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USNORTHCOM Emblem Illustrates New Command's Mission

By Lt. J.G. Eric Brian



March 31 marked the end of the first six months of operation for the United States Northern Command (USNORTHCOM), the new unified military command born out of the September 11 attacks, with the mandate of providing homeland defense for North America.

The command's mission is homeland defense and civil support, specifically to conduct operations to deter, prevent, and defeat threats and aggression aimed at the United States, its territories, and interests within the command's assigned area of responsibility; and as directed by the President or Secretary of Defense, provide military assistance to civil authorities including consequence management operations.

Illustrating that mission - quite literally - is the command's emblem.

In the emblem's forefront is the American eagle, symbolizing the nation and USNORTHCOM's commitment to national security. Representing peace and war, the eagle's right talons hold an olive branch and its left talons clutch a group of 13 arrows, signifying the first 13 states. The eagle's head is turned toward the olive branch, indicating the command's desire for peace.

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On the eagle's chest is a shield, a warrior's primary piece of defensive equipment. The 13 alternating red (courage and fortitude) and white (peace and sincerity) bars on the shield represent the 13 original colonies. The chief - the upper part of the shield - in blue, embodies the colonies strength, vigilance and perseverance. The chief holds 13 six-pointed stars, a reference to the six-pointed design from Gen. George Washington's personal flag. This flag was flown during his winter encampment at Valley Forge.

Washington had a personal protection force, which consisted of a few handpicked men from each of the colonies. This special guard carried these colors. The symbols from the Washington flag are a reminder of the efforts of the Continental Army, which served as the nation's first military organization to free and protect our homeland.

"Protecting our homeland and keeping it free is job one for us," said Gen. Ralph E. Eberhart, USNORTHCOM Commander.

Eberhart said USNORTHCOM provides "unity of command" for U.S. military actions to counter threats against homeland security.

"We are just like other regional combatant commands, with one important difference," he said. "The United States homeland is our area of responsibility."

The emblem's background depicts USNORTHCOM's area of responsibility, shielded by the eagle. On the area of responsibility are three stars, signifying each of the attack sites of September 11, 2001. These gold stars pay tribute to those who lost their lives, reminiscent of the Gold Star Mothers and Widows who lost family members in service to the nation. The gold star tradition began in World War I when white service flags were displayed from homes, businesses, schools and churches. These flags contained blue stars, representing loved ones serving in the military. Gold stars stitched over blue stars subsequently showed the nation those who gave their lives for our country, and the devotion and pride of their family.

Five stars at the top of the emblem represent the five service branches: Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard. The stars are eight-pointed, signifying the eight points

on a compass, and symbolizing USNORTHCOM's mission to counter the global threat of terrorism. The stars are lined up over the area of responsibility, depicting the umbrella of protection that the command provides North America.

The emblem's outside rings of red, blue and red with the white lettering of the command's name are representative of the colors of the nation and the national flag.

The symbolism of the colors and images comprising the emblem are intended to remind people of the solemn charge given to U.S. Northern Command to provide homeland defense for the United States. Once explained, the symbols seem to go right to the heart of all who see it.

"It's very well received," said Mike Perini, USNORTHCOM Public Affairs Officer. "The presentation includes a detailed explanation of the many symbols on the crest. Every age group finds something that touches them personally. We get a lot of great feedback about it."

Among the comments are words of simple appreciation for how the emblem depicts where Americans - and visitors to America - were killed in the three terrorist attacks on September 11. Many who remember World War II identify with the gold stars on the emblem - reminiscent of the stars that hung in the windows of homes where people lost loved ones in combat. Veterans of the five branches of service say they like seeing the five stars at the top of the emblem, knowing that the uppermost star represents their particular branch.

"It's really nice to see the impression that the shield makes on people," said Perini.

USNORTHCOM officials have briefed hundreds of people from across the country about the command's mission, organization and the symbology and significance of its emblem.

