DATE World
Common Environments for Training

How US Partners Use DATE

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

ON THE COVER: US Army Capt. Jason Isgrigg, second from left, with the 3rd Squadron, 2nd Cavalry Regiment, points out locations on a map during a decisive action training environment exercise at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany, Oct. 27, 2012, during Saber Junction 2012. Saber Junction is a US Army 2nd Cavalry Regiment-led exercise designed to prepare US and international partner forces for a NATO deployment to Afghanistan.

Source: SPC Fredrick J. Willis Jr. [Public domain]; https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/37/ U.S._Army_Capt._Jason_Isgrigg%2C_second_from_left%2C_with_the_3rd_Squadron%2C_2nd_Cavalry_ Regiment%2C_points_out_locations_on_a_map_during_a_decisive_action_training_environment_ exercise_at_the_Joint_Multinational_121027-A-OY175-005.jpg

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Red Diamond access via:

apan https://community.apan.org/wg/tradoc-g2/ace-threats-integration/

ATN U.S. Army Army Training Network https://atn.army.mil/.dsp_template.aspx?dpID=381

"DATE World," Common Environments for Training: What's New?

By Angela M. Williams, Branch Chief, Training & Support

Since the original Decisive Action Training Environment (DATE) was released over nine years ago, many users across the US Army, along with several allies, have found ways to challenge training objectives by applying the PMESII-PT conditions described in the five Caucasus countries in multiple ways. These five countries provided operational environments (OEs) with a multitude of challenging conditions set on the terrain in the Caucasus region. In 2015, in an effort to expose Soldiers at training events to challenges outside of the original DATE terrain in the Caucasus region, the Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) directed the creation of new OEs to be set in other regions around the globe. TRADOC G2 responded to this directive with the creation of fourteen new OEs spread across three new regions: Africa, Europe, and Pacific. The addition of these new OEs enriches the overall environment, allows conditions unique to a greater variety of regions, and consequently provides more options for training.

The original DATE, previously known as DATE 3.0, has been renamed as DATE Caucasus in order to highlight the geographic region of focus. This renaming has created a new naming convention that has been applied to the three new DATEs so that all four DATEs are now referred to by the geographic region of focus in the environment. This naming convention also contributes to communicating to the community of interest that all four DATEs are equal; no one environment is primary. To clarify further, just because DATE Caucasus predates the other DATEs, it doesn't carry more weight than the others when it comes to supporting training.

All DATE regions coexist in the same strategic environment, or "DATE World." The conditions developed for the new OEs in the three new DATE regions build upon the repository of conditions initially created in the original DATE and provide data and information for OEs around the DATE world that didn't exist when the environment was first created. This means that while a particular scenario may focus on an OE within the Africa region, conditions from an OE in the Pacific region, Olvana for instance, may have an influence in the African OE if training objectives required such. The options for layers of complexity are even greater with the additional OEs developed (there are now 20 separate country OEs in DATE).

What: TRADOC G2 has developed four interrelated environments in the "Date World" to support training at all venues. The environments include conditions to challenge multi-domain operations (MDO) across the Diplomatic, Information, Military, and Economic (DIME) spectrum.

Where: Conditions from around the world are represented in the four environments that geographically sit on real-world terrain in the following regions: Caucasus, Africa, Europe, and Pacific

Why: The Army has recognized the need for common, shared training environments to enable interoperability and provide for a greater variety of challenges to Army tasks

Who: These environments serve the US Army, ABCANZ partners, other Joint and International partners

When: Available *now* (since Fall 2018)

How: Access all authoritative materials to develop scenarios and exercises on TRADOC G2's ODIN website (https://odin.tradoc.army.mil/)

Key Benefits:

- DATE regions co-exist, enabling complex transnational operations

- Regional specificity of conditions and actors, not previously available

- Satisfies training audience requirement for more specific regional context

- Enables planning and operations agility and more complex training challenges

Another notable point regarding the naming of the regions within DATE is that there will no longer be versions, such as "DATE 3.0." This results from the environments being delivered through the ODIN platform (versus PDFs), which allows updates to be published immediately, making them living documents. As substantive changes are made, a notice will be published on the ODIN homepage. Most changes will be made to enhance the environments for all users driven by both TRADOC G2 initiated updates and community of interest feedback.

WHAT ABOUT THE REAL WORLD?

DATE has the real world covered. Confusion understandably arises over the fictional names given to the OEs and the composite nature of the conditions. So, let's break that down. Composite means that the conditions reflected in any given DATE country do not match exactly the conditions represented by the actual country as determined by the physical terrain or political boundaries. Instead, it is likely that *some* of the conditions from the real-world country will be represented, but they will be combined with others from countries in the same region.

Additionally, realism is NOT about reproducing the real world in terms of current events. Realism is about ensuring that training is as much like expected combat conditions as possible: stress, time crunches, ambiguity, danger, fear, fatigue, and so on. DATE must provide trainers the tools to introduce those factors into the training event through scenarios.

Realistic training focuses on creating conditions that are representative of potential enemies (now and in the future) and operational environments but allows specific training objectives to be challenged. Realistic conditions are not constrained by time, region, or even the capabilities of current adversaries. Realistic conditions focus on preparing a unit for ambiguity and complexity by forcing leaders to make decisions in unforeseen circumstances, and on developing unit task proficiency across a range of conditions. Realistic training is not equal to training just for current operations. Realistic training is the construction of training conditions that are accepted by the training audience to be reasonable, feasible, and plausible. Realistic training allows a soldier or leader to suspend his disbelief of the fictional elements of the training event.

Realistic, however, is not necessarily connected to actual data or to current operations. Realistic training builds an environment that requires a soldier to use the tools he or she will use in combat in the same way when actually in combat. Most of training aids and devices in use right now are intended for that purpose. Realistic training is always relevant to task proficiency but is not necessarily based on a real situation or event in current operations.

Ultimately, the concept is to make the environment more challenging for the sake of training and to not only represent what may be encountered today, but also some time into the future. Conditions for training must meet the three Rs: Realistic, Robust, and Relevant. When determining what goes into DATE, the three Rs serve as a guide:

Realistic: DATE provides real world conditions – no need to make anything up. Fictional names and composite nature are to meet regulation for training.

Robust: Conditions that are realistic and relevant but not robust may not be included. If it doesn't challenge a training task, then it's not as important to include.

Relevant: Conditions are germane to each region to provide the "flavor" of the part of the world being represented.

THE OEs

While we have the DATE organized into four regions, they are still part of the same "DATE World," interconnected across the globe. The distinction between regions is simply for organizational purposes and to emphasize the unique characteristics inherent in various parts of the world.

