

CLAMO Note

Center for Law and Military Operations (CLAMO)
The Judge Advocate General's School

Time to Train Soldier-Lawyers!

"The most important thing we do is . . . to create judge advocate soldiers who can stand at the commander's side on the battlefield and operate across the spectrum of conflict."

Major General Huffman
The Judge Advocate General

Introduction

Over fifty attorneys and legal personnel . . . gathered at one place, turned loose in a newly constructed town, invited as guests to the town's new hotel at no charge, issued weapons and live ammunition, put in the middle of roadblocks, riots, and demonstrations, and, given the authority to take prisoners. What's wrong with this picture? Absolutely nothing if you are members of the Army's Judge Advocate General's Corps, spending a weekend training on the law of war, rules of engagement, treatment of prisoners of war, and basic soldier skills. This was the scene last summer at Fort Knox's new Mounted Urban Combat Training (MOUT) site at Wilcox Range. As summer and warmer weather approach and thoughts of training dance in the mind, it is an appropriate time to remember this first of its kind "JAGX," and to consider how this concept might be used to provide valuable training to judge advocates.

The Fort Knox Office of the Staff Judge Advocate hosted the first ever JAGX last August 27-30, 1999. Participants included active, reserve, and National Guard judge advocates and legal specialists from the following units: Kentucky National Guard; Indiana National Guard; Illinois National Guard; Michigan National Guard; 100th Division (Training); U.S. Army Armor Center and Fort Knox; First U.S. Army; 88th Reserve Support Command; 91st Legal Support Organization (LSO); USARC; USAREC; 300th MPPW Command; 5064th USAG; 21st TAA-COM (CA); 123d ARCOM; 214th LSO; 38th Infantry Division; 76th Special Infantry Brigade; 33d ASG; and the Center for Law and Military Operations (CLAMO). The end product was a very worthwhile three days of training, and a valuable template of how to better train soldier-lawyers.

The Concept

The concept was twofold: let judge advocates see operational law issues from the soldier's perspective; and train both sides of the "soldier-lawyer" equation. Reserve Component (RC) and Active Component (AC) judge advocates provided operational law training, and AC personnel provided support in terms of personnel and logistical resources. Through JAGX,

AC and RC judge advocate personnel were able to train together and to learn from each other about functioning as judge advocates in an operational environment. The goals of the JAGX were to enhance the ability of RC personnel to train operational law issues within the command and control arena, as well as to allow them to practice their skills in the core legal disciplines. Additionally, it was intended that the JAGX demonstrate the power of Situational Training Exercise (STX) lanes as a training tool, and enable judge advocates to use this device as a means to train their supported units.

The training took place over three days. Day One included in-processing, a sample Soldier Readiness Processing Point (SRP), and 9mm-pistol marksmanship training and qualification. Day Two consisted of STX lane training in the areas of rules of engagement (ROE), handling of enemy prisoners of war and law of war issues, and a tour of the new Fort Knox MOUT facility. Day Three was Common Task Training and classroom instruction on operational law. In the end, the event was a resounding success and served as a good model for future judge advocate training.

Day One: Welcome to Fort Knox. Put some rounds down range

The first day started as any deployment would, with a model SRP. Here, pre-deployment legal issues such as wills and powers of attorney were discussed, and SRP stations were demonstrated. Actual wills and powers of attorney were generated for those who required them.

All tactical gear was placed in a holding room, and no time was lost in moving into 9mm-pistol marksmanship training. The opportunity to check the annual weapons qualification block was welcomed by active and reserve component soldiers alike. Training included basic marksmanship, unlimited "rounds" at the Beam Hit Trainer—the Army's official version of a laser-firing pistol video "game," and firing on the "pop-up" target qualification range.

After declarations of "no brass, no ammo," the crew of camo-clad soldier-lawyers moved out, en masse, to a small town in the notional country of Cortina. Accommodations were provided in the town's hotel and the embassy building. Although the MOUT city was still under construction, it was easy to envision rooms complete with beds and linens, offices with desks, bookshelves, and operating computers, and more—all of which will be included when the training facility is completed.

Day Two: Watch . . . your lane!