"Listening to the brief gives people an understanding of what USNORTHCOM is and how we operate," said Perini. "But when the presentation is over and the lights come up and people are heading back to work, the image that sticks in their mind is the image of the USNORTHCOM emblem."

NORTHCOM Chief Says U.S. Better Prepared Against Terror

By Jim Garamone, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON -- The United States is better prepared to face terrorist threats today and the U.S. Northern Command will continue to improve U.S. capabilities, the head of that unified command said today.

During an interview in the Pentagon, Air Force Gen. Ralph Eberhart said Northern Command brings a focus on planning and training to the homeland defense mission that was missing before.

The command stood up Oct. 1, 2002. It was declared "fully operational" Oct. 1, 2003. The command, based in Colorado Springs, Colo., is responsible for the U.S. military's homeland defense mission. NORTHCOM has the responsibility to plan, coordinate, exercise command and control of, and supervise the execution of federal military responses to external threats and aggression.

This also applies to emergency and extraordinary domestic circumstances where the secretary of defense has approved military support.

"Before, it was one of many missions for other commands," Eberhart said. "Today that's all we do. It's Job #1. That allows us to establish relationships. It allows us to focus on planning. It allows us to go out and exercise and train so that we're better prepared to provide for the homeland defense and assist others as they provide vital security."

The command's credo is to deter, prevent, defeat. Eberhart said the key is to have actionable intelligence. This is information that allows U.S. authorities to get at the "front end" of the problem "so that we can deter, prevent, defeat so that we're not just mitigating -- cleaning up," he said. "We want that actionable intelligence that allows us to go out and meet the enemy face-to-face so we're not surprised by that asymmetric threat."

U.S. officials could then secure the port or ship, or stop the aircraft from taking on a terrorist mission. "So we want to get on the front end of the problem with actionable intelligence," he said.

Eberhart said the biggest challenge facing the command is the unknown. "What is the terrorists' plan? What form, when, where will the next attack come from?"

He said the good news is that the various agencies involved in collecting this information are now sharing it properly.

"There are no secrets in terms of one part of government not telling another part of the government something that might be important in terms of safeguarding America," he said.

But, the general said, it is what he doesn't know that bothers him. "What one individual or a small cell might be trying, that's the thing that worries me most and the one impediment to us being successful," he said.

Northern Command cooperates with the other unified commands and shares intelligence with them. "In our view, all terrorists are not equal," he said. "We're very interested in the terrorists that have designs on the ... United States. Those are the ones at the top of our list, and those are the ones we encourage Central Command, Special Operations Command and other commands to place the most emphasis on."

The command also wants to ensure that working relationships are forged among all agencies involved in homeland defense, Eberhart said. These are relationships cut across federal, state and local agencies, and include players from law-enforcement, emergency services, intelligence agencies and the military.

He said the relationships go right to the local level -- to the police and firefighters who would be the first to confront an act of terror. "We believe those relationships will be key to our success," he said.

To foster those relationships, Northern Command has sponsored almost 20 exercises, from tabletop types to a robust one conducted in August.

"We have a long invitation list that includes anyone who might have an interest or play a role," he said. The list includes governmental agencies as well as nongovernmental groups such as the Red Cross or the Association of American Railroads.

"We try to be inclusive," he said. Eberhart said one phrase often used at the command is "we don't want to be exchanging business cards at the scene of the incident."

"We want to already know each other," he said. "We want to have already worked together, we want to have confidence in each other; we want to have trust in each other. It would also be a good idea if we were friends too."

But the command is a military organization. It is part of the Defense Department and takes orders just as any other unified command does. The command does not take direction from the Homeland Security Department.

"We, first and foremost, are a U.S. unified command and our title is Northern Command - not Homeland Defense Command, not Homeland Security Command," Eberhart said. "All those things that apply to the other (military) commands out there apply to us."

"What's different ... is that our homeland is in our area of responsibility," he continued. "The crown jewels are in our area of responsibility. Therefore, we will have some civil support, some homeland security type missions that other commands might not have."

