



**ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL**

**CATALOG OF DOCTRINE TOPICS**

**Introduction to Command and Control**

**Key Considerations of Command and Control**

**Operational and Administrative Branches of the Chain of Command**

**Command Authorities and Relationships**

- Assignment and Attachment of Forces
- Command Relationship Models for Air Force Forces
- Transfer of Functional Forces to a Geographic Command
- Reachback and Distributed Operations
- Multinational and Interagency Considerations

**Commanding Airpower**

- The Commander, Air Force Forces
- The Joint Force Air Component Commander
- Control of Other Services' Aviation Capabilities
- Multi-Hatting Commanders / Span of Command

**Command and Control Mechanisms**

- Air Operations Center
- Air Force Forces (AFFOR) Staff
- Liaisons in the AOC
- Joint Air Component Coordination Element

**Organizing Air Force Forces**

- Regional and Functional Organization
- The Air Expeditionary Force
- The Air Expeditionary Task Force (AETF)

- AETF Organization
- Examples of AETFs
- Integrating Regional and Functional Air Force Forces
- Nuclear Support to Regional Commands
- Homeland Organizational Considerations
- Integrating the Air Reserve Components
- The Senior / Host Installation Commander

**Presenting Air Force Forces**

- Joint Force Organizational Basics
- Air Component Relationships within a Joint Force
- Air Force Component Presentation Considerations
- Joint Staffs

**Appendix A: Command Authorities and Relationships**

- Combatant Command
- Operational Control
- Tactical Control
- Support
- Administrative Control
- Coordinating Authority
- Direct Liaison Authorized

**Appendix B: The Air Operations Center**

**Appendix C: The Air Force Forces (AFFOR) Staff**

**Appendix D: Theater Air Control System**

**Appendix E: The Air Reserve Components**



## ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

### INTRODUCTION TO COMMAND AND CONTROL

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Modern military operations require flexibility in execution to adapt to a wide variety of scenarios; this drives a need to assemble the right mix of forces from the appropriate Services to tailor the operation. This need to assemble the right forces drives a corresponding need for proper organization, clearly defined [command relationships](#), and appropriate [command and control mechanisms](#).

**[Command and control \(C2\)](#) and organization are inextricably linked.** Forces should be organized around the principle of [unity of command](#). Clear lines of authority, with clearly identified commanders at appropriate echelons exercising appropriate control, are essential to achieving [unity of effort](#), reducing confusion, and maintaining priorities. To this end, commanders should be clearly identified and empowered with appropriate operational and administrative command authorities, and appropriate joint command arrangements should be clearly specified to integrate effects across Service lines. Effective joint and Service organization *is* “rocket science.”

Air Force expeditionary organization and preferred command arrangements are designed to address unity of command. The axiom that “Airmen work for Airmen, and the senior Airman works for the [joint force commander](#) (JFC),” not only preserves the principle of unity of command, it also embodies the principle of [simplicity](#). When Air Force forces are [assigned](#) or [attached](#) to a joint force at any level, the senior ranking Airman qualified for command should be designated as the [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR) and the Air Force component should normally be formed as an [air expeditionary task force](#) (AETF). As the senior Airman representing the Air Force component, the COMAFFOR provides a single Air Force face to the JFC for all Air Force matters.

Some capabilities may not be organic to the component and may be made available through a [supported/supporting](#) command relationship, or be made available through [reachback](#) or distributed C2 arrangements.

This annex is arranged around key related topics as follows.

- ✦ **[Key Considerations of Command and Control](#).** This section introduces basic C2-related definitions (e.g., command, control, command and control, commander) as well as some key precepts (e.g., unity of command, centralized control and decentralized execution, commander’s intent; battle rhythm, trust).

- ✦ **Operational and Administrative Branches of the Chain of Command.** This section discusses the differences between the two branches of the chain of command. This is an important distinction.
- ✦ **Command Authorities and Relationships.** This section discusses how forces may be assigned or attached to joint and Service commands, how to tie organizations together through careful arrangements of command relationships, and how to transfer forces between organizations.
- ✦ **Commanding Airpower.** This section outlines the responsibilities of the COMAFFOR and related component command issues.
- ✦ **Command and Control Mechanisms.** This section provides an overview of the C2 mechanisms within an Air Force component: the [air operations center \(AOC\)](#) and the [Air Force forces \(AFFOR\) staff](#), along with discussion of [AOC liaisons](#) and the [joint air component coordination element](#). (Note that this is an overview; detailed discussion is found in appendices)
- ✦ **Organizing Air Force Forces.** This section starts with a discussion of the differences between [regional and functional organizations](#). It then introduces the [air expeditionary task force](#) as the model for organizing Air Force forces afield. This section also contains critical discussion on [integrating regional and functional Air Force forces](#) through specially trained liaisons and supporting command arrangements. There is also discussion of [nuclear support to regional commands](#), [homeland organizational considerations](#), integration of the [Air Reserve Components](#), and the responsibilities of a [senior/host installation commander](#) on a base with mixed forces.
- ✦ **Presenting Air Force Forces.** Once Air Force forces are organized, they should be presented to a JFC for employment. This section provides a primer on [joint force organization](#) and [air component relationships](#) within a joint force. This section contains critical discussion on [presenting an Air Force component](#) at various levels within a combatant command.

Several appendices provide deeper discussion of material presented in the main body of the document:

- ✦ [Appendix A](#) contains the formal definitions of command authorities and relationships, along with amplifying discussion.
- ✦ [Appendix B](#) presents the detailed discussion of a notional AOC.
- ✦ [Appendix C](#) presents the detailed discussion of a notional AFFOR staff, with breakdown by directorates and key responsibilities.
- ✦ [Appendix D](#) provides an overview of the theater air control system.
- ✦ [Appendix E](#) discusses accessing the Air Reserve Components.

## **Command and Control: Lessons Forgotten**

Our ability to effectively command and control (C2) airpower in future major combat operations may be seriously challenged. Advanced technological improvements in the fields of communications, networking, and computing has given us the ability to flatten our combat operational organization into essentially a two-tier theater combat organization; at the top is a single combatant commander (CCDR)-level commander, Air Force forces (COMAFFOR)/joint force air component commander (JFACC) and a centralized air operations center (AOC), and at the bottom is a myriad of combat forces and theater air control system nodes, all responsive to daily guidance from the AOC in the form of air tasking orders and air operations directives. Thus, our combat experience of the last two decades has been characterized by centralization of authority at the highest possible level in an essentially benign, uncontested air environment.

While this was successful under the operational conditions that prevailed in US Central Command, it may also have lulled us into complacency and the false expectation that future operations would take place in the same operational environment of secure, unchallenged C2 and robust communications and cyberspace capability. As our ability to C2 has increasingly become reliant on a complex web of space and cyberspace communications, potential adversaries of the future can be expected to challenge our unfettered dominance of space, cyberspace, and communications in manners that we have not seen or trained for since the height of the Cold War.

Success in future combat will require commanders to plan for times of disrupted communications by decentralizing their control, i.e., establishing and empowering lower echelons of command to continue operations in the absence of daily guidance and constant communication. The intent is to "push forward" control authority toward the tactical edge of operations as a way to maintain continuing advantage, instead of having our C2 ability fall back until centralized control can be reestablished. Loss of communications from higher headquarters must not result in loss of control and inaction at the forward level. Commanders should seriously consider the ability of adversaries to affect the communications required for effective centralized C2 of airpower and tailor plans accordingly. These are operating procedures and skills at which we used to be proficient in planning for operations against the Warsaw Pact. It is now time to blow the dust off the old playbooks, rediscover what worked (and why), and rebuild our atrophied C2 muscles.

A note on terminology in Air Force doctrine: The Air Force prefers—and in fact, plans and trains—to employ in the joint fight through a COMAFFOR who is normally also multi-hatted as [joint force air component commander](#) (JFACC), [area air defense commander](#), [airspace control authority](#), [space coordinating authority](#), and [electronic warfare control authority](#) when involved in multinational operations, the JFACC may become a combined force air component commander (CFACC). **To simplify nomenclature, Air Force doctrine simply uses the term "COMAFFOR," with the presumption that the COMAFFOR may also be designated with multiple hats.** Similarly, Air Force doctrine recognizes that the AOC, in joint or combined operations is correctly known as a joint AOC (JAOC) or combined AOC (CAOC). However, doctrine simply uses the term "AOC."

Air Force doctrine is compatible with existing joint doctrine, but expands and elaborates upon it, because joint doctrine does not explicitly describe the philosophical underpinnings of any one Service, nor does it describe how a Service organizes to support a joint force commander. These are Service, not joint, prerogatives. The ideas presented here should enable Airmen to better describe what the Air Force can provide to the joint effort. This document should influence creation of corresponding joint and North Atlantic Treaty Organization doctrine, and may inform the doctrine of other Services as well.

