Libya's Operation *Odyssey Dawn*

Command and Control

BY JOE QUARTARARO, SR., MICHAEL ROVENOLT, AND RANDY WHITE

U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) was established in 2008 as a new kind of geographic combatant command, one focused primarily on stability and engagement operations rather than warfighting. As such, many of its key leadership positions were filled by non–Department of Defense (DOD) personnel, and its civilian manning was proportionately larger than at other commands.

Events in Libya from January through April 2011 and the related coalition operation, Operation *Odyssey Dawn*, provided an opportunity to observe how this new type of command would perform in a crisis/contingency operation. USAFRICOM was required to plan kinetic operations, form a multinational coalition, stand up a multinational joint task force (JTF), conduct offensive and defensive maritime and air operations, and transition leadership of the operation to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

The best practices and lessons learned from all phases of USAFRICOM's execution of the operation will be valuable in determining the viability of its unique structure and organization and its applicability to other commands. Additionally, the lessons learned will provide input to changes that may be required to ensure future success.

Background

In December 2010, unrest in North Africa began with protests against the Tunisian government and spread like wildfire across Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, Sudan, and Libya. In January 2011,

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Admiral Samuel Locklear III, USN, recognizes Sailors aboard USS *Barry* for their efforts in support of Joint Task Force Odyssey Dawn

peaceful protests and demonstrations against the Libyan government began. In February, the arrest of a human rights activist triggered a riot in Benghazi, Libya, setting off protests that turned violent when confronted by Libyan security forces. Due to increased violence and inflammatory statements by Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi, the U.S. Government directed USAFRICOM to begin preparations for a noncombatant evacuation operation (NEO) of U.S. citizens from Libya.

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As the responsible command, USAFRICOM established Joint Task Force Odyssey Dawn (JTF–OD) to facilitate civilian evacuation, provide humanitarian assistance (HA), and transport Egyptian civilians from Tunisia to Egypt in support of the U.S. Department of State. JTF–OD was commanded by Admiral Samuel J. Locklear III of U.S. Naval Forces Africa, with naval assets assigned from 6th Fleet and air assets from 3d and 17th Air Force.

On February 26, the United Nations (UN) authorized sanctions against Libya under UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1970 to include an arms embargo and demand for an immediate ceasefire. The situation in Libya deteriorated, and the threat of violence against the civilian population increased. The United States, with ongoing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, was reluctant to go it alone to protect Allied interests in Libya—and from a political standpoint, U.S. solo intervention in Libya could be perceived by some in the Muslim world

community as *another* U.S. attack on Islam. Additionally, there were concerns expressed by several African nations that a unilateral move by the United States could be viewed as veiled imperialism. To address these and other concerns, the U.S. Government attempted to form a coalition that included both Arab Muslim and African nations to provide legitimacy for any military action against the Libyan government.

Unfortunately, although most of the African nations agreed that Libya had gone too far in its attempts to suppress the popular demonstrations, these nations were neither militarily equipped nor politically motivated to join a coalition to enforce UNSCR 1970 sanctions against the Libyan government.

France and England were already involved in evacuation operations in Libya and indicated that they would be willing to join with the United States to protect the civilian population. Italy and Germany agreed to provide logistic support for a NEO or HA operation, but would not support kinetic operations unless endorsed by the UN. USAFRICOM, as lead, had no previous experience with forming a coalition, and since none of the African nations within USAFRICOM's area of responsibility (AOR) was willing to participate, potential coalition partners had to come from U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) and U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) AORs. In addition, agreements for basing rights and third-party access to host-nation bases and facilities had to be negotiated with nations residing in the USEUCOM AOR. As one USAFRICOM general officer noted, "Building a coalition: We didn't know who to call and contact to make this happen. We sent LNOs [liaison officers] to the [United Kingdom] and France to facilitate, and later sent an LNO to SHAPE [Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe]. . . . 'Who

do you talk to in order to find out who's going to play and how much they are going to bring to the fight?'"[1]

USEUCOM began contacting potential coalition partner nations through its local military channels, while State worked through its Embassies and other political connections. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate (J5) took the lead for coordinating the coalition-building effort, daily contacting potential coalition partners to determine who would participate, what they could contribute, and what support (basing rights, facilities, overflight rights, and logistics, among others) they would need. J5 kept State informed of its activities on an almost hourly basis. As the partners and their level of support were identified, J5 established and facilitated a coalition coordination center (CCC) at the Pentagon to resolve issues such as force sustainment, host-nation support, and movement control. Eventually, USEUCOM, USAFRICOM, Office of the Secretary of Defense, and State also set up CCCs to coordinate coalition activities within their own areas and with J5.

