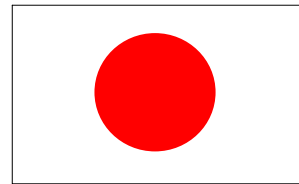




Insights from Operation Tomodachi Bilateral Coordination Action Team (BCAT) – Sendai



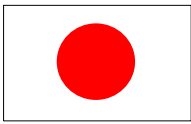
COL Stephen Browne

U.S. Army War College Fellow to Texas A&M University





Agenda



- Overview of the Great East Japan Earthquake (GEJE) and Tsunami Disaster
- Operation Tomodachi Timeline
- Joint Task Force–Tohoku and BCAT–Sendai Task Organization
- BCAT-S Mission and Bilateral Coordination flow Structure
- Key Lessons Learned
- Conclusion





Overview – Earthquake and Tsunami

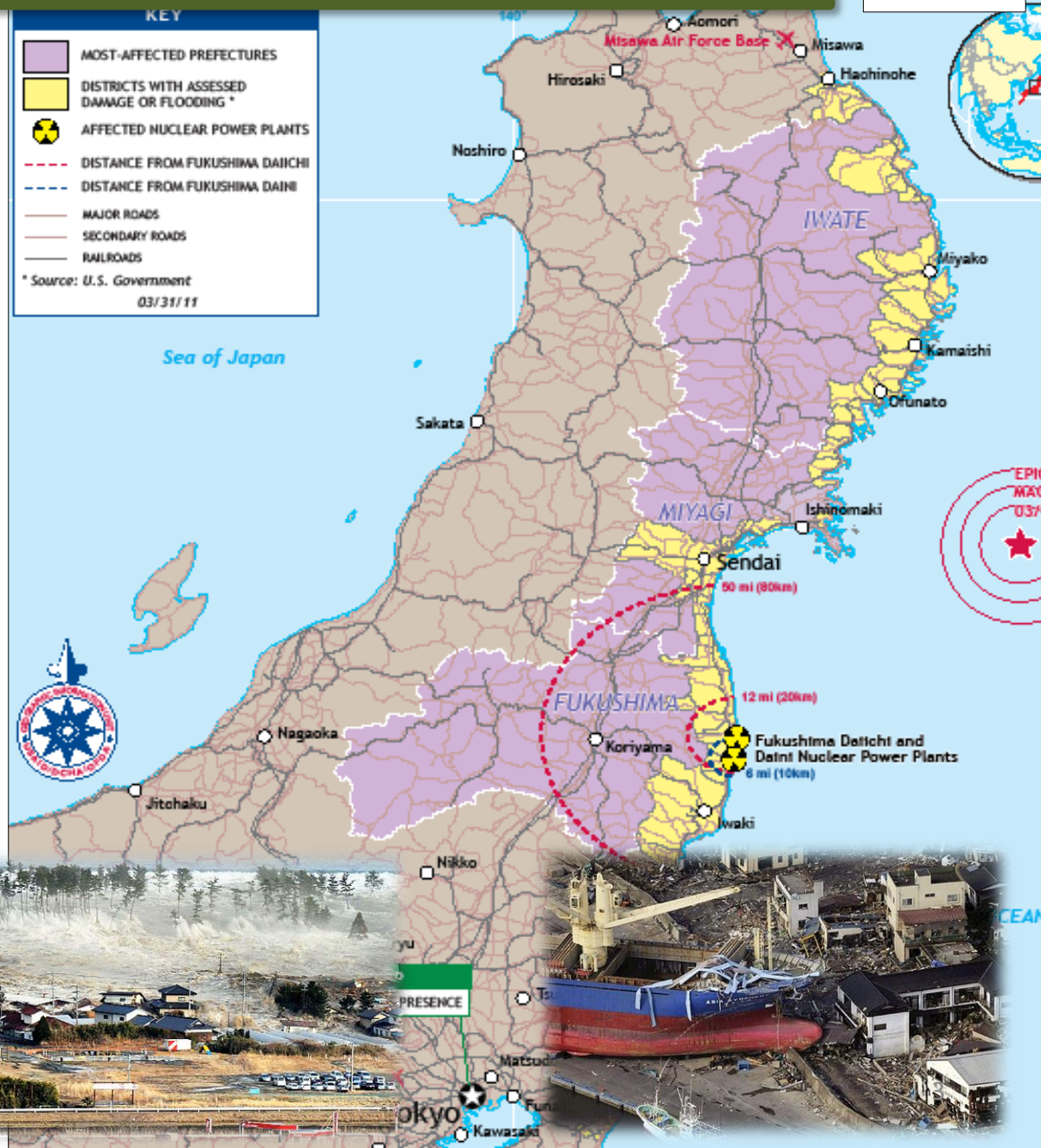


Earthquake

- 11 MAR, 1446 - 9.0 earthquake along Japan coast 230 miles NE of Tokyo
- 3,970 roads, Pacific Coast and JR Railways completely disrupted
- Sea Ports, Roads, and Rail Closed
- Affected coastline lowered up to 1 meter
- 2011 - estimated Rebuild Cost: USD \$309

Tsunami

- Epicenter offshore 65 miles east of Sendai
- Tsunami damage far more severe than earthquake
- Wave height varied; up to 115ft
- Affected over 420 miles of coastline





Operational Timeline



01 1700 MAY - JFLCC repositioning complete & posture for future operations / support

26 APR- Begin JFLCC reposition OPs

08 APR- JLTF 10 established in Ishinomaki

07 APR- TOA between III MEF and USARJ; USARJ assumes JFLCC Operations

06 APR- LTF 35 moves to Ishinomaki Tomorrow Business Town

