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SULIAKAKATIGeJUT – JOINT TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES AT 5 WING

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AIM

1. With today's constraints and the unpredictability of the future operating environment, finding ways to accomplish joint training with current resources, both personnel and infrastructure, will best serve the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). This service paper aims to highlight 5 Wing Goose Bay's resources, infrastructure, and training facilities available for joint training between the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) and the Canadian Army (CA), with the focus specifically on winter warfare training and joint terminal attack controller (JTAC) training.

INTRODUCTION

2. SULIAKAKATIGeJUT means working together in Inuktitut.¹ While this is 5 Wing's motto, it applies to the CAF as a whole. Canada's Defence Policy: Strong, Secure, Engaged highlights the importance of training together as it states, "Maintaining the proper mix of combat capabilities, the ability to operate jointly with the rest of the Canadian military and in concert with key allies and partners is crucial for the Army's success."² A similar statement is also in the most recent Canadian Army Modernization Strategy: Advancing with Purpose, which states, "The demands of operating in a pan-domain environment increasingly require the Canadian Army to nest within a joint force."³
3. Many of the capabilities the CA is required to maintain needs specific operating environments and rely on air-land integration. Even though 5 Wing is a RCAF formation, the training area and facilities are ideal for joint and combined exercises, plus its northern location adds a layer of complexity.
4. First, this paper will provide an overview of 5 Wing, including its infrastructure and training facilities, then present the opportunities and benefits of conducting joint and combined training at 5 Wing. It will conclude with some recommendations.

DISCUSSION

5. 5 Wing is one of fourteen wings that operate under the direction of 1 Canadian Air Division (1 CAD).⁴ It is geographically located on the Northeast coast of Labrador and is the eastern gateway to the Arctic, making it a strategic location to protect Canadian

¹ Royal Canadian Air Force "5 Wing Goose Bay," accessed 02 February 2021, <http://www.rcf-arc.forces.gc.ca/en/5-wing/index.page>.

² Department of National Defence, *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy* (Ottawa: Canada, 2017), 36.

³ Canadian Army, *Advancing with Purpose: The Canadian Army Modernization Strategy* (Ottawa: Canada, 2020), 11.

⁴ Royal Canadian Air Force "Wing and squadrons," accessed 02 February 2021, <http://www.rcf-arc.forces.gc.ca/en/wings-squadrons.page>.

sovereignty.⁵ The environmental conditions are sub-arctic with an average annual snowfall of 475 centimetres and temperatures ranging from -12 to -40 degrees Celsius during the winter, yet an overall yearly average of 0 degrees Celsius.⁶

6. Initially, the base was a staging airfield during World War II and then utilized by the United States Air Force Strategic Air Command during the Cold War.⁷ From the 1980s until 2005, the Wing was used for multinational low-level flying training.⁸ When the low-level flying training ended, there was a period of uncertainty concerning the base's role. It was not until November 2014 when the 1 CAD Commander defined specific mission priorities, which have evolved to be 5 Wing's current mission of "excel at enabling NORAD [North American Aerospace Defense Command] operations and joint/combined austere operational training."⁹ This mission is divided into four priorities, which are: support and sustain NORAD operations, support and sustain joint and combined military training, operate the Goose Bay airfield, and for 444 Squadron to provide flying support to operations/exercises and support taskings as directed by the 1 CAD and the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre.¹⁰
7. Despite a small defence team of about 75 military members and 35 civilian employees,¹¹ 5 Wing can support exercises in upwards of 800 personnel with ease and has an additional surge capacity for more extensive operations or exercises. Many of the standard services that military personnel would normally execute are under the Site Support Services (SSS) contract, such as airfield services, accommodations, food services, transportation, emergency services, and telecommunication and information systems management.¹² A new ten-year contract with the potential of two five year option extensions, with a total evaluation value of 1.4 billion, is currently being evaluated to be awarded at the end of February 2021.¹³

Wing Infrastructure

8. 5 Wing has an extensive infrastructure portfolio. Many of the buildings remain vacant throughout the year but are maintained and available to support operations or exercises.