In all, 15 nations, including nations from NATO and the Arab League, agreed to join the coalition, with other nations agreeing to provide support if sanctioned by the UN. The combined efforts of J5, State, USEUCOM, Defense Logistics Agency, U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM), and the experience of the USAFRICOM and JTF staffs were crucial in overcoming the challenges faced by USAFRICOM as it strove to form the multinational coalition and JTF.

By early March, as the situation in Libya continued to deteriorate, the United States and its NATO and non-NATO allies began to discuss the possibility of military action to enforce the arms embargo and establish a no-fly zone.

On March 12, the Arab League called on the UN to establish a maritime arms embargo and a no-fly zone over Libya to protect civilians. On March 17, Qadhafi threatened to burn the city of Benghazi (the rebel stronghold) to the ground. In response, the UN issued UNSCR 1973, authorizing the use of "all necessary means" to protect civilians and their property: "UNSCR 1973 demanded an immediate cease-fire and authorized the establishment of a no-fly zone, enforcement of the arms embargo delineated in UNSCR 1970, and all necessary measures, short of foreign occupation, to protect civilians and civilian populated areas threatened by attack."[2]

On March 18, President Barack Obama declared that the United States and its Allies would implement the provisions of

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UNSCR 1973; on March 19, the multinational JTF–OD launched operations. The U.S. Government immediately began working to transition leadership of the campaign to NATO, the European Union, Arab League, or another country or countries, in order to remove the U.S. footprint from the operation. On March 31, NATO assumed full control of operations under Operation *Unified Protector*. Operation *Odyssey Dawn* concluded and JTF–OD was disestablished.

Introduction to Command and Control Issues

This article focuses on the command and control (C^2) challenges that USAFRICOM

overcame in order to execute *Odyssey Dawn*. Those challenges included establishing the joint operations area (JOA), defining command relationships among combatant commands, leveraging subordinate commands, interpreting strategic guidance, adapting staff processes, and communicating with coalition partners. The following discusses each of these challenges in detail.

Establishing the Joint Operations Area. Because a NEO was considered the most likely contingency operation that USAFRICOM would be called upon to execute, the command devoted its initial planning efforts to the conduct of a NEO in support of the State Department, normally the leader in this type of operation. USAFRICOM planned to provide air and sea assets for the evacuation of designated civilian and military personnel, HA as required, and air cover to prevent Libyan forces from impeding or harassing NEO/HA operations. The initial JOA requested by USAFRICOM was therefore designed with a NEO in mind; however, this JOA proved insufficient to support maritime operations either for a NEO, HA, or Operation *Odyssey Dawn*. It did not include any Egyptian or Tunisian territory, and it contained limited air and water space.

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USAFRICOM is located adjacent to USEUCOM and USCENTCOM areas of responsibility. Command and control of the operation stretched across the three combatant command geographic regions. As the operation began, the JOA was modified to extend into Egypt in the northeast (USCENTCOM AOR) and along the Tunisian border. In addition, the water space was increased well into the Mediterranean Sea (USEUCOM AOR), encompassing most of the area between North Africa, Italy, and Greece.