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FOR DOCTRINE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION



## ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

### KEY CONSIDERATIONS OF COMMAND AND CONTROL

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Commanders should be cognizant of the authorities they are given and their relationships under that authority with superior, subordinate, and lateral force commanders. Command relationships should be clearly defined to avoid confusion in executing operations. The command of airpower requires intricate knowledge of the capabilities and interdependencies of the forces to be employed, and a keen understanding of the joint force commander's (JFC's) intent and the authorities of other component commanders.

### DEFINITIONS

#### *Command*

Command is defined as “the authority that a commander in the Armed Forces lawfully exercises over subordinates by virtue of rank or assignment.” The concept of command encompasses certain powers, duties, and unique responsibilities not normally given to leaders in the public or private sector. The art of command must be exercised with care and should be awarded only to those who have demonstrated potential to selflessly lead others. Commanders are given authority and responsibility to accomplish the mission assigned. **Although commanders may delegate authority to accomplish the mission, they cannot delegate the responsibility for the attainment of mission objectives.**

#### *Control*

Control is defined as “authority that may be less than full command exercised by a commander over part of the activities of subordinate or other organizations.” Control is the process by which commanders plan, guide, and conduct operations. The control process occurs before and during the operation. Control involves dynamic balances between commanders directing operations and allowing subordinates freedom of action. These processes require strong leaders who conduct assessment and evaluation of follow-up actions. Time and distance factors often limit the direct control of subordinates. Commanders should rely on delegation of authorities and promulgation of commander's intent as methods to control forces. The commander's intent should specify the goals, priorities, acceptable risks, and limits of the operation.

## **Command and Control**

Command and control (C2) is defined as “the exercise of authority and direction by a properly designated commander over assigned and attached forces in the accomplishment of the mission.” C2 is not unique from other military functions. It enables mission accomplishment by collaborative planning and synchronizing integrating forces and operations in time and purpose. Effective C2 enables a commander to use available forces at the right place and time. Fluid horizontal and vertical information flow enables effective C2 throughout the chain of command. This information flow, and its timely fusion, enables optimum decision-making, operationalizing the tenet of centralized control and decentralized execution so essential to effective employment of airpower. A robust and redundant C2 system provides commanders the ability to effectively employ their forces despite the fog and friction of war while simultaneously minimizing the enemy’s capability to interfere with the same.

“Command and control functions are performed through an arrangement of personnel, equipment, communications, facilities, and procedures employed by a commander in planning, directing, coordinating, and controlling forces and operations in the accomplishment of the mission.”

-- Joint Publication 1,  
*Doctrine for the Armed  
Forces of the United States*

## **Commander**

Neither Air Force nor joint doctrine includes an official definition of the general term “commander.” Rather, definitions refer to a specific level or position of commander (e.g., JFC, Service component commander, joint force air component commander). For Airmen, the best official description of a commander is found in Air Force Instruction (AFI) 38-101, Air Force Organization: “an officer who occupies a position of command pursuant to orders of appointment or by assumption of command according to AFI 51-604.” AFI 51-604, Appointment to and Assumption of Command, and AFI 38-101 go into the particulars regarding the various levels and types of Air Force units for which a commander may be designated, but neither provides more details about or a definition of an Air Force commander. From the available description, however, one may conclude that an Air Force commander is an Air Force officer in charge of any Air Force unit or organization.

Note, however, that an Air Force commander is not the same as a commander, Air Force forces (COMAFFOR): “The title of COMAFFOR is reserved exclusively to the single Air Force commander of an Air Force Service component assigned or attached to a JFC at the unified combatant command, subordinate unified command, or joint task force (JTF) level.”

## UNITY OF COMMAND

Unity of command is one of the principles of war. According to Air Force doctrine Volume 1, *Basic Doctrine*, “unity of command ensures concentration of effort for every objective under one responsible commander. This principle emphasizes that all efforts should be directed and coordinated toward a common objective.”

Unity of command is not intended to promote centralized control without delegation of execution authority to subordinate commanders. Some commanders may fulfill their responsibilities by personally directing units to engage in missions or tasks. However, as the breadth of command expands to include the full spectrum of operations, commanders are normally precluded from exercising such immediate control over all operations in their area of command. Thus, C2 arrangements normally include the assignment of responsibilities and the delegation of authorities between superior and subordinate commanders. A reluctance to delegate decisions to subordinate commanders impedes operations and inhibits the subordinates’ initiative. Senior commanders should provide the desired end state, desired effects, rules of engagement (ROE), and required feedback on the progress of the operation and not actually direct tactical operations.

Forces should be organized to assure unity of command in a carefully arranged hierarchy with commanders clearly delineated at appropriate echelons. Within a joint force, the COMAFFOR provides a single Airman in command of assigned and attached Air Force forces.

## CENTRALIZED CONTROL AND DECENTRALIZED EXECUTION

Centralized control and decentralized execution are key tenets of C2; they provide Airmen the ability to exploit the speed, flexibility, and versatility of airpower. Centralized control is defined as “in joint air operations, placing within one commander the responsibility and authority for planning, directing, and coordinating a military operation or group/category of operations” Decentralized execution is defined as “the delegation of execution authority to subordinate commanders” and other tactical-level decision makers to

### Mission Command in the Context of Joint Air Operations

“Mission command is the conduct of military operations through decentralized execution based upon mission-type orders and is a key component of the C2 function. Its intent is for subordinates to clearly understand the commander’s intent and to foster flexibility and initiative at the tactical level to best accomplish the mission. While philosophically consistent with historical C2 of air operations, modern joint air operations and their unique aspects of speed, range, and flexibility demand a balanced approach to C2. **This approach is best codified in centralized control and decentralized execution** [emphasis added].”

-- Joint Publication 3-30,  
*Command and Control of  
Joint Air Operations*

achieve effective span of control and to foster disciplined initiative and tactical flexibility. Airpower's unique speed, range, and ability to maneuver in three dimensions depend on centralized control and decentralized execution to achieve the desired effects.

Centralized control and decentralized execution are critical to the effective employment of airpower. Indeed, they are the fundamental organizing principles Airmen use for effective C2, having been proven over decades of experience as the most effective means of employing airpower. Because of airpower's potential to directly affect the [strategic level of war](#) and [operational level of war](#), it should be controlled by a single Airman at the air component commander level. This Airman should maintain the broad strategic perspective necessary to balance and prioritize use of airpower resources that have been allocated to the theater. A single commander, focused on the broader aspects of an operation, can best mediate competing demands for tactical support against the strategic and operational requirements of the conflict.

Air Force doctrine Volume 1, *Basic Doctrine*, embodies the Air Force's commitment to the tenet of centralized control and decentralized execution of airpower.

## COMMANDER'S INTENT

Two joint C2 concepts that nurture implicit communications are [commander's intent](#) and [mission-type orders](#). By expressing intent and direction through mission-type orders, the commander attempts to provide clear objectives and goals to enable subordinates to execute the mission.

Guidance for planning and conducting air component operations is reflected in the commander's intent. Those granted delegated authority must understand the commander's intent, which is disseminated through such products as a JFC's operation plan; a COMAFFOR's air operations plan and air operations directive; air, space, or cyberspace tasking orders produced by appropriate Air Force components; and annexes to such plans and orders that provide specific guidance for specialized functions. [Unity of effort](#) over complex operations is made possible through [decentralized execution](#) of centralized, overarching plans. Roles and responsibilities throughout the chain of command should be clearly spelled out and understood, not only to ensure proper follow-through of the original mission intent and accountability for mission completion, but also to provide [continuity of operations](#) in the event of degraded communications between echelons. Communication between commanders and those to whom authority is delegated is essential throughout all phases of the military operation.

## BATTLE RHYTHM

[Battle rhythm](#) discipline as a concept also enhances control of forces. Effective operations in a theater require the [synchronization](#) of strategic, operational, and tactical processes, to ensure mission planning, preparation, execution, and [assessment](#) are coordinated. This process is called battle rhythm or operational rhythm. It is essentially

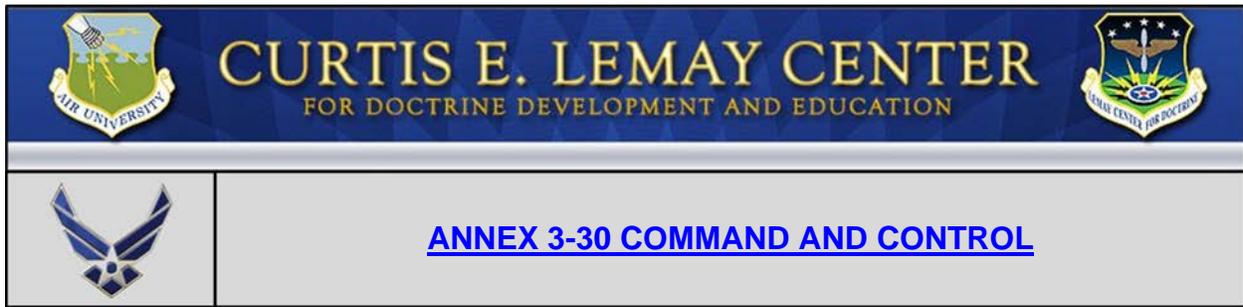
a schedule of important events that should be synchronized with the other Service or functional components and combined forces.