25 MAR- USARJ executes Voluntary Departure

21 MAR - LTF 35 deploys to Sendai Airport

15 MAR – Bilateral Coordination Action Team Stands Up – Sendai

14 MAR - III MEF designated as JFLCC. USARJ DAT integrates into JTF FWD Staff. JTF-FWD begins conducting operations in the Tohoku AO

14 MAR - USARJ DAT deploys to Camp Sendai

12 MAR - USFJ designated as JTF for US Forces in Japan

11 1500 MAR - USARJ CAT & DAT alerted...staff occupies CIC at Zama

11 1446 MAR 11 – 9.0 Earthquake and Tsunami





Joint Task Force Tohoku (JTF-TH)



Defense Minister

US Forces

CRF

CRF Commander

(Response to Nuclear Disaster)

Commander, JTF-TH

CG, NEA GSDF

Joint Staff

BCAT-ICHIGAYA

BCAT-YOKOTA

Joint Operation Liaison Center

CDR, JSF

CG, USFJ

COMPACFLT

Ground Component

Maritime Component

Air Component

JTH-TH HQ

CG, NEA

Other Regional Armies

Commandant Yokosuka District

Self-Defense Fleet's units

Cdr, Air Defense Command

Air Support Command

Air Training Command

Air Material Command HQ

NEA HQ (+Reinforcing Staff)

BCAT-SENDAI

Each Coordination Cells

- Aviation
- Communication
- Transportation
- Engineer

Pref, City Coordination Cells

- IWATE
- MIYAGI
- FUKUSHIMA
- ISHINOMAKI

• JFLCC (USARJ)
JFLCC FWD

• JFMCC
• JFACC (13th AF)
40 Aircraft
600 personnel

• JFLCC (USARJ)
• JFMCC (7th FLT)
• JFACC (13th AF)
• USMC (III MEF)
140 Aircraft
15 vessels
(Carrier, LHA)
24,000 Pax