⁵ Royal Canadian Air Force "Wings and squadron," accessed 02 February 2021, <http://www.rcf-arc.forces.gc.ca/en/wings-squadrons.page>.

⁶ Government of Canada "Canadian Climate Normals 1981-2010 Station Data," accessed 31 January 2021, https://climate.weather.gc.ca/climate_normals/results_1981_2010_e.html?searchType=stnProv&lstProvince=NL&txtCentralLatMin=0&txtCentralLatSec=0&txtCentralLongMin=0&txtCentralLongSec=0&stnID=6777&dispBack=0.

⁷ Royal Canadian Air Force "History of 5 Wing Goose Bay," accessed 02 February 2021, <http://www.rcf-arc.forces.gc.ca/en/5-wing/history.page>.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ S.G. Racle, "5 Wing Commander's Tactical Planning Directive FY 20/21" (Goose Bay: 5 Wing, 16 June 2020), 5.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Bill Whitehead, "5 Wing Goose Bay Capabilities and Capacities: Collective Training and Expeditionary Capability Conference" (PowerPoint, 24-26 April 2019), 4.

¹² Public Works and Government Services Canada "Site Support Services – Canadian Forces military base, 5 Wing, Goose Bay, Newfoundland and Labrador," accessed 05 February 2021, <https://buyandsell.gc.ca/procurement-data/tender-notice/PW-20-00907867>

¹³ Ibid.

There are 600 rooms within the barracks for a total of 822 beds, with the capacity to surge.¹⁴ In the past, the vacant hangars have been used to house troops and act as staging areas. The mess hall is staffed to support 250 personnel per meal but can be augmented to 800 personnel per meal with advance notice.¹⁵ With staggered meal hours and 24-hour operation, the mess hall can serve beyond 800 personnel.

9. The Wing training centre is a multipurpose building within a secure compound that can be utilized during operations or exercises. It consists of numerous multimedia classrooms, offices, conference rooms, a theatre, a weapons vault, and garage bays.¹⁶ In the past, it has proven to be an excellent headquarters and command post for visiting units conducting exercises. In addition to the training centre, other large vacant buildings within the Wing can be used in various ways.

Wing Training Area

10. The Wing is surrounded by a large training area that consists of two small arms ranges with firing points up to 900 meters, an explosive ordnance disposal range, multiple bivouac sites, a gas hut, and a rappel tower.¹⁷ There are multipurpose trails throughout the training area used by light over-snow vehicles (LOSV) or utility terrain vehicles (UTV). These trails are connected to the Labrador trail system that follows the coast and reaches Labrador's most northern community.
11. 5 Canadian Rangers Patrol Group (CRPG) routinely uses the training area to conduct basic military indoctrination courses, general service knowledge refresher courses, LOSV training, and leadership courses for Canadian Rangers across Labrador. The Junior Canadian Rangers use the training area as well for various courses and camps throughout the year.
12. For the past decade, the German Kommando Spezialkräfte (KSK) Special Forces Command has annually utilized the training area to conduct their advanced winter warfare course. 37 Canadian Brigade Group (CBG) also stages out of 5 Wing to conduct their annual Arctic Response Company Group (ARCG) training and validation exercise called Exercise Northern Sojourn. The sub-arctic conditions, challenging terrain, and isolated location make it optimal for long-distance patrols on snowshoe or LOSVs, realistic ground search and rescue scenarios, survival training, and cold weather equipment testing.

Austere Operational Training Complex

13. One of the most underutilized and versatile training facilities at 5 Wing is the Austere Operational Training Complex (AOTC). The AOTC is located in a remote area 65 nm Southeast of Goose Bay and only accessible by air. It is capable of operating year-round

¹⁴ Bill Whitehead, "Introduction to 5 Wing Goose Bay" (PowerPoint, 30 July 2019), 20.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid, 13.