Battle rhythm is a deliberate daily cycle of command, staff, and unit activities intended to synchronize and pace current and future operations. Activities at each echelon must incorporate higher headquarters guidance and commander's intent, and subordinate units' requirements for mission planning, preparation, execution, and assessment. If one element of the task force is not following the battle rhythm, it can produce problems in planning and executing operations with other elements of the task force. Every command headquarters has a rhythm regulated by the flow of information and the decision cycle. The keys to capturing and maintaining control over the battle rhythm are simplicity and sensitivity to the superior commander's and the Service components' battle rhythms.

## **TRUST**

Trust among the commanders and staffs in a joint force expands the senior commander's options and enhances flexibility, agility, and the freedom to take the initiative when conditions warrant. Mutual trust results from honest efforts to learn about and understand the capabilities that each member brings to the joint force: demonstrated competence and planning and training together. Most trust is still built through personal relationships, which are best formed in person rather than over email, telephone, or video-teleconferences.

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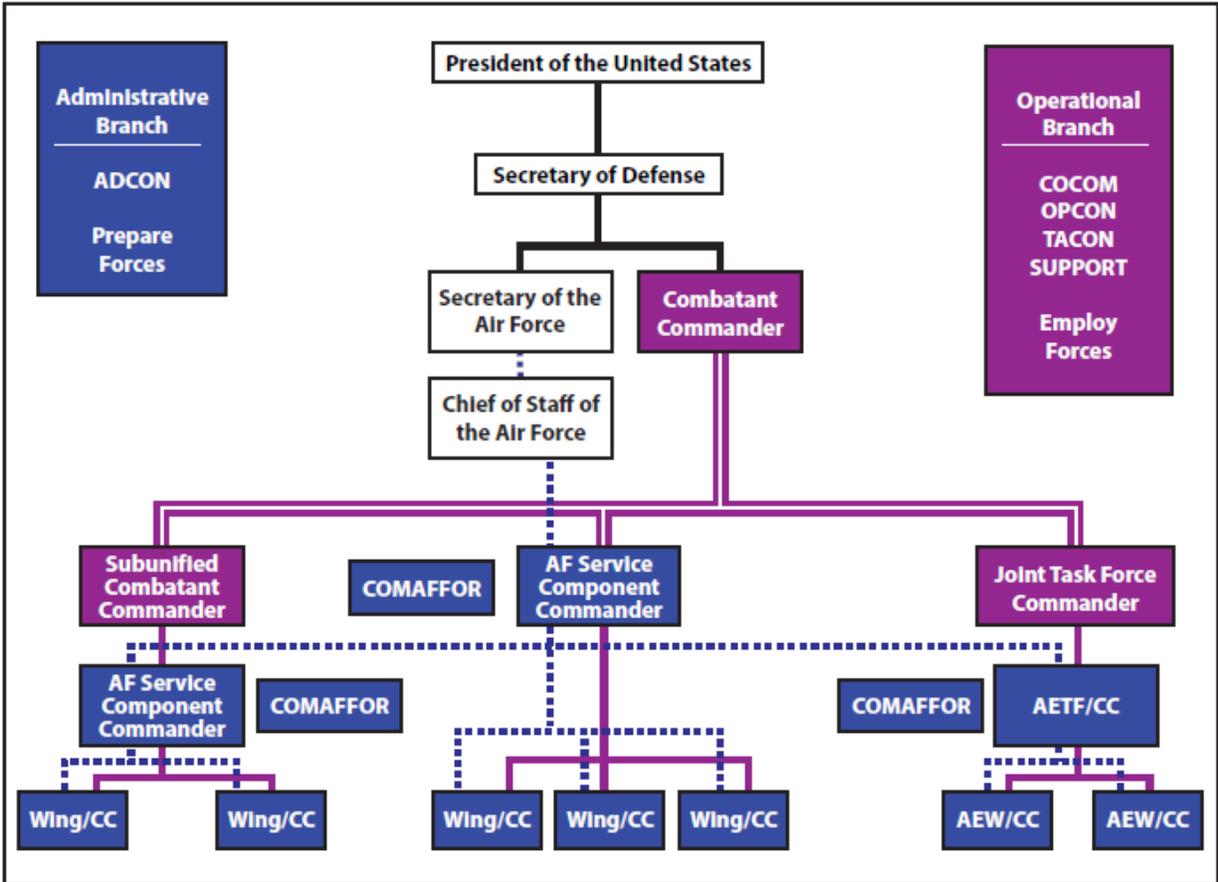
## OPERATIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE BRANCHES OF THE CHAIN OF COMMAND

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The President and the Secretary of Defense (SecDef) exercise authority and control of the armed forces through two distinct branches of the chain of command and control (C2). One branch runs from the President, through the SecDef to the [combatant commanders](#) (CCDRs) for missions and forces assigned to their commands. This is commonly referred to as the “operational” [chain of command](#). The other branch, commonly referred to as the “administrative” chain of command, runs from the President, through the SecDef, to the Secretaries of the military Departments, and as prescribed by the Secretaries, to the commanders of military Service forces.

The Secretaries of the Military Departments exercise [administrative control](#) (ADCON) over Service forces through their respective Service chiefs and Service commanders. The Service chiefs, except as otherwise prescribed by law, perform their duties under the authority, direction, and control of the Secretaries of the respective military Departments to whom they are directly responsible.

See following figure, “Air Force Forces within the Chain of Command.”



ADCON - administrative control  
 AETF - air and space expeditionary task force  
 AEW - air expeditionary wing  
 CC - commander  
 COCOM - combatant command  
 COMAFFOR - commander, Air Force forces  
 OPCON - operational control  
 TACON - tactical control

### Air Force Forces within the Chain of Command



[ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL](#)

**COMMAND AUTHORITIES AND RELATIONSHIPS**

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**Clear and effective [command relationships](#) are central to effective operations and organizations.** In order to apply the [principles of war](#) and [tenets of airpower](#) to any organization, Airmen should fully understand the terms of command and support that underpin today's organizations and operations. A working understanding of command terminology and how forces are gained or placed in support is essential to understanding the relationships among components and the responsibilities inherent in organizations.

**The authority vested in a commander should be commensurate with the responsibility assigned. In other words, the commander with responsibility for a particular mission should have the authority necessary to carry out that mission.** The four types of operational command relationships are—[combatant command \(command authority\)](#) (COCOM), [operational control](#) (OPCON), [tactical control](#) (TACON), and support. These authorities flow through joint channels, from the Secretary of Defense to the [combatant commanders](#) (CCDRs), to subordinate [joint force commanders](#) (JFCs), and to Service and/or functional component commanders. The CCDR attaches various forces to the JFC and specifies the degree of control over each force element in terms of OPCON, TACON, or support. The JFC either retains and exercises these authorities directly, or (more normally) delegates appropriate authorities to the various subordinate component commanders. Thus, a [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR) actually exercises only those operational authorities delegated by the JFC. As an example, if the COMAFFOR is delegated OPCON, the COMAFFOR has the authority to move forces as required to accomplish the assigned missions. However, if the JFC retains OPCON, the COMAFFOR only has the authority to move forces as directed by the JFC.

[Administrative control](#) (ADCON) is that control, which flows from the Services' Title 10 responsibilities to "organize, train, and equip" their forces. Thus, ADCON is a Service command authority, which flows through Service, not joint, chains of command.

Two other relationships, [coordinating authority](#) and [direct liaison authorized](#) (DIRLAUTH) are useful for establishing collaborative relationships between organizations. Formal establishment of these relationships often assists in determining priorities among, for example, continental US-based organizations tasked to support multiple organizations overseas.

These authorities and controls when applied appropriately are the bedrock of effective joint and Service C2 and organization. They are more completely described in [Appendix A](#).

The following topics are relevant to this discussion:

- ✦ The differences between [“assignment” and “attachment” of forces, and forces that are “unassigned” or “retained”](#).
  - ✦ The four general [command relationship models](#) for Air Force forces.
  - ✦ Considerations for [transferring functionally organized forces to a geographic command](#).
  - ✦ A discussion on [reachback and distributed operations](#).
  - ✦ A discussion on [multinational and interagency considerations](#).
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[ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL](#)

**ASSIGNMENT AND ATTACHMENT OF FORCES**

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[Combatant commanders](#) (CCDRs) gain forces through assignment or attachment.