1xDivision
1xLife Support Unit
Others
800personnel

Be Prepared for O/O Missions

200 Aircraft
50 Vessels
14,000 personnel

Be Prepared for O/O Missions

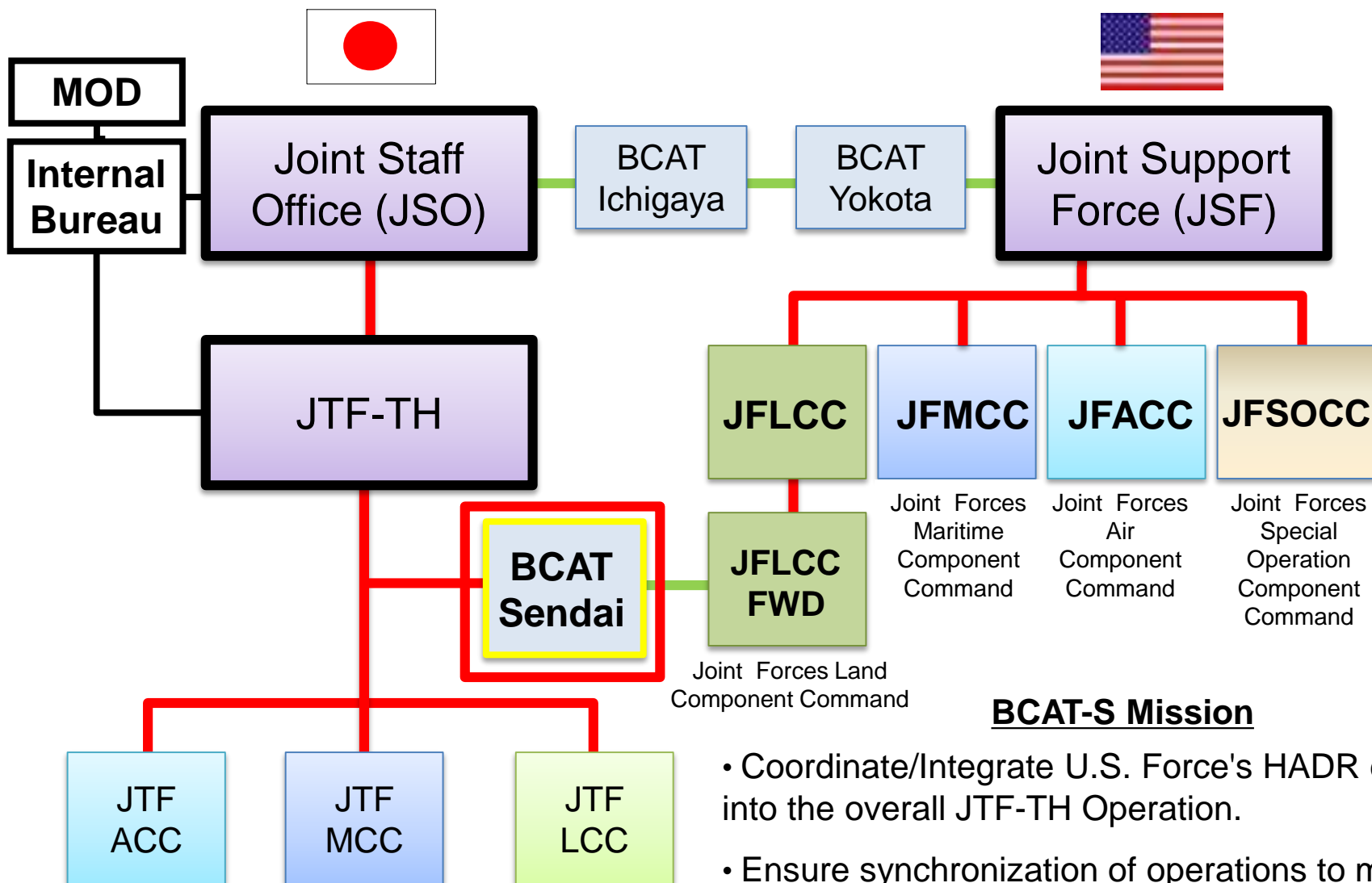
240 Aircraft
24,000 personnel

Maximum scale

5 Divisions
4 Brigades
3 Engr Brigades
1 FA Brigade
1 ADA Brigade
70,000 personnel

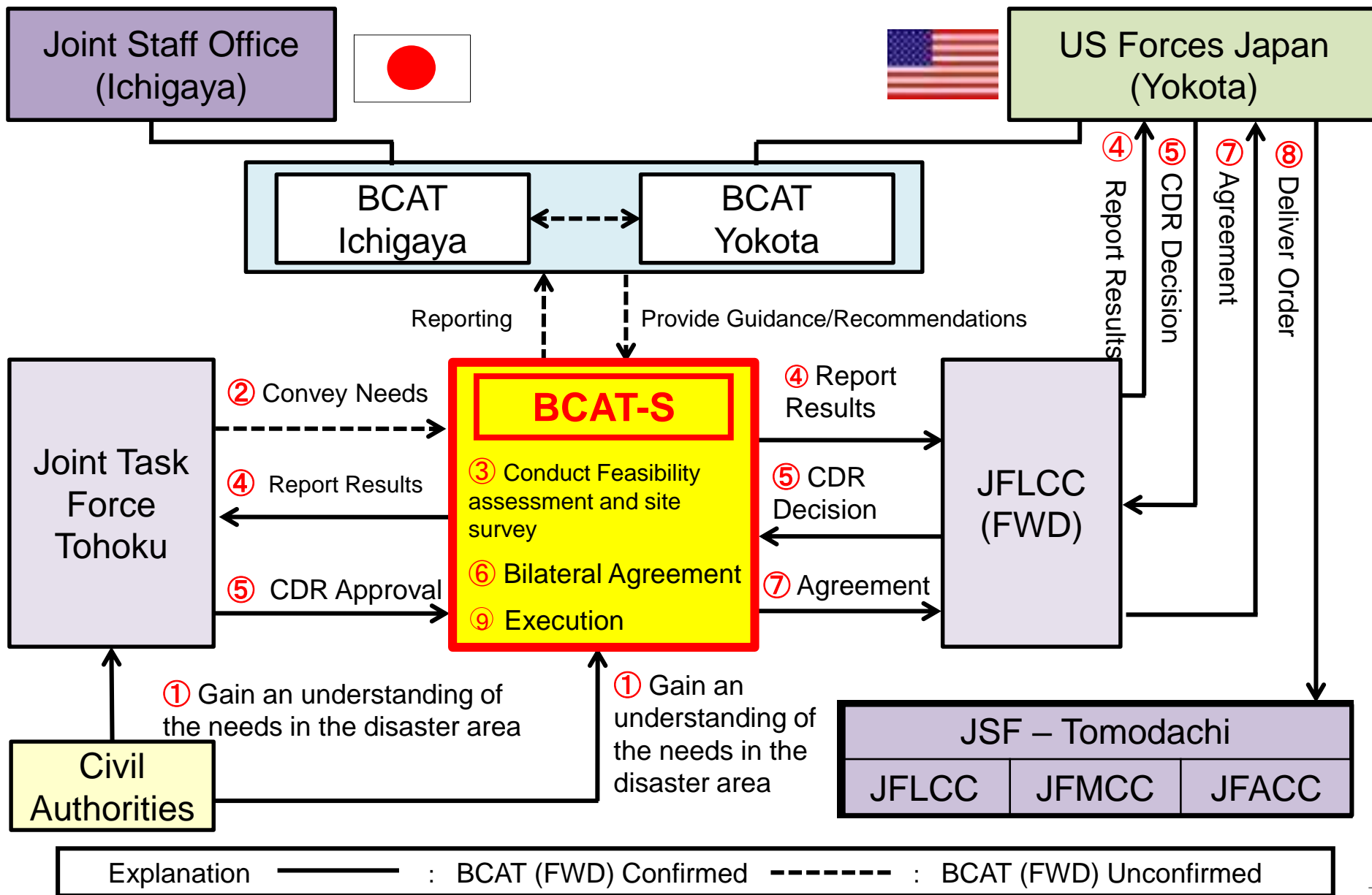


US – Japanese Bilateral Coordination



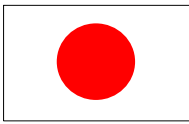


BCAT Information Coordination Flow





BCAT-S Key Lessons Learned



- **Relationships Matter!** BCAT-S capitalized on existing partnerships
 - Bilateral/Multi-Lateral Exercises, KLEs, SLS, and SME Exchanges between US Forces Japan, U.S Army Japan (USARJ) and Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF)
 - USARJ Liaison Officer (LNO) program to each of the GSDF Regional Armies
- **Understanding of Culture and Mind-Set is Critical!** Initial use of Political-Military Experts to facilitate coordination
 - 8 Military, 2 Civilian POL-MIL, DoS, USAID experts helped bridge the gap between language, culture, and thought process barriers
 - JSDF sent various officers from GSO and JSO that had previous experience working with U.S. Forces
 - **Example**: Requirements (U.S.) vs. Capabilities (JPN)