¹⁷ S.G. Racle, "5 Wing Range Standing Orders" (Goose Bay: 5 Wing, 17 October 2019), 6-1.

and is managed by 5 Operations Support Squadron (OSS) personnel and augmented by Canadian Ranger from 5 CRPG when required. There are two dirt airstrips, one of which is 5190 feet long and rated for CC-130 aircraft, and a helicopter landing zone.¹⁸ The main camp consists of bunk-style accommodations capable of housing up to 90 personnel.¹⁹ There are a fully functional kitchen and dining hall, an ablutions building, and a multipurpose administration building capable of serving as a headquarters, operations room, sickbay, or additional bunk space. The AOCT has running water, electricity via solar panels and generators, and satellite communications. An aviation fuel farm with approximately 20,000 litres of usable fuel for helicopter operations is anticipated to be operational by fall 2021.²⁰

14. The camp resupply and transportation are conducted by 444 Combat Support Squadron's CH-146 or chartered aircraft from the local aviation companies. If available and economically sound, CC-130s are requested for larger cargo or troop transports. A limited number of LOSVs and UTVs are available within the camp.
15. The training area at the AOTC is designed to be used by the military for various types of field firing training. There are 360 degrees live firing and six mock villages for targeting or fighting in built-up area (FIBUA) training.²¹ As the AOTC is only accessible by air and the airspace surrounding the camp is controlled by 5 Wing, it provides discreetness to trial tactics. There is also an unmanned air to ground weapon range, known as the practice target area (PTA), licensed for non-dud producing explosives and munitions. Surrounding the AOTC is the 5 Wing flying training area. It is approximately 130,000 square kilometres of unpopulated land, covering a large portion of Labrador.²² There are altitude blocks up to 60,000 feet, and low-level flying can be conducted down to 100 feet.²³
16. While the AOCT does not provide any training value specifically for the NORAD mission, it is occasionally used by RCAF aircraft and annually by the German Forces. For the past several years, 3 Wing's CF-18s have conducted inert munitions bombing campaigns, while the CC-130 Search and Rescue (SAR) aircraft from 413 Squadron use the AOTC as a drop zone for the SAR technicians and to deploy LUU-2 high-intensity illumination flares while conducting SAR training. Besides this training, the AOTC is used for a few weeks every winter by the German KSK Special Forces for a portion of their advanced winter warfare course.
17. The AOTC was initially built in the late 1990s to support JTAC and Forward Air Controller (FAC) training during the low-level flying period and is still fully capable of supporting this training. In 2009, Allied Air Component Command Headquarters Ramstein (CC-Air HQ Ramstein) conducted a site visit to 5 Wing and the AOTC to

¹⁸ Bill Whitehead, "5 Wing Goose Bay Capabilities and Capacities: Collective Training and Expeditionary Capability Conference" (PowerPoint, 24-26 April 2019), 13.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid, 12.

²³ Ibid.

determine if the Wing was suitable to host a large North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) JTAC training exercise. A follow-up letter addressed to the RCAF Chief of Air Staff stated that "the base meets or exceeds all exercise requirements"²⁴ and that the intent was to conduct an annual exercise with realistic combat scenarios commencing in 2010.²⁵ However, at the time, the CAF could not commit, and the exercise never happened.

18. The majority of the cost for maintaining the AOTC and the salary wage envelope for the additional camp staff (Canadian Rangers) are incorporated in the SSS contract or under the 5 OSS budget. Users are required to cover costs of expenses such as fuel and food, and transportation if chartered.

