

# ABLE DANGER

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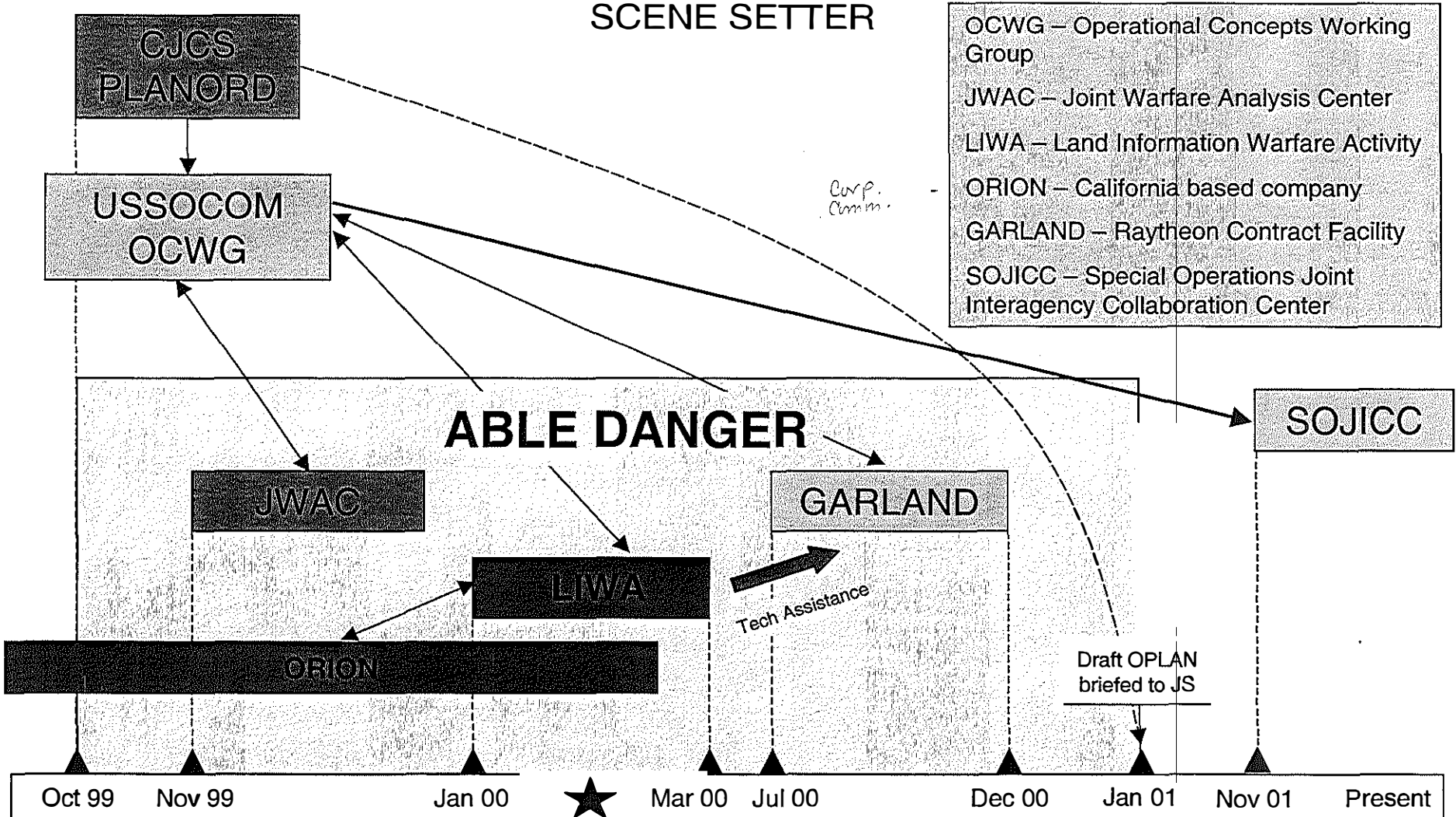
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# Purpose of the Brief

- To provide information concerning the ABLE DANGER project and the Department of Defense efforts to determine facts related to recent public statements concerning ABLE DANGER.
- This briefing will address the following questions:
  - What was ABLE DANGER?
  - Did ABLE DANGER produce a chart that depicted 9/11 hijacker Mohammed Atta? If so, was that information passed to any other USG organization?
  - What were the legal authorities applicable to ABLE DANGER?
  - Was DoD responsive to the 9/11 Commission's request for data?

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# ABLE DANGER SCENE SETTER



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# Able Danger

- In October 1999, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) tasked Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) to develop a campaign plan directed against transnational terrorism with an initial focus on Al Qaida.
  - **ABLE DANGER** was the unclassified name for this effort.
  - **ABLE DANGER** was a planning effort with tasks that included:
    - Use of nodal analysis
    - Determination of exploitable vulnerabilities
    - Establishment of Information Operations (IO) objectives
- **ABLE DANGER** was not:
  - A military unit
  - A military operation
  - A deception program
  - A targeting effort

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# Able Danger (cont'd)

- To support ABLE DANGER, the Commander, USSOCOM established an internal cross-disciplinary working group, the Operational Concepts Working Group (OCWG), to develop the plan.
  - The OCWG consisted of approximately 10 persons attached to USSOCOM
- ABLE DANGER planning was conducted Oct 1999 - Jan 2001
- Various activities and facilities supported USSOCOM during the ABLE DANGER effort
  - Joint Warfare Analysis Center (JWAC), Dahlgren, Virginia
  - Land Information Warfare Activity (LIWA), Fort Belvoir, Virginia
    - Functions now performed by the Information Dominance Center (IDC)
  - A USSOCOM contractor supported facility in Garland, Texas

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# Able Danger (cont'd)

- USSOCOM provided a draft Operations Plan to the Joint Staff in January 2001. The draft plan:
  - Included five phases based upon adaptive planning to maintain agility to respond to a non-conventional threat in a wide ranging complex environment
  - Contemplated working in coordination with other USG interagency organizations
  - The USSOCOM draft plan was not finalized
- In 2001, the military was continuing to develop the Infinite Resolve contingency plans, strike options and development of other concepts including offensive information operations.