The Caucasus region of DATE is likely already familiar, but updates will be made soon to ensure it links in properly with the more recently developed regions. This region describes six country OEs—Ariana, Atropia, Donovia, Gorgas, Limaria, and Pirtuni. Previous scenarios and exercises tended to use the same one or two countries, Ariana and/or Donovia, as the threat, but the environment doesn't require this to be the case. Aside from a few exceptions in the European region of DATE, any DATE OE can be friendly, neutral, or threat. Ariana and Atropia have disputes over Caspian Sea resources, and Ariana seeks to be a caliphate. Atropia, on the other hand, is a NATO ally with abundant natural resources. Donovia is a dominant power in the region that is seeking even greater influence, and its military is large (1.4 million) and strong. Currently, the Donovian OE is being expanded in the DATE world up to the Arctic region, and will "connect" to the European region, and conditions relevant to that area will be written in to include upgraded military capabilities. Gorgas is small and independent without much economic power or many assets. Its strongest relationship is with Atropia. Limaria is also small, but allies itself with Donovia. Pirtuni technically crosses both the Caucasus and Europe regions of DATE. Its significant oil and natural gas resources make it strategically desirable. Across the Caucasus environment, there are hybrid threat elements at play with the plethora of guerrilla, insurgent, and criminal groups in addition to violent extremist organizations (VEOs).
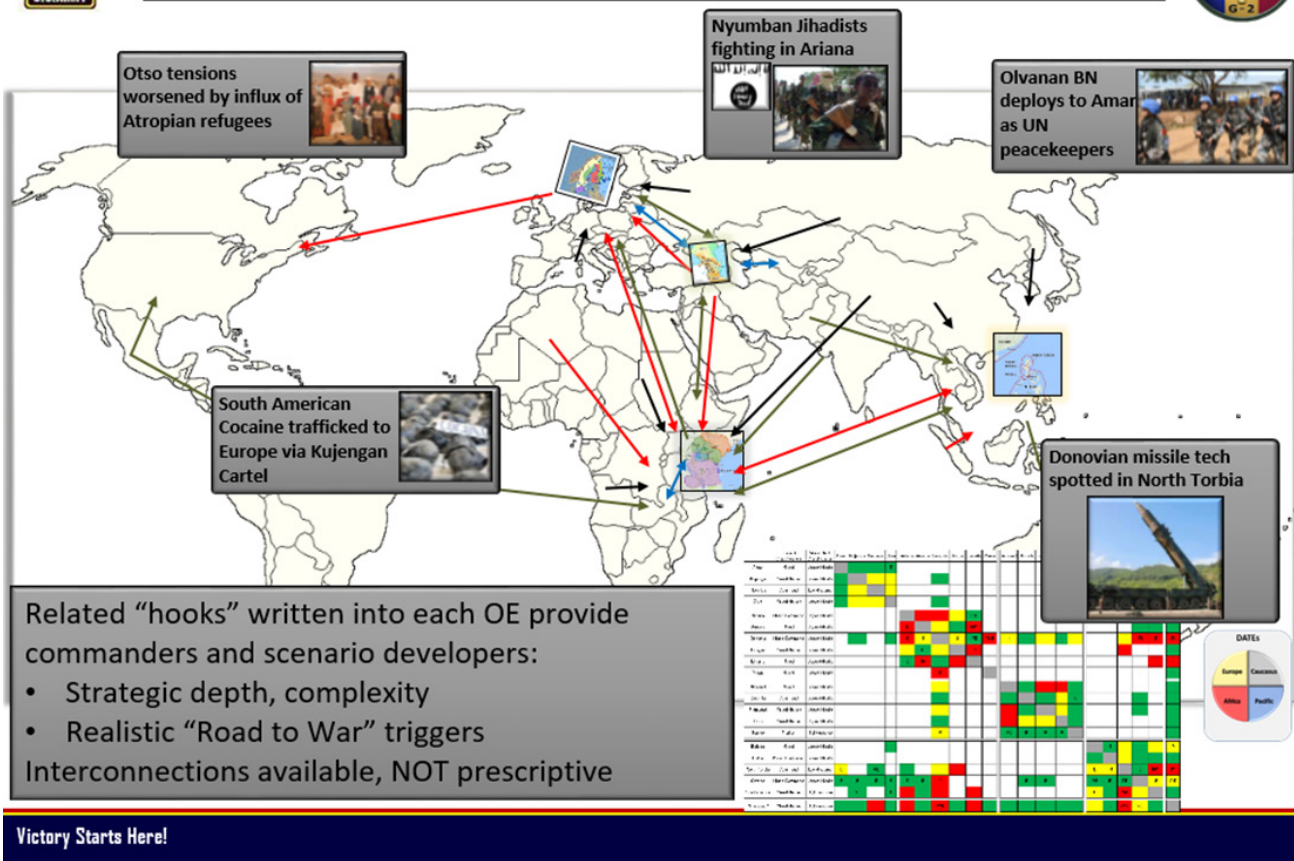
The Africa region of DATE comprises four countries: Amari, Kujenga, Nyumba, and Ziwa. The physical terrain is in eastern Africa roughly in the area of Kenya. Amari has a stable democracy, the biggest military force in this region with about 52,000 with tier 2 and 3 equipment, and good relations with the US. Kujenga suffers from poor infrastructure and negative consequences of tribalism, to include border issues with Amari. It has a single party government and poor relations with the US. Nyumba represents a failed state with a prevalence of warlords, and has a military about the same size as Kujenga, but with primarily tier 3 equipment. Ziwa is economically on the rise because of newly discovered natural resources; it is also more technologically advanced, yet it suffers from regional tensions. Its military has the newest equipment with it being mostly tier 2 with some tier 1 niche capabilities. Some unique conditions in this region of DATE include child soldiers, drug and human trafficking, piracy, smuggling, illicit mining, armed civilian non-combatants, and private security organizations. There is a great variety of non-state actors too: guerrillas, insurgents, militants, and criminals.

The European region of DATE is unique because it's the only area with countries that cannot be played as a threat. These are easy to spot as they retained their actual names.* There are still five composite OE countries at play as needed in this region though, as well as Pirtuni and Donovia. The five are Arnland, Bothnia, Framland, Otso, and Torrike. Arnland is small and weak, so it strives to maintain a neutral posture and aspires to join the European Union (EU). Bothnia is considered a regional power broker (as is Torrike) with a sizable, well trained military and increasing relations with Donovia. Framland is best described as stable and neutral. It boasts a stable economy and social freedoms and would like to be part of NATO. Otso is another small nation wishing to retain its neutrality. Torrike is quite similar to Bothnia with an even slightly larger military and anti-NATO. Torrike's self-view is that of the regional leader due to its former role as the core nation of the Skolkan Empire. The non-state threats in this area are primarily criminal with a few that could be labeled as guerrillas/insurgents or VEOs.