**ASSIGNMENT OF FORCES**

Forces are assigned to [combatant commands](#) (CCMDs) by the Secretary of Defense's (SecDef's) "*Forces for Unified Commands*" memorandum. Assignment of forces is relatively permanent. A force [assigned](#) to a CCMD may be transferred from that command only as directed by the SecDef and under procedures prescribed by the SecDef and approved by the President. A CCDR may subsequently organize assigned forces as necessary, to include the establishment of [subordinate unified commands](#) and [joint task forces](#) (JTFs). Establishing authorities for subordinate unified commands and JTFs may direct the assignment or attachment of their forces to those subordinate commands as appropriate. CCDRs exercise [combatant command \(command authority\)](#) (COCOM) over assigned forces. By law, COCOM cannot be delegated.

Service component commanders of assigned Service forces exercise all elements of [administrative control](#) (ADCON) through the administrative branch of the [chain of command](#).

**ATTACHMENT OF FORCES**

When a CCDR requires more forces or capabilities than those already assigned, he/she requests additional forces be [attached](#) to that gaining command. Attachment of forces, unlike assignment of forces, is temporary. The [command relationship](#) the gaining commander will exercise over such attached forces (and the losing commander will relinquish) should be specified by the SecDef in appropriate orders. A gaining CCDR will normally be given [operational control](#) (OPCON) over attached forces. The gaining CCDR then normally delegates control (usually OPCON) over gained forces to the appropriate Service component commander. The Service component commander exercises only specified elements of ADCON over attached Service forces. These specified ADCON elements should be delineated in the orders attaching the forces to the gaining command.

## AIR FORCE CAPABILITIES NOT ASSIGNED TO COMBATANT COMMANDS

Certain Air Force forces are not assigned to any CCDR but may still be attached to a CCDR or placed in a supporting relationship to one or more CCDRs as required for specific operations. These forces include forces that are required by the Service secretary to accomplish his/her assigned Title 10 responsibilities (e.g., Air Education and Training Command, Air Force Materiel Command, field operating agencies, etc.) and Service-retained forces such as Air Combat Command and other specialized units such as various information fusion centers and continental US-based units operating remotely piloted aircraft. These organizations exist within the Air Force's administrative chain of command yet may be capable of supporting ongoing military operations. These organizations may deploy personnel forward or support operations in place using [reachback](#). Their relationships with a regional [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR) may be governed by formal command relationships such as a [supporting/supported](#) relationship, by memorandum of agreement/understanding, or other establishing directive. Depending on how they are to be integrated and employed (deployed or in-place support), the COMAFFOR requests Air Force forces through his/her CCDR, to the Joint Staff. If approved by the SecDef, the Secretary of the Air Force publishes an [establishing directive](#) placing the tasked elements in support of a CCDR. The establishing directive designates the type and scope of support to be provided by the supporting capability to the supported force. If a support relationship does not provide the CCDR sufficient control over these forces, the SecDef may attach these forces with specification of OPCON to that CCDR.

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[ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL](#)

**COMMAND RELATIONSHIP MODELS FOR  
AIR FORCE FORCES**

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When employing military forces, a [combatant commander](#) (CCDR) first turns to those forces already [assigned](#). Assigned forces are delineated in the Secretary of Defense's (SecDef's) "*Forces for Unified Commands*" memorandum, and the CCDR exercises [combatant command \(command authority\)](#) (COCOM) over them. Additional forces beyond those assigned to the CCDR may be [attached](#) by SecDef action. Under current policies, attached forces may be provided through one of two specific Global Force Management allocation supporting processes: rotational force allocation in support of CCDR annual force needs, and emergent force allocation in support of CCDR emerging or crisis-based requests for capabilities and forces. The [deployment order](#) (DEPORD) should clearly delineate the degree of command authority to be exercised by the gaining commander. Forces temporarily transferred via SecDef action are normally attached with specification of [operational control](#) (OPCON) to the gaining CCDR.

**The DEPORD is the primary instrument for transferring forces and establishing supported and supporting relationships between CCDRs. Forces may also be transferred by an [execute order](#) which executes an approved [operation plan](#).** Other orders created during the planning process, such as [warning orders](#), [alert orders](#), [planning orders](#), and [fragmentary orders](#), may also specify or shape [command relationships](#), but they do not transfer forces. The SecDef, as the only authority for transferring forces between CCDRs, normally approves DEPORDs. This DEPORD should specify to which CCDR the deployed forces are assigned or attached and the command relationship (OPCON or [tactical control](#) [TACON]) to be exercised by the gaining commander. Air Force component commanders may shape command and support relationships by working through their [chains of command](#) to refine the details of orders being drafted by the Joint Staff. While the [joint force commander](#) (JFC) ultimately has the authority to determine the delegation of command among subordinates, Air Force commanders should make consistent recommendations and present forces in a consistent manner to the JFC.

**For Air Force forces, there are four general models for command relationships.** Considerations for these relationships should include the ability of gaining commands to receive the forces and to command and control them appropriately, the characteristics and support requirements of the forces involved, and the operating locations of the forces.

- ✦ Forces deployed and executing operations within the theater to which they are assigned or attached.
- ✦ Forces executing missions inside the theater of operations but based outside the theater (i.e., across [areas of responsibility](#) [AORs]).
- ✦ Functional forces with global missions.
- ✦ Transient forces.

These four models illustrate **the most probable combinations** in assigning responsibility for OPCON and [administrative control](#) (ADCON); **however, many nuances are possible**, and commanders must exercise sound professional judgment when setting up command relationships. (Note: In the following examples, “supported CCDR/JFC” specifically means the in-theater commander who is tasked with executing the operation for which the forces under discussion may be assigned or attached.)

## MODEL 1: IN-THEATER FORCES

In general, when Air Force forces deploy into a theater to conduct operations, OPCON of those forces should normally go forward to the CCDR to whom the President or SecDef has assigned responsibility for accomplishing the mission. To the maximum extent possible, specified elements of ADCON should also go forward to the regional [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR) to whom the forces are attached. Since not all elements of ADCON authorities and responsibilities are transferred to the forward based gaining commander, ADCON can and does run concurrently between the gaining COMAFFOR and the parent organizations of the deployed forces. Which elements of ADCON are specified to the forward COMAFFOR and which are retained by the parent organization should be clearly specified in the G-series orders that establish the expeditionary organization and in the DEPORDs that attach forces to that organization. The regional COMAFFOR already exercises OPCON and ADCON over Air Force forces assigned to that geographic CCDR.

Note that Air Force forces permanently based in the continental US (CONUS), although resident within the US Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) AOR, are not normally assigned to USNORTHCOM. If required, such forces need to be formally attached through SecDef orders before USNORTHCOM’s Air Force component, First Air Force (Air Forces Northern), can exercise any control of them.

## MODEL 2: OUT-OF-THEATER FORCES

There are two general cases in which Air Force forces may execute missions inside a theater of operations while based outside the theater. These cases involve CONUS-based forces, and forward-based forces operating outside the CONUS (OCONUS) and outside the AOR. In either case, the appropriate command authority should be relinquished by the supporting CCDR and gained by the commander responsible for executing the mission, while ADCON is dependent upon where the forces are based.

## ***CONUS-Based Forces***

CONUS-based forces that launch from their CONUS home station, conduct operations in another theater, and recover in CONUS should normally transfer OPCON to the supported CCDR/JFC upon sortie generation. ADCON should remain with the original component command. An example would be a bomber launching from CONUS, striking a target overseas under the command of a regional force, and returning to CONUS. In this example, OPCON should be gained by the supported CCDR/JFC who is executing the mission; this is the preferred arrangement. However, if the tasked CCDR/JFC is only granted TACON of these forces, OPCON in this case remains with the CCDR to whom the forces are assigned and ADCON remains with that CCDR's COMAFFOR.

CONUS-based forces that do not deploy, but provide support to forward-based operations, normally remain under the OPCON and ADCON authority of their owning command chain and establish support relationships with their forward customers. In the case of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) whose controllers and control systems remain in the CONUS, their remotely piloted aircraft and launch element, if based forward, are normally under the OPCON and ADCON of the regional COMAFFOR in which they are bedded down. The regional commander then typically exercises OPCON of the CONUS UAS control element while those crews are performing missions in support of that region. (Note: See related discussion on [reachback and distributed operations](#).)

## ***OCONUS Forces outside the AOR***

For OCONUS units stationed outside the theater of operations tasked to conduct sustained operations in that theater, OPCON should normally be relinquished by the supporting CCDR and gained by the geographic CCDR/JFC executing the mission, while ADCON is best held by the COMAFFOR of the geographic region in which they bed down. An example of this situation would be bombers stationed at Diego Garcia in the US Pacific Command AOR, but conducting operations under the command of US Central Command (USCENTCOM). The Commander, USCENTCOM would exercise OPCON of the bombers most likely through the COMAFFOR, the Commander, US Air Forces Central. The Commander, Pacific Air Forces (PACAF), would exercise ADCON through the established PACAF organizational structure but would have no operational responsibility or authority over the forces attached to Commander, USCENTCOM.

