



PRESENTATION OF INFORMATION OPERATIONS PLANNERS AND INFORMATION-RELATED CAPABILITY FORCES

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When directed, the Air Force presents [information operations](#) (IO) planners and [information-related capability](#) (IRC) forces to [combatant](#) commanders (CCDRs) to meet national-level and theater-level taskings.

The [IO staff](#) and planning function for a theater component is typically presented as a function within an [air operations center \(AOC\)](#) and on the [commander, Air Force forces'](#) (COMAFFOR's) [staff](#). The AFFOR and AOC IO planners typically serve as a focal point for coordinating requirements for reachback support from IRCs outside of theater and should ensure their plans and support are in line with joint IO across the joint operations area.

An AOC normally includes an IO team that coordinates with all of the AOC divisions and with counterpart IO elements at other commands and task forces. The IO team may be attached to the AOC's strategy division and coordinate with the other AOC divisions, or the IO team may report direct to the AOC commander as a cross-cutting specialty team. Also within the AOC, an IO duty officer is typically assigned to work alongside other specialty duty officers for the senior duty officer or directly for the chief of combat operations.

Service and Functional IO Responsibilities

IO planners and IRC specialists on the Service and functional component staffs fill critical roles needed to successfully integrate IRC tasks and effects into theater operations. AFFOR and AOC specialists share a common effort in support of the commander's objectives and complement each other's responsibilities. The two staffs coordinate regularly to ensure consistency in focus and that their respective responsibilities and external relationships are appropriately deconflicted.

In general, the AFFOR IO staff coordinates planning actions at the [joint force commander](#) or CCDR level. In addition to internal AFFOR coordination, the AFFOR IO staff coordinates with the AOC IO team, component MAJCOM and NAF staffs, the joint staff, and functional and geographic combatant command staffs to:

- ✦ Request IRC forces and IO support (e.g., request for forces).
- ✦ Establish supporting-supported command relationships and authorities for IO planning and IRC tasking (e.g., [direct liaison authorized](#) [DIRLAUTH], electronic warfare coordinating authority).
- ✦ Facilitate deployment, beddown, and redeployment of unit-level IRC forces (e.g., deployment order, time-phased force and deployment data).
- ✦ Provide IO and IRC input on strategic/campaign-level operation planning documents (e.g., [theater campaign plans](#), [concept plans](#), [operation orders](#)).

In contrast, the AOC IO staff coordinates planning and tasking actions at the joint task force (JTF)-level. In addition to internal AOC coordination, the AOC IO team coordinates with IRC contacts on [air expeditionary task force](#) (AETF) staffs, IO contacts on JTF staffs, and IO contacts on other theater component staffs to:

- ✦ Provide input on operation planning documents (e.g., annexes/appendices, [joint air operations plan](#), air operations directive).
- ✦ Coordinate themes, messages, and actions, approvals (e.g., [rules of engagement](#), airspace control order), tasking orders (e.g., air/space/cyber tasking order), targeting lists (joint integrated prioritized target list, restricted target list, no-strike list).
- ✦ Submit requirements for analytical and targeting needs (e.g., telecom studies, patterns of life).
- ✦ Develop assessment criteria (e.g., [measures of performance/effectiveness](#)).

Example forums (or mechanisms) for coordination and commander's updates may be the joint targeting coordination board, joint collection management board, and battlestaff update brief.

Reachback and Federated Support for IO

Commanders and their staffs should consider leveraging other resources and capabilities available through reachback and federation to support theater IO and IRC activities. There are many Service, joint, Department of Defense, interagency, and national organizations referenced in this publication that can provide additional support to theater IO efforts. For instance, the [National Air and Space Intelligence Center](#) and the [363d Intelligence Surveillance Reconnaissance Group](#) may be able to provide behavioral analysis and targeting products to meet IRC operational requirements. The AOC combat plans, strategy, and ISR divisions should be the main organizations in-theater requesting additional support. The need to establish command relationships for requesting reachback support may vary depending on the purpose and extent of support. If any formal relationship is needed for developing plans, DIRLAUTH is usually appropriate. Command relationships for executing operations may range from nothing formal required (i.e., standard tasking processes are sufficient) to formal establishment

of tactical control (i.e., for dedicated, responsive support). Support established by formal agreement is termed “federated.”
