

## CMI-ITE: Balancing Perspectives through Virtual Training - ACT

Written by Tony Iccayan and Robin Michelle Barnett, Staff Writer  
Monday, 05 November 2012 14:52

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Allied Command Transformation (ACT) held its second workshop to develop the Civil Military Interaction – Immersive Training Environment (CMI-ITE) tool at the NATO Civil-Military Fusion Centre (CFC) in Norfolk, Virginia from 23-25 October 2012.

The CMI-ITE project is a collaborative effort between ACT's Operational Experimentation Branch (OPEX) and the Education and Individual Training (EIT) Branch to develop and evaluate the usefulness of a virtual immersive environment capability.

"This tool is envisioned to be included in NATO's Advance Distributed Learning (ADL) courses and be available to both civilian and military personnel," said Paul Thurkettle, Section Head for Education and Individual Training.

The CMI-ITE tool will incorporate challenging real-world situations. Students will encounter divergent interactions and be required to foster cooperation with military and/or civilian counterparts depending on their virtual role within the environment. It is anticipated that this virtual training will enable students, whether civilian or military, to better communicate, de-conflict and work alongside each other once they are in the field.

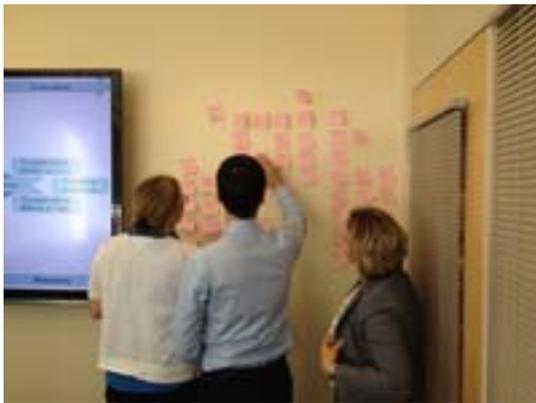
"This tool is essential to address gaps in reciprocal knowledge existing between military and civilian actors that continue to cause friction in the field," said Lieutenant-Colonel Guy Leclerc.

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The October 2012 workshop continued the development of the CMI-ITE prototype begun in the initial workshop held at the CIMIC Centre of Excellence (CCOE) in Enschede, Netherlands on 22-23 September 2012. The first CMI-ITE workshop integrated military personnel from both ACT and CCOE. Military participants facilitated the creation of the content foundation and basic storyline for the CMI-ITE from a military perspective. Alternatively, the second workshop focused on civilian points of view.



The second workshop utilised subject matter experts with extensive experience in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) projects supporting global international organisations and non-governmental organisations (IOs/NGOs). The civilian participants brought with them personal experiences illustrating the complexities of collaboration that exist between civilian and military personnel working in the field.

Thanks to the diverse civilian contributions we successfully captured relevant perspectives, guidelines, structures and mechanisms that humanitarian and development civilian actors would want military counterparts to understand in order to improve future interaction.

In addition, the civilian focused workshop enabled ACT technical developers to establish realistic scenarios which will help facilitate holistic communication and coordination between military and their civilian counterparts in the field.

"I am very impressed," said Erin Foster, a workshop participant and civilian humanitarian expert. "The CMI-ITE 3-D interactive tool is a forward thinking approach to training and has great potential to raise awareness about those key inhibitors which exist between civil and military personnel operating in complex crises."

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