## **MODEL 3: FUNCTIONAL FORCES**

Functional forces (such as [air mobility](#) and [space forces](#)) satisfy mission requirements across multiple AORs and are thus best centrally controlled. For such forces, the functional CCDR normally retains OPCON of assigned forces and executes as a [supporting commander](#) to the supported geographic CCDR. However, mission requirements may sometimes mandate a higher degree of control than is possible with a support arrangement. If the geographic CCDR has the organic ability to properly

control the forces, then the SecDef may direct that global functional forces be temporarily attached with specification of OPCON or TACON to the geographic CCDR for the duration of the mission. Considerations for location of forces and mission to be accomplished will drive selection of a Model 1 or Model 2 type command relationship.

In those cases where functional forces bed down in a geographic CCDR's AOR, the Air Force host base commander (or senior Air Force officer present on the installation, if the Air Force is a tenant) normally exercises a minimum degree of ADCON, usually only for [force protection](#), Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ), dining and lodging, and some limited force reporting. (See the discussion on [ADCON responsibilities of host installation commanders](#) in this annex). The extent and nature of the elements of ADCON to be exercised by the geographic commander should be specified in DEPORDs and/or command-to-command agreements.

## **MODEL 4: TRANSIENT FORCES**

Geographic or local commanders do not normally exercise OPCON of transient forces (i.e., forces merely transiting an AOR or joint operations area, and not part of an [air expeditionary task force](#), and not participating in CCDR-sponsored joint exercises). However, such forces are subject to local force protection, general orders, dining and lodging, and administrative reporting requirements. Per [Joint Publication 1](#), "Transient forces within the assigned AOR of a CCDR are subject to that CCDR's orders in some instances (e.g., for coordination of emergency defense, force protection, or allocation of local facilities)." Transient forces are not part of the area commander's command, and the area commander is not in their normal chain of command.

## **FORCES IN EXERCISES**

Forces participating in joint exercises constitute a separate case with respect to those discussed earlier. Such forces under the orders of a CCDR- or other SecDef-directed training should normally be under the OPCON of the sponsoring CCDR. Forces participating in such joint training should normally be attached to the CCDR with specification of OPCON via SecDef approved DEPORDs.

Unless otherwise specified by the SecDef, and with the exception of the USNORTHCOM AOR, a geographic CCDR has TACON for exercise purposes whenever forces not assigned to that CCDR undertake exercises in that CCDR's AOR. TACON begins when the forces enter the AOR and is terminated upon completion of the exercise, after departing the AOR. In this context, TACON provides directive authority over exercising forces for purposes relating to that exercise only; it does not authorize operational employment of those forces. This blanket specification of TACON for exercise purposes does not apply to US Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) assets within any AOR or to forces deployed for exercises in the USNORTHCOM AOR. OPCON and TACON for USTRANSCOM forces or forces exercising in the USNORTHCOM AOR remain as established by the SecDef.

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ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

**TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONAL FORCES TO A  
GEOGRAPHIC COMMAND**

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

In some situations, a geographic commander may request additional functional forces beyond those apportioned or allocated during deliberate or crisis action planning. The decision to transfer functional forces, with specification of [operational control](#) (OPCON) to a geographic [combatant commander](#) (CCDR) should be balanced against competing needs across multiple [areas of responsibility](#) (AORs). In some cases, the requirement for OPCON over specific forces to accomplish the geographic CCDR's missions may be of higher priority than the competing worldwide mission requirements of the functional CCDR. Therefore, after coordination with the owning functional commander and upon Secretary of Defense (SecDef) approval, functional forces may be transferred to the geographic command and organized accordingly. The decision to attach additional functional forces has two parts. First, the decision should consider whether:

- ★ The geographic CCDR will use the forces at or near 100 percent of their capability with little or no residual capability for other global missions.
- ★ The forces will be used regularly and frequently over a period of time, not just for a single mission employment.
- ★ The geographic commander has the ability to effectively [command and control](#) the forces.

**If the answer to all three conditions above is “yes,” then the functional forces should be [attached](#) to the geographic [combatant command](#) (CCMD). If any of the above conditions are answered “no,” then the functional forces should remain under the OPCON of the functional CCDR's [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR) and be tasked in [support](#).**

If the decision is to attach forces, the second decision is whether the forces should be attached with specification of either OPCON or [tactical control](#) (TACON).

- ★ **Specification of OPCON:** OPCON is the more complete—and preferred—choice of control. It normally “provides authority to organize and employ commands and forces as the commander considers necessary to accomplish assigned missions. It does not include authoritative direction for logistics or matters of administration, discipline, internal organization, or unit training.” (Joint Publication 1, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*).

- ★ **Specification of TACON:** TACON is the more limited choice of control. It is defined as “the authority over forces that is limited to the detailed direction and control of movements or maneuvers within the operational area necessary to accomplish missions or tasks assigned.” [Joint Publication 1 states](#) “[w]hen transfer of forces to a joint force will be temporary, the forces will be attached to the gaining command, and JFCs, normally through the Service component commander, will exercise OPCON over the attached forces.” Thus, transfer and attachment with specification of TACON is not the expected norm. While it is possible for the SecDef to attach forces across CCMD lines with the specification of TACON in lieu of OPCON, such action would deviate from joint doctrine established in JP 1 and would result in a more complicated chain of command with OPCON and TACON split between two different CCDRs.

Regardless of which form of control is specified, regional COMAFFORs have inherent responsibilities for such issues as local [force protection](#), lodging, and dining. Thus, if a regional COMAFFOR holds OPCON of forces outside the AOR, he or she is not responsible for such issues—that is the responsibility of the COMAFFOR in the region in which they are bedded down. In a parallel fashion, if such out-of-region forces divert into bases in his/her region (for example, for emergencies), that COMAFFOR is now responsible for basic support and protection.

As an example, a CCDR requests tankers in support of a regional operation. If the tankers are totally committed to that operation and are unavailable to perform any other missions, OPCON of these tankers may be specified by the SecDef to be gained and exercised by the forward geographic CCDR/JFC. If, on the other hand, the tankers are only partially employed in that operation and thus are available for other missions (such as support to the intertheater air bridge), or there are competing priorities among other CCDRs for those tankers, the Commander, US Transportation Command, should retain OPCON to optimize overall tanker utilization. As another example, missile warning satellites can provide warning to the geographic CCDR/JFC through a direct support relationship, but the Commander, US Strategic Command, retains OPCON to optimize missile warning mission requirements globally.

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## ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

### REACHBACK AND DISTRIBUTED OPERATIONS

Last Updated: 20 July 2016

Commanders may use the concepts of reachback and distributed operations to execute operations and support forces deployed or operating in place from multiple locations. Communications and information systems should provide a seamless information flow of prioritized data to and from forward and rear locations.

#### REACHBACK

Reachback is defined as “**the process of obtaining products, services, and applications, or forces, or equipment, or material from organizations that are not forward deployed.**” Reachback may be provided from a supporting/supported relationship or by Service retained forces. This relationship gives the commander, Air Force forces (COMAFFOR) the support necessary to conduct operations while maintaining a smaller deployed footprint. Effective reachback enhances the operational capability and facilitates informed and timely decision-making by the COMAFFOR.

#### DISTRIBUTED OPERATIONS

Distributed operations are defined as **operations when independent or interdependent forces, some of which may be outside the joint operations area, participate in the operational planning and/or operational decision-making process to accomplish missions and objectives for commanders.** While Service-retained forces may provide reachback, forces conducting distributed operations should be assigned or attached to a combatant command. For instance, the Joint Space Operations Center may task the Global Positioning System operations center to provide required data to theater planners for planning of air strikes. While the relationships may vary according to the nature of the operation, the design of a distributed operation should enable a more survivable command and control (C2) network through distribution of tasks, information, and responsibilities. In some instances, the commander may establish a formal supported/supporting relationship between distributed nodes. In other instances, distributed nodes may have a horizontal relationship. Military commanders have used distributed C2 for many years. The method and means for controlling forces have changed, but military leaders have always distributed their operations among multiple echelons. What has changed in recent years is that technology enables more participants from greater distances to create and manage complex networks.

## SPLIT OPERATIONS

Split operations are a type of distributed operations. The term describes those **distributed operations conducted by a single C2 entity that is separated between two or more geographic locations**. A single commander should have oversight of all aspects of a split C2 operation. For example, sections of the air tasking order may be developed from a rear area or backup operation center to reduce the deployed [air operations center](#) (AOC) footprint. In this case the AOC is geographically separated and is a split operation. During split operations, the commander should be given the authorities necessary to ensure mission success.

Although distributed operations are similar to reachback, there is one major difference.

**Reachback provides ongoing combat support such as products, services, or equipment to the operation from the rear, while a distributed operation indicates actual involvement in operational planning and/or operational decision-making.** It is possible for an organization or individual to be involved in both. Information technology advances may further enhance distributed operations. **The goal of effective distributed operations is to support the operational commander in the field.** The concept of “reachback” allows functions to be supported by a staff at home station, to keep the manning and equipment footprint smaller at a forward location. Distributed operations, which may rely heavily on reachback support, vary by mission, circumstances, and level of conflict.