Although the 2011 Unified Command Plan (UCP) provided overarching guidance to combatant commanders on how to conduct operations that cross combatant command seams, it lacked specifics, except to state that a joint task force should be formed. The formation of JTF–OD filled that requirement:

> *Geographic AORs provide a basis for coordination by Combatant Commanders. These geographic AORs do not restrict accomplishment of assigned missions. Combatant commanders may operate forces wherever required to accomplish their missions. When significant operations overlap boundaries, a task force will be formed unless otherwise directed.*[3]

Establishing Command Relationships. Because of the complexities of the cross–combatant command JOA and UCP boundaries, it was essential to define and establish supported and supporting command roles early in the operation. Initially, when tasking for a NEO seemed likely, USAFRICOM was designated the supported command (the command with the authority to coordinate and conduct operations);[4] however, as combat operations loomed, there was discussion about making USEUCOM the supported command, with USAFRICOM the supporting command (command assigned to support the supported commander).[5] The latter option was considered likely because the air and maritime assets needed to conduct the operation were predominately based in, and would need to transit through, the USEUCOM

AOR. In the end, the decision was made to retain USAFRICOM as the supported command, with USEUCOM, USCENTCOM, USTRANSCOM, and U.S. Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) in support.

As an engagement-focused combatant command, USAFRICOM had few assigned forces. In order to conduct Operation *Odyssey Dawn*, USAFRICOM relied heavily on USEUCOM and, to a lesser extent, USCENTCOM for forces. Command and control of forces also included assets owned by USSTRATCOM and USTRANSCOM, many of which were either based in the United States or deployed and operated from bases within Europe. Due to proximity and capability, USEUCOM became the primary supporting command and de facto force provider to USAFRICOM. A USEUCOM general officer stated, "Here is the complexity of this operation—you have kinetic effects in one GCC [geographic combatant command], generated out of another GCC, partnered with a coalition, with resources from a third GCC."[6]

One of the cross–combatant command challenges in the operation lay in establishing command relationships that worked for all combatant commands involved. While initially challenging, a CJCS order authorized the USAFRICOM and USEUCOM commanders to hash out command relationships of transferred forces without first soliciting Secretary of Defense approval, as would normally have been required.[7] The inherent flexibility and latitude delegated to both combatant commands in the CJCS order facilitated the establishment of functional and effective authorities. With the concurrence of the commanders, provisioning of forces occurred at the combatant command level. In theater, the relationships established remained consistent with the guidance provided—USAFRICOM

was to be supported by USEUCOM and the other combatant commands.

Planners and operators on all staffs lacked clear doctrinal understanding of the various command relationships—in particular operational control (OPCON), tactical control (TACON), and direct support (DS).[8] They did not fully understand the benefits and drawbacks of the different levels of command relationships. This added to confusion, taking valuable time away from planning and execution. One officer noted, "People don't really understand OPCON/TACON/administrative control/DS and the constraints on operations each one entails."[9]

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OPCON and TACON relationships each had advantages and disadvantages for the commander. For example, using an OPCON relationship allowed a joint force commander (JFC) to task-organize and establish support relationships; however, the commander would then also be responsible for training, administration, and logistics support, and he would "buy" attrition of forces. Alternatively, a TACON relationship would not provide the ability to task-organize and establish support relationships, but the JFC would receive the requested number of units/sorties without concern for maintenance, training, administration, or unit replacement issues.

Since a large number of air assets were operated from bases in the USEUCOM AOR, the command retained OPCON of these forces, allowing logistics/administrative support

through preexisting relationships and infrastructure. USAFRICOM assumed TACON of air assets during the actual sorties.[10] With regard to air-to-air refueling support, USTRANSCOM retained OPCON of the tankers while giving USAFRICOM TACON for mission support. This allowed USTRANSCOM to manage maintenance and support yet still provide USAFRICOM the assets required.

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Maritime forces, which retained other maritime missions within the USEUCOM AOR, remained OPCON to USEUCOM while providing direct support to USAFRICOM. Direct support of these forces gave USAFRICOM and the JTF commander authority over the general direction of the supporting forces, providing for the necessary effects within the JOA while unburdening JTF–OD of determining the tactics, methods, and procedures used. Also, all sustainment responsibilities remained with the supporting command. However, if a ship or submarine did not have a USEUCOM mission, it was assigned OPCON to USAFRICOM from the outset.