Inter-OE Linkage Potential

Otso tensions worsened by influx of Atropian refugees

Nyumban Jihadists fighting in Ariana

Olvanan BN deploys to Amari as UN peacekeepers

South American Cocaine trafficked to Europe via Kujengan Cartel

Donovian missile tech spotted in North Torbia

Related "hooks" written into each OE provide commanders and scenario developers:
- Strategic depth, complexity
- Realistic "Road to War" triggers

Interconnections available, NOT prescriptive

Victory Starts Here!

* During the development of DATE Europe, all real-world countries named in the environment were consulted and elected to have their country play a role in the environment, thus retaining their real-world name. This facilitates both the European countries' use of the environment for their own exercises and enables exercises between the US and its partners in a common environment.
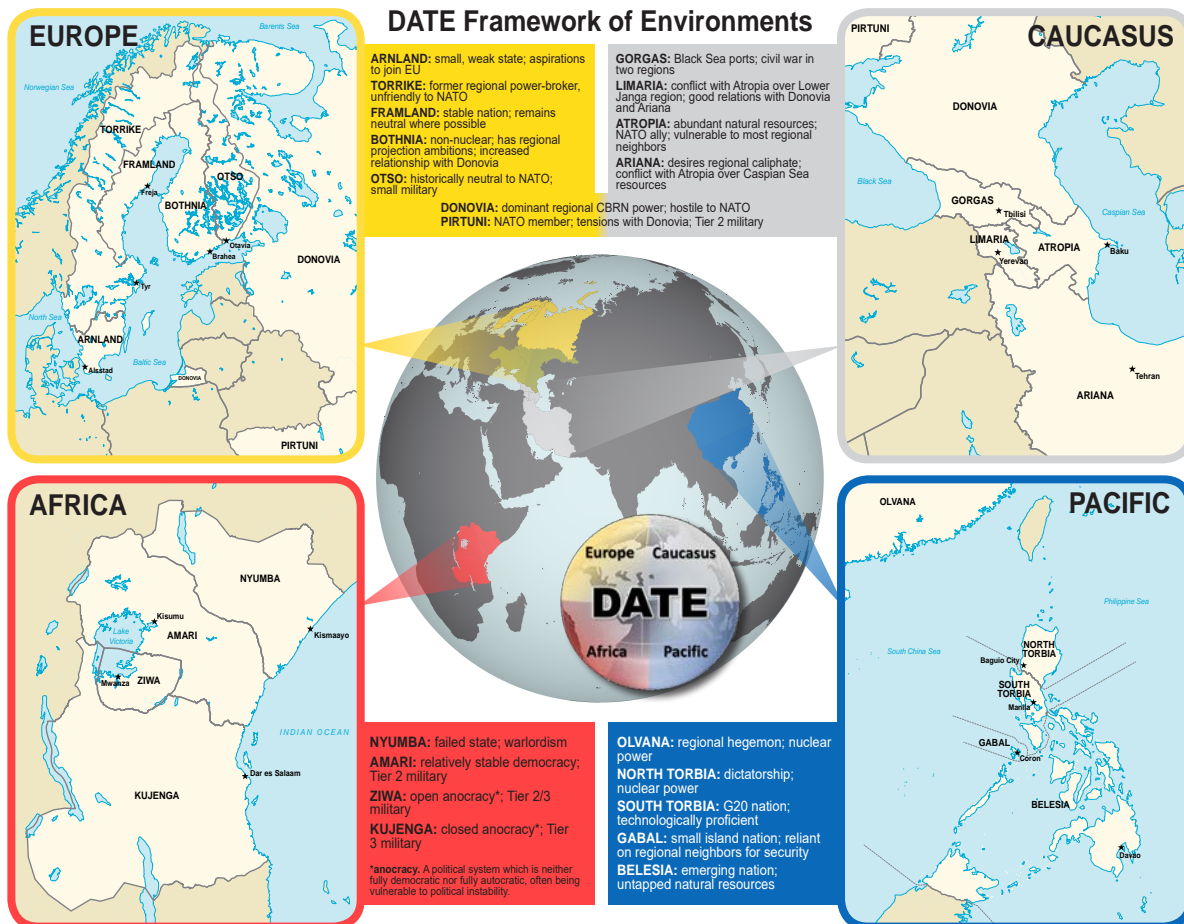
PACIFIC

The Pacific region in DATE sits primarily on the real-world geography of the Philippine archipelago, but expands into parts of Malaysia and up through the South China Sea onto the southeastern parts of China. The area comprises five country OEs called Belesia, Gabal, Olvana, North Torbia and South Torbia. Belesia is a relatively new democracy with significant yet untapped natural resources. It suffers from quite a bit of crime and insurgencies. Gabal is vulnerable due to its small size and significant political/social issues resulting from tribalism. Olvana is large and strong with significance and power in this region and in some OEs in the other regions of DATE. Its military boasts 1.1 million personnel with tier 1 and 2 equipment, and is heavily involved in the sale of military weapons to allies. Its economy benefits from heavy trade partnerships around the world. Olvana and Donovia have two of the strongest INFOWAR capabilities in the DATE world. North Torbia represents a dictatorship and wishes to unite with and control South Torbia. The military power of North Torbia is considerable for its size. The government tightly controls the flow of information. Finally, South Torbia also boasts a strong military along with political stability and wealth with a technologically proficient population.

WHAT NEXT?

Now that there are four, fully developed regions in the DATE world, what comes next? As mentioned previously, there is currently work under way to expand Donovia. There is also a need to re-look the Caucasus DATE to ensure it connects logically to the other regions. The Events section (you can find this here: https://odin.tradoc.army.mil/DATE/Caucasus/Caucasus:_Events) needs to be expanded and enriched to capture some of the unique conditions present in all DATE regions and to better facilitate exercise vignette development. A few entities have already used the material to build scenarios for training, and many more will over the coming months and years. As that happens, TRADOC G2 seeks your feedback. These living documents with be revised and added to as needed to ensure the necessary conditions for training are available to all users.

