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Pacific Fleet Focuses on *War Fighting*

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Mobilized for its first exercise held on board the USS *Blue Ridge* (LCC-19) in October 2002, JTF-519 gives the Pacific Commander a fully deployable joint task force capable of planning and executing any contingency, from noncombatant evacuations to major theater conflicts.

The Pacific Fleet always has embraced change. From its roots in the Pacific and Asiatic Squadrons at the beginning of the 20th century, to its reestablishment during World War II under the leadership of Chester Nimitz, it has adapted to the dynamic strategic environment of the Pacific and transformed to meet the defense needs of our nation. In 1958, the Pacific Fleet's role shifted from joint war fighter to primarily a naval force commander and provider. It deployed naval forces to deal with crises throughout the region, including the defense of Southeast Asia during the war in Vietnam, and against the growing capability of the Soviet Navy. After the Cold War, the Pacific Fleet's Title X responsibilities to man, train, and equip naval forces

came to the fore. These responsibilities were showcased during Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, when five of the Fleet's six aircraft carrier strike groups and the majority of its expeditionary forces were mobilized and deployed to support combat and stability operations throughout the Western Pacific.

What is not as apparent is the change that the Fleet has undergone over the past few years, including an expanded role as a joint planner and war fighter. At the end of 1999, in response to a need for a stronger contingency planning capability in the Pacific, Pacific Fleet Commander Admiral Tom Fargo was assigned additional duties as Commander, Joint Task Force (JTF)-519.

What Is JTF-519?

JTF-519 is a fully deployable joint task force capable of planning and executing any contingency from relatively small-scale operations, such as noncombatant evacuations or maritime interdiction, to major theater conflict. For the Pacific Commander, the task force's focus today is the higher end of joint operations and warfare, while lower echelon staffs continue their work in the area of smaller scale joint operations.

What is unique and revolutionary about JTF-519 is the manner in which its staff is organized and trained. Rather

Staff Training Goes On-line



Because Joint Task Force-519 is a fully distributed organization, training is a challenge. To address this, the working group developed an interactive Web site configured to support both group (such as planning cells and boards) and individual training requirements. With access to the secure Internet, staff members can train, interact, and plan regardless of their locations or branches of service. Training is automatically recorded on-line, and the Web site includes built-in training readiness indicators that enable staff leaders to monitor progress. The site also supports

both collaborative training and interactive problem solving among the staff, and in the future, this capability will be expanded to include the functional component staffs as well.

The Web site's advantages and flexibility are best seen in the indoctrination and training of new team members. In many cases, JTF staff additions are very senior officers assuming significant responsibilities at major commands within their respective services. The Web site allows them to pace their indoctrination and training to fit within the normal stresses and challenges of reporting to a new

job, right from their desktop computers.

While much work is accomplished through the Internet, there still is no replacement for gathering periodically to establish and build on relationships, and to test the collective planning and decision-making skills of the staff. This is accomplished through a series of executive steering group meetings, staff exercises, and ultimately during a comprehensive series of exercises during which JTF-519 mobilizes, gathers, and deploys forward.

than being built around an active headquarters, the JTF-519 staff is distributed throughout the United States, with members located as far east as Fort Meade, Maryland, and as far north as Alaska. The core of the JTF is known as the "Magic 150," and this expands to 400, including selected members of the functional service components who join the staff when called to deploy forward. The 400-person limit conforms to command ship berthing constraints, making the task force fully mobile and able to operate independently anywhere in the Pacific. Initial staff manpower estimates were as high as 1,200, but the emergence of powerful information technology systems and processes enabled planners to limit the staff to less than half the size of a notional major shore-based warfighting staff. JTF-519 has the distinct advantage of operational independence in theaters where access is problematic either politically or because of significant force protection requirements.

A working group spearheaded the effort to identify and fill staff billets. Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, is designated as the commander of JTF-519. The deputy commander is Vice Commander of U.S. Pacific Air Forces, who also serves as chairman of the Joint Targeting Coordination Board, and the chief of staff is the Deputy Commanding General, U.S. Army Forces Pacific. Commanders, U.S. 7th Fleet and 11th Air Force, are the maritime and air component commanders, respectively, and the Commanding General, I Corps, heads the land component. The JTF-519 staff is 44% Navy, 22% Air Force, 15% Army, and 7% Marine Corps, with the remainder sourced from other government agencies. Sixty-seven members of the Pacific Fleet staff are dual-hatted with JTF-519 bil-

lets, but virtually the entire Pacific Fleet staff supports the planning and operations efforts in one form or another. When a sailor reports to the Pacific Fleet for duty, he necessarily is indoctrinated not only in the Fleet's traditional Title X responsibilities, but also in the additional responsibilities of a joint warfighting staff.