Eventually, the JTF–OD C^2 structure contained a complex myriad of operational/tactical control and direct support command relationships. Yet from the JTF–OD commander's perspective, the heavy reliance on relationships other than OPCON posed potential risks and created confusion. There were concerns about TACON or DS forces getting pulled for other contingencies because it would be easy to reassign forces away from a supported command (USAFRICOM) when OPCON was retained by supporting commands (for example, USEUCOM): "As the JTF commander, [you] need OPCON of forces otherwise someone can take them away when you need them. . . . We were responding to OPCON pleas of the provider to make his life easier rather than OPCON needs of the commander."[11]

Leveraging Shared Command Roles. Multi-hatted commanders, collocated organizations, and shared forces were crucial to the success of Operation *Odyssey Dawn*; however, they also created risks. The challenges posed by cross–combatant command operations and complex command relationships were in part overcome through the use of multi-hatted and/or collocated commanders and associated staffs.

Admiral Locklear and his staff were the Navy component command (U.S. Naval Forces Europe [USNAVEUR] and U.S. Naval Forces Africa [USNAVAF]) for both USEUCOM and USAFRICOM and were collocated with U.S. 6th Fleet at Naval Support Activity Naples. Vice Admiral Harry Harris (Joint Force Maritime Component Commander [JFMCC]), U.S. 6th Fleet, provided forces and orchestrated naval operations on a routine basis for USEUCOM and, when required, USAFRICOM. Both staffs, USNAVEUR–USNAVAF and 6th Fleet, worked closely on a daily basis and had recently completed an exercise with USEUCOM (Austere Challenge 2011). This exercise had a similar scenario to *Odyssey Dawn* and incorporated the use of a four-star-led JTF with a three-star JFMCC. Thus, the JTF–OD staff and JFMCC staff were well prepared to execute the operation for USAFRICOM because of training received via USEUCOM. VADM Harris noted, "Austere Challenge exercises were crucial in preparing for this operation. Because we have been

operating in this arrangement (and have been doing it for six years), the decision to make a 4-star JTF and [a] 3-star Joint Force Maritime Commander was really easy."[12]

A 1954 bilateral agreement between the United States and Italy drove the initial decision to collocate the JTF and JFMCC onboard the command ship USS *Mount Whitney*. Collocating the JTF and JFMCC onboard facilitated command and control but presented its own set of challenges.

Some key leaders in the JTF were dual-hatted with equivalent roles in the JFMCC (J2, J5, J6, J7, judge advocate, and surgeon). Ultimately, much of the staff worked for both commands, which streamlined the staff but in some instances created confusion and increased staff work. One flag officer noted, "The dual-hatted nature of our components brought a level of readiness and experience that was instrumental to the command's success during Operation *Odyssey Dawn*."[13]

Although many senior commanders onboard praised the co-mingling of staffs, concerns were raised by JTF and JFMCC staff officers over sustainability. Many action officers continued to work for both commands, significantly increasing their workload. As one officer commented, "Co-location of JTF and JFMCC provided good coordination and having some billets dual-hatted made the info flow better . . . but burned the crew out."[14]

Collocated commands also proved valuable for the Joint Force Air Component Command (JFACC). The 3d and 17th Air Forces, USEUCOM and USAFRICOM's Air Force (AF) component commands, respectively, were both located at Ramstein Air Base, Germany. As Air Forces Africa Command, the 17th Air Force and its air operations center (AOC), 617th AOC, formed the JFACC; however, the 17th Air Force was organized primarily for logistics and lift operations, not kinetic air operations. The JFACC received heavy augmentation from the more heavily staffed 3d Air Force (Air Forces USEUCOM) and its AOC, the 603d AOC.[15] For *Odyssey Dawn*, these two staffs in effect merged under the leadership of the 17th AF commander operating out of the 603d AOC, providing increased capacity for the JFACC.

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While multi-hatted commanders and staffs had advantages for the operation, there were also risks. Had other contingencies arisen, forces taken from USEUCOM or USCENTCOM to support the operation would not have been readily available to respond. In addition, with JTF–OD in place, forming another JTF for a new crisis would have been challenging.