Finally, it's essential to note the training with DATE involves many parts. The environments themselves, which was the focus of this article, is the baseline for all of it, but training with DATE is enhanced by other products and tools, to include the Worldwide Equipment Guide (WEG), Force Structures, opposing force doctrine (all found on ODIN) and tools like ION and exercise support tools. TRADOC G2 provides all these products and services to ensure users have what they need to execute realistic, robust, and relevant training from homes station to Multinational and Joint exercises.♦

DATE Framework of Environments

EUROPE

ARNLAND: small, weak state; aspirations to join EU
TORRIKE: former regional power-broker, unfriendly to NATO
FRAMLAND: stable nation; remains neutral where possible
BOTHNIA: non-nuclear; has regional projection ambitions; increased relationship with Donovia
OTSO: historically neutral to NATO; small military
DONOVIA: dominant regional CBRN power; hostile to NATO
PIRTUNI: NATO member; tensions with Donovia; Tier 2 military

CAUCASUS

GORGAS: Black Sea ports; civil war in two regions
LIMARIA: conflict with Atropia over Lower Janga region; good relations with Donovia and Ariana
ATROPIA: abundant natural resources; NATO ally; vulnerable to most regional neighbors
ARIANA: desires regional caliphate; conflict with Atropia over Caspian Sea resources

AFRICA

NYUMBA: failed state; warlordism
AMARI: relatively stable democracy; Tier 2 military
ZIWA: open anocracy*; Tier 2/3 military
KUJENGA: closed anocracy*; Tier 3 military

*anocracy. A political system which is neither fully democratic nor fully autocratic, often being vulnerable to political instability.

PACIFIC

OLVANA: regional hegemon; nuclear power
NORTH TORBIA: dictatorship; nuclear power
SOUTH TORBIA: G20 nation; technologically proficient
GABAL: small island nation; reliant on regional neighbors for security
BELESIA: emerging nation; untapped natural resources

Canadian DATE
By Dave Banks and Gary Yuzichuk

The Implementation and Use of the DATE in the Canadian Army

The Canadian Army has enjoyed a long and close training relationship with the US Army through peace and wartime; most recently in Afghanistan and Iraq. When Canada sought to replace its outdated standard synthetic training environment, it was only natural that we consulted with our allies, and after evaluation, The US's Decisive Action Training Environment (DATE) was selected as the most suitable option.

In 2015, the Canadian Army Simulation Centre (CASC) was tasked to support the Army-wide implementation of DATE 2.2 as the standard synthetic environment for the Canadian Army training, both individual and collective. This was a natural fit for CASC, as our mission includes the design, development, and delivery of collective training using various types of simulations. CASC supports a wide range of command and control training activities ranging from simple table-top exercises to train staffs, up to full digital environments supported by multiple constructive simulations to exercise courses, High Readiness exercises and joint force headquarters. One could equate the CASC to an amalgam between the US Army Mission Command Training Program (MCTP), the Operational Environment Training Support Center (OETSC) and the US National Simulation Center (NSC), but on a smaller scale and catering for the Joint community and Other Government Departments (OGDs) as well as Army needs.

In pursuit of this task, CASC turned to the DATE creators at the TRADOC G2 Analysis Control Element – Threats Integration (ACE-TI) located in Fort Leavenworth KS. This initial contact four years ago has developed into a strong and close working relationship which persists today, and which we would encourage all Allied DATE users to emulate.

The approach we took to introduce DATE to the Canadian Army was to create something we called the "DATE Toolbox," an on-line presentation platform mounted on the Defence Wide Area Network (DWAN). The concept was inspired by the sort of community websites established by computer gamers, and was intended to encourage the same kind of sharing and innovation. We intentionally used the term "Toolbox" because we wanted to convey the idea that it would help users to build what they needed, rather than rigidly dictate their efforts.

To expedite the use of DATE by the field force, we developed a complete and detailed background scenario at the political, strategic, and operational levels, situating a Canadian task force in the context of a US-led CJTF conducting operations in Atropia. By providing these levels of background, we hoped to ease the burden for users (most of whom were in our small Army function at brigade and below) to focus on developing their own exercises within a context.

The foundation references for our work were the DATE 2.2 publications from ACE-TI, and additional DATE 2.2 material developed by MCTP. (These materials are displayed on the Toolbox, along with a link to the TRADOC ODIN site). An overarching "Campaign Timeline," linked to a Road to War narrative, provided an anchoring logic flow to the broad story represented by the various simulated directives, agreements, orders, ORBATs, graphic products, and videos presented on the Toolbox. The story told by these products evolves from peacetime military engagement in Atropia (represented by a training mission sub-story), through Coalition deterrence to large scale combat operations, terminating in the conduct of stability and peace support operations. The idea was to allow users to situate their own particular exercises anywhere in the broader story.

The concept behind the Toolbox was threefold:

- To introduce DATE as quickly and efficiently as possible across the entire Army, with products readily accessible to all users;

- To lighten the workload for users by providing them with a wide range of ready-built background documents for use "as is" or for modification according to their particular needs. A well-built exercise usually requires a convincing set of background documents: the Toolbox was intended to help with this; and

- To provide a place where DATE users could ask questions (by means of an RFI button), share their products, and provide feedback (again with a specific button to click).

The Canadian Army DATE Toolbox went on line in late 2016 and has been in use, with periodic improvements and updates, ever since. We have since shared its contents with both the Australian Army and with the ACE-TI team, which is in the collaborative spirit of the DATE user community.