The decision to establish distributed or split operations

### Remotely Piloted Aircraft and Remote Split Operations

Current remotely piloted aircraft (RPA) technology provides extremely effective employment capabilities as well as unique (C2) challenges. One solution is a concept called remote split operations (RSO).

RSO refers to the geographical separation of the RPA and its launch and recovery crew, typically bedded down in a geographic combatant commander’s (CCDR) area of operations, from the mission crew, which generally remain in the continental US (CONUS). This enables the extension of RPA capabilities to almost anywhere in the world through a distributed secure network.

For RSO, the in-theater RPA and launch crew are typically assigned/attached to the CCDR, similar to other in-theater forces. However, the CONUS mission crew and control center may be formally attached to the CCDR based on Secretary of Defense-established global priorities and requirements, and can “swing” to support other CCDRs as those priorities and requirements change. This allows significant flexibility in RPA tasking and support, while allowing these high-demand but limited assets to best meet warfighter needs.

invokes several tradeoffs:

- ✦ The fewer the number of personnel/forces deployed forward, the less support is required to be pushed across great distances; however, face-to-face interaction between forward and rear decision makers may be limited, and decision making timelines may stretch.
- ✦ Having fewer personnel/forces forward reduces security requirements; however, their expertise is no longer immediately at hand for ad hoc problem solving.
- ✦ Reachback requires more bandwidth for communications. These links then become vulnerabilities. However, a distributed operation may arguably be more survivable and less prone to single-point failure.

Each Air Force C2 entity should have a defined function that contributes to an overall distributed operation, whether they provide information from a fixed location at home station, or whether they are forward deployed. In a distributed C2 operation, specific roles, functions, and capabilities at each node should be fully understood to effectively execute operations.

Depending on the scenario, communications capabilities, joint/combined requirements, and the political situation, C2 nodes may be required to operate in a distributed operations mode. To employ distributed operations most effectively, early and extensive planning is required to prepare for contingencies. Component staffs should already have plans drawn up to accommodate a variety of C2 arrangements for various scenarios, to include devolution of command in a degraded or contested environment.

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## ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

### MULTINATIONAL AND INTERAGENCY CONSIDERATIONS

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

Most operations today are not US-only. Many operations involve military forces of allies, and many operations also involve [intergovernmental organizations](#) (IGOs), [nongovernmental organizations](#) (NGOs), and regional organizations. Managing the myriad interrelationships is necessary, but often challenging. In many instances, direct command over these various entities is not possible, and [unity of effort](#) rather than [unity of command](#) becomes the goal.

### MULTINATIONAL OPERATIONS

Multinational operations are operations conducted by forces of two or more nations, and are usually undertaken within the structure of a coalition or alliance.

- ★ An [alliance](#) is “the relationship that results from a formal agreement [e.g., a treaty] between two or more nations for broad, long-term objectives that further the common interests of the members.”
- ★ A [coalition](#) is “an arrangement between two or more nations for common action.” Coalitions are formed by different nations with different objectives, usually for a single occasion or for longer cooperation in a narrow sector of common interest.

In a multinational force, the joint commanders become combined commanders; thus, a [joint force commander](#) becomes a combined force commander, a [joint force air component commander](#) becomes a combined force air component commander, etc. Similarly, an [air operations center](#) (AOC) (properly a joint air operations center [JAOC] in joint context) becomes a combined air operations center (CAOC) with representation that, as with a JAOC, reflects the composition of the force.

**An important point is that commanders may not have the same defined degree of control over forces (e.g., [operational control](#) [OPCON], [tactical control](#) [TACON], etc.) as in a US-only force; degrees of control may have to be negotiated.**

Sometimes, existing non-US controls may be used, as may be encountered in North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) operations by the use of NATO operational command (OPCOM), OPCON, tactical command (TACOM), and TACON; commanders and staff should be aware of the different nuances. Finally, each nation may retain its own [chain of command](#) over its forces and separate [rules of engagement](#); thereby further complicating unity of command. Thus, the challenge in multinational operations

is the effective integration and synchronization of available capabilities toward the achievement of common objectives through unity of effort despite disparate (and occasionally incompatible) command and control (C2) structures, capabilities, equipment, and procedures.

Per Joint Publication (JP) 3-16, Multinational Operations, commanders in multinational operations should consider the following:

- ★ **Respect.** In assigning missions, the commander should consider that national honor and prestige may be as important to a contributing nation as combat capability. All partners must be included in the planning process, and their opinions must be sought in mission assignment.
- ★ **Rapport.** US commanders and staffs should establish rapport with their counterparts from partner countries, as well as the multinational force commander. This requires personal, direct relationships that only they can develop.
- ★ **Knowledge of partners.** US commanders and their staffs should have an understanding of each member of the multinational force. Much time and effort is spent in learning about the enemy; a similar effort is required to understand the doctrine, capabilities, strategic goals, culture, religion, customs, history, and values of each partner.
- ★ **Patience.** Effective partnerships take time and attention to develop. Diligent pursuit of a trusting, mutually beneficial relationship with multinational partners requires untiring, even-handed patience. This is more difficult to accomplish within coalitions than within alliances; however, it is just as necessary.
- ★ **Mission focus.** When dealing with other nations, US forces should temper the need for respect, rapport, knowledge, and patience with the requirement to ensure that the necessary tasks are accomplished by those with the capabilities and authorities to accomplish those tasks. This is especially critical in the security line of operations, where failure could prove to have catastrophic results.
- ★ **Trust and confidence.** Commanders should engage other leaders of the multinational force to build personal relationships and develop trust and confidence. Developing these relationships is a conscious collaborative act rather than something that just happens. Commanders build trust through words and actions.

See JP 3-16 for more complete discussion on multinational operations.

## INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

Interagency coordination is “the coordination that occurs between elements of the Department of Defense [DOD], and engaged US Government agencies and departments for the purpose of achieving an objective” Attaining national objectives requires the efficient and effective use of the diplomatic, informational, economic, and

military [instruments of national power](#) supported by and coordinated with those of our allies and various IGOs, NGOs, and regional organizations.

“A large number of civilian agencies and organizations—many with indispensable practical competencies and significant legal responsibilities—interact with the Armed Forces of the United States and its multinational counterparts. Joint and multinational operations must be strategically integrated and operationally and tactically coordinated with the activities of participating USG agencies, IGOs, NGOs, [host nation](#) (HN) agencies, and the private sector to achieve common objectives. Within the context of DOD involvement, **interagency coordination** is the coordination that occurs between elements of DOD and engaged USG agencies for the purpose of achieving an objective. Interagency coordination forges the vital link between the US military and the other instruments of national power. Similarly, within the context of DOD involvement, **interorganizational coordination** is the interaction that occurs among elements of the DOD; engaged USG agencies; state, territorial, local, and tribal agencies; foreign military forces and government agencies; IGOs; NGOs; and the private sector. Successful interorganizational coordination enables the USG to build international and domestic support, conserve resources, and conduct coherent operations that more effectively and efficiently achieve common objectives.” ([JP 3-08, Interorganizational Coordination During Joint Operations](#))

**As with multinational operations, C2 is not as straightforward as within a US-only joint force, and unity of effort is the goal.**

“Achieving unity of effort requires the application of a comprehensive approach that includes coordination, consensus building, cooperation, collaboration, compromise, consultation, and deconfliction among all the stakeholders toward an objective. An inclusive approach of working closely with stakeholders is often more appropriate than a military C2 focused approach. Taking an authoritative, military approach may be counterproductive to effective interorganizational relationships, impede unified action, and compromise mission accomplishment. Gaining unity of effort is never settled and permanent; it takes constant effort to sustain interorganizational relationships.” ([JP 3-08](#))

See JP 3-08 for complete discussion, including planning, organization, and execution considerations.

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ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

**COMMANDING AIRPOWER**

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

Air Force expeditionary organization and preferred command arrangements are designed to address [unity of command](#), a key [principle of war](#). Clear lines of authority, with clearly identified commanders at appropriate echelons exercising appropriate control, are essential to achieving [unity of effort](#), reducing confusion, and maintaining priorities. Because of the joint nature of [airpower](#), early attention within the Air Force was placed on commanding joint air operations through a [joint force air component commander](#) (JFACC); less well appreciated was the role of the [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR). However, during numerous recent deployments, the Air Force has learned a great deal about the nuances of commanding Service operations afield. As a result, the Air Force no longer looks at the COMAFFOR's job, as some Air Force officers mistakenly did, as simply a "lesser included case" nested within the JFACC's tasks. Quite the opposite: it's the COMAFFOR who usually wears multiple hats.