Interpreting Strategic Guidance

As the crisis in Libya unfolded, USAFRICOM was initially directed by the Defense Secretary to prepare to conduct a NEO to evacuate American citizens from Libya. Planning for the NEO was still in progress when USAFRICOM was tasked to support the State Department in its HA operation to help move Egyptian citizens from Tunisia to Egypt. While USAFRICOM was planning for the NEO and HA operations, the Defense Secretary tasked USEUCOM to prepare plans to implement a no-fly zone and possible enforcement of sanctions on the Libyan regime. As one USAFRICOM general

officer noted, "Early on, in setting up potential NEO [operations], there was poor coordination between [State] and DOD. . . . During preparations for the NEO, there were almost daily changes to tasking by [State] and DOD, gradually morphing from a NEO to enforcing a [no-fly zone] and arms embargo."[16]

without a defined endstate for operations in Libya, USAFRICOM was uncertain as to what resources it needed for operations

Guidance from the White House and DOD was confusing. Many people at USAFRICOM were unsure as to whether "regime change" was an intended option, as stated by the President, or whether operations were to be focused solely on protecting civilian life and providing humanitarian assistance to the refugees, as implied by the Defense Secretary's warning orders. Without a defined endstate for operations in Libya, USAFRICOM was uncertain as to what resources it needed for operations:

> [T]*here was a lack of clear guidance from* [Washington]. *The lack of guidance was perceived by the POLAD* [political advisor] *to be due to a lack of coordination at the senior policy making level. DOD was different, once tasked the JTF went out and executed the mission. The POLAD never received any clear direction from* [State].[17]

At the start of Operation *Odyssey Dawn*, the national strategic objectives were not fully developed. The operation was intended to be a short-term, U.S.-led multinational effort to protect civilians. President Obama made it clear that the United States wanted to transfer leadership responsibilities to its Allies and coalition partners quickly.[18] As General Carter Ham stated, "Our role currently . . . under my authority as the commander, is to make sure of two things—first, that we continue exercising our . . . mission that we have—protect civilians, and secondly, that we are prepared to transition responsibility for the mission to NATO quickly, effectively, and without disruption of the ongoing mission."[19]

However, translating given political objectives into viable and coherent military objectives without a clearly defined endstate proved difficult. With no specific guidance on desired outcomes after the intervention, termination criteria were determined by transfer of ongoing operations vice completion of operations or end of hostilities. USAFRICOM's course of action was to remain narrowly focused on the limited military objectives given:

> [T]*he biggest problem and concern was difficulty in getting a definite/consistent message from the White House and* [State]. *From discussions, it was clear that we would work some type of intervention in Libya; the UNSCR would allow civilian protection, but regime change? This discussion fed ambiguity all around . . . we had to look at policy statements from* [principals] *to use as policy direction.*[20]

Establishing, Improving, and Adapting Staff Processes

Although tasked with the same authorities and responsibilities as other combatant commands, the USAFRICOM mission was more aligned toward engagement, focusing on stability and security operations. As Secretary of Defense Robert Gates noted at USAFRICOM's inception: "AFRICOM represents yet another

important step in modernizing our defense arrangements in light of 21st century realities. It is, at its heart, a different kind of command with a different orientation. . . . AFRICOM's mission is not to wage war, but to prevent it; not to show United States military presence, but to enhance the security forces of our partners."[21]

USAFRICOM's emphasis on security engagement, as described in its mission statement, had a major impact on how it was organized and resourced: "[USAFRICOM], in concert with other U.S. government agencies and international partners, conducts sustained security engagement through military-to-military programs, military-sponsored activity, and other military operations as directed to promote a stable and secure African environment in support of U.S. foreign policy."[22]

Because of its mission to conduct security and stability operations in support of State and other non-DOD agencies, many key senior leadership positions within USAFRICOM were manned by State and non-DOD civilians. In addition, the staff was 50 percent civilian, as opposed to the usually heavy military staff of other combatant commands. As Admiral Locklear stated, "AFRICOM was built for security cooperation, not kinetic operations. It never dawned on anyone that they would have to be prepared to fight a war; they had the right elements, but the staff was not trained or manned to do targeting and embargo enforcement."[23]

At the onset of the Libyan crisis, USAFRICOM was not manned to plan and conduct large-scale contingency operations. There were not enough target analysts assigned to support USAFRICOM, the JTF, or the JFMCC, and until analysts could be moved from other commands to fill the void, planning to enforce the embargo and a no-fly zone was slow to develop. Because of the high number of civilians assigned

to the staff, standing up a 24/7 Joint Operations Center was difficult, and it could not have been sustained over a long campaign: "They never trained or practiced for a kinetic scenario, no one knew where to go for 'General Quarters.' Some directorates within AFRICOM were not prepared or manned for 24/7 operations."[24]

> ### USAFRICOM strayed from the standard orders process and used an ad hoc method of orders production and dissemination

In addition, USAFRICOM was short on planners and analysts, which, under the circumstance of planning for multiple courses of action ranging from NEO to HA operations to regime change, further complicated the task.