Since the introduction of the DATE Toolbox, the Canadian Army has implemented DATE in a number of training venues:
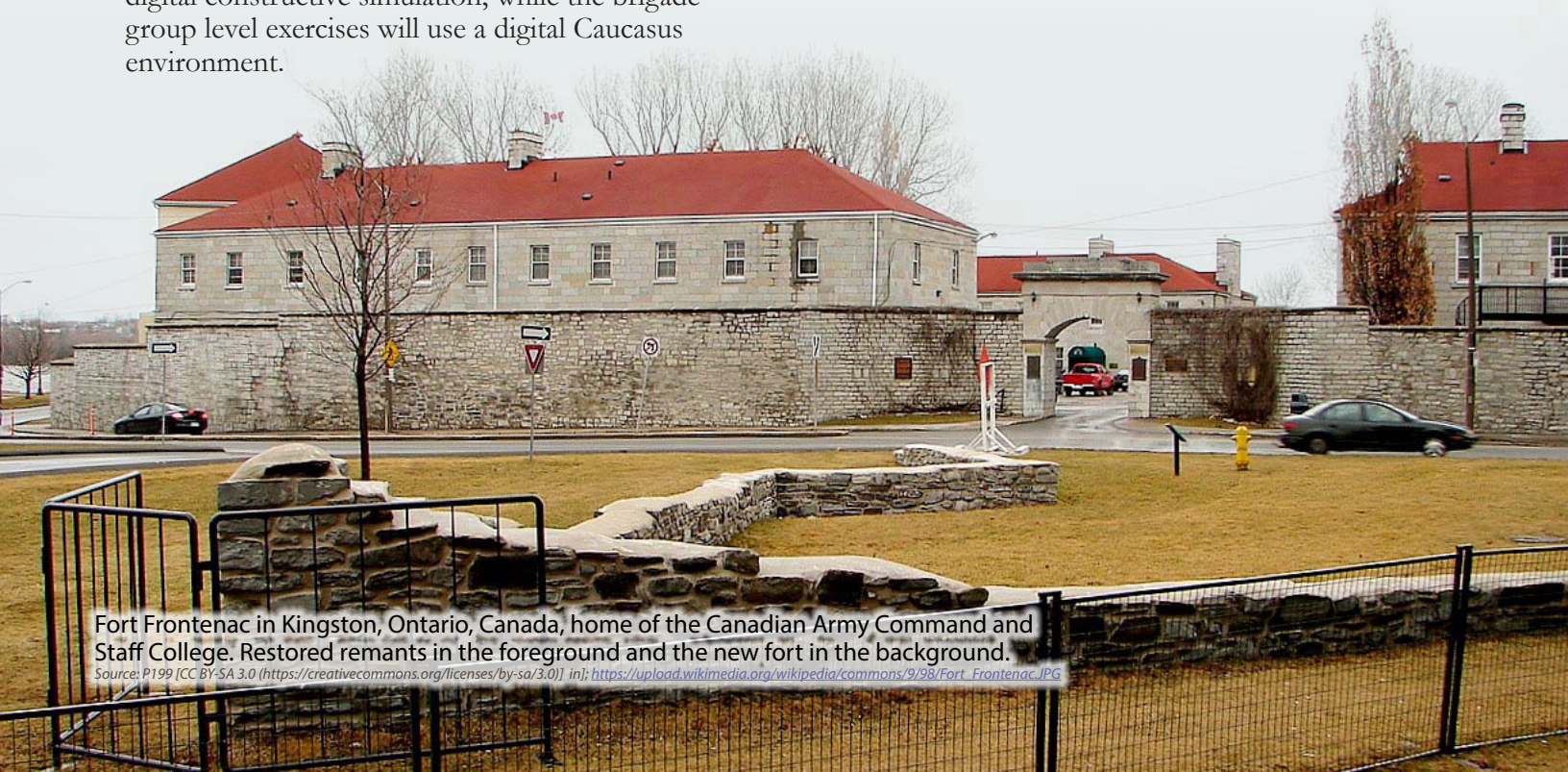
- the Combat Training Centre in Gagetown, New-Brunswick, where the combat arms branches conduct most officer and NCO individual training courses, converted all of its exercises to DATE 2.2, including a "DATE drape" map of the training area, assigning Atropian names and locations to the real geography;

- the Wainwright, Alberta based Canadian Manoeuvre Training Centre (CMTC) high readiness exercises UNIFIED RESOLVE (brigade group) and MAPLE RESOLVE (battle group) were rewritten in the DATE 2.2 environment, again using the "DATE drape" to make the familiar hills and plains of western Canada represent the Caucasian terrain. Beginning with UNIFIED RESOLVE 2020, that exercise series will be conducted in a purely Caucasus digital environment;

- the Canadian Army Command and Staff College in Kingston, Ontario is in the midst of recasting its exercises in DATE 2.2. The battlegroup exercise series will use a different "DATE drape" over real local terrain to allow the students to conduct Tactical Exercises Without Troops (TEWTs) followed by digital constructive simulation, while the brigade group level exercises will use a digital Caucasus environment.

Once the Canadian Army began to use DATE, interest spread to other services. The Royal Canadian Air Force uses DATE as the environment for a number of its training activities, and the Canadian Forces School of Military Intelligence is in the process of converting its exercises to use the DATE environment, with emphasis on the OPFOR aspects.

To assist with user understanding of the OPFOR aspects of DATE, the Army adopted the use of the TRADOC G2 Threat Tactics Course (TTC). With a few modifications, this was later combined with a short "DATE world" familiarization program to create a travelling roadshow known as the "DATE Academy." Our experience was that the TTC helped users understand the "new enemy" a learning process which continues today as the Army moves beyond the Afghanistan COIN paradigm towards large scale combat operations but with a strong hybrid twist reflective of the current operating environment.

In our view as a training design, development, and delivery organization what makes DATE valuable as a synthetic environment is its inherent flexibility and adaptability. First-time users often assume that DATE is a set of rigid rules and prescriptions that must be religiously adhered to: this is not at all true. While there are some basic common sense protocols for use, we have found it very easy to adapt DATE to our needs.

Looking ahead, CASC keeps in close touch with ACE-TI on the development of the full range of DATE OEs such as DATE Europe and Arctic additions. As the training needs of the Canadian Army evolve to meet world commitments, DATE provides an excellent range of options. ♦

Fort Frontenac in Kingston, Ontario, Canada, home of the Canadian Army Command and Staff College. Restored remants in the foreground and the new fort in the background.

DATE Adoption in Australia

Australia has been aggressively working to implement the Decisive Action Training Environment (DATE) for adoption across the entire Australian Army training continuum. Our goal is to build a consistent and coherent training system, underpinned by DATE, from ab-initio all the way through to higher level collective training.

We have had great success in our adoption model, to date, and have greatly benefitted from support by the US Army's subject matter experts in the TRADOC G2 command. This has enabled us to overcome many of the challenges in changing our mindset and approach to tactical training as well as realigning the support structures needed to make our Army future ready by fighting the contemporised DATE enemy.

Mr Kristin Lechowicz delivers DATE Threat Tactics Training to Australian instructors during a sponsored visit to Australia for DATE training alignment in March 2019.

Under our current implementation timeline, Australia will reach full compliance for our training school houses by 2020 and complete adoption across all Army training by 2021. This will mark a significant achievement after only four years, since scoping and analysis of DATE began. This model will be committed to sustaining DATE, as well as investing in the future development of other operating environments for the progression of greater multi-national interoperability with all DATE allied partners' training systems.

Australia is now seeking to repay US Army investment in our adoption phase for DATE, with the deployment of our first dedicated DATE exchange officer to work in support of the development of DATE Pacific. We believe that this is an area where we can most effectively provide an initial contribution, and scope ongoing and deepened support for the future. The Australian Army has always considered itself to have specialised skills and knowledge in the South East Asian Pacific Rim. We plan to support DATE Pacific's operational environment build with lessons learned from the past 50 years that we have been conducting operations in this region.

The focus of Australia's adoption over the last six months has been on the delivering 'train the trainer' courses and workshops. This training, heavily supported by the TRADOC G2 Threats Integration, has worked to teach our instructors how to practically apply DATE into training, both at a planning level and realising a distinctive and agnostic live enemy force that embodies the principles under DATE. Australia has managed to hit key stakeholders in over 70% of Army, with over 1,000 people trained in DATE.

