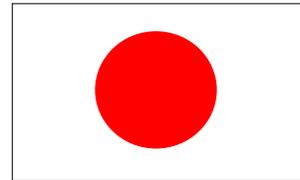




Insights from Operation Tomodachi Bilateral Coordination Action Team (BCAT) – Sendai



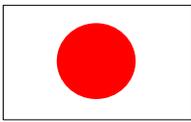
COL Stephen Browne

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





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

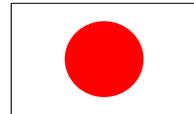
11 1500 MAR - USARJ CAT & DAT alerted...staff occupies CIC at Zama



11 1446 MAR 11 – 9.0 Earthquake and Tsunami



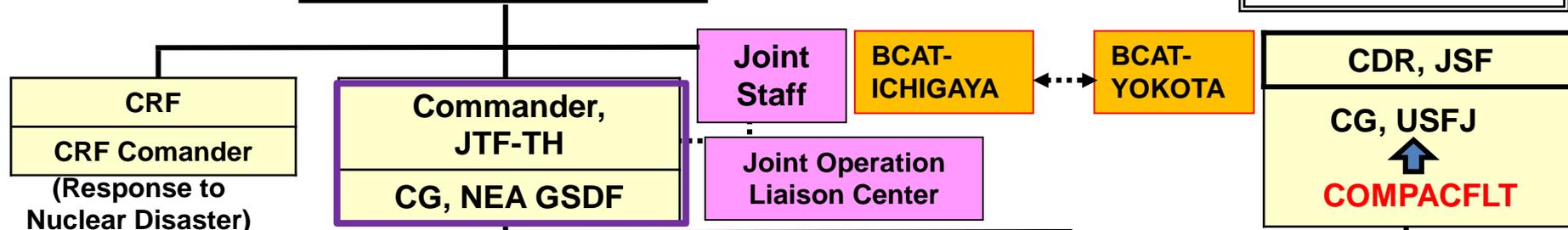
(Source: USARJ CG Operation Tomodachi Brief; NEA PAO Pictures)



Joint Task Force Tohoku (JTF-TH)

Defense Minister

US Forces



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

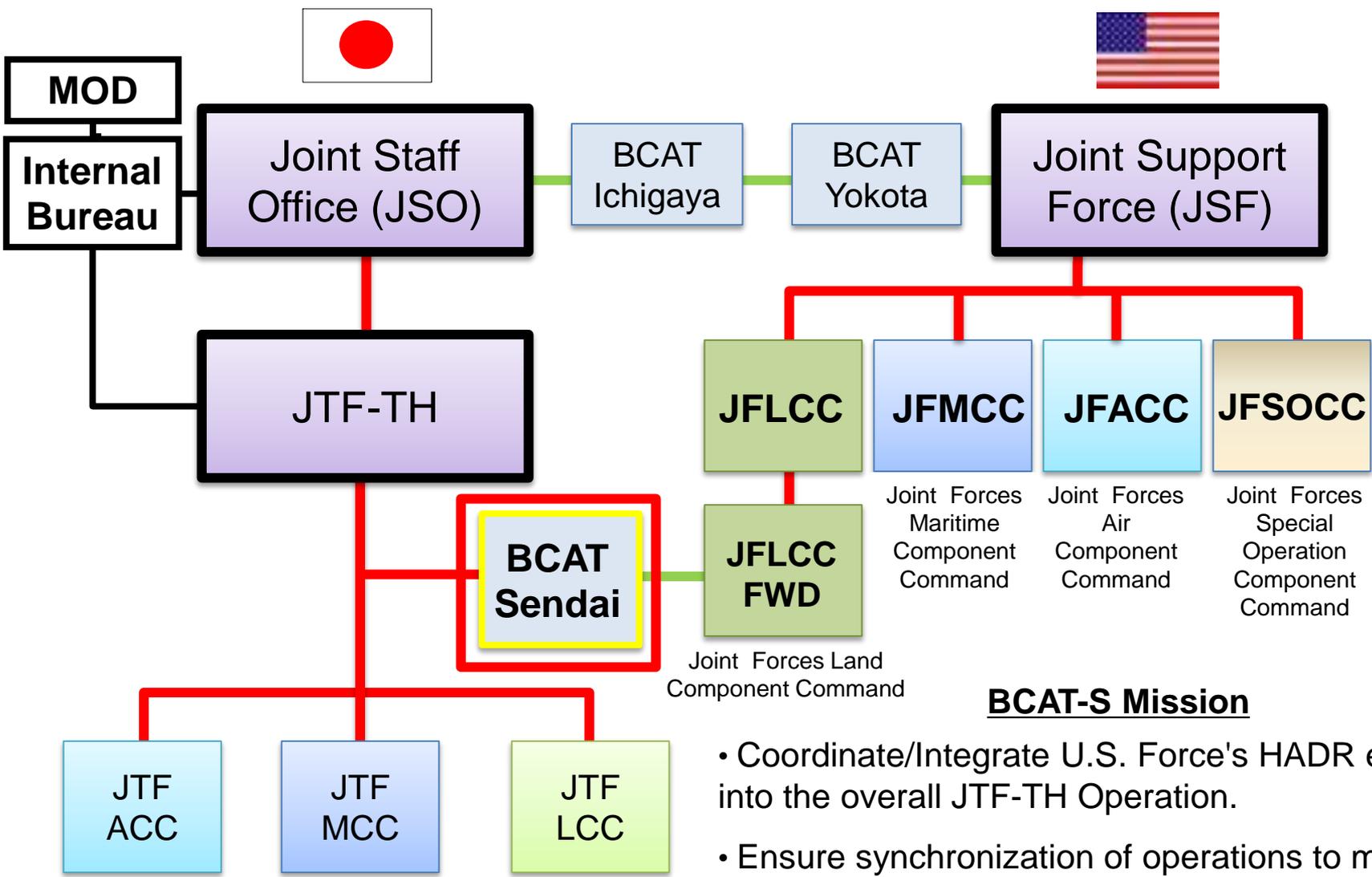
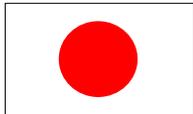
240 Aircraft
24,000 personnel