China Waging War on Space-Based Weapons

By Larry Wortzel

What is China's position on space-based weapons? Considering the gap between what officials in Beijing say and what they do on the issue, it's hard to get a straight answer. But let's look at the facts.

For some time now, China has spearheaded an international movement to ban conventional weapons from space. More than a year ago, the Asian superpower -- joined by Russia, Vietnam, Indonesia, Belarus, Zimbabwe and Syria --

introduced a draft treaty at the United Nations to outlaw the deployment of space-based weapons.

But even as it tries to rally multinational coalitions and public opinion to oppose "the weaponization of space," Beijing quietly continues to develop its own space-based weapons and tactics to destroy American military assets.

China's strategy here is to blunt American military superiority by limiting and ultimately neutralizing its existing space-based defense assets, and to forestall deployment of new technology that many experts believe would provide the best protection from ballistic-missile attack.

Chinese security experts have a keen appreciation of America's space-based assets and how the military envisions using them in future conflicts. Strategists in the People's Liberation Army have studied our campaigns in the 1991 Gulf War, Kosovo, Afghanistan and this year's war in Iraq.

They have observed our overwhelming superiority in the general field of "C4ISR" (command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance). More importantly, they have noted that our superiority in communication, reconnaissance and surveillance depends on what we have up in space.

These lessons have convinced PLA military planners that America's strength can become our Achilles heel. If they can neutralize or destroy our space assets, American forces will lose a critical advantage, leaving them far more vulnerable to China's larger but less-advanced military.

The importance the PLA attaches to space technology was stated most succinctly in a Dec. 12, 2001, article posted on the PLA Web site: "Whoever has control [or "hegemony"] over space will also have the ability to help or hinder and affect 'ground' mobility and air, sea and space combat." The article, dramatically entitled "The Weaponization of Space -- A Call to the Danger," dutifully calls for the "peace-loving nations and peoples of the world" to oppose this weaponization.

But a decade's-worth of technical articles in Chinese science digests discussing how to fight a war in space and analyzing U.S. strengths and vulnerability make it clear that Beijing has a long-running military program designed to challenge America's dominance in -- and dependence on -- space.

China's Technology Research Academy, for example, has been developing an advanced anti-satellite weapon called a "piggyback satellite." The system is designed to seek out an enemy satellite (or space station or space-based laser) and

attach itself like a parasite, either jamming the enemy's communications or physically destroying the unit.

The PLA also is experimenting with other types of satellite killers: land-based, directed-energy weapons and "micro-satellites" that can be used as kinetic energy weapons. According to the latest (July 2003) assessment by the U.S. Defense Department, China will probably be able to field a direct-ascent anti-satellite system in the next two to six years.

Such weapons would directly threaten what many believe would be America's best form of ballistic-missile defense: a system of space-based surveillance and tracking sensors, connected with land-based sensors and space-based missile interceptors. Such a system could negate any Chinese missile attack on the U.S. homeland.

China may be a long way from contemplating a ballistic missile attack on the U.S. homeland. But deployment of American space-based interceptors also would negate the missiles China is refitting to threaten Taiwan and U.S. bases in Okinawa and Guam. And there's the rub, as far as the PLA is concerned.

Clearly, Beijing's draft treaty to ban deployment of space-based weapons is merely a delaying tactic aimed at hampering American progress on ballistic-missile defense while its own scientists develop effective countermeasures.

What Beijing hopes to gain from this approach is the ability to disrupt American battlefield awareness -- and its command and control operations -- and to deny the U.S. access to the waters around China and Taiwan should the issue of Taiwan's sovereignty lead to conflict between the two Chinas.

China's military thinkers are probably correct: The weaponization of space is inevitable. And it's abundantly clear that, draft treaties and pious rhetoric notwithstanding, they're doing everything possible to position themselves for dominance in space. That's worth keeping in mind the next time they exhort "peace-loving nations" to stay grounded.

