

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

BETWEEN THE

U.S. ARMY, DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF, G-3/5/7

AND THE

U.S. AIR FORCE, DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF, AIR AND SPACE OPERATIONS

AND THE

**UNITED STATES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND, DIRECTOR,
OPERATIONS SUPPORT GROUP**

FOR

JOINT FIRES OBSERVER

14 November 2005

Joint Fires Observer Memorandum of Agreement

Purpose: This Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) formalizes the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC)-chartered Joint Close Air Support (JCAS) Executive Steering Committee's (ESC) 2005 JCAS Action Plan, Issue 16. This recommendation is to provide training to Forward Observers (FOs), Reconnaissance Marines, and Special Operations Forces to better prepare them to execute Terminal Guidance Operations (TGO), and provide targeting information for JP 3-09.3 defined Type 2 and Type 3 close air support (CAS) terminal attack control. Trained Service members will be jointly known as a Joint Fires Observer (JFO). **A Joint Fires Observer is a trained Service member who can request, adjust, and control surface-to-surface fires, provide targeting information in support of Type 2 and 3 close air support terminal attack controls, and perform autonomous terminal guidance operations.** Signatory Services will input changes to include JFO definition as appropriate during revisions to JP 1-02, JP 3-09, JP 3-09.3, and to applicable Service publications.

Background: Joint Terminal Attack Controllers (JTACs) cannot be in a position to see every target on the battlefield. Trained JFOs, in conjunction with JTACs, will assist maneuver commanders with the timely planning, synchronization, and responsive execution of all joint fires and effects. Additionally, since not all terminal guidance operations (TGO) missions are CAS, we can increase our capability to conduct TGO missions by training JFOs on JLASER (JP 3-09.1) Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTP) and communication procedures with aircrew. Autonomous TGO independent of CAS requires the JFO to have direct or indirect communications with the individual commanding the delivery system plus command and control connectivity with the JFO's maneuver commander, and / or appropriate weapons release authority. While any personnel may be required to perform non-qualified JTAC control procedures in the CAS mission area, JFOs are better trained and prepared to execute these "In Extremis" procedures. The intent of a JFO is to add joint warfighting capability, not to circumvent the need for qualified JTACs. JFOs provide the capability to exploit those opportunities that exist in the joint battle space where a trained observer could be used to efficiently support air delivered fires that are not JCAS, deliver surface-to-surface fires, and facilitate targeting for the JTAC in situations that are JCAS.

This JFO initiative is founded on the 2005 JCAS Action Plan. The following four actions are designed to standardize training of JFOs throughout the Services: 1) Standardize the title and develop a joint definition for the position, 2) Develop a joint individual standard and syllabus, 3) Develop Joint TTPs and update Service manuals as appropriate, and 4) Establish a minimum equipment capability standard for the position. Completion of these actions will improve joint force capabilities and reduce the potential for mishaps resulting in fratricide and unacceptable collateral damage.

Scope: This MOA establishes a JFO Joint Mission Task List (JMTL) for Services to develop initial and continuation JFO training programs. JP 3-09.3 refers to an "observer," other than a JTAC, who may be in a position to "see" a target and provide "real time targeting information" for Type 2 or 3 CAS terminal attack control. The MOA

serves as the vehicle to increase the capability of these “observers” in the application of joint fires and effects. The training program emphasizes joint collaboration and the need for JFOs and JTACs to train together as resources allow.

Responsibilities: Services with JFO training programs will ensure those programs are in compliance with this MOA.

1. JFO Certification and Qualification Process: Services will develop minimum level course entry requirements.

2. Grandfathered JFO: All previous USAF Air Ground Operations School (6th Combat Training Squadron) and USA Field Artillery School JFO Course graduates are “grandfathered” as JFOs.