It is important to distinguish here between an Air Force commander and a commander, Air Force forces; they are not necessarily synonymous. The former refers to any Air Force commander within a Service context (e.g., wing, group, or squadron commander). The latter is reserved exclusively for the senior Air Force commander directly responsible to a [joint force commander](#) within a joint context. Just as "all tigers are cats, but not all cats are tigers," so is every COMAFFOR an Air Force commander, but not every Air Force commander is a COMAFFOR.<sup>1</sup>

This section discusses the following related topics:

- ✦ A detailed presentation on [the COMAFFOR](#).
- ✦ An overview of [the JFACC](#).
- ✦ A discussion on controlling [other Services' aviation capabilities](#) that may be made available for tasking.
- ✦ A discussion on the challenges of [multi-hatting commanders](#).

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<sup>1</sup> For more discussion of this distinction, see *Air and Space Power Journal*, Nov-Dec 2013, "[Who's in Charge? Commander, Air Force Forces or Air Force Commander?](#)"



[ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL](#)

**THE COMMANDER, AIR FORCE FORCES**

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

The title of Commander, Air Force Forces (COMAFFOR) is reserved exclusively to the single Air Force commander of an Air Force Service component command assigned or attached to a joint force commander (JFC) at the unified combatant command, subordinate unified command, or joint task force (JTF) level. At the unified combatant command level, the combatant commander's (CCDR's) Air Force Service component is specified in the Secretary of Defense's (SecDef's) "Forces for Unified Commands" memorandum. The SecDef/CCDR may elect to permanently establish a subordinate unified command (subunified command) or temporarily establish a subordinate JTF as part of his/her organizational structure. The commanders of these subordinate joint forces are, by joint and Air Force doctrine, JFCs at a lower level than the CCDR. If Air Force forces are assigned or attached to these subordinate JFCs, that action creates an Air Force Service component with a separate COMAFFOR directly responsible to the appropriate JFC.

If Air Force forces are attached to a JFC, they should be presented as an air expeditionary task force (AETF). The AETF becomes the Air Force Service component to the JTF, and the AETF commander is the COMAFFOR to the JTF commander. **Thus, depending on the scenario, the position of COMAFFOR may exist simultaneously at different levels within a given theater as long as each COMAFFOR is separately assigned or attached to a different JFC.** In the case where Air Force forces are operating in support of a JTF but are not attached to it, they do not constitute a separate JTF-level Service component under a separate COMAFFOR. In this instance, there remains a single COMAFFOR at the theater level.

**The COMAFFOR provides unity of command.** To a JFC, a COMAFFOR provides a single face for all Air Force issues. Within the Air Force Service component, the COMAFFOR is the single commander who conveys commander's intent and is responsible for operating and supporting all Air Force forces assigned or attached to that joint force. Thus, the COMAFFOR commands forces through two separate branches of the chain of command: the operational branch and the administrative branch. The operational branch flows through joint channels from the SecDef, through the CCDR, to subordinate JFCs and component commanders, and is expressed in terms such as operational control (OPCON), tactical control (TACON), and support. The administrative branch runs from the SecDef, through the Secretary of the Air Force and the Air Force Chief of Staff to subordinate Air Force commanders through Service channels only. This authority is expressed as administrative control (ADCON). Command authorities are explained in more detail in Appendix A.

The COMAFFOR should normally be designated at a command level above the operating forces and should not be dual-hatted as commander of one of the subordinate operating units. This allows the COMAFFOR to focus at the operational level of war, while subordinate commanders lead their units at the tactical level of war.

## OPERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMAFFOR

When Air Force forces are assigned or attached to a JFC, the JFC normally receives OPCON of these forces. This authority is best exercised through subordinate JFCs and Service component commanders and thus is normally delegated accordingly. **If not delegated OPCON, or if the stated command authorities are not clear, the COMAFFOR should request delegation of OPCON.** When the CDR delegates OPCON of the Air Force component forces to the COMAFFOR, the COMAFFOR has the following responsibilities: (Note: if the COMAFFOR is also designated as the joint force air component commander [JFACC], he/she carries out many of these responsibilities through that authority. Refer to JP 3-30, Command and Control of Joint Air Operations, for more discussion of the JFACC.)

- ★ Make recommendations to the JFC on proper employment of forces in the Air Force component.
- ★ Accomplish assigned tasks for operational missions.
- ★ Develop and recommend courses of action (COAs) to the JFC.
- ★ Develop a strategy and operation plan that states how the COMAFFOR plans to exploit Air Force capabilities to support the JFC's objectives.
- ★ Develop a joint air operations plan (JAOP) and air operations directive to support the JFC's objectives.
- ★ Recommend and/or implement, when passed down by the JFC, theater rules of engagement (ROE) for all assigned and



*[General MacArthur] had finished his talk, when one of the correspondents said, "General, what is the Air Force doing today?" General MacArthur said, "Oh, I don't know. Go ask General Kenney." The newspaperman said, "General, do you mean to say you don't know where the bombs are falling?" MacArthur turned to him, grinned, and said, "Of course I know where they are falling. They are falling in the right place. Go ask General Kenney where it is."*

– George C. Kenney, *General Kenney Reports: A Personal History of the Pacific War*

attached forces. For those Service or functional components that operate organic air assets, it should be clearly defined when the air component ROE also apply to their operations (this would normally be recommended).

- ★ Make [air apportionment](#) recommendations to the JFC.
- ★ Plan, coordinate, allocate, and task Service forces and joint forces made available.
- ★ Normally serve as the [supported commander](#) for the following operations as directed by the JFC. As the supported commander, the COMAFFOR has the authority to designate the target priority, [effects](#), and timing of these operations and attack targets across the entire [joint operations area](#) (JOA) in accordance with JFC guidance, to include coordinated targets within land and maritime [areas of operations](#) (AOs).
  - ★ ★ [Strategic attack](#)
  - ★ ★ [Counterair](#) (to include [integrated air and missile defense](#))
  - ★ ★ [Counterland](#)
  - ★ ★ [Countersea](#)
  - ★ ★ [Space control](#)
  - ★ ★ [Air mobility](#)
  - ★ ★ [Information operations](#)
  - ★ ★ Theater airborne [intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance](#).
- ★ Normally serve as [supporting commander](#), as directed by the JFC, for operations such as [close air support](#) (CAS), [air interdiction](#) within other components' AOs, and maritime support.
- ★ If so designated, act as [airspace control authority](#) (ACA), [area air defense commander](#) (AADC), [space coordinating authority](#) (SCA), and [electronic warfare control authority](#), and develop plans and products associated with these responsibilities.
- ★ Coordinate [personnel recovery](#) operations, including [combat search and rescue](#) (CSAR).
- ★ Direct [intratheater air mobility](#) operations and coordinate them with [intertheater](#) air mobility operations.
- ★ Coordinate support for [special operations](#) requirements with the [joint force special operations component commander](#) or the [joint special operations task force](#) commander.

- ✦ Perform [assessments](#) of air component operations at the operational (component) and tactical levels.
- ✦ Conduct joint training, including the training, as directed, of components of other Services in joint operations for which the COMAFFOR has or may be assigned primary responsibility, or for which the Air Force component's facilities and capabilities are suitable.

## ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMAFFOR

Commanders of Air Force components have responsibilities and authorities that derive from their roles in fulfilling the Service's ADCON function. Within the administrative branch, the COMAFFOR has complete ADCON of all assigned Air Force component forces and specified ADCON of all attached Air Force component forces. The specified responsibilities listed below apply to all attached forces, regardless of MAJCOM or Air Force component (regular, Guard, or Reserve). The COMAFFOR also has some ADCON responsibilities for Air Force elements and personnel assigned to other joint force components (such as liaisons). The Air National Guard (ANG) and Air Force Reserve Command retain all other ADCON responsibilities, such as Reserve Component activation, inactivation, partial [mobilization](#), and length of tour. Additionally, intertheater forces, such as [intertheater airlift](#) and forces transiting another COMAFFOR's area of interest, are subject to the ADCON authority of the respective COMAFFOR while transiting that COMAFFOR's area for administrative reporting and for TACON for [force protection](#) requirements derived from the geographic CCDR.

As the Service component commander to a JFC at any level, the COMAFFOR has the following responsibilities:

- ✦ Organize, train, and sustain assigned and attached Air Force forces for CCDR-assigned missions.
  - ✦ ✦ Prescribe the chain of command within the Air Force Service component.
  - ✦ ✦ Maintain [reachback](#) between the Air Force component and other supporting Air Force elements. Delineate responsibilities between forward and rear elements.
  - ✦ ✦ Provide training in Service-unique doctrine, tactical methods, and techniques.
  - ✦ ✦ Provide for logistics and mission support functions normal to the command.
- ✦ Inform the JFC (and the CCDR, if affected) of planning for changes in logistics support that would significantly affect operational capability or sustainability sufficiently early in the planning process for the JFC to evaluate the proposals prior to final decision or implementation.