In support of the transition of our training, Australia has developed a nested DATE Caucasus campaign, advertisements, scenario, training videos, learning packages, digitised smart books and tailored training forces that link directly to into the Caucasus training environment. There is further development still planned in the generation of stitched terrain mapping and new tranches of training videos under development.
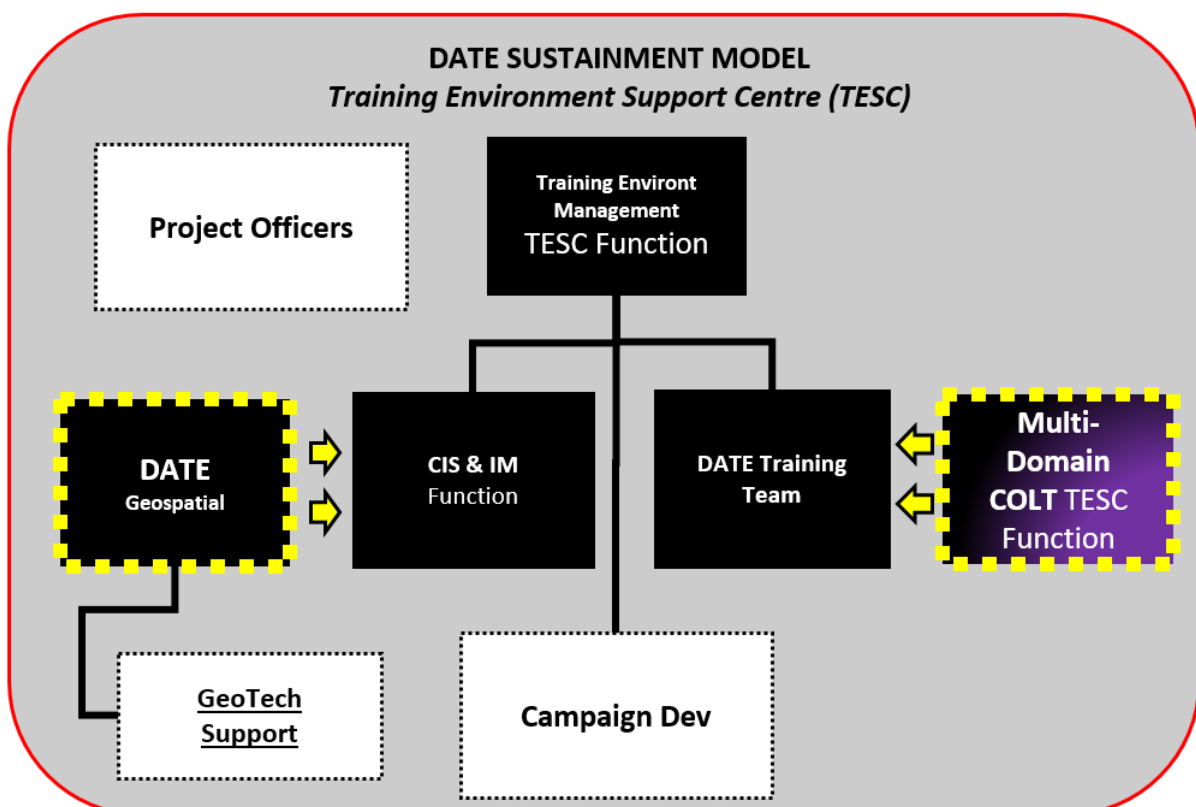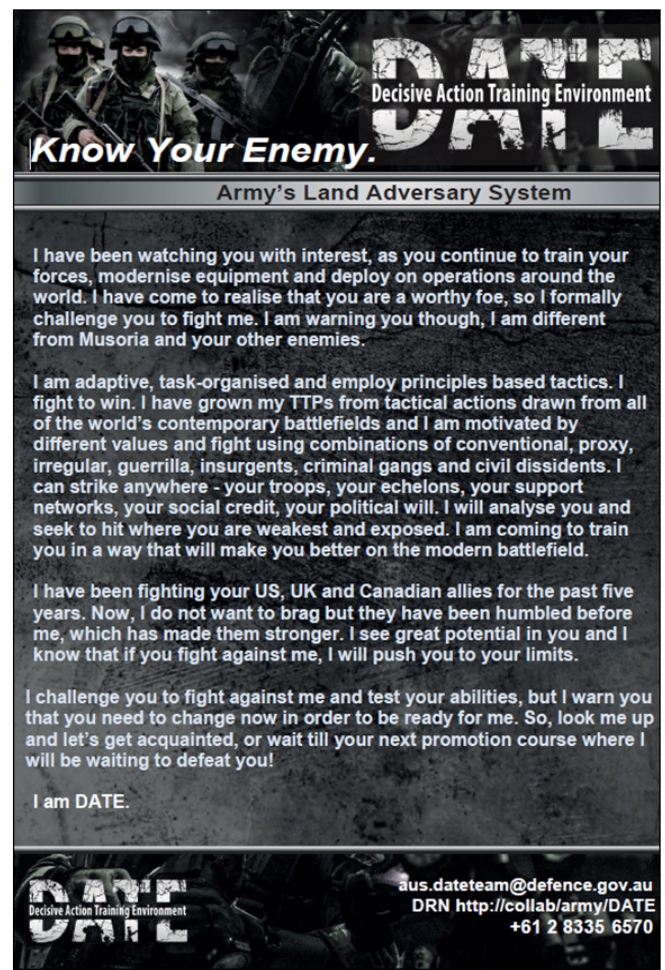
We have committed to making our entire training framework DATE compliant and nested within the allied nation partnership for our future training. Australia is investing $5m-$10m over the next three years to realise DATE as our core training adversary. This funding will be used to stand up a dedicated workforce of several specialists to operate a DATE Support Centre responsible for standardisation and delivery of DATE delivery across our Army. The Australia DATE Support Centre will align us to the TRADOC G2 Operational Environment Centre (OEC) as a bespoke satellite (Australia's "Mini OEC") working in concert with the US Army and other allied partners.

This journey into DATE has not been without setbacks and challenges, which has translated into important lessons for our pathway ahead. One of the key issues

was addressing the coalface concerns from instructors about removing doctrinal templates under DATE. We have discovered that additional workshops with instructors on principles-based assessment was needed in this area.

We also had to find the right balance in allowing training houses to implement DATE at their own pace, as each training house was under different pressures with courses throughput and limited resources for transition of training material. Our solution to this problem was the employment of "Regional DATE Support Officers" drawn from our reserve forces to augment instructors. Australia's willingness to change to DATE has been highly positive; almost all of our units have identified "DATE is a much needed change." The friction for adoption we have faced generally comes from the administrative burden placed on training houses to rewrite all of our training course from the ground up.