Maximum scale

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



US – Japanese Bilateral Coordination



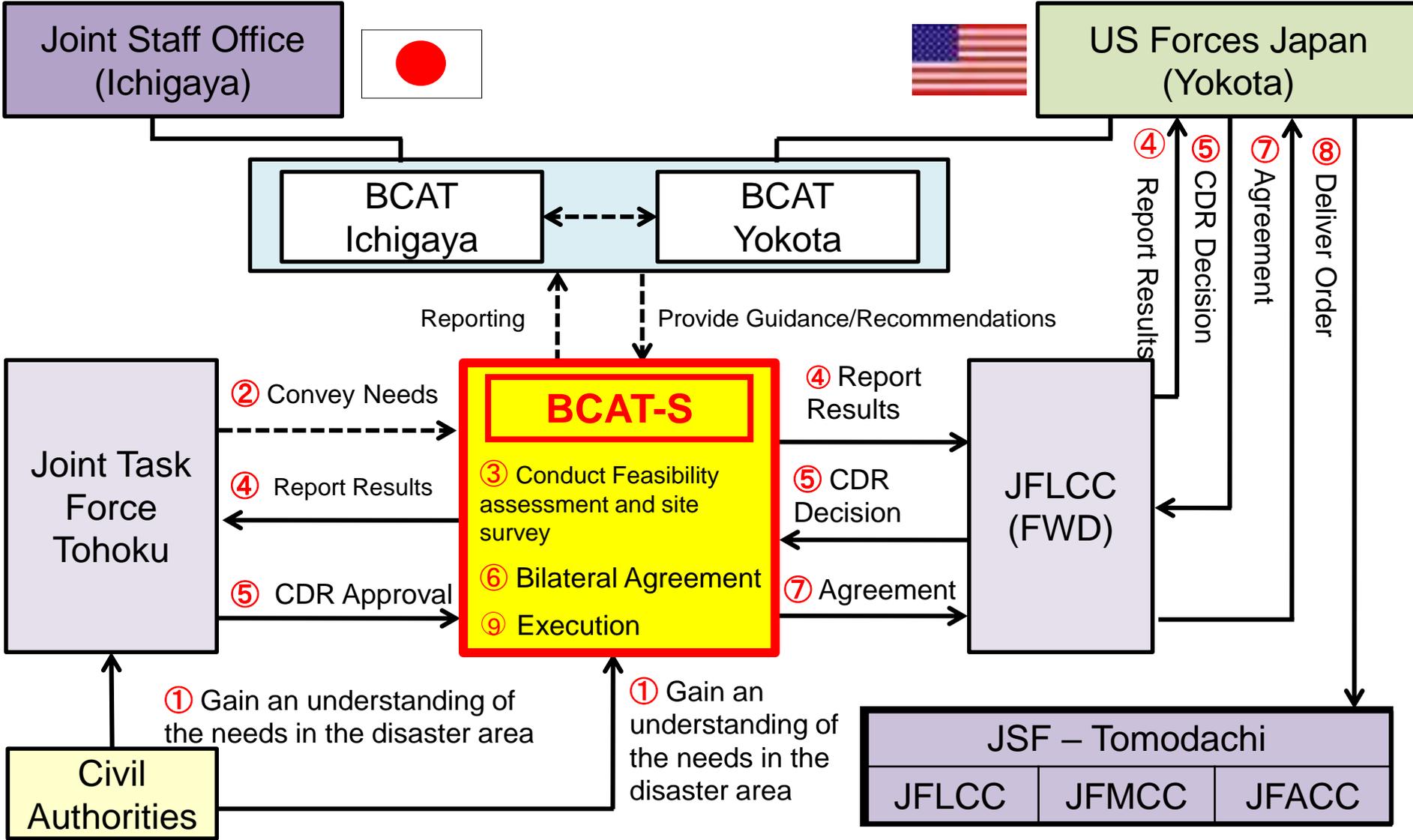
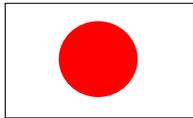
BCAT-S Mission

- Coordinate/Integrate U.S. Force's HADR efforts into the overall JTF-TH Operation.
- Ensure synchronization of operations to meet the needs of local authorities, prefectural governors, and the JTF-TH Commander.

(Source: JTF-TH Bilateral AAR (DEC 2011))



BCAT Information Coordination Flow



Explanation ——— : BCAT (FWD) Confirmed - - - - - : BCAT (FWD) Unconfirmed

(Source: JTF-TH Bilateral AAR (DEC 2011))



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)



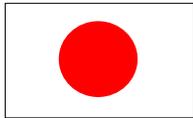
BCAT-S Key Lessons Learned



- **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



MOD
Internal Bureau



Joint Staff Office (JSO)

BCAT Ichigaya

BCAT Yokota



Joint Support Force (JSF)

JTF-TH

JFLCC

JFMCC

JFACC

JFSOCC

BCAT Sendai

JSF - FWD

Joint Forces Land Component Command

JTF ACC

JTF MCC

JTF LCC

The BCAT-S and the JFLCC-FWD was not "joint"—prevented transparency between U.S./JPN operation, hindered coordination, and prevented proper allocation of resources.



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

