

THE IRREGULAR WARFARE CENTER

Spotlight



Vol 1 • 4

Amplify | Illuminate | Address

July 2023



Dr. Dennis Walters, IWC Director, provided opening remarks during the Center's and WVNG's Ridge Runner Distinguished Visitor Day event, June 7, 2023, at Camp Dawson, Kingwood, West Virginia.



U.S. Army Maj. Michael Susick, Ridge Runner Program Director, led a panel discussion of Ridge Runner SMEs during the Center's and WVNG's Ridge Runner Distinguished Visitor Day event, June 7, 2023, at Camp Dawson.

The IWC Collaborates with WVNG to Host Ridge Runner DV Day Event

The newly established Irregular Warfare Center (IWC) collaborated with the West Virginia National Guard (WVNG) to host Ridge Runner IWX (23-01) Distinguished Visitor Day on June 7, 2023, at Camp Dawson, Kingwood, West Virginia, to provide allies and partners with an opportunity to learn more about the Ridge Runner exercise and the Center's essential partnership with the WVNG.

"Having this partnership with the IWC, our allies and partners allows us to bring together a variety of components, including internationals, to learn and train together in the same environment multilaterally," said MG Bill Crane, Adjutant General for the State of West Virginia. "Having the IWC fall under the DoD construct allows them to bring in partners/experts from all areas and I feel is critically important because it diversifies the entire organization and brings them to the forefront."

"For Maj. Gen. Crane and I, success is the collaboration through both organizations and the ability to provide the necessary resources and funding needed to execute," said Dr. Dennis Walters, IWC Director. "From a tactical standpoint, articulating the lessons learned and identifying the pieces missing in IW campaign development will help us continue to build and improve in the future."

Ridge Runner Irregular Warfare Exercise is jointly supported through the IWC and provides a validation venue for deploying Special Forces elements. RR IWX offers a dynamic and realistic platform to conduct irregular warfare training, develop interoperability between coalition special operations and conventional forces, enable training on mission essential tasks, and assess readiness while enhancing strategic irregular warfare capabilities. RR IWX (23-01) ran through June 16 and included about 300 special operations troops and support staff.

"In partnering with the IWC we are looking for a bridge to bring forward lessons learned and a strategic education piece to tie into the practical application piece of the exercise and Ridge Runner program," said Jason Smith, Deputy Director, WVNG Ridge Runner Program. "By having that strong academic piece upfront to educate gives us the ability to inform our participants and prepare them for



Ridge Runner RR IWX (23-01) participants receive a daily briefing of essential exercise evolutions during the Center's and WVNG's Ridge Runner Distinguished Visitor Day event, June 7, 2023, at Camp Dawson.

real-world scenarios."

Attendees included the Texas-based 5/19th Special Forces Group, 92nd Civil Affairs, 6th PSYOPS, and the USMC training alongside special operations forces from the United Kingdom, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland. Observers from Canada, Romania, Georgia, Moldova, Qatar, Hungary, Germany, Finland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Australia, and the United Kingdom Special Air Service.



The Ridge Runner exercise takes place in the fictional country of Applia (West Virginia), which has been broken up similarly to the Soviet Union in the 1990s. Now, due to economic and energy concerns, "bad actors" are trying to reunify the country. Soldiers, most of whom are not in uniform, must work with local officials and residents to maintain independence. Military officials have land agreements to operate on 500,000 acres, role players, and some help from local officials.

"Ridge Runner is a vehicle to educate and train National Guard special operations forces in conjunction with active components, allies and partners, to be able to validate a process to better send ready soldiers forward to complete objectives," said Smith.

The IWC serves as the central mechanism for developing the Department of Defense's (DoD) irregular warfare knowledge and advancing the Department's understanding of irregular warfare concepts and doctrine in collaboration with key allies and partners.

The Center's foundation is built upon three Lines of Effort:

- AMPLIFY and collaborate to build an innovative and adaptable global networked IW community of interest.
- Strategically ILLUMINATE current and future irregular threats, crises, and obstacles.
- ADDRESS current and future irregular threats to the US, allies, and partners by providing optionality to leaders.

Through these LOEs, the Irregular Warfare Center addresses current and emerging security concerns and challenges with world-class research, rigorous analysis, top-tier strategic education and training for U.S. and international partners.

Including the Center's inaugural event, The IW Medical Resiliency Workgroup (Feb. 2022), the IWC recently hosted several informative and educational irregular warfare-themed events such as IWC International IW Week (March 2023), IWC IW Seminar at Georgetown University (March 2023), IWC IW Seminar at Georgetown University (March 2023), University Days (April 2023), and PME Day (April 2023), as well as the facilitating Transformational Irregular Warfare Leaders Thought Courses (TILT-C) for the U.S. interagency (March 2023), U.S. Special Operations Command (April 2023), the intelligence community (May 2023), and the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) (June 2023), and the National Resistance Application Course (NRAC) in conjunction with this year's Ridge Runner planning conference (March 2023) and academic week (June 2023).