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# Chronology of Significant Events

- 6 Oct 99 CJCS PLANORD directed CDR USSOCOM to develop campaign plan to counter trans-national terrorism, with an initial focus on the AQ terrorist network
- Dec 99 USSOCOM and Joint Warfare Analysis Center (JWAC) collaboration began
- Jan 00 USSOCOM and Land Information Warfare Activity's (LIWA) Information Dominance Center (IDC) collaboration began
- Mar 00 USSOCOM decision to create organic data mining / nodal analysis capability; employed contractor facility in Garland, TX; opened facility in July 2000
- Oct/Nov 00 USSOCOM decision to create USSOCOM Joint Interagency Collaboration Center (SOJICC) in Tampa; Garland facility ceased work to produce draft OPLAN
- Jan 01 Draft OPLAN delivered to Joint Staff
- Nov 01 SOJICC becomes fully operational
- Oct 03 Mr. Tony Shaffer met with 9/11 Commission staff in Afghanistan
- Jul 04 CDR Scott Phillpott met with 9/11 Commission staff in Washington reference ABLE DANGER and "the Chart" he believes he saw in Jan/Feb 00

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# The “Chart” and DoD’s Response

- To date, four individuals, including Mr. Shaffer and CAPT Phillipott, have indicated that during the ABLE DANGER effort, a proof of concept chart was produced depicting terrorists with ties to Al Qaida, and included a photograph of 9/11 hijacker Mohammed Atta linked to a “Brooklyn Cell.” CAPT Phillipott recalls seeing this chart in Jan-Feb 2000.
- In response to recent public statements concerning ABLE DANGER, DoD has:
  - Interviewed over 80 people including those making public statements, key ABLE DANGER participants, LIWA supervisors/managers, DoD lawyers, and government and contract analysts.
  - Performed extensive search of records, files and electronic data to locate additional ABLE DANGER materials, particularly “the Chart” or data that would have produced the chart.

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# The Results

- DoD did not discover such a chart when first responding to the 9-11 Commission in Nov/Dec 2003
- DoD has not discovered such a chart in the current search
  - DoD has not discovered the data that would have enabled creation of such a chart during ABLE DANGER
- DoD has discovered additional ABLE DANGER related documentation not previously identified
  - The documentation would have been generally responsive to 9/11 Commission information requests.
  - However, the documents do not shed any new light on this issue.
  - The files did include nodal analysis charts. One of the charts, produced in 1999 by a contractor, contains names and photos of members of the Al Qaida Network and a “Brooklyn Cell.”
    - The chart is not labeled ABLE DANGER
    - The chart does not include the name or photo of Mohammed Atta.

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# Sharing AD Information

- DoD has the authorities necessary to share information of interest with respect to collection, retention and dissemination of intelligence with other U.S. government organizations and agencies. These authorities have remained unchanged since 1998.
  - Since 9/11 the policy implementation of information sharing has been focused on more sharing and less restrictions on information characterization by the originator
- It is routine for attorneys to review projects like ABLE DANGER. Attorneys from DoD General Counsel, Joint Staff, USSOCOM and the Army provided advice/support during the ABLE DANGER project.
  - The legal focus was to ensure compliance with existing authorities, e.g., EO 12333 & DoD Directive 5240.1-R, and specifically, collection, retention and dissemination of intelligence on U.S. persons.

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# Interaction with 9/11 Commission

- While on temporary active duty, Mr. Shaffer discussed ABLE DANGER with the 9/11 Commission staff in Afghanistan in October 2003.
- DoD responded to two 9/11 Commission requests for ABLE DANGER documents (Nov/Dec 2003).
  - The Department provided 23 documents in response to these requests
- DoD facilitated a 12 July 2004 meeting between the 9/11 Commission staff and CDR Phillipott after he expressed a desire to speak with the Commission concerning ABLE DANGER and “the Chart”.
- No ABLE DANGER documentation or information was deliberately withheld from the 9/11 Commission by DoD.

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# Summary

- What was ABLE DANGER?
  - ABLE DANGER was a USSOCOM planning effort to develop a campaign plan against transnational terrorism, starting with AQ. It was not a military unit or operation.
- Did ABLE DANGER produce a chart containing a photo of 9/11 hijacker Mohammed Atta? If so, was that information passed to any other USG organization?
  - DoD has been unable to locate any ABLE DANGER chart that includes Mohammed Atta or any data that would have produced such a chart during ABLE DANGER.
  - To date, DoD has not found any administrative impediment that prevented the sharing of information.
- Was DoD responsive to the 9/11 Commission's request for data?
  - DoD was responsive to the 9/11 Commission's request for information on ABLE DANGER.

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