Opportunities and Benefits

19. As presented in the previous section of this service paper, 5 Wing's resources, training area and facilities can support a diverse range of joint and combined training opportunities and already supports some allied training. To capitalize on the existing infrastructure and get the most out of the fixed price portion of the SSS contract, the RCAF and CA should use the Wing as a venue to host sub-arctic winter warfare training and JTAC training. Not only will the participating forces reap benefits, but it will also benefit 5 Wing's primary mission of supporting and sustaining NORAD operations.
20. Utilizing 5 Wing's services and infrastructure regularly throughout the year and in all weather conditions will result in a higher level of readiness and proficiency in fulfilling NORAD commitments. As most of the airfield personnel are employees under the SSS contract, their exposure to military operations and military aviation is limited to what they encounter in Goose Bay. Therefore, the military air traffic used during exercises provides valuable training to the Wing.

Winter Warfare Training

21. One of the initiatives listed in Canada's Defence Policy: Strong, Secure, Engaged is "Conduct joint exercises with Arctic allies and partners and support the strengthening of situational awareness and information sharing in the Arctic, including with NATO."²⁶ While 5 Wing is not in the high arctic, it is a sub-arctic climate with extreme snow conditions and an ideal location for multinational winter exercises. In 2019, the 5th Canadian Division Commander had the following to comment about Exercise Northern Sojourn "[it is an] opportunity to challenge... soldiers with complex training in the harsh sub-Arctic environment of Labrador. It also provides... an opportunity to work closely

²⁴ Roger A. Brady, JTAC Training Exercise – Goose Bay. Allied Air Component Command Headquarters Ramstein, 1 December 2009.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Department of National Defence, *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy* (Ottawa: Canada, 2017), 90.

with our U.S. and European allies while connecting with our fellow Canadians living in the North."²⁷

22. With 5 Wing's proven capability to support air exercises while concurrently supporting winter warfare training, the Wing could supplement the operations and exercises conducted at the Canadian Armed Forces Arctic Training Centre in Resolute Bay.

JTAC Training

23. The minimum training and standards outlined in the Canadian Army Order 24-05, based on the international standard, require JTACs to conduct live weapon training,²⁸ which requires an air asset capable of employing weapons and a licensed air-weapon range. While there are several air-weapon ranges available in Canada and currently being used for JTAC training, there are limited air assets. As contracted aircraft cannot employ weapons, JTAC training relies on CF-188s or other allied military aircraft.²⁹
24. It was noted that the reduction in flying hours for the CF-188 fleet placed additional strain on qualifying and maintaining JTAC currencies.³⁰ As 3 Wing CF-188s already uses the air-weapon range at 5 Wing to conduct bombing campaigns, with extra planning and coordination between the key players from both the RCAF and CA, the JTAC training capability at 5 Wing could be re-established and ran concurrently with the bombing campaign. It would remove pressure on the JTAC training system, especially for units on the east coast, but would also serve 5 Wing. Once the capability is re-established and matures, 5 Wing could host combat realistic JTAC exercises focused on urban close air support using the existing mobile target and FIBUA villages.

CONCLUSION

25. This service paper did not only present the resources, infrastructure, and training facilities at 5 Wing Goose Bay; it also offered a solution to improve joint training without additional resources while maximizing the SSS contract. Using 5 Wing as the venue for joint exercises, such as winter warfare training and JTAC training, will provide challenging opportunities for participating units and benefit the CAF as a whole.

²⁷ Canadian Army. "Canadian Army: Winter Warfare training in Labrador," accessed 06 February 2021, <http://www.army-armee.forces.gc.ca/en/news-publications/national-news-details-no-menu.page?doc=canadian-army-winter-warfare-training-in-labrador/jskwba5o>.

²⁸ Alan A. Lockerby. "Joint Terminal Attack Controller Capability Management as a Formed Unit" (Joint Command Staff Course Service Paper, Canadian Forces College, 2019-2020), 4.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

RECOMMENDATION

26. This service paper recommends the Canadian Army Doctrine Training Centre (CADTC):
 - a. engages 5 Wing and conducts a site visit;
 - b. conducts an in-depth analysis and identify exercise objectives; and
 - c. establishes a service level agreement and joint training schedule.

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