3. JFO Training Definitions:

- Certified - Individuals who satisfactorily complete the appropriate Service academic and practical training requirements of a core JFO training curriculum, and complete a comprehensive evaluation.
- Qualified - A certified JFO who has maintained currency by achieving the established minimum recurring training and evaluation requirements.
- Control - Consists of at least one aircraft attacking a surface target. The control begins with a CAS briefing (the 9-line is the JP 3-09.3 standard) from a JTAC and ends with either an actual/simulated weapons release or an abort on a final attack run. No more than two controls can be counted per CAS briefing per target (reference JTAC MOA).
- Live - Real aircraft used in a training environment. Live does not indicate ordnance expenditure. Adheres to the guidelines of DoD 5000.59-M of a simulation involving real people operating real systems.
- Simulated or Simulation - Computer-based system used in a training environment involving real people operating simulated systems. Adheres to the guidelines of DoD 5000.59-M of virtual simulations inject human-in-the-loop in a central role by exercising motor control skills (e.g., flying an airplane), decision skills (e.g., committing fire control resources to action), or communication skills (e.g., as members of a C4I team).
- Services will designate their suitable system.

4. JFO Certification Process: Services will develop certification programs in compliance with the JM TLs in this MOA. Certification requirements will be performed under the supervision of a commander designated qualified trainer.

5. JFO Qualification (Currency) Process: Once certified, a JFO will retain qualification provided currency is maintained and all recurring evaluation requirements are accomplished. Semi-annual currency requirements waiver authority is the first O-6 in the JFO’s chain of command. Waivers will be documented and maintained in the JFO’s training jacket/folder. Ordnance expenditure is preferred in all events but not required. Currency requirements:

A. Semi-annual:

- 1) Perform as a JFO the following six fixed or rotary wing events.
 - a) Perform two live or simulated laser guided weapon system TGO events.
 - b) Perform as a JFO in support of one live fixed wing CAS control. This control begins with the JFO acquiring the target and providing targeting data to the JTAC for a Type 2 or 3 CAS terminal attack control for the JTAC to control. If live control is not possible/feasible, event may be accomplished via simulation if approved by waiver authority per paragraph 5.
 - c) Perform as a JFO during one live night target marking event using marking devices (i.e. Laser, IR Pointer). Conduct at night beyond End of Evening Nautical Twilight (EENT) and prior to Begin Morning Nautical Twilight (BMNT). Laser events in conjunction with TGO (para 5. A.1) a) and support of CAS controls (para 5. A.1) b) credits this requirement if conducted between EENT and BMNT.
 - d) Perform one simulated terminal attack control as non-qualified JTAC individual utilizing Multi-Service Procedures for the Joint Application of Firepower (JFIRE). Supervision by a qualified JTAC is preferred but not required.
 - e) Perform one live or simulated abort. May be accomplished in conjunction with other semi-annual events.
- 2) Perform six live or simulated surface-to-surface or naval surface call for fire events.
- 3) Perform one live or simulated AC-130 call for fire.

B. Evaluation Requirements: Recurring evaluation requirements will be determined by respective Services, not to exceed 18 months. JFOs lose their qualification if evaluation period lapses or if they fail the evaluation. JFOs will adhere to "Requalification Process" paragraph until successful evaluation. Services will develop evaluation programs in compliance with the JM TLs in this MOA.

C. Requalification Process: A JFO that fails to comply with currency requirements loses qualification. To regain qualification, a JFO must complete the number and category (e.g. laser events, controls, surface-to-surface calls for fire, and/or AC-130 calls for fire) of currency requirements in paragraph 5. A. that they failed to accomplish in the previous six months under supervision of a commander designated qualified trainer. A JFO who is unqualified for 24 consecutive months must regain qualification by completing a Service/USSOCOM approved refresher syllabus including a minimum of the semi-annual requirements under supervision of a commander designated qualified trainer. Upon successful completion of a comprehensive evaluation, the individual will be requalified as a JFO.

D. Deployment Process: JFOs are expected to deploy fully qualified. JFOs who deployed fully qualified do not have to maintain currency while deployed in support of combat/contingency operations. Units will continue to document training and combat events. Upon return to home station, resume normal training on the individual's first duty day after deployment. All deployed JFOs who do not maintain currency

requirements are considered unqualified upon completion of the deployment and must requalify IAW this MOA.

E. JFO Evaluation Folder (Training Jacket). To properly document JFO certification and qualification (currency) standards, an individual JFO evaluation folder (training jacket) will be initiated by the appropriate JFO schoolhouse and maintained by the individual's assigned command. Document may be electronically based if all required information is readily available. The training jacket will accompany the individual to each duty assignment to provide the commander that individual's certification and qualification status to conduct JFO duties, and to maintain appropriate records (currency) within the training jacket.

