SMDC/ARSTRAT

JOINT BLUE FORCE MISSION MANAGEMEN

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

The USASMDC/ARSTRAT Joint Blue Force Tracking Mission Management Center (JBFT MMC) provides 24/7/365 support to the Warfighter by collecting, validating and disseminating timely, actionable, and accurate position location information data downrange to the Combatant Commands (COCOMs) to enable Joint Blue Force Situational Awareness. In other words, a commander has the capability to look at a single Common Operational Picture and see where his forces are located, their direction and speed, and where other friendly forces may be located on his left, right, front and rear.

The JBFT MMC receives data from between thirteen and eighteen unique device types. Currently the JBFT MMC collects data from over 70,000 devices in support of over 200 customers, globally, from all branches of service.

The JBFT MMC performs its support role to the Warfighter by employing 15 government employees and 10 contractors. The government employees perform shift-work (swings, mids and days), and are required to go through a stringent train-up period, with an initial certification test at the 90 day mark. Further certification testing takes place at six-months and one year. This insures that each and every operator is capable of responding to any issues relating to device operation, architectural troubleshooting (ground and Space), and various computer systems, to include the GCCS (Global Command and Control System), and the C2PC (Command and Control Personal Computer).

Many of the Government employees are either retired Military, or have some prior military experience. While

TRACKING
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BY JON E. BUSICK
BLUE FORCE TRACKING
MISSION MANAGEMENT CENTER

Tracking SFC Kenneth Dawson of Fort Lewis, Wash., checks the map of his Force XXI Battle Command Brigade and Below (FBCB2) system, a widely used but limited blue force tracking system that is being improved. *U.S. Army photo by CPT Timothy Beninato.*

military service is definitely not a requirement to be a Watch Operations Specialist, the fact that many of us have "been there and done that" brings a certain amount of understanding, appreciation, and unwavering support to the Warfighters in harms way. The Watch Operations Specialist visually observes over 20 monitors, maintains operational awareness of over 50 servers, cues in on a multitude of architectural alert tools and performs over 178 tasks daily.

In addition to supporting the Warfighter and the COCOMs by insuring timely, actionable and accurate data downrange, the JBFT MMC also serves, in many cases, as the first line of action for various devices capable of transmitting a 911 distress signal. Upon receipt of a 911, the Watch Operations Specialist must identify the device owner, down to the lowest level, and track the device transmission rate, location, and any other pertinent information. The watch operations specialist must then contact various elements within the system by phone, e-mail and chat room to ensure immediate response, if the event is in fact a real-world distress call. To this end, the JBFT MMC has been personally responsible for saving warriors lives.

The JBFT MMC mission and responsibility is ever-growing and will continue to support the Warfighter in support of the Global War on Terror. From its inception some seven years ago, with only three device types and approximately 150 devices, to the present number, it's easy to understand that the JBFT MMC will be around for the long haul. We believe in the people we serve and understand our mission and role and WILL continue to be a part of the USASMDC/ARSTRAT mission to help "Secure the High Ground."