

## Agentic Warfare—Wargaming & Experimentation

**The Problem:** Wargaming is a key U.S. strategic advantage. It is critical to stress-testing military plans, exposing weaknesses, and building decision advantage over adversaries. The United States has unmatched wargaming foundations in its war colleges, exercises, and planning staffs, but has only begun to experiment with artificial intelligence (AI) tools in these contexts. The wargaming enterprise has not yet connected AI, data, and experimentation in a way that turns these advantages into faster learning, stronger evidence, and quicker adaptation. Today, AI-enabled wargaming is a very small part of the overall wargaming enterprise. Where it is taking place, experimentation remains fragmented, weakly instrumented, and insufficiently linked to doctrine, training, and funded adoption. This produces promising pilots, but too little comparative evidence to guide doctrine, procurement, and force-wide adoption. If left unfixed, the Department of War (DOW) will learn too slowly, fail to scale what works, and risk entering future crises with staffs not yet ready to use AI at the speed modern war will demand.

**Why It Matters Now:** Agentic AI tools are now mature enough for scaled—if bounded—adoption to transform how the Joint Force wargames, plans, and learns. China knows this, and the People's Liberation Army is already using joint combat experiments and wargames—augmented at an increasing clip by AI—to sharpen concepts, plans, and doctrine. The United States risks falling behind not for lack of technology, but for lack of institutional pace. Early U.S. experimentation at the Army War College, LeMay Center, and elsewhere already shows what these systems can do and where the risks lie. But these efforts remain small and disconnected. The moment calls for an aggressive, force-wide surge in experimentation, tied from the outset to common standards, rigorous evaluation, and clear pathways into doctrine, training, and operational adoption.

**Next Steps:** The DOW has already set the right direction through the 2026 AI Strategy: prioritizing speed by launching AI Pace-Setting Projects including Agent Network and Ender's Foundry, GenAI.mil, enterprise enablers, and accelerating experimentation. The Joint Staff J-7 Directorate and war colleges already run joint experimentation forums and integrated wargames to learn and share lessons. Those efforts now require connection into a coherent engine for force-wide adoption.

**1 - Mandate Comparative Trials:** So we understand what benefits AI delivers, every major Joint and Service wargame that uses AI should run instrumented A/B comparisons between staffs with and without agentic tools. The Deputy Secretary should direct this now. Joint Staff J-7, in close collaboration with the Chief Digital and Artificial Intelligence Office (CDAO), should set the framework. The Services and combatant commands should execute it. Without this comparative evidence, the DOW will not generate the one thing senior leaders lack today: credible proof of which tools improve planning speed, course of action (COA) quality, risk identification, and staff performance under pressure.

**2 - Stand Up a Joint AI Wargaming Integration Function:** Building on the Joint Experimentation Network (JExNET), create a small integration cell inside existing J-7 and CDAO governance to set common standards for scenarios, data capture, model logging, safety rules, and transition criteria. It should not run wargames itself, but rather make the system work as a system. This will unlock coherence across war colleges, combatant commands, and the Services, and prevent further fragmentation of AI-enabled wargaming.

**3 - Build the AI Wargaming Commons:** Building on the J-7's Joint Live, Virtual, and Constructive Federation, establish a shared classified and unclassified wargaming experimentation layer. This can augment what already exists through Ender's Foundry, GenAI.mil, the War Data Platform, and planned joint synthetic environments—with secure compute, approved models, reusable interfaces, scenario libraries, and machine-readable after-action reporting. CDAO, the Defense Information Systems Agency, J-7, the Services, and selected war colleges should build this together, with Congress supporting multi-year funding where needed. Scaling these efforts requires common infrastructure, which will unlock more experiments, faster iteration, reusable evidence, and a common technical foundation rather than dozens of one-off efforts.

**4 - Bound the First Mission Set and Test It Hard:** Direct the force to focus first on bounded, high-value staff functions such as COA development, analysis, wargaming, scenario generation, planning support, doctrine retrieval, and post-game analysis, while subjecting those uses to common evaluation and operational red-teaming. The CDAO and J-7 should define priority use cases and requirements. The Director of Operational Test and Evaluation (DOT&E) and CDAO should own the standards. The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency and other scientific centers of excellence, working with industry experts in trust and evaluation, can help build the test regime. The Services and combatant commands have a role to play as well: they are the operational testbeds of experimentation. Broad-based experimentation across the enterprise and at lower levels unlocks faster, bounded adoption and learning, while reducing risks of automation bias, false authority, and premature trust.

**5 - Track How the Insights from AI-Enabled Wargaming Flow into Doctrine, Training, and Programs:** Senior leaders should closely follow how the insights from every major AI wargaming effort transition into doctrine, professional military education curricula, exercise design, and eventually, an operational pilot or program portfolio. The Secretary and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff should insist on this—managed through Joint Staff J-7 and J-8 Directorates and the requirements process. Experimentation only matters if it changes how the force trains, plans, resources, and fights. This unlocks real institutional advantage: a force that learns, adopts, and adapts with AI faster than its adversaries.