Although USAFRICOM was established in 2008 and achieved full operational capability in 2009, it had not often practiced standing up a fully manned JTF at the headquarters nor had it practiced JTF operations with its component commands. In addition, staff personnel were neither familiar with nor had they practiced the processes and procedures for transitioning from security engagement operations to crisis/contingency operations.

USAFRICOM therefore had undeveloped staff processes for the scale of operations encountered in *Odyssey Dawn*. There were no established procedures for handling requests for information (RFIs), leading elements within USAFRICOM to respond to RFIs in parallel without cross-leveling their efforts throughout the rest of the command. Eventually, USAFRICOM developed an operational planning team as the primary action cell for all RFIs.

USAFRICOM strayed from the standard orders process and used an ad hoc method of

orders production and dissemination. It leaned heavily on the use of verbal orders of the commander (VOCO), PowerPoint, Tandberg video teleconferencing (VTC), telephone, and plain text email for two reasons: the speed of the operation required rapid production of orders, and USAFRICOM lacked experience in formal written orders production: "We were fighting this thing one PowerPoint slide at a time."[25]

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Although VOCO/PowerPoint/email usage proved timely, these workarounds lacked the detail, discipline, and written records needed to prevent inconsistencies and confusion at subordinate staffs:

> *AFRICOM was not proficient at writing and publishing orders. They relied on e-mail and PowerPoint.*[26]

> *Lots of VOCO between all levels of command; speed of operations and information flow required it but you lose tracking of what is being told to whom.* [Concept of operations] *and orders were being implemented under PowerPoint.*[27]

Use of VTC allowed for rapid communication and dissemination of orders among the Flag and General Officers but at times left staff officers in the dark about leadership intentions. Staffs lost track of what was being told to whom: "These days everything is done by [VTC]; written products are kind of [overcome by events]; now you have a living [knowledge management] system that needs to be robust and contain key documents."[28]

Gaps in the orders process, whether in communication or production, were compensated for at the JTF level. The JTF and its functional commands operated from Joint Chiefs of Staffs orders to stay ahead of the process.[29] The JFMCC issued Daily Intentions Messages across the net to provide a sort of "cleanup." Formal orders that were missing from USAFRICOM were written at the JFMCC level to direct force movement and produce warning orders.[30]

Communicating with the Coalition

Conducting operations with both NATO and non-NATO partners magnified difficulties in information-sharing. Many U.S. products did not meet "releasability" requirements for sharing with coalition partners. In addition, the ever-shifting makeup of the coalition challenged Foreign Disclosure Officers (FDOs) and exacerbated the problem. Releasability caveats shifted from U.S. Secret, to NATO releasable, to releasable to the coalition force. This placed a greater burden on the FDOs to clear information for release:

> *Many U.S. participants did not understand requirements to classify for releasability, and this became the primary roadblock to releasing information.*[31]

> *Info coming in at all security levels created a challenge sorting out what info could be passed to coalition partners.*[32]

On average, it took FDOs 2 to 3 days to release requests. Despite challenges, FDOs did a heroic job considering the circumstances involved; however, there was a lack of capacity overall:

The White House (Pete Souza)

President Obama leads briefing on situation in Libya during secure conference call aboard Air Force One

The FDO did a great job; it was messy at first and not a perfect process; took a week to get to [the] *point where* [releasable] *to* [Combined Forces Odyssey Dawn] *was established.*[33]

A tremendous effort was required to push information through the FDO. There were only two onboard the Mount Whitney *to support both the JTF and JFMCC.*[34]

As events unfolded in Libya, it became apparent that USAFRICOM did not have adequate satellite bandwidth to conduct operations. USEUCOM transferred bandwidth to USAFRICOM; however, this put some of USEUCOM's potential operations at risk.[35] In addition, a network capability did not exist to pass classified information to both NATO and non-NATO partners. Considering the diversity of the coalition, it is understandable that no standard network was in existence. However, a lack of network capability at USAFRICOM between U.S. and NATO systems restricted information flow between the United States and its NATO partners.

