



## WARGAME HELPS A NAVAL SYSCOM DEVELOP ITS WARTIME ACQUISITION RESPONSE PLAN (WARP)

The Department of the Navy's systems commands (SYSCOMs) are the materiel agencies responsible for the design, construction, and maintenance of military systems, such as ships, aircraft, facilities, and weapons. As China and Russia increase their military capabilities and ambitions, the SYSCOMs must be positioned to quickly respond to emerging warfighter requirements across the globe.

To prepare the SYSCOMs for transition from peacetime operations to contingency and wartime operations, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition tasked all the SYSCOMs, including their Program Executive Offices and field activities, with developing Wartime Acquisition Response Plans (WARPs) through table-top exercises (TTXs). Each WARP was to include the processes and guidelines to support the rapid expansion of acquisition capabilities needed to support major combat operations. They also must align with the assistant secretary's strategic objectives.

### Strategic Objectives For SYSCOMS WARP

**Capacity Building** – Analyze and develop plans for providing additional material capabilities, in numbers and volume, to meet high-demand or surge crisis or contingency operations.

**Capability Building** – Identify and analyze gaps and develop plans for the organization to rapidly address emergent requirements for critical capabilities during crisis or contingency operations.


**Data-driven Actions and Investment** – Identify actionable metrics to inform resourcing and science and technology investment decisions, to drive actions at all levels of the organization and enable agility and speed.

**Accelerated Acquisition** – Identify mechanisms and agile streamlined processes that allow the acquisition and sustainment community to maximize use of accelerated acquisition authorities.

**Workforce Trained and Exercised to Pivot in Wartime** – Train and exercise the workforce to administratively and procedurally pivot in response to national and warfighter requirements during crises or contingencies, in accordance with wartime authorities.

**People and Culture** – Develop a workforce culture that allows for a timely transition from peacetime to crisis or wartime acquisition.

Source: Assistant Secretary of Defense for Research, Development, and Acquisition. 4 Jan. 2021. *Wartime Acquisition Response Plan Guidance*.



TTXs and other wargames can help leaders to think through future operational scenarios and make corresponding decisions. Because CNA combines more than 80 years of naval operational experience with a tradition of customized, data-driven wargames, we are an internationally recognized center of excellence for naval wargame design and analysis. As such, Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command (NAVFAC) asked CNA to develop and conduct a TTX that would identify wartime requirements from supported commanders and test NAVFAC's ability to respond to those demands.

## CNA's Approach to Developing Wargames

**CUSTOMIZED** – Designed from the ground up to exactly fit the sponsor's needs.

**INFORMED** – Backed up by CNA's 500 analysts — 90 percent with advanced degrees — and more than 80 years of operations analysis experience.

**IMMERSIVE** – Created as a synthetic experience to help players understand the consequences of operational decisions.

**DIVERSE** – Built using a broad range of wargaming concepts, styles, and tools to focus precisely on the problem, while avoiding unnecessary complications.

CNA took a holistic approach to identify the challenges, opportunities, and insights needed to advance NAVFAC's understanding of the wartime acquisition problem. The team included experienced operational analysts and veterans of CNA's Field Program who have worked side-by-side with commanders and operators. We tailored the TTX design, data collection process, and analysis to meet those needs and to prompt thought about the second- and third-order effects of any actions taken.

More than 70 NAVFAC, Navy, and DOD personnel from around the world attended the TTX. All three Civil Engineer Corps flag officers and the Principal Military Deputy to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition attended and contributed to the TTX.

The final round of the TTX was a scenario-based operational planning game that used a U.S. Indo-Pacific Command scenario, with five turns of play.

Participants planned the actions their commands would take during each turn and were encouraged to communicate across groups, especially when requesting additional resources such as personnel and equipment.

The TTX identified a variety of internal and external knowledge gaps, such as unfamiliarity with the processes for forward-deploying civilians and the likely requirements associated with war plans. CNA subsequently recommended actions that NAVFAC could take to help develop preplanned responses to future operational scenarios. These included actions to improve personnel availability, to assess authorities related to contracting and real estate during wartime, to identify critical equipment and infrastructure, and to ensure operations security and communications.

## ABOUT CNA

CNA is a nonprofit research and analysis organization dedicated to the safety and security of the nation. It operates the Center for Naval Analyses — the federally funded research and development center (FFRDC) of the Department of the Navy — as well as the Institute for Public Research. CNA develops actionable solutions to complex problems of national importance.

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