IWC Director's Corner



Dr. Dennis Walters,
IWC Director



Greetings from the IWC team,

The IWC team hit the ground running in the month of June with several key meetings in DC that set conditions for greater collaboration with our Interagency partners. First up was a very informative meeting with the National Counterterrorism Taskforce followed by a roundtable discussion with the Irregular Warfare Community of Interest. At both of these meetings we discussed ways to enhance collaboration to include adding representatives from these organization to future IWC international programs.

As the month rolled along, The Center continued to expand its partnership and collaboration efforts both nationally and globally. Our staff delivered a lecture on "Special Warfare Deterrence and Resistance" at the Baltic Defence College in Estonia deepening the security cooperation relationship with the Baltic nations. The IWC also met with representatives from Indo-Pacific Command's Federal Bureau of Investigation team, Homeland Security Investigation and Secret Service advisors to discuss collaborative efforts to counter Chinese influence operations in the region.

Some other key initiatives for the month include the IWC's Special Projects Officer providing subject matter expert support for the United Kingdom (UK)-led Georgian Ministry of Defense (MOD) National Resistance Concept Tabletop Exercise (TTX) held in Tbilisi, Georgia. This led to the Georgian General Staff approval for a meeting with the Georgian National Security Council (NSC) staff to allow the IWC Special Projects Officer to discuss national continuity of governance in crisis, national resilience, and national resistance. Later in the month, our team participated in a two-day Partnership for Peace Consortium, IW Working Group at the Swedish Defence University for Ukrainian general officers and senior civilian leaders. A key outcome of this will be providing curriculum support to the National Defense University of Ukraine.

The month of July promises to be busy with the IWC moving across the globe building academic bridges to solve irregular challenges. I am looking forward to bringing the IWC team back to D.C. for our Colloquium where we'll get to hear firsthand some of the great scholarship happening across the country.

Stay tuned for more great things!

Dennis Walters

Staff Member of the Month



Lori Leffler,
IWC Deputy Director
& Chief of Staff



Describe your role and responsibilities at IWC?

Anyone who's been a Chief of Staff knows the job requires complete knowledge of everything the organization is doing operationally, which can be challenging. Still, having a central person with an eye on the operational tempo, health of the organization, and its team is essential. I became involved with the IWC soon after the Director began designing the Center. My work included building the initial organizational structure and supporting his vision to meet and exceed the Center's objectives. I also work with the staff to support our organization's mission. I sometimes refer to my position as "herding cats," but I could not find a more engaged, knowledgeable, or professional team of cats to work with on this important effort.

What do you enjoy most about working at IWC?

The mission of our Center is incredibly important. The irregular challenges facing the U.S. and our allies are extensive, and we were created to address these challenges directly. Everyone on our team believes passionately in this mission, and I am honored to work with them.

Upcoming Events

- ◇ The Irregular Warfare Center has released a call for universities to nominate graduate students and postdocs to contribute to our Irregular Warfare Colloquium, which is scheduled for July 27-28, 2023. The Colloquium will bring together nominees from a wide range of excellent colleges and universities to share their ongoing work on irregular warfare concepts and help them develop their projects into impactful peer-reviewed publications.
- ◇ The IWC is sponsoring a Wargaming course in conjunction with the US Naval Postgraduate School (NPS), with the Hybrid CoE hosting two courses in Helsinki to teach the tools and techniques of wargaming in a hybrid threat environment. An essential tool for planning and decision-making, the course for sponsors around the world has been conducted by NPS since 2006. The advanced course has been specifically designed for Hybrid CoE to examine hybrid threats in greater depth.

Media Highlights

- ◇ [Transnational Organized Crime in the Gray Zone: The Authoritarian IW Toolbox and Strategic Competition](#) by Dr. Cüneyt Güler and Francesca E. Strat
- ◇ [Utopia or Oblivion? An Examination of Wargames, Irregular Warfare & Futurism — How Games Can Contribute & Best Practices for Doing So](#) by Daveed Gartenstein-Ross & Madison Urban, IWC Analyst
- ◇ [Simple Sabotage 2.0: The Threat of Pro-Russian Civil Resistance in Ukraine](#) by Dr. Sandor Fabian, IWC Chair, Engagements, Dr. Kevin Stringer, IWC Chair, Education and Andrew Liflyandchick, IWC Analyst

