

## Joint Force Headquarters NCR Readies For Battle

### Press Release

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A new command is taking its shakedown cruise this week in the National Capital Region. With spanking-new systems for protecting the seat of government, new team of joint service members to work with and an awesome mission of safeguarding the people and their institutions, the Joint Force Headquarters National Capital Region is coming into its own.

Monday the headquarters took the wraps off major command and control systems, a fully networked Joint Operations Center and an integrated Mobile Command Center, and put them to use. In a sense they were born in the embers of the Pentagon.



Command Sgt. Maj. Jeffrey Greer assists Maj. Gen. Galen B. Jackman cut the ribbon for the JFHQ-NCR's Joint Operations Center and Mobile Command Center Aug. 2, 2004.  
Photo credit: Tom Mani

This represents the center of the flagship, Maj. Gen. Galen B. Jackman, the commanding general of JFHQ-NCR, told staff members gathered in the new Joint Operations Center for the afternoon ribbon cutting.

Jackman, who commands U.S. Army Military District of Washington as well, praised the teamwork of G3/J3 and the Naval Air Warfare Center in developing the new operational capability both a JOC whose finishing touches were still being applied even as it was coming on line in the Global War Against Terror and a Mobile Command Center, parked just outside the Fort McNair building that houses the JOC.

The tools are due for a workout now in Determined Promise 04, a US Northern Command readiness exercise that is serving as the validation exercise for JFHQ-NCR, formed last October and due to achieve full operational capability this October.

This is our piece of transformation, Col. James T. Bartran said, taking an Army administrative headquarters focused on ceremonies and base support and transforming it into a joint and interagency operational command.

It's all starting to come alive now in this exercise, Bartran said. The people, the equipment, the tools. There's a lot of energy here and it's the first chance to stand up and do what we are expected to do, to execute our new mission.

The JOC has over 50 workstations with both secure and non-secure network access from each station, secure and non-secure phones on each desk, secure and non-secure video teleconferencing, a round-the-clock radio/watchdesk operation, networked links with law enforcement and civilian agencies as well as integration with the Northcom secure communications systems.

Add to this Geospatial Information System capability, red phone hookup, and satellite communications to and from the Mobile Command Center and a smaller communications vehicle obtained since 9/11 that the command nicknames Dagger.

The 41-foot-long MCC is built on a commercially available truck chassis, a 10-wheel Freightliner, but the inside, including the overall dimensions, is entirely to specifications

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drawn up with the task in mind, integrating fully with JOC.

Jackman singled out Maj. Robert Alexander for his management of the project on behalf of MDW and JFHQ–NCR. Alexander, an MP officer with the Force Protection Division, got the assignment soon after arrival at MDW in March 2002.

“Colonel [Egon] Hawrylak [the then MDW G3] gave me the job a couple of weeks after I arrived,” Alexander recalled. It was an additional duty, a side project that became a full-time job “about 98 percent of my time, Force Protection might get 2 percent,”

Alexander said, free with his praise for others involved in the project, such as the NavAir engineers and IT personnel from NCR–DOIM who “came through in a big way” to getting everything connected at the end.

Now, the Force Protection team, the rest of MDW and the Joint Forces Headquarters will be better able to communicate with each other and with the other agencies, federal and local, that they will need to work with in Determined Promise “or any real-world scenario in the capital that calls for a military response.

Hawrylak, who has taken the post of civilian deputy G3/J3, said the Army command’s Pentagon 9/11 recovery effort pointed out the need for a better operations center and for a mobile command capability.

“The credit for making the tough early decisions goes to Major General James T. Jackson,” Hawrylak said. The MDW commanding general needed both to be onsite at the Pentagon and to take daily update briefings at the MDW Emergency Operations Center.

“We had no vehicle then that was capable of anything more than a non-secure telephone connection,” Hawrylak said. “The EOC was basically an unclassified environment.” “He made the commitment to secure a modern mobile command center and to fund it from the MDW budget,” Hawrylak said. Similarly Army funds were also earmarked for a major building renovation that would include a up-to-date operations center.

9/11 also pointed to linking the military services for joint defense of the homeland “nationally, as with US Northern Command and the North American Air Defense Command, and at the military and political nerve center, with a Joint Force Headquarters “National Capital Region.

It was Northcom that ultimately funded the National Capital Region’s JOC, however, achieving the capability far sooner than what would have occurred. But for both the JOC and the MCC the the G3 planners were already thinking jointly.

The NavAir Warfare Center’s Special Communications Requirements Division at St. Inigoes, Md., was well equipped to handle the job and had handled similar tasks for the Department of Defense and other agencies. They were well chosen to get MDW out of the “Conestoga wagon” from which it was operating.

At the ribbon cutting were NavAir personnel from Patuxent River who helped determine the requirements and find ways they could best be met. Senior engineer Steve Snyder, Doug Hosea, the project manager for the MCC, and Eric Stevens, the project manager for the JOC.

Hosea said the team would be staying together and in any crisis would be available as developer of similar command and control systems would be know how they could link and what all the capabilities were.

One major change during the development process was the location of the operations

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center, Alexander said. Renovation of Building 39 on Fort McNair, the future headquarters and operations building for MDW and the JFHQ–NCR, became tied up with contracting and engineering complications wholly unrelated to the work that NavAir would be doing.

That's when Northcom stepped forward with the means to create the needed capability now in the existing S3 structure, Building 46. Renovation of Building 39, when it comes, should advance the command and control capability of MDW and the JFHQ–NCR beyond where it is now.

Jackman, prior to cutting the ribbon in the JOC, asked his staff, both MDW and JFHQ–NCR, for two things. "First I want you to leverage these tools to the maximum," he said, using them to obtain the clearest situational awareness and then to facilitate acting in the best and most coherent way.

"Take care of and improve on these tools," Jackman further counseled, suggesting that the step forward, while large, was still just a milestone on a longer journey.

Photos are available here: <http://www.northcom.mil/index.cfm?fuseaction=photos.main>  
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