In the near future, JTF-519 will integrate the capability of Joint Forces Command's new Standing Joint Force Headquarters command-and-control element, which was developed around a small group of specially trained analysts and planners. This element will enhance planning, and allow both the Pacific Command and JTF-519 to better coordinate with external agencies in responding to a regional crisis.

Terminal Fury

The Terminal Fury exercises, sponsored by the U.S. Pacific Command and supported by the Joint Warfighting Center, tested the JTF-519 construct and accelerated its maturity. The first exercise was held in October 2002 on board the 7th Fleet command ship, USS *Blue Ridge* (LCC-19), to test the mobilization and deployment of the staff, their ability to assume warfighting responsibilities from an on-station lower echelon joint task force, and both internal and external staff processes. The exercise was a resounding success. JTF-519's 400 members were mobilized and transported to Japan and the *Blue Ridge*, where they quickly assumed the lead warfighting role. The transport and integration went seamlessly, allowing the staff to focus on internal planning and process improvements and, even more important, on contingency plan deficiencies. In



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During StaffEx in June 2003 in Hawaii, JTF-519's leaders came from around the world (Commander, 7th Fleet, participated using video teleconferencing) to evaluate and test contingency plans and new joint warfare operational concepts.

fact, having all component commanders on the JTF command ship during the exercise facilitated coordination among the components and with the commander and allowed the task force leaders to focus on each issue in an "offsite-like" environment.

The second Terminal Fury exercise, held in December 2002, built on the success of the October exercise and included enhanced participation by the regional combatant commander. The exercise stressed the critical areas of bandwidth and connectivity, battle rhythm internal and external to the staff, and further drilled into regional warfighting issues. Transportation was a concern because of the holiday season, but it never became an issue because of outstanding support from the Transportation Command. Again, the concept of a deployable standing joint task force headquarters was confirmed. Connectivity among the staff, higher headquarters, and forces participating in the exercise was excellent, and the limit of available bandwidth was never tested.

The Terminal Fury exercise series validated the JTF-519 concept of a distributed staff, its ability to train and plan through the Internet and to gather to fight as a team when required. This is a powerful construct with applicability and potential for every regional commander.

Operational Focus

The Pacific Fleet's expanded duties as Commander, JTF-519, have reshaped its mission and vision. The important Title X and naval component responsibilities remain, but they are framed by the challenges of specific theaterwide joint warfare requirements, and in the dynamic Asia-Pacific region they are numerous. Some specific issues further exposed during Terminal Fury were in the areas of joint command, control, communications, computers, and intelligence (C⁴I) and antiaccess technologies and tactics

that are especially critical to a sea-based joint task force.

For example, the December exercise provided an opportunity to compare the Air Force Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Manager (ISR-M) system with the Navy-developed Joint Fires Network. The systems proved to be functionally identical, which highlighted the need for all command-and-control systems to be developed for joint use from the outset. The exercises also pointed to the need for detailed and effective bandwidth monitoring and management systems, especially as requirements for bandwidth grow.

In the critical area of antiaccess systems, the Navy's vision of Sea Shield applies. Numerous countries

throughout the region have developed significant diesel submarine forces, and many countries also are pursuing long-range ballistic missiles. JTF-519 must deal with these threats to ensure access to the littorals and mission success. In addition, as past events in Bali, Indonesia, and the Philippines have demonstrated, force protection remains a primary concern.

These issues are examples of the Pacific Fleet's shift to a more operational focus—a subtle but important transition. In October 2001, Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Vern Clark designated Commander, Atlantic Fleet, as the lead Fleet (Commander, Fleet Forces Command) and the single voice for fleet requirements. This initiative has allowed Pacific Fleet to place greater emphasis on operations and, ultimately, to better translate joint warfighting issues into requirements for Fleet Forces Command to take forward. Our focus on war fighting and operations has shifted from a provider of trained and equipped forces to the regional commanders to a joint force commander responsible to the Pacific Commander for developing and executing real-world contingency plans.

The Pacific Fleet has come full circle from war fighter, to ready force provider, and now to joint war fighter and provider of combat-ready naval forces. The JTF-519 construct gives the Pacific Combatant Commander a fully deployable joint force headquarters with the capability to plan and carry out every level of theater contingency operations. Much work remains as we further develop this new operational role and nurture an already superb working relationship with U.S. Fleet Forces Command. The challenges are many, but the future is bright for the Navy and the Pacific Fleet. We can be certain that the defense needs of our nation will continue to be met.

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