

Capstone Concept for Joint Operations Activity Concepts

Professional Military Education Implications



**U.S. Joint Forces Command
Joint Concept Development and
Experimentation Directorate, J9
115 Lake View Parkway
Suffolk, VA 23435**

16 Nov 10

Elements of the CCJO Activity Concepts Proposed to Be Addresses in Professional Military Education

Background

The *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations* (CCJO) describes in broad terms the Chairman's vision for how joint forces will operate in response to a wide variety of future security challenges, and envisions a future operating environment characterized by complexity, uncertainty, and rapid change. The CCJO's central thesis is that future joint commanders will combine and subsequently adapt four basic categories of military activity—combat, security, engagement, and relief and reconstruction—in accordance with the unique requirements of each operational situation.

The CCJO Activities Concepts document provides greater conceptual development of these activities, combining the distinct but interrelated concepts into a single volume. Like the CCJO itself, the purpose of these concepts is to guide force development by: establishing a common intellectual framework for military professionals, policymakers, and others interested in the use of military force; establishing a conceptual foundation for subsequent joint and Service concepts; motivating and guiding the study, experimentation, and evaluation of joint concepts and capabilities; and identifying the broad capabilities required to perform that activity.

Impact

Each Activity Concept provides a vision of how future joint forces will conduct each respective activity including a central idea, functions, and a set of precepts. The concepts also present potential implications that identify proposed institutional changes and a set of risks of adopting these concepts.

Contained in this document are the Activity Concept implications and insights that directly warrant attention as an element of Professional Military Education.

While some implications may apply across more than one category of military activity, they are listed according to the military activity concept in which they appear.

Combat

- The tension between the imperatives for overwhelming force and for increasing discrimination must be reconciled. The Joint Combat Concept recognizes that a key challenge for commanders at all levels will be reconciling the tension between the imperative to apply force and minimize unintended collateral damage. It argues that a key prerequisite for reconciling that tension is to delegate the authority to control combat power to the commander best able to employ it with the necessary discrimination. Achieving overwhelming force need not preclude discrimination.
- The CCJO notes that there are two defeat mechanisms, attrition and disruption, that have been employed in combat. The aim of disruption is to defeat an enemy's ability to fight as a cohesive and coordinated organization. The alternative is to destroy his material

capabilities through attrition, which generally is more costly and time consuming. While successful combat involves both, the Joint Combat Concept conditionally favors disruption because it tends to be a more effective and efficient way of causing an enemy's defeat, and because the imperative for restraint often precludes attrition.

- Achieving defeat by disruption requires attacking those objectives expected to cause the greatest disruption to the enemy's ability to operate cohesively. Since few enemies will be vulnerable to defeat at a single point, usually this will require attacking some combination of elements, often in some necessary sequence. The process of selecting such key objectives will always remain a matter of judgment rather than exact calculation, and commanders should never expect to be completely correct in their estimates. The enemy's objectives change over time, so the joint force commander should expect to adapt his operational objectives as part of the operational adaptation process.
- The joint force must fight to gain and maintain local domain superiority, but be prepared to operate without it. Future joint forces may face enemies increasingly capable in some domains (which almost certainly will be true of cyberspace). This means that joint forces would have to dedicate larger portions of the force to that mission, deferring or diminishing support of other activities until they have achieved the necessary freedom of action, or be prepared to face the difficult challenge of operating temporarily without domain superiority.
- The joint force must apply combat power across domains to create dilemmas for the enemy. While gaining domain superiority is important, it is not an end in itself but merely a means to the ultimate end of accomplishing the mission. Once they have gained superiority in any domain, joint forces should exploit that advantage to apply combat power into other domains as well. Future applications could include more tightly integrated cross-domain combat. Done correctly, this could provide valuable asymmetric advantages over practically any enemy.
- Improving the ability to interoperate with foreign military partners at lower echelons is critical for future operations. The challenge is in the number of potential partners with whom joint forces might find themselves operating, which introduces legal, political, and security as well as doctrinal complexities. The more transparent the joint force can make their operating practices, and the more willing the U.S. is to share information and technology, the more rapidly and completely the joint force will be able to rely on allied capabilities and vice versa. That partnership has become increasingly essential at increasingly lower echelons, and with allies whose technical capabilities may not be the equal of U.S. forces. Conversely, those allies often enjoy a better understanding of the enemy and the environment than U.S. forces do, and operating practices that seem to us to be unsophisticated may in fact be better adapted to the fight than our own.

Security

- The prevention and de-escalation framework proposed by the Joint Security Concept will require a multi-domain, multi-agency understanding of each situation on its own terms.

within the unique political and strategic context. This requires a comprehensive understanding of potential adversaries, as well as the political, economic, and social activities that impact the security environment. Given the complexities of the future operating environment, joint force situational assessments will require robust intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) support to conduct the requisite intelligence preparation of the environment (IPE). Together multi-domain and cross-institutional assessments will enable the joint force to understand the systemic and subtle changes that continually take place and develop appropriate, effective, focused, and comprehensive responses.