At the outset of operations, USAFRICOM had only a limited Battlefield Information, Collection, and Exploitation System (BICES) capability—USEUCOM had to plus them up:[36]

BICES didn't exist in AFRICOM; with political pressure to move away from U.S. lead, how do we communicate? EUCOM and [U.S. Army Europe] *helped engineer a plan in three days to get BICES infrastructure; a training plan was developed and members from* [Operation *Enduring Freedom*] *were pulled to assist.*[37]

BICES capability is needed at all [combatant commands], *because in the current environment any* [combatant command] *could be called upon to work with NATO partners.*[38]

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Lacking capability, liaison officers were used to manually "hand jam" data from one network to another to pass critical information. The network capability used was BICES "manually" enabled by LNOs: "BICES was used as the primary cross domain solution for information sharing, but much work remains to build systems capable of transferring real-time intelligence between U.S. and NATO [command, control, communications, computers, and intelligence] systems."[39]

An additional challenge when operating within a coalition lay in ensuring interoperability of command platforms' enabling systems from different nationalities to allow communication with each other within the operational environment. While most of the NATO assets could communicate through various networks, not all coalition ships and aircraft could communicate with each other. Non-NATO partners required extra communications support in order to link them into the network. USAFRICOM, USEUCOM, and the JTF were able to work through this issue in order to conduct operations.

Conclusion

In spite of the Operation *Odyssey Dawn* C[2] challenges and adaptations discussed,

USAFRICOM was able to lead a coalition comprised of 15 nations, establish a JTF, plan and execute operations in support of UNSCR 1973, and transfer leadership of the operation to NATO. This was due in no small part to strong cross–component command support, which enabled an inexperienced command with a security engagement focus to achieve its military objectives. In addition, leaders and staffs used 10 years of recent warfighting experience in Iraq and Afghanistan to overcome the challenges of a headquarters that was under-resourced for the mission.

Manning shortfalls created by USAFRICOM's engagement mission and the heavy use of civilians to fill traditionally military roles hindered planning and operations early on, but with support from USEUCOM, USCENTCOM, and an innovative core of experienced leaders, USAFRICOM quickly overcame this challenge. Due to the USAFRICOM mission, there was little emphasis placed on training to stand up a JTF or transition from engagement to combat operations. The extensive combat experience of senior leadership and staff helped to rapidly mold the headquarters team into a cohesive fighting unit.

In this scenario, the presence of a large number of State Department and other non-DOD civilian personnel on the USAFRICOM staff did little to improve or enhance coordination between myriad players. State personnel were familiar with and had good contacts within the USAFRICOM AOR, but once the scope of the operation morphed to combat operations with basing and resources coming from and being staged outside USAFRICOM's sphere of influence, they were out of their element and had to rely on coordination between

State and USEUCOM to form the coalition and obtain the necessary staging areas for forces and logistics.

While the specific circumstances of Operation *Odyssey Dawn* generated numerous challenges, USAFRICOM successfully worked with the supporting combatant commands and JTF to manage these challenges and conduct operations. As the military will likely conduct future coalition operations that cross combatant command seams and require continued use of shared assets, the command and control lessons learned from the operation will remain germane. **PRISM**

The information provided in this article is derived from a larger, classified study on Operation *Odyssey Dawn* conducted by the Joint and Coalition Operational Analysis division of the Joint Staff J7 that examined the U.S. Africa Command response to the Libyan crisis and its execution of the operation.

Notes

[1] Brigadier General (BG) James W. Lukeman, USMC, Deputy Director for Plans and Programs, U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM), Strategy, Plans, and Programs (SPP)/J5, interview by Joint and Coalition Operational Analysis (JCOA) Division, April 12, 2011.

