



COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS AND INFORMATION OPERATIONS

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When a theater requests [information-related capabilities](#) (IRCs) from organizations with global responsibilities, the Secretary of Defense (SecDef) will specify a command relationship between the [functional combatant commander](#) (FCC) and the [geographic combatant commander](#) (GCC) - normally a [support relationship](#). This will be employed at appropriate levels within both the supporting and supported commands. These support relationships fall into four categories: general, mutual, direct, and close support.¹

For IRCs providing effects via a support relationship, it is important for both [supported and supporting commanders](#) to document their requirements in an “establishing directive.” The establishing directive should specify the purpose of the support relationship, the effect(s) desired, and the scope of the action(s) to be taken. Additional information includes:

- ★ The IRCs allocated to the supporting commander's effort.
- ★ The time, place, level, and duration of the supporting commander's effort.
- ★ The relative priority of the supported commander's effort.
- ★ The degree of authorities exercised by the supported and supporting commanders over the effort, to include processes for reconciling competing requirements and resolving emergency events expeditiously, as required.

To facilitate a support relationship, there should be an appropriate level of coordination between the involved commanders. This facilitates planning the detailed integration of IRCs and their effects with theater operations, and enables theater warfighters to coordinate directly at either the same or differing organizational levels. A [direct liaison authorized](#) relationship² should be established for coordination between the theater and functional IO planners.

¹ JP 1, [Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States, Chapter IV, Section 6](#).

² [DIRLAUTH](#) is explained in JP 1, Chapter V, Section 9c.

If the desired effects produced by IRCs of a functional combatant command are focused primarily on a single area of responsibility, the SecDef may direct the FCC to attach IRC forces to the GCC of that theater. In these situations, the SecDef normally attaches the required forces with specification of [operational control](#) (OPCON)³ to the GCC. An example may be the SecDef directing the Commander, [US Strategic Command](#) to attach space forces to a GCC. The GCC, in turn, normally attaches gained forces to the appropriate Service component commander with specification of OPCON. The theater [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR) is the Service component commander for Air Force IRC forces. The functional component commander for many IRCs is usually the in-theater [joint force air component commander](#).

If the COMAFFOR is formally designated as the supported commander for IRC operations, the JFC normally delegates related coordinating authorities down to the COMAFFOR to coordinate joint IRC operations and integrate theater and global IRCs and their effects. The COMAFFOR is well suited to coordinate many Air Force IRC operations because of the COMAFFOR theater-wide perspective, ability to exercise command and control of IRC forces, and subject-matter expertise on the [AFFOR staff](#) and the [air operations center](#) IO team. Senior IRC or IO advisors on the COMAFFOR's staff may be assigned the responsibilities of executing IRC authorities on behalf of the COMAFFOR. Examples of coordinating authorities include [space coordinating authority](#) and counterintelligence coordinating authority.⁴

³ See [JP 1, Chapter IV, Section 4](#).

⁴ For a description of these coordinating authorities, see Annex 3-14, [Space Operations](#), and JP 2-01.2, *Counterintelligence and Human Intelligence in Joint Operations*.