- The joint force must balance application and emphasis of intervention, regulation, and information actions in a complementary manner to achieve a viable and sustainable security environment. The CCJO posits that the joint force must “combine joint capabilities to maximize complementary rather than merely additive effects.” A thorough understanding of evolving security challenges and threats must guide the combination and application of the approaches. Information actions should be guided by an adaptive, decentralized process that seeks to understand selected audiences and factor their perceptions into operations at every level. Information actions also must be integrated with planning of all security actions to consider the potential communication impacts of both interventional and regulatory actions and their likely impact on the perceptions of key audiences and stakeholders.
- Joint force leaders, with an understanding of foreign languages and cultures, and capable of applying innovative approaches to security planning and implementation must be developed. Successful security activities will frequently hinge on acceptance by the populace and their perception of the activities. Joint professional military education institutions should enhance language and cultural studies as well as creative thinking in their curricula. The joint force should also explore alternative and innovative methods to develop security-focused skills and aptitudes.

Engagement

- Joint force commanders must understand legal authorities and funding boundaries to ensure flexibility in meeting multidisciplinary challenges. Developing a common understanding of the authorities and funding sources of each agency may allow the joint force and other USG agencies to identify ways to complement each other’s resources and authorities. The joint force must also be able to assess the results achieved through the provision of resources, which is particularly important for making the case for new resources and reallocating existing resources.
- Instruction on engagement should be integrated into professional military education (PME). This training should include instruction in the laws and regulations by which a joint force commander at any level must operate, as well as the authorities and responsibilities of other USG agencies. Emphasis should be placed on critical thinking and adaptive leadership in addition to operations and tactics.

Relief and Reconstruction

- Relief and reconstruction activities will be most successful and have an enduring positive impact if the joint force conducts them in ways that help build the legitimacy of the affected government and enhance the effectiveness of its capacity to sustain the population. The joint force should plan, prepare, and execute relief and reconstruction activities, together with its partners, to facilitate the transition between its immediate relief and reconstruction mission and the establishment of a host government that is legitimate and effective and which can progressively assume maintenance, administration, and funding of reconstituted or newly developed systems. The joint force should be cognizant of the impact its approach to relief and reconstruction will have on the relative legitimacy and effectiveness of a state or indigenous institutions and actors.
- To meet the challenge of relief and reconstruction, the joint force will primarily enable its partners to provide, restore, and improve essential civil services and critical infrastructure. Though the future joint force will place a priority on enabling others' efforts, it will directly conduct relief and reconstruction activities when required. Recognizing the primacy of other actors to perform R&R will enable the joint force to be more readily available to conduct other operations.
- Enhanced accountability will aid the joint force in perception management and build support for the host government and US government activities. Corruption can erode and may, ultimately, undermine legitimacy. If the people perceive political elites misdirecting or mismanaging relief and reconstruction resources for their personal benefit, it may damage the credibility and trust required for these operations. The joint force must aggressively mitigate potential vulnerabilities or negative perceptions. Relief and reconstruction activities can provide opportunities for the joint force to communicate information and influence perceptions to build or reinforce legitimacy. Accountability in relief and reconstruction activities is critical to gain and maintain the population's support for host government and USG activities.
- Cultivating local ownership and buy-in will assist the joint force in developing and encouraging long-term sustainability of reconstruction. The "iron triad" of local ownership, sustainability, and capacity building are critical elements for ensuring successful and enduring reconstruction results. Long-term sustainability of infrastructure and essential services will depend on early cultivation of local ownership and buy-in. Some situations may require additional investments in skills training for local partners and careful attention to boosting weak technical capacity. The scale and scope of projects should correspond to local capacity levels to operate and maintain services and infrastructure.
- The joint force requires mechanisms and standards to partner with foreign and domestic groups. While it is imperative for the joint force to partner with a wide range of groups and individuals such as foreign governments, tribes, indigenous institutions, NGOs, and private businesses, it must balance these partnerships against its capability to innovate, adapt, and take immediate action. In conjunction with its civilian partners, and taking into account their mandates and capacity, the joint force should build mechanisms and

sets of standards for partnership in relief and reconstruction activities that allow for maximum flexibility and adaptability, with the least implications to the combat and security missions of the joint force.

- Awareness and understanding of specific funding authorities must be developed by joint force commanders so they can effectively plan and implement relief and reconstruction actions. Commanders must be able to leverage all available resources when planning with civilian USG agencies and departments who operate under separate funding authorities. Unless commanders are keenly aware of funding streams and authorities they may encounter constraints or limitations on their actions and affect their ability to accomplish operational objectives. Developing a more in-depth knowledge will allow commanders to leverage all available resources when planning with other USG agencies and departments. Additionally, comptrollers and staff judge advocates will need to help ensure joint force commanders heed the appropriate laws and directives, and that they know where to reach experts for such funding.
- US military personnel must be trained and educated in cultural awareness techniques and special cultures where relief and reconstruction activities are likely. To effectively carry out operations in a foreign environment, commanders must possess a degree of cultural and language knowledge. This does not mean that conventional forces must rival special force's proficiency in this area. Rather, conventional forces should train in basic communication skills and learn how to recruit and use local translators to facilitate their mission objectives.