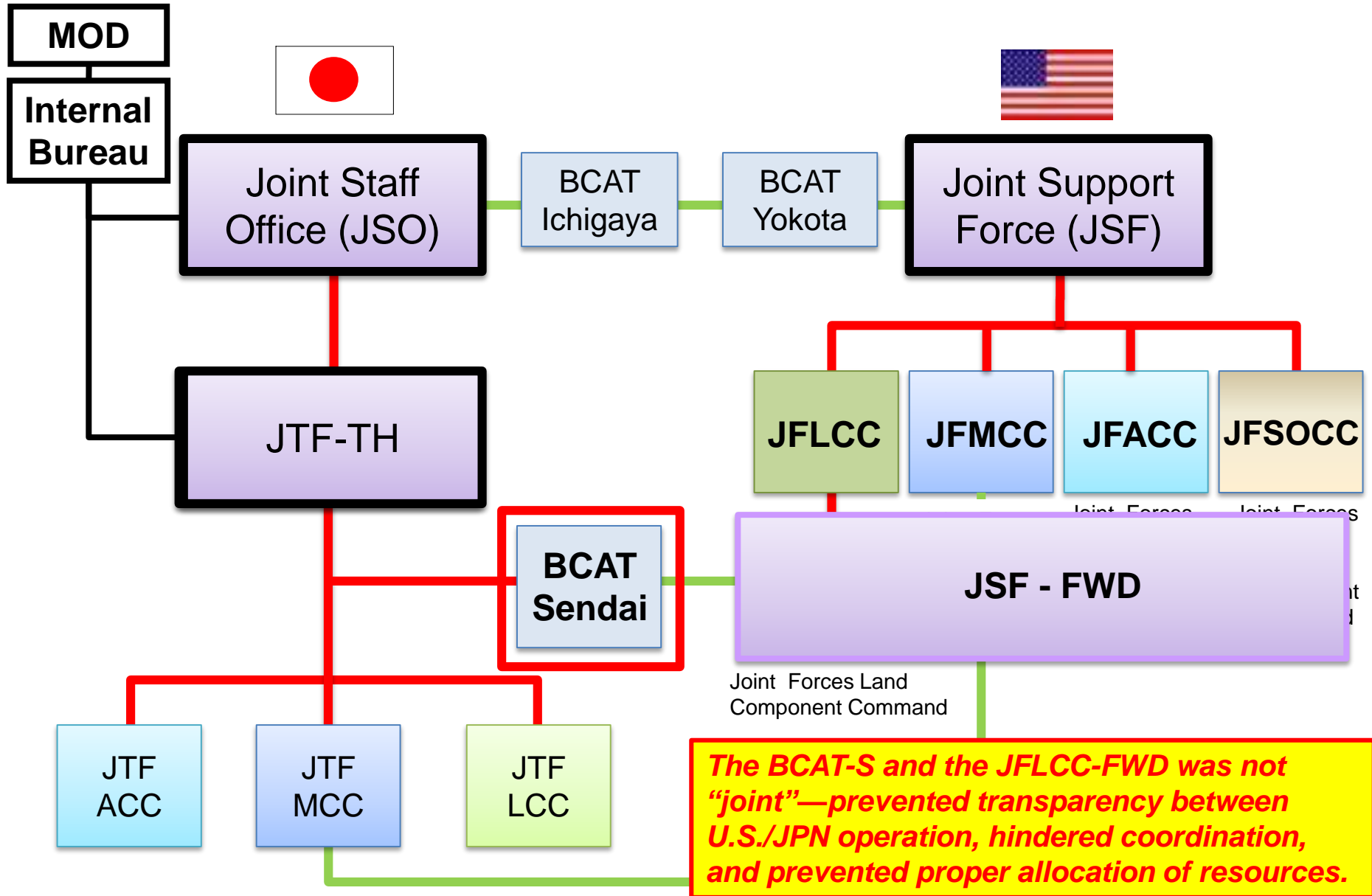
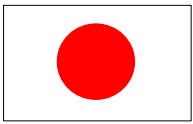
BCAT-S Key Lessons Learned



- **BCATs must be “Joint!”** – Hindered Speed of Coordination
 - BCAT-S was heavy on US Army and US Marine Corps
 - Lack of US Navy and US Air Force personnel caused coordination delays
 - Example: JFLCC-FWD vs. JSF-Tomodachi FWD
- **All warfighting functions must be represented!**
Hindered ability to understand requirements, lack of SMEs in the BCAT; prevented effective coordination
 - JSDF staffed the BCAT-S with Operations, Logistics, Engineer, Communications, and Public Affairs Personnel
 - US staffed largely with Foreign Area Officers and later some operations and logistics personnel; however they operated back and forth between JFLCC-FWD and BCAT-S

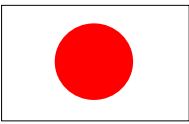


US – Japanese Bilateral Coordination





Conclusion



- JSDF established first ever JTF (~108,000 troops, 700 reserves) in response to the devastating Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami disaster
- Operating in a complex, multilateral, intergovernmental environment is not easy – must establish coordination structures and rehearse them
- Relationships matter & understanding of culture and mind-set is critical
- Support to complex disasters must be with a joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multilateral mindset

