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REF, JPMG & JPdM-FPS Install Joint Defense Operations Center in Africa

FORT BELVOIR, VA – July 24, 2015 – In May 2015, the U.S. Army Rapid Equipping Force, Joint Project Manager Guardian and Joint Product Manager, Force Protection Systems completed the installation of a Joint Defense Operations Center in the Horn of Africa. Six days after installation, the unit reported that the technology significantly enhanced the base force protection.

The REF was able to redirect integrated protection capabilities no longer needed in Afghanistan to facilitate the equipping action in HOA. Approximately 150 days after the Africa-based unit's requirement was approved, the system shipped from one theater to another and the team completed installation.

“Because we were able to redirect a solution from Afghanistan to the Horn of Africa, we equipped the unit in less than six months with a newly-integrated technology system that had been operated on the battlefield,” said LTC Steven Delgado, a project team chief at the REF. “We’ve received positive feedback from both units indicating that the solution has mitigated their force protection capability gap.”

The original requirement came from a unit in Afghanistan requesting support to consolidate force protection systems, while retaining a robust capability. The REF reached out to Army and joint partners to find a technology suite that would improve efficiency inside Tactical Operations Centers, reduce hardware and power requirements and enhance a Commander's Common Operating Picture.

To support the current requirements of the JDOC the REF, working with JPdM FPS, improved upon the integrated force protection capabilities originally deployed to Afghanistan in 2011. These upgrades included updates to the integrated sensor packages (cameras, thermal imagers, etc.). It also included the use of the government-off-the-shelf integrating software, the JDOC Situation Awareness System. This system collates the information inputs from sensor networks to provide a COP to the user. This reduces required manpower and can assist decision makers in making timely, informed and effective decisions.

An additional task of the installation was to optimize the functionality of the interior layout of the JDOC. All extraneous equipment was removed from the TOC and

technologies are reorganized to streamline use. As a result, the TOC accommodates operator needs and provides holistic information flows.

As an improved system, the new JDOC package boasts a high operational readiness rate and has been proven effective in both Afghanistan and Africa.

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About the Army's Rapid Equipping Force

The REF, headquartered at Fort Belvoir, VA, harnesses current and emerging technologies to provide immediate solutions to the urgent challenges of U.S. Army Forces deployed globally. The Department of the Army formed the REF in 2002 to support critical warfighter requirements in Afghanistan, and during the past 11 years, the REF has met challenges as diverse as defeating improvised explosive devices, increasing tactical-level operational energy efficiency, gathering blast effect data to better understand traumatic brain injury and improving intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance capabilities in austere locations. The REF responds to global Army Units of all types, Combat, Combat Support and Combat Service Support, to rapidly adapt to changing battlefield conditions and enemy tactics. Please visit us at www.army.ref.mil or visit our social media pages, Twitter: @USArmyREF, Facebook: Rapid Equipping Force, for more information.

About the Technology

The integrated JDOC concept was initially developed in 2011. It consists of rapidly deployable, easily transportable and re-locatable integrated electronic security systems, with video archiving capability, including tailored components such as radar (Man-Portable Surveillance Tracking and Reconnaissance), ground sensors (Battlefield Anti-Intrusion System), fixed Closed Circuit Television cameras, Pan/Tilt/Zoom cameras and Long Range Thermal Imagers.

The JSAS Control Station provides live video to the Sector Command Post and JDOC staff for observations from camera assets it controls and also other live video feeds from other force protection assets on the forward operating base that it doesn't control to provide better situational awareness/situational understanding for decision makers and staff. The JSAS Control Station provides a COP that supports situational awareness/situational understanding for operators, decision makers, and staff. The JSAS Control Station provides target area location and the slew-to-cue mode once sensor alarm activates on a designated camera to allow the operator to monitor and observe target and manually cue additional camera assets if needed.