DATE is the Australian Army's eighth evolution in training adversary since World War I. DATE brings a modern training focus that sees a shift from "what to think" towards "how to think." By embracing the DATE training adversary, and focusing on developing future leaders that are comfortable with uncertainty, Australia will become future ready to face the challenges of the modern era.♦

DATE SUSTAINMENT MODEL
Training Environment Support Centre (TESC)

Australia's vision for a future sustainment workforce to support DATE adoption in Army and align our efforts back into the allied partnership.

UK Use of DATE & OPFOR

Training Intelligence and Operations Centre, Land Warfare Centre

The UK and DATE

DATE in the UK is coordinated by the Training Intelligence and Operations Centre (TIOC), near Salisbury Plain Training Area. The TIOC functions as the UK's DATE custodian, linking back to TRADOC through a UKLO in Ft Leavenworth. It is led by an Intelligence Corps (Int Corps) Lt Col (OF4/O5), backed up by a handful of INT CORPS NCOs, Mabway contractors, geospatial specialists, Royal Marine and RAF communications specialists, two staff officers and an RAF intelligence officer.

Use of DATE is now mandatory across the Field Army and thanks to that core audience it is also picking up traction across the other services; notable examples are the Chinooks and Pumas of Joint Helicopter Command, and the Royal Marines of 3 Commando Brigade.

To ensure that the benefits of the TC 7-100 documents are also not lost on the British Army, the TIOC has developed a UK version of the Threat Tactics Course. This is aimed at slightly higher formations than the US equivalent, and aims to teach tactics at the battlegroup and brigade level.

Within the year, a further major change is coming for the British Army's collective training exercises. Using a similar (albeit smaller) model to the US World Class OPFOR, Project HANNIBAL will give the UK a professional OPFOR enablers. To enable greater continuity the personnel will be contractors and will be located within the TIOC.

A battlegroup HQ working as an Arianan divisional CP.

The Hannibal team will provide a free-thinking enemy enablers to constructive training (i.e. Command Post Exercises with simulated troops), varying from battlegroup to division in scale. There is a further intention to send small cadres of military OPFOR SMEs to the UK's major Collective Training areas, both at home and abroad, to ensure that the same continuity is present in live training.

The Information Operations Network (ION), created by TRADOC, is similarly beginning to gain traction in the Army as a platform to train for Information Activity within the DATE OEs. 77 Brigade (who specialize in information activity for 3 (UK) Division) have expressed interest, as have elements of the UK's tier 1 Special Forces community.

UK DATE & OPFOR

- **DATE is the mandated environment for collective training in the Field Army.**

- **Project HANNIBAL will equip the UK with a professionalised OPFOR.**

- **The potential of the Information Operations Network has been recognized.**

UK OPFOR in Action - Ex SPECULAR 19

Exercise SPECULAR is the premier constructive training event for the UK's warfighting division. While ostensibly the certification exercise for an armoured Brigade, other formations and units, together with elements of the divisional command post (CP), invariably also feature as additional training audiences.

For the past four years, the scenario for Ex SPECULAR has been based on DATE Caucasus and enabled by staff work from a US Corps — in this instance, 18 Corps' work from Ex WARFIGHTER 17.5. The situation involved an Arianan combined arms invasion of Atropia, with the aim of gaining permanent control of the South East of the country. As Project HANNIBAL was still in the early phases of development, the OPFOR was manned by a battlegroup's CP staff supplemented by TIOC personnel and individual subject matter experts in

TIOC NCOs enact the Arianan plan on the ABACUS simulation system.

artillery, engineering, rotary-wing manoeuvre and electronic warfare. On this occasion the OPFOR battlegroup selected was the Household Cavalry Regiment (HCR). Although they are perhaps better known for their displays of horsemanship outside Buckingham Palace, the HCR are close reconnaissance soldiers by trade and were judged to be ideal for the agility of thought required. They had also already conducted some experimentation with streamlined planning processes and so were well prepared to challenge the training audiences' decision making cycles.

In preparation for Ex WARFIGHTER 19 the General Officer Commanding (GOC) 3 UK Division decided that he would use SPECULAR as an additional warm-up for his staff. He therefore appointed the Deputy Commanding General (DCG), Brig Gen Van Wagenen (US Army), exercise director so that he could concentrate on leading the Blue fight without any awareness of the Red plan. This was an arrangement that worked well for the OPFOR, and there were daily briefings in which Brig Gen Van Wagenen was able to act as the de facto Red corps commander, approving or denying Red requests to use air, SSM, attack helicopter and CBRN capabilities. This allowed him to manage the stress under which the training audience was placed without unduly restricting the OPFOR's freedom of thought and action and is broadly similar to the World Class OPFOR's arrangement at Fort Leavenworth. The Commanding Officer (CO) of the TIOC acted as an additional 'trusted agent,' with access to both Blue and Red planning areas, and worked to coordinate the OPFOR's activities with the training objectives of the primary training audiences,

"The Training Audience was tested from the first day of the exercise…"

including representing the OPFOR at exercise control synchronisation meetings.

A vital lesson that had been identified on prior iterations of the exercise was the importance of a detailed OPFOR plan being prepared before the training audience began their own preparatory work, so that their RFIs could be answered in a realistic fashion. To this end, the HCR were invited to the TIOC a week early. This time proved to be vital, as it also enabled the delivery of an abridged course on threat tactics. Led by the CO of the HCR, the OPFOR seized on this new way of thinking and immediately tasked one of the sharpest HCR officers with defeating the UK forces in the information domain.

This officer, working alongside an INT CORPS SNCO, rapidly proved his worth. Over the course of the 10 day long execute phase, they were a constant thorn in the side of the Blue Forces. At various points, and through close coordination with the OPFOR Battle Captain, they were able to draw the Blue forces into causing collateral damage through the co-location of key Arianan assets with schools, hospitals and any civilians who had not fled the battlespace. They used these incidents to create a credible and testing narrative for the training audiences. This success was capitalised on when, in coordination with the planning cell, a likely Coalition objective was identified in the form of a critical airfield. The Information Warfare team, working over several days, built a case for this airfield to be declared a 'Cordon Sanitaire' by the UN and took it to Brig Gen Van Wagenen. In a single stroke they

Household Cavalry soldiers on ceremonial duties are inspected by Her Majesty the Queen.
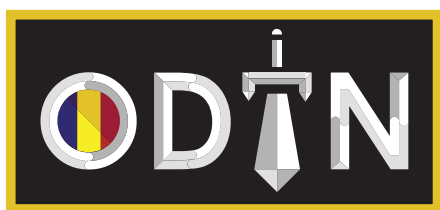
prevented any military forces from using or targeting it, freeing up defensive forces for other areas of the battlespace and enabling the continued use of its radars as early warning for the Arianan air defences. It is worth noting that this was primarily possible thanks to the virtual nature of the exercise—without the deployment of ION or a similar system, it would be much harder to replicate the level of information activity in the live environment.

