

US military launches Jade Helm “super-drill” domestic training operations

By Thomas Gaist
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The US Defense Department (DOD) officially began continental-scale drills across a broad swath of the southern and western United States, including areas of California, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico and Texas on Wednesday.

The drills mark a new and ominous stage in the expansion of domestic military operations and planning.

The two-month long “super-drill,” code named Jade Helm 15, involves Special Forces detachments from all four branches of the military, including the US Army Special Forces Command (the Green Berets), US Navy SEALs, US Air Force Special Operations Command and the US Marine Corps Special Operations Command.

At least 1,200 elite US troops will participate in the drills, referred to in the DoD slides as “Realistic Military Training.”

The Special Operations Command (SOCOM) commando teams will be reinforced by conventional military units, including US Marine Corps Expeditionary Units and troops from the Army’s 82nd Airborne.

The JH15 war games will focus on “emerging concepts in Special Operations warfare,” according to government slides leaked by the *Houston Chronicle*. US commandos, sometimes dressed in civilian clothing and riding in civilian vehicles, will infiltrate targeted areas and practice a range of unconventional warfare techniques, including “military extractions” and nighttime assassination raids.

The bulk of JH15’s simulated missions are scheduled to take place in the dead of night, with commandos flying into targeted areas via helicopter, practicing various mission scenarios, and then returning to base

before dawn.

“We come in doing the hit, and extracting. Time on the ground may be 15 to 20 minutes of exposure, then that’s it,” a US military spokesman told concerned residents during a public relations town hall meeting in Texas earlier this year.

JH15 participants will also seek to “blend in with the local environment” and “set up cells of people and test how well they’re able to move around without getting too noticed in the community,” a local official with the Victoria County Sheriff told the *Chronicle*.

Texas, Utah and portions of California are colored red and listed as “hostile territory” and “insurgent strongholds” in the leaked US Army slides.

The military will coordinate on a daily basis with “interagency partners” at the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) throughout the drills.

Training will be “coordinated in great detail with both state and local officials in the various states that we’ll be conducting it,” according to Pentagon spokesman Colonel Steve Warren.

Though a full list of cities hosting JH15 is unavailable, the *Chronicle* has confirmed that training operations will involve some 17 towns and cities in Texas alone, including Bastrop/Smithville, Big Spring, Caddo Lake, Caldwell, Christoval, College Station, Dell City, Eldorado, Goliad, Junction, Leakey, Menard, Mountain Home, San Angelo, San Antonio and Victoria.

In a last minute announcement last week, the Pentagon declared that media will be completely banned from observing the drills. The decision stands in glaring contrast to policies that routinely allow media to “embed” with military units engaged in actual

combat operations overseas.

JH15 is part of broader preparations, developed by the US ruling elite over decades, to effectively suspend the US Constitution and rule the country through dictatorial methods.

During the 1980s, the Reagan administration and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) drew up plans, codenamed Operation Rex 84, to transfer authority to a “parallel government” run by military and intelligence personnel. Rex 84 included plans to round up hundreds of thousands of political opponents and detain them in militarized prison camps.

These preparations have only intensified during the intervening decades. Since 2001, the US government has developed a global network of “black site” torture camps, erected illegal mass surveillance programs targeting the entire world's population, and established massive new agencies for domestic repression, including the DHS and the Pentagon's Northern Command (NORCOM), the first DOD sub-component dedicated to planning combat operations within the continental US.

During the past two years alone, multiple US cities have been placed under partial police lockdown. This includes Boston, Massachusetts following the 2013 Marathon bombing; and Ferguson, Missouri and Baltimore, Maryland during protests against police violence.

In December 2014, thousands of US Marines deployed throughout Los Angeles County as part of drills that saw teams of heavily armed combat troops inserted from helicopters into the middle of the downtown area. Last month, US Army personnel simulated urban warfare in Flint, Michigan, staging mock gun battles and setting off explosions at several locations around the city.

Similar drills have been conducted in other US cities, often with little or no advance warning to local residents.

According to an April 2014 US Army document titled “Civil Disturbances” leaked by Wikileaks earlier this year, the US Army plans to manage domestic unrest with a “graduated response matrix” that includes the use of sniper fire, high-caliber machine guns and artillery and mortar fire against crowds of demonstrators.

The corporate media has mocked the concerns of

citizens over the drills in recent weeks and months. A systematic media propaganda campaign is underway to slander critics of JH15 as “conspiracy nuts” and de-legitimize opposition to domestic military operations.

JH15 critics are “traversing the outer edges of political paranoia,” the *New York Times* proclaimed in a May 6 article, “Conspiracy Theories Over Jade Helm Training Exercise Get Some Traction in Texas.”

The *Times* accused “conservative bloggers and Internet postings” of fueling unwarranted “paranoia” in its latest report on JH15 Wednesday, even while acknowledging that “the size and scope of Jade Helm make it unusual.”

Despite these efforts, JH15 has met growing backlash from residents in targeted areas. Nearly 45 percent of Texans think the drill is intended to impose martial law, a recent *Texas Tribune* poll showed.

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