



JAPCC Air & Space Power Conference 2015

23–25 November



© Lockheed Martin

Air Power and Strategic Communications – NATO Challenges for the Future Conference Announcement



General Gorenc, JAPCC Director

The Joint Air Power Competence Centre (JAPCC) welcomes you to attend our 2015 Air and Space Power Conference in Essen, Germany from 23–25 November. The JAPCC is an accredited NATO Centre of Excellence which aims to provide key decision-makers with effective solutions on Air and Space Power challenges, in

order to safeguard NATO and the Nations' interests. Our internationally renowned annual conference provides an interactive forum for delegates to exchange ideas and perspectives on Joint Air and Space Power topics.

The JAPCC Conference has attracted senior military, political, industry and academia leaders with attendance of over 130 flag officers, including Air Chiefs, in the last 2 years. The theme of this year's conference is: 'Air Power and Strategic Communications – NATO Challenges for the Future'.

Airpower is one of the primary means through which NATO deters and combats hostile regimes, as well as conduct intervention and stability operations. Now, and in the foreseeable future, the demand for NATO airpower will continue to grow. Its incredible speed, versatility and precision can achieve objectives at low cost and low risk, with little collateral damage or civilian casualties. To NATO, the value of airpower is clear. It's equally as clear to an adversary, some of whom have minimal military capability to counter it and must instead leverage the information environment as their predominant weapon. Entities hostile to NATO understand that the general public's knowledge and opinion of airpower are vulnerable. Indeed, the more prominent airpower becomes in operations, the more likely it will be targeted in disinformation campaigns designed to misinform the public and undermine support for NATO's airpower employment.

Today's global communication capabilities greatly amplify the impact and speed with which one can change foreign and domestic public opinion and potentially influence Alliance activities or operations. Dealing with disinformation is a major challenge for NATO and Western Strategic Communications campaigns.

There has, until now, been relatively little study of the role of Strategic Communications and airpower. Through this conference, the intention of the JAPCC is to deepen NATO's understanding of this relationship. NATO requires public support to conduct operations and must improve its ability to communicate airpower's role in strengthening international peace and security.

The conference will be organized as a symposium and will present four themed panels:

1. Strategic Communication and its Relationship to Airpower

This panel will feature strategic-level political and military leaders who will discuss NATO's long-term plans for developing strategic communications as well as examining the unique role of airpower. Some core questions will include: Are NATO doctrine and resources for Strategic Communications adequate? What is the role of airpower as seen through the lens of Strategic Communications? What do recent conflicts teach us about the relationship of Strategic Communications and airpower?

2. The Media and Perspectives on NATO Airpower

Open and effective relationships with the media are a necessity for democratic nations. This panel will focus on how the Western media perceives airpower. Key issues to be explored: What are the current frictions between the media and the military? As the military and media come from very different organizational mindsets, are they talking at cross purposes? This panel will bring professional journalists and NATO public relations experts together to explore their understanding of media/military relations as well as to identify means by which the media and military might mitigate miscommunications by building a stronger mutual perspective.

3. Disinformation Campaigns Against Airpower

This panel will feature a group of expert academics who will outline how disinformation affects the broader public discourse surrounding NATO's employment of airpower. Some key questions to be examined include: how effective is disinformation against NATO airpower? What are the main themes of that disinformation?

One special topic will examine how Russia is using major media campaigns to undermine and discredit NATO.

4. Preserving Credibility

What are the best and most acceptable methods for countering enemy disinformation? The adversary will often view domestic public opinion as a friendly centre of gravity and attempt to influence it. Therefore, the Alliance must improve its methods for informing the international audience regarding its mission and actions. Some key questions: How can NATO Strategic Communications best present NATO policy and airpower? How can NATO Strategic Communications best prepare in terms of organization, doctrine, planning and training to meet the Strategic Communications/Airpower future challenges? This panel will also provide highlights from the JAPCC's research project Mitigating Disinformation Campaigns Against Airpower and some recommendations to improve NATO policy and doctrine.

This year's conference expects to bring together top experts from the political, academic, military and media spheres to encourage debate and audience engagement. It is essential we enhance our understanding and capability to use the information environment to advance our objectives, removing the ability of our adversaries to corrupt public opinion by distorting or maligning the Alliance's intent and quality of operational execution. We look forward to seeing you there!

© 2015 JAPCC

This flyer may be reproduced for the purpose of instruction, reference or analysis under the following conditions:

1. You may not use this work for any commercial purposes, nor may it be used as supporting content for any commercial product or service. 2. You may not alter, transform, or build upon this work. 3. All copies of this work must clearly display the original copyright notice and website address. 4. A complete reference citing the original work must include the following: Author(s), Paper Title, Publication Title, Editors, Volume (Issue) Number, Article (or Page) Number, (Year). 5. Any on-line reproduction must also provide a link to the JAPCC website www.japcc.org.

Disclaimer: The Flyer is a product of the JAPCC. It is produced to provide an update on current topics within the NATO Air & Space Power community. It does not represent the opinions or policies of NATO and reflects independent analysis, opinion, and the position of its author. Releasable to the Public.

Interested? Contact and reserve your seat:
conference@japcc.org
www.japcc.org



**Joint Air Power
Competence Centre**