The training audience was tested from the first day of the exercise as the OPFOR struck rapidly, taking advantage of the speed of the Arianan reconnaissance forces to get a screen in place, then pushing forward artillery with anti-air cover to prevent coalition formations from linking up and seizing ground. This plan, initially intended to buy time for preparation of a manoeuvre defence, proved more successful than expected and was therefore reinforced. This in turn was enabled by a successful implementation of Phase One of the OPFOR air defence doctrine; the early location of the UK attack helicopter force had enabled a massed UAS strike while the Apaches were preparing to take-off, forcing the cancellation of their mission. During this initial part of the exercise it became clear that the co-location of the OPFOR's planning staff with the sim operators executing the plan gave an unrealistic advantage to the OPFOR, however it was useful in enabling Exercise Control to influence the level of stress placed on the training audience, as the speed of reaction of the Arianan forces could be altered as necessary. Project HANNIBAL will offer more opportunities to experiment with this arrangement.

These examples illustrate how a battlegroup HQ, operating within the rich information of the DATE Caucasus scenario and under the OPFOR construct, was able to train three separate primary training audiences (and a plethora of secondaries) to the point of failure, in accordance with the direction of the UK's Commander Field Army, Lieutenant General Ivan Jones. As preparations begin for Ex SPECULAR 20, attention is already turning to the opportunities and challenges posed by DATE Europe.♦
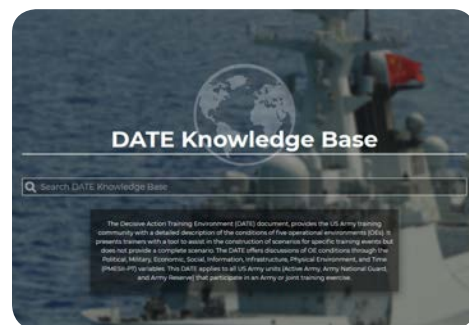

The HCR on operations in Helmand Province, Afghanistan.

Operational Environment Data Integration Network

ODIN is the authoritative source for DATEs, their accompanying Threat Force Structures, the Worldwide Equipment Guide (WEG), and other threat doctrine publications such as the TC 7-100 series.

https://odin.tradoc.army.mil/

ABCANZ DATE Working Group

ABCANZ [America, Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand] Decisive Action Training Environment (DATE) Working Group (WG) was held at Fort Eustis 10–13 June 2019.

ABCANZ DATE Working Group video teleconference, with presenter MAJ Alex Rubin (AU).

The purpose of the WG was to increase interoperability in training among the five ABCANZ nations through the use of DATE operational environments (OE). The primary objectives of this WG were to update TRADOC G2 on the progression of DATE adoption by ABCANZ partner nations and address issues of concern faced by all nations. This WG was planned as a continuation of the ABCANZ DATE WG held in 2018, with intent that this become the annual forum for the mutually beneficial alignment of DATE as the standardized training adversary framework across ABCANZ.

ABCANZ DATE Working Group discussion.

Representatives from US TRADOC G2 ACE and OEC were in attendance along with our partners from Australia, the UK, Canada, and New Zealand. The working group was chaired by Colonel Stuart Cree of Australia.

MAJ Will McDade (AU) discusses the DATE inter-OE linkage potential.

This forum serves to ensure all partner nations have current information on any recent or pending changes to the OEs and supporting information and tools. It also provides an opportunity for partner nations to share their progress with implementation along with any concerns. The agenda included updates from each nation on progress and methods of implementation across their forces, deep dives into the four regions of DATE, and updates on trainings tools. Important discussion topics included information sharing, interoperability, and how best to utilize tools and supplementary materials like ION and the Worldwide Equipment Guide (WEG). Use of DATE in simulations was also discussed.

This annual working group proved beneficial as it allows sharing of lessons learned and best practices, and ensures all partners have a voice in the way forward so that the training environments provided by DATE continue to meet the needs of the US and its partners.♦

OE&TA THREAT TACTICS COURSE

WHAT (TTC Description): The Threats Tactics Course (TTC) is a five-day block of instruction presented by the TRADOC G-2 Operational Environment & Threat Analysis (OE&TA) Directorate. The TTC is a Department of the Army G-2 Foundry approved course. The course curriculum focuses on developing, understanding, and applying a validated opposing force (OPFOR) threat in support of US Army training, professional education, and leader development learning objectives.

WHO (TTC Attendees): The TTC curriculum addresses threat topics useful to US Army Soldiers and leaders who will act as an OPFOR supporting institutional/operational readiness training missions such as a combat training center or regional collective training capability (RCTC); Center of Excellence (CoE) training and curriculum developers; or threat managers, scenario developers, and home-station training and installation planners. The TTC is open for attendance to US military, US government employees, and US government contractors.

WHERE (TTC/MTT): The TTC resident course is offered at Fort Leavenworth, KS campus in the modernized classroom facilities of TRADOC G-2 OE&TA. The MTT is another option for a unit/activity to host a TTC. The TTC can accommodate a wide range of unit/activity locations and adapts to available facilities in coordination with the unit/activity point of contact. Contact the TTC POC for specific information on course requirements at the MTT host site.

WHEN (TTC Duration): The TTC follows a five-day program, Monday through Friday. The normal class day is 0800 to 1630. Exceptions to policy can be made a case by case basis.

Source: U.S. Army Photo by Sgt. Jason Nolte

HOW (TTC Small-Group Concept): A resident TTC is typically 16 attendees (1 class). A MTT typically sustains 15-27 students. The class breaks into smaller groups during the week for tactical projects and preparation for practical exercises. Instructional methods include lecture, small group research and discussion of threat topics and class presentations, video vignette assessments, and real-world threat incident analysis.

TTC Main Topics

- Threat concepts
- OPFOR functional tactics and functional analysis;
- Strategic environment (SE) overview, operational environment (OE), and OE variables for tactical exercises
- Hybrid threat (HT) in current, complex, persistent conflict and relevant populations
- Threat actors: Regular and irregular forces, criminal organizations, and terrorist groups
- Offensive and defensive tactics and techniques
- Emerging threat capabilities
- Practical exercises: Tactical offense and defense vignettes.

COST (MTT Funding):

The unit is responsible for funding the instructor temporary duty (TDY) costs. No additional MTT cost is incurred for course instruction for US military members, US government employees, or US government contractors. The TTC is "Foundry approved training" and currently resides on the Army Training Requirements and Resources System (ATRRS); however, students are NOT enrolled through ATRRS courses. The Foundry Program Course Number is AS327.

MTT Proponent

The US Army TRADOC G-2 Operational Environment & Threat Analysis Directorate at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, is the G-2 proponent for the TTC-MTT.

TRADOC G-2 OE&TA point of contact for additional MTT information:

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