



CURTIS E. LEMAY CENTER FOR DOCTRINE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION



ANNEX 3-03 COUNTERLAND OPERATIONS

BATTLESPACE GEOMETRY COORDINATION

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Since [counterland](#) operations are normally conducted in conjunction with friendly land forces, [fire support coordination measures](#) (FSCMs) should be established to integrate [joint fires](#) and avoid fratricide. FSCMs are established for adjacent lanes of maneuver and are linear in nature. Traditional combat operations may also involve rapidly advancing ground maneuver or widely distributed ground operations; either of these approaches will require non-linear FSCMs. Moreover, when conducting [stability operations](#), the linear operational area tends to dissolve into pockets of dispersed operations and noncontiguous [areas of operations](#) (AOs). [Close air support](#) (CAS) and [air interdiction](#) (AI) require FSCMs that are flexible, simple, effective, and relevant to conflicts characterized by linear and nonlinear operations.

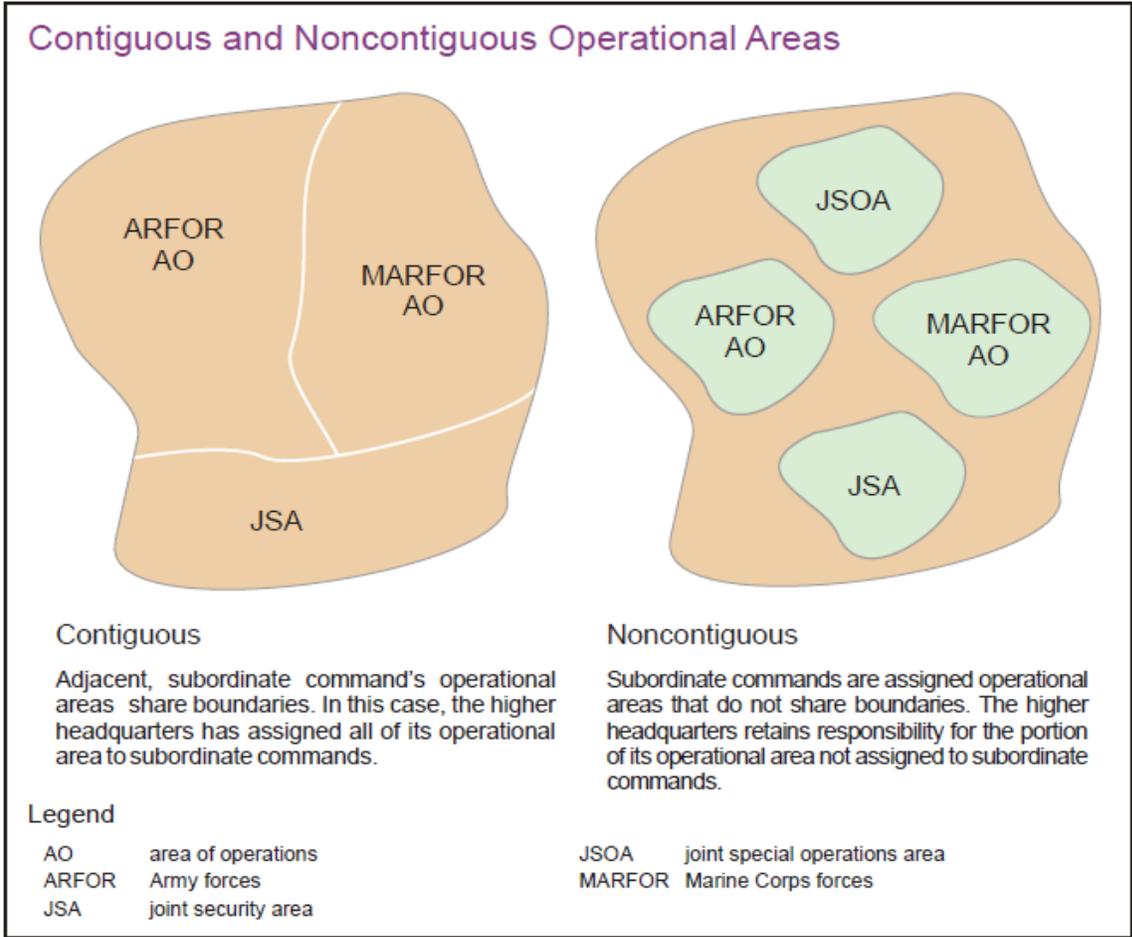
Contiguous and Noncontiguous Operational Areas

Operational areas may be [contiguous](#) or [noncontiguous](#). When they are contiguous, a boundary separates them. When operational areas are noncontiguous, they do not share a boundary; the concept of operations links the elements of the force. A noncontiguous operational area normally is characterized by a 360-degree boundary. The higher headquarters is responsible for the area between noncontiguous operational areas. See figure, "Contiguous versus Noncontiguous Operations" below.

Linear and Nonlinear Operations

In [linear](#) operations, commanders direct and sustain combat power toward enemy forces in concert with adjacent units. Linearity refers primarily to the conduct of operations along lines of operations with identified forward lines of own troops. In linear operations, emphasis is placed on maintaining the position of the land force in relation to other friendly forces. This positioning usually results in contiguous operations where surface forces share boundaries. Linear operations are normally conducted against a deeply arrayed, echeloned enemy force or when the threat to [lines of communications](#) reduces friendly force freedom of action. In these circumstances, linear operations allow commanders to concentrate and integrate combat power more easily.

In [nonlinear](#) operations, forces orient on objectives without geographic reference to adjacent forces. Nonlinear operations typically focus on multiple [decisive points](#) and are



Contiguous versus Noncontiguous Operations (Source: JP 3-0)

characterized by noncontiguous operations. Nonlinear operations emphasize simultaneous operations along multiple lines of operations from selected bases. Nonlinear operations place a premium on [intelligence](#), [air mobility](#), and sustainment. Often integrated with ground maneuver, swift aerial attack delivering concentrated, precise fire against several decisive points can induce paralysis and shock among enemy troops and commanders. Operations JUST CAUSE, ENDURING FREEDOM, ODYSSEY DAWN, and UNIFIED PROTECTOR are examples of nonlinear operations. The joint forces orient more on their assigned objectives (for example, destroying an enemy force or seizing and controlling critical terrain or population centers) and less on their geographic relationship to other friendly forces. To protect themselves and achieve objectives, ground forces rely heavily on [airpower](#) to provide operational area awareness, mobility advantages, and freedom of action. Depending on the situation, the [joint force commander](#) may conduct linear or nonlinear offensive and defensive operations in contiguous and noncontiguous areas. Linear contiguous warfare typically characterizes major operations and campaigns while stability operations are usually nonlinear and noncontiguous.
