

Joint, Coalition Warfighters Test Technological Solutions for Combatant Commanders

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DAHLGREN, Va. (NNS) -- Visitors observed U.S. and coalition warfighters judge new and emerging technologies real-time on simulated military missions and national emergency scenarios during Coalition Warrior Interoperability Demonstration (CWID) 2009 at the Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC) Dahlgren Division June 15-25.

"The visitors toured CWID's Dahlgren site to watch 114 warfighters - including 36 foreign military members - evaluate 31 interoperability trials (ITs) such as mapping programs and tracking systems," said NSWC Dahlgren Division Commander Capt. Sheila Patterson. "Warfighter appraisals determine whether or not a trial truly improves interoperability and is ready for deployment to our joint and coalition forces."

This is the 10th year NSWC Dahlgren hosted U.S. forces and coalition partners to evaluate new solutions throughout the exercise. Warfighters from New Zealand to Norway tested 42 trials - cutting-edge information technologies - designed to fill capability gaps and requirements defined by combatant commanders.

"Interoperability trials continue to develop complex solutions to meet the technology needs of warfighters on the front lines," said Dennis Warne, NSWC Dahlgren Division CWID site manager. "This year, CWID's complexity featured multiple domain networks running simultaneously, multiple warfighting scenarios and several ITs attempting far reaching technologies."

The demonstration took place out of five network locations across the United States with more than 20 coalition partners around the world.

The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff annual event enables U.S. combatant commands, services, agencies and international partners to investigate technologies that enhance interoperability and command and control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capability.

"Our operating environments are complex," said Col. Jim Bacchus, Marine Corps CWID lead. "For example, in Afghanistan multiple nations and non-governmental organizations are providing reconstruction, stability and security. Connecting and sending data effectively amongst partners is challenging, especially in the rapidly changing world of information technology."

The forum is a Department of Defense hosted event that brings together new and emerging information technologies into a global network environment with interagency and multinational partners.

"CWID is all about identifying, and fixing interoperability issues before you find them on the battlefield," said Bacchus.

The warfighters' assessment of technologies includes how well ITs perform, ease of use, compatibility and interoperability among existing systems and other test technologies.

IT Technologies receive one or more of three assessment types during execution. Assessment types are: warfighter/operator utility and technical performance; interoperability/technical ability to exchange usable data; and information assurance - the capability to identify threats and enforce policies.

U.S. Joint Forces Command, in its role as the leader of joint capability development, coordinates assessment results to determine which CWID trials meet defined requirements and have the potential to fill identified capability gaps. Assessments will be compiled in a final report published later in 2009.

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