[Larry M. Wortzel is vice president for foreign policy and defense studies at The Heritage Foundation.]

Steps for Establishing a Family Disaster Plan

Disaster can strike quickly and without warning. It can force you to evacuate your neighborhood or confine you to your home. What would you do if basic services--water, gas, electricity or telephones--were cut off? Local officials and relief workers will be on the scene after a disaster, but they cannot reach everyone right away.

Families can--and do--cope with disaster by preparing in advance and working together as a team. Follow the steps listed in this article to create your family's disaster plan. Knowing what to do is your best protection and your responsibility.

4 Steps to Safety

I. Find Out What Could Happen to You:

1. Contact your local Red Cross chapter or emergency management office--be prepared to take notes.
2. Ask what types of disasters are most likely to happen. Request information on how to prepare for each.
3. Learn about your community's warning signals: what they sound like and what you should do when you hear them.
4. Ask about animal care after a disaster. Animals are not allowed inside emergency shelters because of health regulations.
5. Find out how to help elderly or disabled persons, if needed.

6. Find out about the disaster plans at your workplace, your children's school or day care center, and other places where your family spends time.

II. Create a Disaster Plan:

1. Meet with your family and discuss why you need to prepare for disaster. Explain the dangers of fire, severe weather, and earthquakes to children. Plan to share responsibilities and work together as a team.
2. Discuss the types of disasters that are most likely to happen. Explain what to do in each case.
3. Pick two places to meet: Right outside your home in case of a sudden emergency, like a fire, and another location outside your neighborhood in case you can't return home. Remember, everyone must know the address and phone number.
4. Ask an out-of-state friend to be your "family contact". After a disaster, it's often easier to call long distance. Other family members should call this person and tell them where they are. Everyone must know your contact's phone number.
5. Discuss what to do in an evacuation. Plan how to take care of your pets.

III. Complete This Checklist:

1. Post emergency telephone numbers by phones (fire, police, ambulance, etc.).
2. Teach children how and when to call 9-1-1 or your local Emergency Medical Services number for emergency help.
3. Show each family member how and when to turn off the water, gas, and electricity at the main switches.
4. Check if you have adequate insurance coverage.
5. Get training from the fire department for family members on how to use the fire extinguisher (ABC type), and show them where it's kept.
6. Install smoke detectors on each level of your home, especially near bedrooms.
7. Conduct a home hazard hunt.
8. Stock emergency supplies and assemble a Disaster Supplies Kit.
9. Take a Red Cross first aid and CPR class.
10. Determine the best escape routes from your home. Find two ways out of each room.
11. Determine the safest places in your home or office for each type of disaster.

IV. Practice and Maintain Your Plan:

1. Quiz your family every six months or so.
2. Conduct fire and emergency evacuation drills.
3. Replace stored water every six months and stored food every six months.
4. Test and recharge your fire extinguisher(s) according to manufacturer's instructions.
5. Test your smoke detectors monthly and change the batteries at least once a year.

Neighbors Helping Neighbors:

Working with neighbors can save lives and property. Meet with your neighbors to plan how the neighborhood could work together after a disaster until help arrives. If you're a member of a neighborhood organization, such as a home association or crime watch group, introduce disaster preparedness as a new activity. Know your neighbors' special skills (e.g., medical, technical) and consider how you could help neighbors who

have special needs, such as disabled and elderly persons. Make plans for childcare in case parents can't get home.

Home Hazard Hunt:

During a disaster, ordinary objects in your home can cause injury or damage. Anything that can move, fall, break, or cause a fire is a home hazard. For example, a hot water heater or a bookshelf can fall. Inspect your home at least once a year and fix potential hazards. Also, it would be a good idea to contact your local fire department to learn about home fire hazards.

