

# US Army simulates gun battles, sets off explosives in Flint, Michigan

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US Army soldiers simulated assaults and set off explosives in Flint, Michigan last week as part of 10 days of urban warfare training exercises staged in southeastern Michigan.

The exercises have been carried out under a thick veil of secrecy. They were initially publicized by local media only after terrified Flint residents began calling in reports about apparent gun battles raging near their homes.

Residents of areas impacted by the drills were informed either at the last minute or after the fact, with many caught completely unaware.

“The US Army is doing training in Flint this weekend and you may hear helicopters, gunfire, and explosions. Please do not be alarmed,” the official Facebook page of neighboring Lapeer County notified residents, several days after the exercises had already begun.

The war games in Michigan are a prelude to the upcoming two-month long Jade Helm 15 (JH15) exercises, which are set to become the largest ever special forces training exercise held in the continental United States.

Referred to by the Pentagon as “Realistic Military Training” (RMT), the July-September exercises will simulate counterinsurgency operations on a continental scale, coordinated across a battle-space encompassing large areas of the American south and west. It will be one of the largest and most elaborate military exercises ever conducted on US territory by the Defense Department.

“The size and scope of Jade Helm sets this one apart,” the US Army’s own press release noted.

In preparation for the exercise, special operations forces personnel are already conducting reconnaissance and preparatory work in rural areas, towns and cities in California, Utah, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona,

Mississippi, Florida and Colorado.

According to DOD documents, JH15 will involve commandos from all four branches of the US 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.

These special operations forces will be reinforced with conventional forces, including USMC Marine Expeditionary Units and troops from the Army’s 82nd Airborne.

Throughout the exercises, the Pentagon will coordinate closely with its “interagency partners” at the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Homeland Security and the Drug Enforcement Administration.

The counterinsurgency training will be “coordinated in great detail with both state and local officials in the various states that we’ll be conducting it,” official Pentagon spokesman Colonel Steve Warren said.

Despite the extreme secrecy surrounding the exercises, the military’s own documents make clear that participants will practice and refine the murderous tactics used by US special forces against the populations of Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia and countless other countries.

Notwithstanding claims by the White House and military that JH15 is a “routine” training exercise, intended to prepare US soldiers for combat overseas, a mountain of evidence shows that the drills represent a marked escalation of efforts to prepare the state machinery for violent repression directed against the broad mass of the US population.

Texas, Utah, and portions of California will be considered “insurgent strongholds” and “enemy” areas during the exercises, a map included with US Defense

Department slides leaked earlier this year by the *Houston Chronicle* shows.

As part of JH15, US commandos will practice “emerging concepts in Special Operations warfare,” according to the leaked DOD slides. The exercises will center on simulated raids known as “military extractions” and “surgical strikes.”

Teams of commandos will enter targeted areas in the dead of night, between 11 p.m. and 4 a.m., to carry out simulated snatch-and-grab and targeted assassination missions, according to statements by Jade Helm Operations Planner and retired Green Beret Thomas Mead, during a town hall meeting with Bastrop County residents of Big Spring, Texas.

“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 military officer accompanying Mead said.

Speaking to the *Chronicle* about a briefing he received from the military, Roy Boy, the chief deputy of the Victoria County Sheriff’s Office, said that the commandos will “set up cells of people and test how well they’re able to move around without getting too noticed in the community” and seek to “blend in with the local environment.”

The planned exercises and the operations in Flint are part of a string of military drills within the United States.

Last December saw more than 2,000 troops with a USMC Expeditionary Unit stage urban warfare drills in Los Angeles, including insertion of teams of heavily armed Marines directly into the downtown area.

This May, local agencies in South Carolina held joint RMT exercises with Special Forces troops stationed at Fort Bragg. Deploying alongside professional soldiers in full battlefield regalia, the local sheriff’s deputies practiced nighttime maneuvers, including firing of heavy caliber Humvee-mounted machine guns.

Under the guise of “realistic training,” the counterinsurgency techniques used by Washington to terrorize and subjugate populations abroad are being prepared for use against the US population itself.



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