

# LESSON 11

## JOINT PLANNING: THE CRISIS ACTION PLANNING PROCESS

*“It is delusion, when one believes that one can plan an entire campaign and carry out its planned end . . . The first battle will determine a new situation through which much of the original plan becomes inapplicable.”*

—Field Marshal Helmuth Count von Moltke  
*Collected Military Works, 1892-1912*

### Lesson Introduction

While deliberate planning is conducted in anticipation of future events, there are always unanticipated situations arising that might require U.S. military response. Such situations may approximate those previously planned for in deliberate planning, though it is unlikely they will be identical. In some instances, they will be completely unanticipated. Usually, the time available to plan responses to such real-time events is short. In as little as a few days, a feasible course of action must be developed and approved, and timely identification of resources must be accomplished to ready forces, schedule transportation, and prepare supplies for movement and employment of U.S. military force. In such time-sensitive crisis situations, the Joint Planning and Execution Community (JPEC) uses crisis action planning (CAP) procedures, prescribed in CJCSM 3122.01, JOPES Volume I and Joint Pub 5-0, *Doctrine for Planning Joint Operations*.

In a crisis, the situation is dynamic, with the body of information growing hour by hour from the latest reporting sources and intelligence reports. An adequate and feasible military response in a crisis demands flexible procedures keyed to the time available, to communications that are rapid and effective, and to the use of previous planning, whenever possible. The key members of the JPEC need to know what others are doing and they need to know what is expected of them. Crisis action planning is used by the JPEC to plan and execute the deployment and employment of U.S. military forces in crisis situations.

### Student Requirements by Educational Objective

#### Requirement 1

Objective 1. Comprehend the differences between deliberate and crisis action planning (CAP) at the operational level of war. [JPME Area 2(a), 3(c), 4(c)(e)]

Objective 2. Comprehend the unique planning techniques and procedures required to conduct effective Joint crisis action planning at the operational level. [JPME Area 2(a), 3(c), 4(e)]

Objective 3. Comprehend the six phases of crisis action planning. [JPME Area 2(a), 3(c), 4(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)]

Objective 4. Understand the interaction and flow of orders and documents from the CJCS to the regional combatant commander during crisis action planning. [JPME Area 2(a), 3(e), 4(a)(b)(c)(e)]

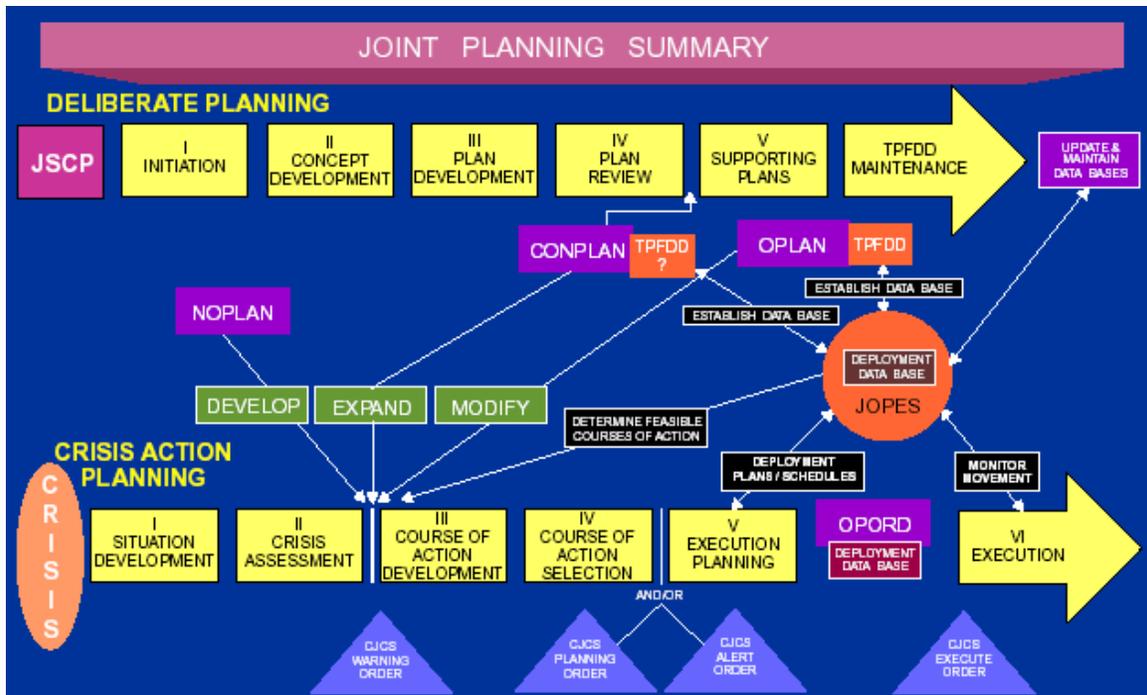
Read:

- Joint Pub 5-00.2, *Joint Task Force Planning Guidance and Procedures*, 13 January 1999, pp. IX-14 to IX-27 (stop at sub-section 8. Joint Operation Planning and Execution System) (13 pages).

View:

- DOCNET interactive module lesson, *Planning Joint Operations: "Crisis Action Planning"* (also, ensure you view the case study segment) (15 minutes). Refer to Joint Pub 5-0, *Doctrine for Planning Joint Operations*, 13 April 1995, pp. III-9 to III-15.
- Air Command & Staff College video, "Crisis Action Planning" by Lieutenant Colonel John Schneider USAF (28 minutes).

In a crisis, the luxury of time available for lengthy and detailed planning does not exist. For a contingency considered in the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP), the JPEC may build an operations order (OPORD) using or adapting an existing operations plan (OPLAN) or concept plan (CONPLAN). For contingencies not anticipated by deliberate planning, Joint planners and operators are likely to be in a "no plan" situation. They must develop courses of action (COAs), a concept of operations, and a deployment database from scratch in a compressed timeframe. However, even though the crisis at hand may not resemble existing operation plans in detail, there are probably aspects of one or more plans in the database that could be adapted to the situation, speeding up the CAP process. Even if the response to a crisis has to be completely developed without adapting plans or parts of plans in the database, the routine process of developing the database in deliberate planning keeps the JPEC familiar with the procedures, policies, and JOPES ADP capabilities that make rapid development of OPORDs possible. Throughout the CAP process, planning information is exchanged over the global command and control system (GCCS), on secure phones, and by operational reporting (OPREP) messages. The product of CAP is an executable OPORD published by the supported commander. The President of the U.S. (POTUS) and Secretary of Defense exercise ultimate authority over the selection of the COA and execution of the OPORD.



## Requirement 2

**Objective 5.** Understand how JOPES supports crisis action planning. [JPME Area 2(a), 4(c)(e)]

Read:

- Joint Pub 5-00.2, *Joint Task Force Planning Guidance and Procedures*, 13 January 1999, pp. IX-27 to IX-39 (stop at sub-section 9. Joint Task Force Specific Planning Process) (12 pages).

The framework of policies, procedures, processes, and ADP capabilities within which the JPEC carries out both deliberate and crisis action planning is JOPES. The chart above depicts the relationship to both forms of planning within the function of JOPES. As can be seen, JOPES is an entire system for conducting Joint contingency planning in both the deliberate and crisis response modes; it encompasses but is not limited to the ADP capabilities that Joint planners use as tools to get the planning job done.

## Requirement 3

**Objective 6.** Comprehend the differences between Joint synergy realized through current Joint crisis action planning today and the results of crisis planning during Operation Desert Storm. [JPME Area 2(c), 4(b)(d)]

Read:

- *The Generals' War*, Chapters 13, 14, 16, and 17 (78 pages)

When reading chapters 13, 14, 16, and 17, keep in mind our current doctrine affecting the operational level of war and the kinds of problems encountered during Operation Desert Storm. Compare and contrast the way we do Joint planning today and the results we obtain with planning and operations during Operations Desert Storm. Determine if we conduct operations more efficiently and more effectively now or during the Gulf War. In essence, did we learn anything from Desert Storm and did we seize upon those lessons for conduct of war, at the operational level, today?

Though the Gulf War appeared to most as a well planned and orchestrated engagement, Gordon and Trainor painted it as an event whereby each of the four services largely fought independent wars. Even communications between them were lacking. The staffs of General Colin Powell and Norman Schwarzkopf were viewed as not coordinating their planning efforts resulting in differing views of the enemy, primarily based upon separate intelligence sources. All the while, Russia was attempting to broker a peaceful solution.

General Schwarzkopf worried about Iraq's nuclear capability while he used B-52 raids to buy time for the Marines to prepare for an amphibious landing in one area and return from a major reconnaissance mission in Southern Kuwait. This delay, wrote the authors, was politically driven to enable the Marines to have "part of the show."