Evacuation:

- Evacuate immediately if told to do so.
- Listen to your battery-powered radio and follow the instructions of local emergency officials.
- Wear protective clothing and sturdy shoes.
- Take your Disaster Supplies Kit with you.
- Lock your home.
- Use travel routes specified by local authorities--don't use shortcuts because certain areas may be impassable or dangerous.

If you're sure you have time:

- Shut off water, gas, and electricity before leaving, if instructed to do so.
- Make arrangements for your pets.

Emergency Supplies:

Keep enough supplies in your home to meet your needs for at least three days. Assemble a Disaster Supplies Kit with items you may need in an evacuation. Store these supplies in sturdy, easy-to-carry containers such as backpacks, duffle bags, or covered trash containers. Include:

- A three-day supply of water (one gallon per person per day) and food that won't spoil.
- One change of clothing and footwear per person, and one blanket or sleeping bag per person.
- A first aid kit that includes your family's prescription medications.
- Emergency tools including a battery-powered radio, flashlight, and plenty of extra batteries.
- An extra set of car keys and a credit card, cash or traveler's checks.
- Sanitation supplies.
- Special items for infant, elderly, or disabled family members.
- An extra pair of glasses.

Keep important family documents in a waterproof container, and for added preparedness, keep a smaller version of this kit in the trunk of your car.

UTILITIES:

- Locate the main electric fuse box, water service main, and natural gas main. Learn how and when to turn these utilities off. Teach all responsible family members. Keep necessary tools near gas and water shut-off valves.
- Remember, turn off the utilities only if you suspect the lines are damaged or if you are instructed to do so. If you turn the gas off, you will need a professional to turn it back on.

If Disaster Strikes:

- Remain calm and patient. Put your plan into action.
- Check for injuries.
- Give first aid and get help for seriously injured people.
- Listen to your battery-powered radio for news and instructions.
- Evacuate, if advised to do so. Wear protective clothing and sturdy shoes.
- Check for damage in your home... use flashlights. Do not light matches or turn on electrical switches, if you suspect damage.
- Sniff for gas leaks, starting at the water heater. If you smell gas or suspect a leak, turn off the main gas valve, open windows, and get everyone outside quickly.
- Shut off any other damaged utilities. (You will need a professional to turn gas back on.)

- Clean up spilled medicines, bleaches, gasoline, and other flammable liquids immediately.
- Remember to: (1) Confine or secure your pets; (2) Call your family contact--do not use the telephone again unless it is a life-threatening emergency; (3) Check on your neighbors, especially elderly or disabled persons; (4) Make sure you have an adequate water supply in case service is cut off; (5) Stay away from downed power lines.

[Materials for this article were compiled from the "Family Disaster Plan", developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the American Red Cross. Copyright 1998, The American National Red Cross. All Rights Reserved.]

International Joint Operations & Command Conference
Northern Ireland Brigade Training Centre, Belfast
12th - 13th November 2003



IJOCC

International Joint Operations
Command Conference 2003

Belfast 12th - 13th November

The landmark global terrorism conference - International Joint Operations Command Conference 2003 - will bring together emergency agencies to develop the best practice in responding to major incidents such as terrorist attacks. The conference will use actual incidents as case studies, such as urban search and rescue operations at the Pentagon and lessons learned from the SARS outbreak in Toronto, to set the agenda for improving operational response in multi-agency co-operation.

Hosted by Northern Ireland Fire Brigade, the event brings together leading international experts from police, fire and ambulance in dealing with chemical, biological, radioactive and nuclear incidents. IJOCC 2003 is your opportunity to meet the experts, discover how they have dealt with the world's worst catastrophes and produce a roadmap to improve multi-agency co-ordination and improve community protection.

For more information, contact Michelle Plumb via phone at 01737-855-424, or via email at michelleplumb@uk.dmgworldmedia.com. The unique event will see the world's leading experts discuss their knowledge on every conceivable disaster incident, aiming to improve response throughout the world. For the full conference program & speakers, please visit www.ijocc.com/.