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IWC Partners with FBI



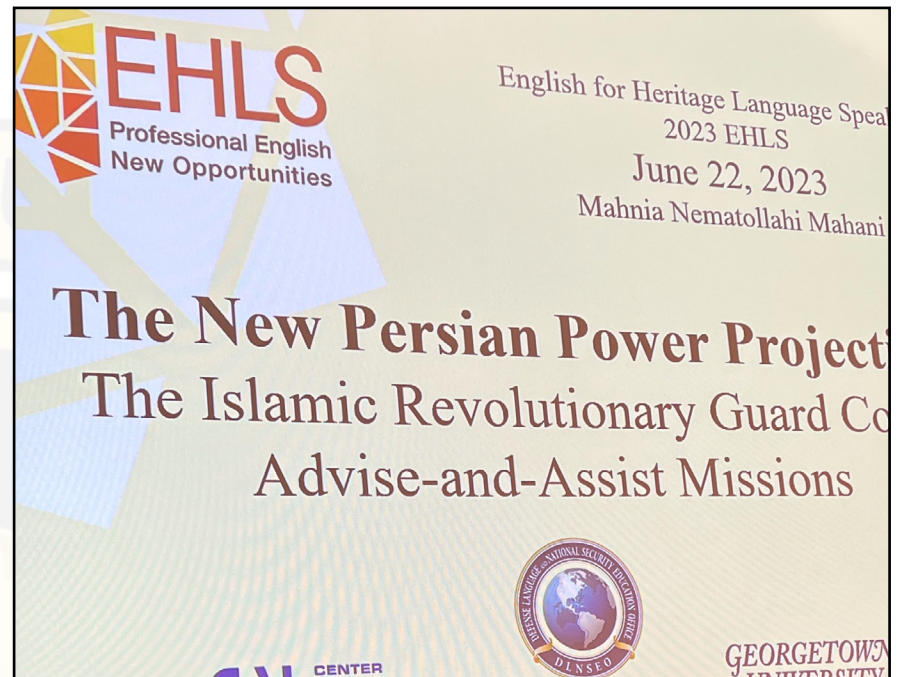
In partnership with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Irregular Warfare Center attended the Asia Pacific FBI National Academy Retrainer Conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

With over 70 graduates of the National Academy from 15 Asia-Pacific countries in attendance, the IWC's Senior Analyst Varsha Koduvayur, discussed the importance of a Whole-of-Society and Whole-of-Government approach to deterring hybrid threats to national security. The IWC continues to educate and train foreign partners and allies about irregular warfare and has now engaged with over 37 countries around the globe.



IWC Supports Research Project

On June 22 2023, Dr. Mahnia Nematollahi Mahnia delivered a presentation at Georgetown University on "The New Power Projection: The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' Advise-and-Assist Missions."



Dr. Mahani's research was supported by the Defense Language and National Security Education Office (DLNSEO) that was proposed by the Defense Security Cooperation University's Irregular Warfare Center (IWC). Dr. Bill Rosenau of the IWC advised her during her research project, which she presented during a two-day conference on open-source analysis convened by DLNSEO's English for Heritage Language Speakers Scholarship Program, the Center for Applied Linguistics, and Georgetown University.

IWC Leadership Presents the Center's Mission and Vision at CIWAG Symposium



The Irregular Warfare Center's (IWC) Senior Advisor Chris Burns presented IWC's mission and vision to the Naval War College's Irregular Warfare Maritime Symposium attended by DoD, IA, allies, partners, and civilian stakeholders. The symposium presented numerous panels on critical IW issues to help shape future education, strategy and policy while illuminating the need to capture and share critical IW lessons learned with our allies and partners.

A leadership team of IW subject matter experts representing the Irregular Warfare Center attended the CIWAG Symposium at the Wyndham Newport Hotel in Middletown, R.I. from June 27-28, 2023. The Center on Irregular Warfare and Armed Groups' 2023 Maritime symposium, Exploring Our

Maritime Strategies hosted five panels moderated by experts in their fields, along with professionals ranging from the United States Coast Guard to the Center for Naval Analyses.

The IWC serves as the central mechanism for developing the Department of Defense's (DoD) irregular warfare knowledge and advancing the Department's understanding of irregular warfare concepts and doctrine in collaboration with key allies and partners.

The IWC also serves as the only global DoD center which works in close collaboration to amplify regional centers' IW efforts.



Photo of the Month



(Above) Ridge Runner program leadership provided participants with an overview of various exercise simulations and technological capabilities during the Center's and WVNG's Ridge Runner Distinguished Visitor Day event, June 7, 2023, at Camp Dawson, Kingwood, West Virginia. (Below) MG Bill Crane, Adjutant General for the State of West Virginia, provided participants with an overview of the Ridge Runner program during the Center's and WVNG's Ridge Runner Distinguished Visitor Day event.



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