[2] United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973, March 17, 2011.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Joint Publication (JP) 1, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States* (Washington, DC: The Joint Staff, May 14, 2007, updated March 20, 2009), states, "[T]he supported commander has the authority to exercise general direction of the supporting effort. General direction includes the designation and prioritization of targets or objectives, timing and duration of the supporting action and other instructions necessary for coordination and efficiency."

[5] Ibid.: "The supporting commander will advise and coordinate with the supported commander on matters concerning the employment and limitations of such support, assist in planning for the integration of such support to the commander's effort as a whole and ensure that support requirements are appropriately communicated throughout the supporting commander's organization."

[6] U.S. European Command (USEUCOM), Chief of Staff, interview by JCOA, April 12, 2011.

[7] JP 1: "When forces are transferred between combatant commands, the command relationship the gaining CDR will exercise (and the losing CDR will relinquish) over these forces must be specified by the [Secretary of Defense]," (March 20, 2009), IV–7.

[8] Ibid.

[9] USEUCOM, J5 Officer, interview by JCOA, April 12, 2011.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Admiral (ADM) Samuel J. Locklear III, USN, Commander, Joint Task Force Odyssey Dawn (JTF–OD), interview by JCOA, April 20, 2011.

[12] Vice Admiral (VADM) Harry Harris, USN, Joint Force Maritime Component Commander Odyssey Dawn (JFMCC–OD), interview by JCOA, April 18, 2011.

[13] VADM Charles J. Leidig, USN, Deputy Commander, USAFRICOM, interview by JCOA, April 11, 2011.

[14] JTF–OD, J5 Officer, interview by JCOA, April 18, 2011.

[15] USEUCOM, Combined Joint Plans and Policy Division, interview by JCOA, April 12, 2011.

[16] Major General (MG) Salvatore F. Cambria, USA, USAFRICOM, Operational Logistics (OPLOG)/J3, interview by JCOA, April 11, 2011.

[17] U.S. Naval Forces Europe/U.S. Naval Forces Africa, Senior Foreign Service Officer, interview by JCOA, April 19, 2011.

[18] President Barack Obama, "Remarks by the President in Address to the Nation on Libya," National Defense University, Washington, DC, March 28, 2011.

[19] General Carter F. Ham, Commander, USAFRICOM, interview, *NBC Nightly News*, March 25, 2011.

[20] Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff J5, Senior Officer, interview by JCOA, May 18, 2011.

[21] Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, USAFRICOM activation ceremony, October 1, 2008.

[22] USAFRICOM, mission statement, available at <https://portal.africom.smil.mil/Pages/Default.aspx>.

[23] ADM Samuel F. Locklear III, April 20, 2011.

[24] USAFRICOM, SPP/J5 Officer, interview by JCOA, April 15, 2011.

[25] USAFRICOM, Strike OPS Planner, interview by JCOA, April 11, 2011.

[26] Rear Admiral (RADM) Gerard P. Hueber, USN, JFMCC–OD, Chief of Staff, interview by JCOA, April 16, 2011.

[27] BG Arnold Gordon-Bray, USA, USAFRICOM, Deputy OPLOG/J3, interview by JCOA, April 11, 2011.

[28] ADM Samuel F. Locklear III, April 20, 2011.

[29] RADM James G. Foggo, USN, JTF–OD/J3 (paraphrased), interview by JCOA, April 21, 2011.

[30] JFMCC, Chief of Staff (paraphrased), interview by JCOA, April 20, 2011.

[31] JFMCC–OD, Command Operational Assessment (COA), April 19, 2011.

[32] MG Salvatore F. Cambria, April 11, 2011.

[33] USAFRICOM, Deputy Strategy, Plans, and Programs Officer, interview by JCOA, April 12, 2011.

[34] JFMCC–OD, COA, April 19, 2011.

[35] USEUCOM, J63 Officer, interview by JCOA, April 13, 2011.

[36] Ibid.

[37] BG Robert Ferrell, USA, USAFRICOM, C^4 Systems Director, interview by JCOA, April 12, 2011.

[38] MG Salvatore F. Cambria, April 11, 2011.

[39] JFMCC–OD, COA, April 19, 2011.