This evaluation folder (training jacket) will contain a 4-part documentation system. This is mandatory for all JFOs. Required information:

Part I: COMMANDERS DESIGNATION LETTER

Section contains a copy of the JFO current designation letter and a copy of any previous designation letters, if applicable.

Part II: DOCUMENTATION OF TRAINING

Section contains a record of all training events in a legible format and must be in compliance with this document's currency requirements. This section should contain records of all required JFO MOA training performed since initial certification.

Part III: DOCUMENTATION OF EVALUATIONS

Section contains documentation of all evaluations conducted since initial certification.

Part IV: JFO FORMAL SCHOOL DIPLOMAS

Section contains copies of any certificates received from attending a formal JFO course.

JFO JM TL. The following Joint Mission Tasks have been identified for a JFO and will be instrumental in developing schoolhouse academic training syllabus/programs of instruction (POI) for JFO certification and unit appraisal to maintain JFO qualification. The Joint Mission Tasks are divided into duty areas for academic application and are listed by task and associated sub-tasks.

Duty Area 01.

Engage Targets with Ground Surface-to-Surface Fires

- 01.1 Conduct adjust fire missions
- 01.2 Conduct fire for effect missions
- 01.3 Conduct special missions
- 01.4 Conduct suppression of enemy air defenses

Duty Area 02.

Engage Targets with Naval Surface Fires

- 02.1 Conduct adjust fire missions
- 02.2 Conduct fire for effect missions
- 02.3 Conduct special missions
- 02.4 Conduct suppression of enemy air defenses

Duty Area 03.

Engage Targets with Air to Ground Fires

- Provide timely and accurate targeting data to a JTAC for Type 2 and 3 CAS terminal attack control
- Assess basic effects of weather, terrain, and threat air defenses on CAS assets and advise JTAC
- 03.3 Apply the principles of CAS weapons effects
- 03.4 Coordinate and direct close combat attack or support CAS terminal attack control with attack helicopters
- 03.5 Conduct an AC-130 call for fire
- 03.6 Conduct terminal attack control as a non-qualified JTAC.
- 03.7 Determine requirement and transmit timely ABORT commands to controlling JTAC or aircraft

Duty Area 04.

Terminal Guidance Operations

- 04.1 Provide visual, voice or electronic targeting data for terminal guidance operations
- 04.2 Conduct laser guided weapon system terminal guidance

Syllabus and Programs of Instruction (POI). Service schoolhouses will develop their individual syllabi/POI. Specifically, the USAF Joint Air Ground Operations Group (JAGOG) will develop their syllabus in coordination with the USA Field Artillery School (USAFAS) via the Army Joint Support Team-Nellis (AJST-N). USAFAS will develop their POI in coordination with JAGOG. Once syllabi/POI is approved by respective Major Commands, changes will be coordinated between JAGOG and USAFAS at the O-6 level before receiving respective Major Command's approval.

Service Schoolhouses. Services signing this JFO MOA may create training facilities as desired. Since only JAGOG and USAFAS are currently training JFOs, there is no need for joint standardization enforcement. Services signing the JFO MOA may create schoolhouses as desired, but must coordinate their JFO course of instruction with participating Services. Participating Services will determine standardization

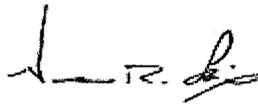
requirements if additional JFO schools are opened during annual reviews and take to the JCAS ESC recommendation for joint standardization enforcement.

Waiver Authority. Waiver authority not specifically addressed in this MOA is the respective Major Command G-3, DO, J-3, or their designated representative.

Effective Date, Review, and Termination: This MOA will be effective 1 November 2005. It will be reviewed annually and updated as required. Review will be initiated sequentially between the Department of the Army (first review after signing), Headquarters United States Air Force (second review), and Headquarters United States Special Operations Command (third review). In the event more than two years passes without review, any signatory may initiate a review. Termination will occur on incorporation in a joint instruction or directive.



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