OPORD Brief

The most challenging but rewarding day involved STX lanes, complete with live role players, pyrotechnics, weapons, and lane “graders.” A different unit planned and ran each set of lanes. The 91st LSO opened with a briefing on the notional operational setting and ROE. They presented a scenario derived from the Joint Readiness Training Center, and successfully tied general ROE instruction into a mini-operations order (OPORD) brief to prepare participants for the lanes they were about to encounter. As the scenario played out, the U.S. forces entered the notional nation of Cortina to protect its citizens from Cortina’s dictatorship, a move condemned by the majority of the Cortinian people. Simulated protests and violent opposition lurked around every corner, as participants dealt with civilians on the battlefield, armed attack by rebels, detainees, and numerous other problem situations.

React to Contact

As the briefing ended and questions were answered, all lawyers and legal specialists were organized into four platoons, and “volunteers” were chosen to be platoon leaders and sergeants. Their mission: to lead their platoons, mounted patrols, safely through the town. With only minutes to organize into a coherent unit, the troops mounted the trucks and were on their way. The first platoon rounded the first corner and encountered a potentially hostile roadblock. Members of the Fort Knox 1st Squadron, 16th Cavalry Regiment played soldiers of the “host” nation. “Platoon” responses to the same scenario varied widely. Some had no deaths and took all hostile soldiers captive, while others suffered multiple casualties on both sides.

Moments after resolving the first situation, the platoons encountered a makeshift roadblock set up by demonstrating civilians. The longer a platoon remained stagnant and failed to take control of the situation, the closer the water-balloon wielding demonstrators came to the vehicle. In the end, if not stopped, a woman carrying a blanket, wrapped as though it contained a baby, would approach the rear of the vehicle and throw a bomb. The value of these and the other lane events was the fact that judge advocates—attorneys with years of education and even more years of experience—were able to discern firsthand how difficult a task it is to apply a given set of ROE to a fluid and uncertain situation. The Michigan National Guard, with the assistance of Fort Knox and other personnel, drew upon real life events from past operations in order to craft these STX lanes. All participants gained a new appreciation of the difficult mission faced by commanders and their judge advocates in training and preparing soldiers to make split second life or death decisions.

Handle Detainees and Prisoners

After the four “platoons” encountered four challenging STX lane events and eventually made it to the other side of town, the time had come to deal with all the detainees. Little did the

members of the 100th Division of Louisville, Kentucky, know that the training scenarios they had devised would later be reflected in the reality of ground operations in Kosovo. Role players included civilians, military personnel, paramilitary personnel, liars, truth tellers, physically injured, mentally ill, and more. The scenarios succeeded in exercising the participants’ soldier skills in the “Five S’s” of enemy prisoner of war handling: search, silence, segregate, safeguard, and speed to the rear. Also required was a working knowledge of the law of war and an understanding of how to determine the status of combatants, noncombatants, medical personnel, and others.

Evaluate Law of War Issues

Next on the agenda was a series of scenarios giving rise to Law of War (LOW) issues. Certain lanes simply had role players acting out a scenario, while participants observed and evaluated the issues that arose. Other lanes drew the participants into the actual fray. The idea was to “train the trainer”—to demonstrate to judge advocates how to go home and train soldiers in the basics of the LOW.

We Own the Night

Evening offered no rest for the weary. Throughout the night, opposition forces conducted reconnaissance missions, raids, and ambushes. This provided an opportunity for judge advocates to stand guard mount, to patrol, and to attempt to show their tactical prowess. Basic concepts forgotten in the garrison environment were refreshed, such as challenge and password procedures, sleep plans, cover and concealment, and squad-level tactics.

Day 3: Know Soldier Skills or “Die”

After a night full of explosions and small arms fire, it was time to return to basics. Many participants noted that it had been an extended period of time, years for some, since they had trained on soldier common tasks. The professional Fort Knox soldiers conducting the instruction all had tales of how a particular common task had been crucial to successfully dealing with situations that they, or someone they knew, had encountered on a recent deployment.

Conclusion: Train, Train, and Train Some More

The Fort Knox sponsored JAGX was an extraordinary success. It forced judge advocates to view ROE and legal training through the eyes of the ordinary soldier. It trained judge advocate soldier-lawyers to be soldiers and lawyers. It allowed judge advocates to train in an environment of peers, uninhibited by concerns of inexperience or ignorance. Most importantly, it is an idea and model that can be replicated by judge advocates in the field. The complete program of instruction, supporting

documents, and some video clips are available from the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate, Fort Knox and the Armor Training Center, or from the Center for Law and Military Operations (CLAMO), via electronic mail at CLAMO@hqda.army.mil.

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