

JOINT BLUE FORCE SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

The Marine Corps is actively participating in the multi-Service Joint Blue Force Situational Awareness (JBFSA) Integrated Product Team (IPT) efforts to address interoperability shortfalls that exist between numerous Blue Force (friendly force) tracking systems today, and to define the capabilities required to achieve a joint solution in the future.

The JBFSA IPT is a multi-Service effort to enhance the combat effectiveness of Blue Forces, and integrate the Blue Force Common Operational Environment (COE) into a Common Operational Picture (COP) operating within the Global Information Grid (GIG). It will identify, classify, and characterize the status of joint and coalition forces operating throughout the battlespace, both within and beyond the line of sight. It will operate globally, supporting the full spectrum of operations from major combat operations to peacetime engagement, stability and support operations, and home-station training on a 24-hour per day basis.

Today's Service-specific Blue Force tracking (BFT) systems, although valuable, tend to operate independently with separate types of mission profile support, user devices, information dissemination architectures, and messaging standards. A JBFSA capability implemented among the Services, DoD agencies, and coalition

forces would result in a seamless sharing, distribution and display of blue force information, improving overall situational awareness.

Using Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom lessons learned – and tying their efforts to the overall JBFSA effort – the Marine Corps and Army are working to develop a Joint BFT capability that will allow any unit on the battlefield to see, and be seen by nearby units without having to contend with equipment integration issues and constraints. This effort to standardize architectures and software baselines solve much of the interoperability challenges associated with a single ground picture and the dissemination of information needed for situational awareness.

Future conflicts will involve unpredictable enemy actions on an asymmetrical battlefield, which will require greater coordination across all battlefield functions and widespread knowledge of the disposition of all Blue Forces. JBFSA will focus on better identification, retrieval, dissemination, correlation, filtering, fusion, and other processing of Blue Force data created by existing and planned systems. It will improve the ability to transport JBFSA data over existing and planned communications and networking infrastructure to warfighters who need it.