32nd Course for TACP Operator - Air Cooperation at the Artillery Command

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The **Artillery Command** has recently concluded the **32nd Course for Tactical Air Control Party (TACP) Operator**, a specialized training activity conducted at the **Fires & Targeting and Information Operations Center (CFTIO)**.

The course, lasting **four weeks**, was aimed at Sergeants and Permanent Service Graduates selected to operate within the **JTAC (Joint Terminal Attack Controller)** teams. The qualification of **TACP Operator** enables personnel to perform liaison tasks between ground units and air assets employed in **Close Air Support** missions, ensuring **coordination and integration of fire support**.

The role of JTAC is provided for by **NATO doctrine** and is part of the certification system governed by **STANAG 3797**, which defines requirements and procedures for the training of terminal air attack controllers. TACP training thus constitutes a **qualifying segment** in the preparation path of personnel destined for air cooperation activities.

Field Training and Technological Integration

The educational program provided a balance between **theoretical training and practical activities**. Participants delved into:

- tactical air cooperation techniques
- target acquisition and designation procedures
- use of radio equipment for coordination with aircraft
- application of standardized procedures within NATO

Training on the VBS3 simulator. Source: Italian Army.

The exercises also took place in the **Braccianese** areas, where topographic marches and orientation activities were conducted. Practical tests included day and night activities, using different types of materials for target acquisition.

Particular attention was given to the **management of radio communications**, an essential element to ensure continuity in the connection between ground forces and air assets. The training activities included **simulated scenarios** aimed at consolidating the ability to apply operational procedures in structured contexts.

The use of technological systems dedicated to the **Joint Fires** sector allowed participants to develop technical skills consistent with the standards required for employment in TACP teams.

The Joint Dimension and National Training

The **Fires & Targeting and Information Operations Center** represents the national reference for **Joint Fires virtual simulation** and advanced training in the Fires Support, Targeting, and Information Operations sectors. Its activity is part of the broader national training system, which also includes the **School of Air Cooperation**, recognized within NATO as the **Joint Air Operations School**.

Group Photo. Source: Italian Army.

The **“Joint”** dimension involves the integration between ground and air components through shared **Command and Control** procedures and systems. In this context, the TACP Operator performs a **technical-operational liaison function** between the ground commander and the air assets employed in support.

The 32nd Course for TACP Operator is part of the training activities aimed at **maintaining and developing the air cooperation capabilities** of the Italian Army, in compliance with national and allied standards provided for this specific operational sector.

News link: https://www.esercito.difesa.it/comunicazione/terminato-il-32-corso-per-operatore-tactical-air-control-party-tacp/132943.html