The Army determined through "templating" that the Iraqis could be a tough match. They believed that the Air Force's plan to destroy half the Iraqi Army through air power was unrealistic. This same lack of communication between the Army and the Air Force also existed within the Army's ranks. The XVIII Airborne Corps' deception plan to fix the Iraqis in the north while executing a "Hail Mary" left hook to the West was at cross-purposes with the VII Corps.

The Navy, in the meantime, was fighting an independent war against ocean mines that were laid by Iraqi patrol boats.

According to Gordon and Trainor, the Iraqis lost their ground war due not only to superior American forces, intelligence, and equipment, but also due to internal chaos, not the least of which involved command and control at the highest levels remaining in Baghdad due to division commanders in the field not being trusted.

### **Optional Activity**

1. You can now conduct a CAP practical application as an optional activity. Those of you going to a Joint tour, working with Joint planning staffs or those of you anticipating working on a JTF will find this practical application extremely useful. It is designed to give CSCDEP students a chance to apply the crisis action

planning process to a fictionalized scenario. Students will play the role of the supported regional combatant commander's planning staff and work their way through all phases of the CAP process. This application is not graded; it is intended to provide you with an enhanced look at the crisis action planning process and allow you to go into greater depth, depending upon your future operational needs and assignments. This practical application provides information necessary to perform the CAP process. It is produced for academic purposes only by the Air Command and Staff College but represents a truly joint application of the CAP process. Its contents are unclassified and largely fictional. This practical application does not constitute any official policy or position of the United States, the United States Marine Corps, or United States Air Force toward any of the countries identified for the scenario.

The scenario is set in the year 2012. The following are key scenario events that provide background for the situation leading up to the combatant commander's initiation of the Crisis Action Planning system:

- March 2010: New JSCP tasked Commander U.S. Central Command to develop CONPLAN to address the protection of US interests in the South Asian area of operations in the event of aggression from the CAA nations of Pakistan and Afghanistan.
- May 2011: CJCS approved CENTCOM CONPLAN 1018.
- September 2011: Supporting Plans for CENTCOM OPLAN 1018 completed.
- February 2012: CAA Forces show increased pace of combined arms training and air operations training.
- 15 March 2012: Pakistani ground forces rapidly disperse to their home bases following a CAA joint defense exercise.
- 18 March 2012: Pakistani ground forces begin deployment toward forward positions near the border with India in the Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Kashmir/Jammu regions.
- 18 March 2012: DIA identifies indicators that suggest CAA forces may be preparing to conduct a major offensive against India.
  - DIA orders WATCHCON status to be upgraded to WATCHCON II.
- 19 March 2012: US Ambassador requests voluntary evacuation of all non-essential AMCITs in northwest India.
- 19 March 2012: Commander CENTCOM calls special meeting of his staff to discuss the increasing tensions in the region.

The Crisis Action Planning Application shows how the process is applied in this scenario. Your job as the combatant commander's planning staff is to work through all the phases of the Crisis Action Planning process to plan and possibly execute Joint operations to face this crisis.

View: (optional):

- Air Command and Staff College Crisis Action Planning application

## Lesson Summary

A crisis is defined within the context of Joint operation planning and execution as an incident or situation involving a threat to the U.S., its territories, citizens, military forces, and possessions or vital interests. It often may develop rapidly and create a condition of such diplomatic, informational, or military importance that commitment of U.S. military forces and resources is contemplated to achieve national objectives. An adequate and feasible military response to a crisis demands a flexible adaptation of the basic planning process that emphasizes the time available, rapid and effective communications, and the use of previously accomplished contingency planning whenever possible. In time-sensitive situations, the JPEC follows formally established crisis action planning and execution procedures to adjust and implement previously prepared contingency plans or to develop and execute OPODs where no useful contingency plan exists for the evolving crisis. CAP procedures provide for the rapid and effective exchange of information and analysis, the timely preparation of military COAs for consideration by the President of the United States (POTUS) and the Secretary of Defense, and the prompt transmission of executive decisions to supported commanders.

## JPME Summary

AREA 1					AREA 2				AREA 3					AREA 4					AREA 5			
A	B	C	D	E	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D	E	A	B	C	D	E	A	B	C	D
					X		X				X		X	X	X	X	X	X				