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Joint Functional Command for Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance

By JAMES L. DENTON

E-2C Hawkeye launches to conduct operations over Iraq



U.S. Navy (Liliana Vendel)

Intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) operations continue to perform a vital role in the war on terror and promise to remain integral to current and future wars. That our military can execute the ISR mission has never been in question; the challenge is the efficiency, flexibility, and agility of that execution. The U.S. Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) Joint Functional Component Command for Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (JFCC-ISR) is engaged in that challenge.

Major James L. Denton, USAF, is Chief of the Joint Functional Component Command for Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Commander's Action Group.

Authorities

On January 10, 2003, President George W. Bush endorsed the reality that ISR touches every mission area from combating weapons of mass destruction to integrated missile defense to small unit operations. On that date, he signed Unified Command Plan 02, Change 2, which gave USSTRATCOM the responsibility for Department of Defense (DOD) ISR. This responsibility has transferred without change in subsequent plans, making the commander of USSTRATCOM responsible for the execution of the global ISR mission, which he chose to do through the creation of the JFCC-ISR. To meet those responsibilities, JFCC-ISR develops strategies and plans; integrates DOD, national, and international partner capabilities; and executes DOD ISR operations to satisfy combatant command and national operational and intelligence requirements.

Location

The JFCC-ISR uniquely integrates national and theater ISR expertise, forming an organization representing the entire DOD ISR enterprise. Located in the Defense Intelligence Analysis Center at Bolling Air Force Base, in Washington, DC, JFCC-ISR has ready access to all 16 agencies of the Intelligence Community. Toward that end, JFCC-ISR hosts ISR-associated mission partners to create integrated ISR planning and operations teams that perform the envisioned integration and synchronization. These partners include the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) Office for Collection Management, National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, National Security Agency, National Reconnaissance Office, and representatives from the Service staffs.

The JFCC-ISR central location and access make it a valuable ISR focal point for DOD by helping to ease the frustration in communicating between the different Intelligence Community organizations and geographic combatant commands, thereby building trust within these organizations. Thousands of government and military professionals across these organizations are doing great work; JFCC-ISR helps to bring all of that effort together.

a benefit of the Defense Intelligence Agency location is the "across the hall" proximity to the Defense Joint Intelligence Operations Center



Defense Intelligence Analysis Center at Bolling Air Force Base, home of the JFCC-ISR

DOD

Relationships

A great benefit of the DIA location is the “across the hall” proximity to the Defense Joint Intelligence Operations Center (DJIOC). In fact, the two organizations are in the process of integrating their operations centers. Within 6 months, a call to either center will reach personnel from both organizations who, in turn, will work an ISR solution with the resources that the DJIOC, JFCC–ISR, and their mission partners bring to bear.

While the DJIOC handles “big picture” integration of our military’s intelligence effort, the JFCC–ISR, including its mission partners, serves as the ISR arm of the DJIOC. The JFCC–ISR Operations Center keeps an enterprise-wide watchful eye on all assets using the ISR common operating picture. With future upgrades, the operations center will eventually monitor collection plans as they unfold in real time, signal deviations to those plans, instantly realign assets to the most important collection gaps, and export that same capability to key customers.

Operations

The JFCC–ISR theater teams work closely with the combatant commands, Services, national agencies, Joint Staff, and the DJIOC to make national and regional ISR integration happen daily. These regional teams operate on their respective regions’ battle rhythm to develop courses of action and options to mitigate ISR capability risks and gaps to meet the geographic combatant commands’ collection plans. They provide a single point for regional specific management questions.

Also focusing on our nation’s ISR effort is the JFCC–ISR Assessments Division, which looks across the entire ISR enterprise to determine if there are better ways to optimize integration and allocation. This division recognizes that the ISR community is stressed; people and platforms are tired, saturated, and busy; and no one has the opportunity to step back from the day-

to-day operations to ask, “Is there a better way?” That is the Assessments Division’s responsibility: to help find a better way to do business and to get more out of limited resources as the intelligence demand contin-

the ISR Global Force Management model allocates forces to combatant commands based upon priorities of the war on terror

ues to increase exponentially. Additionally, the division assists the USSTRATCOM commander’s advocacy effort for capability investment. The division develops metrics to determine where the most value lies in current assets and activities, as well as where real gaps exist. These, in turn, inform the USSTRATCOM J8 recommendation about where to put the next ISR dollar.

Integrating new and emerging capabilities into mission activities is the responsibility of the Special Access Division. This division monitors/leverages underutilized capabilities in the Special Access program arena that could answer our nation’s ISR questions.

Shattered Molds

In keeping with the search for new business practices and using the expertise of its personnel and mission partners, the JFCC–ISR launched two ambitious initiatives to redefine ISR allocation and management. The first is a new ISR Global Force Management model that uses a mission-based approach to allocating ISR assets as opposed to a calendar-based one. This model allocates forces to combatant commands based upon priorities of the war on terror. It also provides a rotational force that moves through theaters during times when a combatant commander can anticipate an increased demand for ISR assets (such as yearly exercises or during political elections of countries of interest). This is in contrast with previous calendar-based allocation in which ISR assets rotated into theaters on an inflexible yearly basis and went underutilized during lulls in requirements.

In addition, the construct provides reserve response force assets, which are

located at their respective home stations, meeting the important annual training requirements until a significant event occurs requiring a sudden, short duration plus-up of a combatant commander’s ISR assets.

The second effort is the ISR transition. Knowing that no amount of money will equalize the disparity between

capability and requirements for the overburdened ISR enterprise, JFCC–ISR is investigating ways to manage the global enterprise more effectively. On January 1, 2007, the ISR Transition Team launched an initiative to develop well-understood, practical, and executable best practices for operationally phased ISR support to the combatant commands. It will accomplish this by developing, testing, and implementing a set of coordinated ISR activities, processes, and tools designed to help combatant commands better meet their intelligence needs. The ISR Transition Team will use a spiral development process that examines discrete activities to address the areas of managing requirements, decisionmaking processes, force management, data-sharing capabilities, and assessments—areas where the potential for improvement is the greatest. The endstate of the ISR transition will be a commonly accepted, responsive global ISR management process based on DJIOC prioritization and flexible global force management that benefits the combatant commands and enables operations that are more effective.

Endstate

JFCC–ISR will continue to investigate better ways to manage the DOD ISR enterprise—from better relationships with members of the Intelligence Community, to combatant command–focused integration teams, to instant modification and reflowing of collection efforts, to new ISR business models. All of that effort focuses on satisfying our nation’s significant and growing demand for intelligence. **JFQ**