Background

The Army targeting process of “decide-detect-deliver-assess” (D3A) has historically been an integral part of U.S. Army operations. Ground forces successfully employed D3A to integrate the highly kinetic combat operations of Operation Enduring Freedom I (OEF-1) and Operation Iraqi Freedom I (OIF-1), and then adapted D3A to synchronize the full-spectrum counter-insurgency operations that followed for over a decade. However, the 2014 Army Lessons Learned Forum collected several observations from OIF and OEF that identified the Army had significant targeting issues in joint interagency multinational environments with meeting a ground force commander’s (GFC) intent for joint Fires.

Operational forces feedback reinforced a 2001 Department of the Army (DA) Targeting Study that identified the Army had significant targeting issues in joint interagency multinational environments with meeting a ground force commander’s (GFC) intent for joint Fires.

The problem

At the core of the AMTC’s establishment was the following problem statement: How does the Army train, man and equip personnel to execute the joint targeting process in accordance with Department of Defense policies and published joint standards for developing targets for cross-service execution and joint force synchronization? In other words, the Army does not resource ground force commanders with joint certified individuals or qualified crews to execute joint targeting. This cedes the responsibility to shape the joint task force/GFC’s deep area to sister-services.

The mission of the AMTC is to serve as “the Army’s executing agent for cross-domain, cross-warfighting function doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities policy (DOTMLPF-P) modernization and integration responsibilities for targeting.”

Key tasks to building an Army capacity for joint cross-domain capabilities integration and synchronization include:

1. Establishing Army targeting training standards and certification requirements.
2. Representing the Army at federal, joint and multinational targeting forums.
3. Facilitating federated target development to the operational force to enable staffs to meet ground force commander’s intent for joint maneuver and Fires; national and theater-intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance (ISR); pre-planned airspace; and non-lethal capabilities employment (Figure 1).

Peer adversaries in large-scale combat operations (So why now?)

The assured nature of air, maritime and space supremacy in years past as a pre-condition to the commitment of ground forces reduced the necessity for the Army to have an operational role in joint cross-domain planning and integration. However, advances in technologies and peer threat capabilities have created an operational environment where the Army cannot necessarily rely on another service to get land forces close enough to employ our organic direct and indirect fire weapon systems. The battlefield for all services has an extended anti-access area denial (A2AD) depth, and require simultaneous integration of systems in order to establish temporary windows of domain superiority. These domains include space, cyber and information as contested environments.

The Army Multi-Domain Targeting Center
Increasing the rate and volume of cross-domain capabilities

By Col. Yi Se Gwon
To dominate the modern battlefield, the Army needs to have a more active role in developing overarching joint cross-domain processes to complement the material solutions being developed for defeating peer threats. Currently, Army readiness requirements track a unit’s individual certifications, crew qualifications and collective training in the form of gunnery tables and mission readiness exercises prior to deploying to a combined training center. However, the Army has not yet employed the existing DoD and joint staff accredited courses to certify individuals, or require qualified crews/work centers, as depicted below, that can meet Joint Staff standards of target development as a pre-requisite for command posts to deploy as joint force land component commanders or JTF headquarters (Figure 2).

### Transforming for multi-domain operations

Based on assistance from Corps Headquarters, Army Service Component Commands, the U.S. Army Intelligence Center of Excellence and other centers of excellence, and respective branch proponent offices, the AMTC developed a strategic roadmap for modernizing the Army’s Targeting Enterprise. The way ahead builds on the tactical Army targeting process of D3A, and adds the operational/strategic processes of joint intermediate and advanced target development. Essentially, GFCs will have joint qualified crews and staffs that can effectively plan, integrate and execute cross-domain maneuver and Fires in support of multi-domain operations. The result will be a dramatic increase to the rate and volume of joint Fires that GFCs can influence through the joint targeting process. This ability to shape the modern operational environment across different domains will enable tactical units to operate semi-autonomously within a pre-determined decisive space with access to the full range of joint, interagency and multinational capabilities.

As we move toward full operational capacity, the AMTC is currently funded in Fiscal Year 18 and standing up the Army’s Joint Intermediate Target Development and Planning process.

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**Figure 1. A comparison between Army targeting and joint targeting methods. (Courtesy illustration)**

**Figure 2. The joint targeting training strategy. (Courtesy illustration)**
Course, and the Target Material Production Course as part of advanced target development. These courses are essential building blocks whose absence in Army professional military education had previously required land forces to sublet to the other services any spare support for the Army’s joint targeting requirements. Having Army personnel and crews trained in these joint targeting tasks will give the current and future forces the ability to execute targeting for multi-domain operations. The funding for a provisional DOTMLPF-P targeting modernization is approved to begin in Fiscal Year 20.

Way ahead

DA is currently assessing a permanent Army support capability to the force for joint targeting to begin in 2021. This would be in the form of a fully operational AMTC of 140 personnel. At end state, future land forces will have the operational training and qualifications to enable tactical formations with the full range of lethal and non-lethal capabilities currently available and being developed across the DoD. Tactical formations will have the certified expertise to both understand and employ these cross-domain capabilities at extended ranges beyond a BCTs’ organic capabilities to persistently attack and achieve overwhelming overmatch against an enemy. Tactical units would also have the ability to integrate into joint cross-domain efforts to penetrate and disintegrate any A2AD threats that would impede closing with and finishing the enemy with short-range direct and indirect fire weapon systems in the close fight (Figure 3).

An enduring Army joint targeting support to the force would also provide a mechanism for capturing lessons learned, updating doctrine, and identifying future requirements for designing exercises as units gain proficiency in integrating cross-domain capabilities through targeting. For example, exercise designs for CTCs and warfighters in the future could have a dramatically expanded framework of both friendly- and peer-adversary capabilities. Friendly forces would begin their rotation from home-station with the proficiency to employ the full range of lethal, non-lethal and asymmetric attacks to penetrate and disintegrate enemy A2AD, and mitigate casualties to get to the CTC training area.

The potential increases in the rate and volume of Fires, ISR, space, cyber and electronic warfare capabilities that ground forces can achieve through joint targeting dramatically exceed pre-established proficiency benchmarks with higher achievable levels of force protection. A continued DA investment in the Army Multi-Domain Targeting Center would ensure that land forces at the operational level of war will have the tools to execute joint targeting and integrate with the other services as part of the joint multi-domain fight well into the future.

The Army targeting process will continue to be an integral part of Army tactical operations, but the additional joint targeting proficiencies will allow for more complex tactical training with developed training aid-assisted and constructive replication of cross-domain effects and assessments. The AMTC is postured to ensure the Army plays a dominant role in the development and execution of multi-domain operations with joint, interagency and multi-national partners for large-scale combat operations.

Col. Yi Se Gwon serves as the U.S. Army Multi-Domain Targeting Center director. He is responsible for executing the Army’s cross-domain, cross-warfighting targeting force modernization, and advocating Army interests to the Department of Defense Targeting Enterprise.

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