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United States Joint Forces Command

- Home
- About Us
- Who Works For Us
- Newslink
 - ▶ Articles
 - ▶ Podcasts
 - ▶ Speeches
 - ▶ Photos
 - ▶ Media Kit
 - ▶ Archives
- Newcomers
- Partnering with us
- Sitemap
- Related Sites
- Search
- Contact Us
- Login

Empire Challenge 07 shows success of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance integration



U.S. Joint Forces Command's Intelligence Directorate and the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency worked together recently to test new intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance technologies and concepts at Empire Challenge 07 in China Lake, Calif. Event organizers have offered some of the initial results.

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By Army Spc. Andrew Orillion USJFCOM Public Affairs

(NORFOLK, Va. - Aug. 30, 2007) -- A recently completed National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) and U.S. Joint Forces Command (USJFCOM) demonstration helped examine new and different ways to evaluate intelligence technology on how well it can share information with U.S. and multinational partners.

USJFCOM officials recently discussed the initial findings of Empire Challenge 07 (EC07), an intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) demonstration that wrapped up in late July at the Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake, China Lake, Calif.

As a live demonstration primarily focused

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on ISR integration, EC07 looked at the ability to fuse together information from a variety of different sources to enhance a commander's decision-making process.

NGA led EC07, with operational support from USJFCOM's [Joint Intelligence Directorate's](#) ISR Division.

The demonstration had more than 700 participants, including members of two USJFCOM subordinate commands; [Joint Transformation Command for Intelligence \(JTC-I\)](#) and [Joint Systems Integration Command](#).

Representatives from the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia also participated, bringing their own technologies and concepts to EC07.

Other organizations included the Distributed Ground Station - Experimental at Langley Air Force Base, Va., and NATO's Command and Control and Consultation Agency, which used the information generated by EC07 to improve and assess information sharing with coalition partners.

John Kittle, USJFCOM's chief of capability assessment group for Intelligence Directorate/JTC-I integration, said EC07 was a big success and helped improve ISR integration by providing a testing ground for new ISR technologies.

Kittle said one demonstration that was very effective was of the Adaptive Joint C4ISR Node, an advanced concept technology demonstration (ACTD) that uses software to bridge communication gaps between signals intelligence, electronic warfare, and information operations.

"It provided the command and control and communications backbone for the entire event, particularly at the tactical level," said Kittle. "It provided comms [communications] bridging from the internal to the range area itself and also communications from the range back to the operations center in China Lake. Everybody knew what was going on,

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especially in the field."

EC07 also provided a testbed for the ISR integration capability of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV). Kittle said the Scan Eagle UAV, a small non-combat UAV currently deployed with U.S. Marines in the Iraqi theater, tested very well.

He said Scan Eagle worked in conjunction with the experimental Joint Battlespace Awareness/ISR Integration Capability (J-BAIIC), a Naval Postgraduate School-managed ISR testbed that provides video for relay to individual convoy commanders. J-BAIIC also allowed the transfer of data from the Scan Eagle into a data library for easier access.

"Scan Eagle did a lot of work. It was airborne for several hours everyday and provided a lot of video that was used during the event itself," said Kittle.

Kittle said that the Multi-sensor Aerospace-ground Joint ISR Interoperability Coalition (MAJIIC), a USJFCOM-managed ACTD that allows for easier information sharing between the U.S. and its coalition partners, also proved a success at EC07.

"We were able to extend MAJIIC into the NATO realm as well, so folks working at the NATO headquarters in The Hague were able to see the data that was collected and were able to play with some of the data on their exploitation systems," said Kittle.

Kittle said that planning for EC08 is currently under way with the initial planning conference scheduled to begin in October.

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