) for the common operational picture or COP.



Figure 4

An officer with the 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, briefs the concept of the operation prior to the combined arms live fire exercise at the Joint Training Center, Jordan. (Photo by David N. Beckstrom)

With respect to planning, each phase of the operation should have its own operational approach. This is done during the mission analysis phase of the Military Decision Making Process or MDMP. Our JAF partners utilize the operational level planning process (OLPP), a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) standard. Opportunities to nest both MDMP and OLPP exist in such a large-scale training exercise. Second, the challenges to set the conditions for subordinate commands to conduct successful external cooperation at their level along with balancing the capabilities of local aid organizations with those capabilities of international organizations are complex real-world problems. Such problems challenge military organization at all echelons. Personnel shortages and existing real-world operational commitments stretch existing capabilities. USARCENT's deployment of a CCP as the U.S. core of a CJTF headquarters was an economy of force measure in response to the security and humanitarian crisis in the region. The CCP accomplished its task of deploying and, along with personnel from the JAF partners, established a functioning CJTF headquarters. However, the CJTF headquarters was effectively limited to managing CUOPS and only near term FUOPS.

## **Summary**

Jordan and the United States successfully deployed elements of their armed forces to form a combined joint task force and deal with emerging crisis. The joint command group set the tone for partnership, starting with staff integration, and the CJTF took a combined approach in dealing with external partners. CJTF did an exceptional job with a small headquarters to manage component commands, positively impacting the mission. USARCENT conducted a joint AAR with their Jordanian partners in an effort to improve upon the exercise for 2019.