- ✦ Provide lateral liaisons with Army, Navy, Marines, and special operations components, and [coalition](#) partners.
- ✦ Maintain internal administration and discipline, including application of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ).
- ✦ Establish [force protection](#) and other local defense requirements.
- ✦ Provide Service [intelligence](#) matters and oversight of intelligence activities to ensure compliance with laws, executive orders, policies, and directives.

The COMAFFOR is responsible for overseeing the morale, welfare, safety, and security of assigned and attached forces. Subordinate commanders issue orders and direct actions in support of those responsibilities and ensure these orders and directives are consistent with the policies, directives, and intent of the COMAFFOR exercising ADCON of those forces. The responsibilities of lead commands are to organize, train, equip, and provide forces; the responsibility of the COMAFFOR is to ensure specialized training is conducted based on mission needs. The COMAFFOR and properly designated subordinate commanders exercise disciplinary authority in accordance with the UCMJ and relevant Air Force Instructions. These commanders advise parent MAJCOMs of any disciplinary action taken against deployed personnel. Overlapping and interconnecting areas of ADCON shared among the various commanders make it essential that appropriate written orders clearly state which elements of ADCON authority and responsibility are executed by which commander.

## **ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES AS THE SERVICE COMPONENT COMMANDER TO A COMBATANT COMMANDER**

When the COMAFFOR is the CCDR's Air Force Service component commander, he/she also has the following additional operational and administrative responsibilities:

- ✦ Develop program and budget requests that comply with CCDR guidance on war-fighting requirements and priorities.
- ✦ Inform the CCDR (and any intermediate JFCs) of program and budget decisions that may affect joint operation planning.
- ✦ Support the CCDR's theater campaign plans through development of appropriate supporting Service plans.
  - ✦ ✦ Develop steady-state strategy to support the CCDR's strategy.
  - ✦ ✦ Contribute to the development of CCDR steady-state campaign plans and security cooperation country plans.
  - ✦ ✦ Develop campaign support plans in support of CCDR campaign plans.

- ✧ ✧ Develop security cooperation country plans in support of CCDR security cooperation country plans.
  - ✧ ✧ Recommend and/or implement policy and rules of engagement for the conduct of steady-state operations, including planning, execution, and assessment.
  - ✧ ✧ Provide commander's intent to inform tactical-level planning, execution, and assessment.
  - ✧ ✧ Execute and assess steady-state operations.
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[ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL](#)

**THE JOINT FORCE AIR COMPONENT COMMANDER**

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

In the conduct of joint air operations, the [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR) is normally designated as the joint force air component commander (JFACC), not merely due to providing the preponderance of forces but also due to the ability to [command and control airpower](#) through an [air operations center](#) (AOC), which forms the core of the JFACC's joint AOC (JAOC). This is why the COMAFFOR trains to act as the JFACC. It is rare that sizeable Air Force forces have been present in a JTF, and the COMAFFOR has not been the JFACC. While joint doctrine discusses the roles and responsibilities of the JFACC in adequate detail, it is important to present a basic discussion here in Service doctrine in parallel with discussion in Joint Publication 3-30, [Command and Control of Joint Air Operations](#).

If aviation assets from more than one Service are present within a joint force, the [joint force commander](#) (JFC) normally designates a JFACC to exploit the full capabilities of joint air operations. **The JFACC should be the Service component commander with the preponderance of forces to be tasked and the ability to plan, task, and control joint air operations.** If working with allies in a coalition or alliance operation, the JFACC may be designated as the combined force air component commander. The JFACC recommends the proper employment of air component forces from multiple components. The JFACC also plans, coordinates, allocates, tasks, executes, and assesses joint air operations to accomplish assigned operational missions. **Because of the wide scope of joint air operations, the JFACC typically maintains a similar theaterwide or [joint operations area](#) (JOA)-wide perspective as the JFC.** The JFACC, as with any component commander, should not also be dual-hatted as the JFC as the scope of command is usually too broad for any one commander and staff.

**Functional component commanders normally exercise [tactical control](#) (TACON) of forces made available to them by the JFC.** Thus, a COMAFFOR normally exercises [operational control](#) (OPCON) of [assigned](#) and [attached](#) Air Force forces and, acting as a JFACC, normally exercises TACON of forces made available for tasking (i.e., those forces not retained for their own Service's organic operations).

If the JFACC is appointed from another Service, the COMAFFOR relinquishes control of those Air Force component forces to be made available to the JFACC as directed by the JFC. In all cases, the COMAFFOR maintains an effective command and control structure to perform Service operational and administrative functions. In addition, the COMAFFOR should coordinate with the JFACC through a liaison element.

Refer to JP 3-30 for more complete discussion of the JFACC's role and the planning processes that support joint air component employment.

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ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

**CONTROL OF OTHER SERVICES' AVIATION CAPABILITIES**

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

When the commander, Air Force forces (COMAFFOR) is designated as the joint force air component commander (JFACC), he/she may control aviation assets of other Services, in whole or in part, depending on the situation. However, he/she only controls those capabilities “made available for tasking” as directed by the joint force commander (JFC). The other Services have developed their air arms with differing doctrinal and operating constructs in mind, and may retain control of some or all of their assets to perform their organic scheme of maneuver. These tactical mission priorities (primarily support of surface forces) may constrain their availability to conduct the broader scope of joint air component operations at the strategic and operational levels of war. Similar concerns also apply to the aviation arms of our allies. The COMAFFOR should consider these differing philosophies when developing the air component portion of a joint campaign.

Regardless of whether the COMAFFOR, as the JFACC, exercises tactical control of other Services' forces, the COMAFFOR, in the normally expected additional roles of airspace control authority, area air defense commander (AADC), space coordinating authority, and electronic warfare control authority, normally requires inclusion of such forces on the air tasking order (ATO) and airspace control order (ACO). This provides situational awareness of all friendly aviation in the area of responsibility/joint operations area, prevents fratricide, and deconflicts airspace.

- ★ Army aviation assets. These assets are normally retained for employment as organic forces within its combined arms paradigm. However, some Army helicopters could be employed in close air support, interdiction, or other missions, in which case they may come under the purview of the COMAFFOR when the COMAFFOR has been tasked to plan and execute the theater interdiction effort. The same can hold true for other systems (such as the Army Tactical Missile System) when employed for interdiction or offensive counterair, depending on tasking and target location. As a minimum, Army aviation elements, including some unmanned systems, should comply with the ACO to deconflict airspace and friendly air defense planning. Placing Army aviation assets on the ATO/ACO reduces the risk of fratricide and provides better overall integration with other joint air component operations. Additionally, Army Patriot surface-to-air missiles and Theater High Altitude Air Defense (THAAD) capabilities should be integrated into the overall theater defensive counterair effort and may operate in a direct support role to the COMAFFOR acting as AADC.

- ★ Navy aviation assets. These assets include carrier-based aircraft, land-based naval aircraft, and missiles. They provide a diverse array of power projection capabilities. Such assets, beyond those retained as needed for fleet defense and related naval missions, are usually available for tasking via the air tasking process. Additionally, Navy Aegis air and missile defense capabilities may be integrated into the overall theater [defensive counterair](#) effort. As with Army aviation assets, Navy aviation assets, including unmanned systems, should comply with the ACO for airspace deconfliction and air defense planning.
  - ★ Marine aviation assets. The primary mission of Marine aviation is support of the Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF) ground element. Sorties in excess of organic MAGTF direct support requirements should be provided through the JFC to the COMAFFOR for ATO tasking. (Note: Marine sorties provided for tasking for such theater missions as long range [reconnaissance](#), theater air interdiction or defensive counterair, are not considered “excess” sorties.)
  - ★ Special operations forces (SOF) aviation assets. The JFC may assign control of SOF aviation forces to either a Service or a functional component commander. When SOF air assets are employed as part of joint SOF operations, the JFC may assign control of those forces to the [joint force special operations component commander](#) (JFSOCC), who may in turn designate a [joint special operations air component commander](#) responsible for planning and executing joint special air operations. However, if SOF aviation assets are assigned primarily in support of the theater air operation, then the JFC may delegate control of those assets to the COMAFFOR as part of the [air expeditionary task force](#). Whether operating autonomously or in conjunction with conventional forces, special operations should be synchronized and closely coordinated with other air activities supporting the theater campaign. In order to coordinate and deconflict operations in their common operating environment the JFSOCC and the JFACC exchange liaison teams. The JFSOCC provides the air operations center a [special operations liaison element](#) to coordinate, deconflict, and synchronize SOF operations, [strategy](#), and plans with conventional air, and if required, the JFSOCC in turn receives a [joint air component coordination element](#) from the COMAFFOR.
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ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

**MULTI-HATTING COMMANDERS / SPAN OF COMMAND**

Last Reviewed: 7 Nov 2014

Caution should be applied when multi-hatting commanders. Too many “hats” may distract a commander from focusing on the right level of war at the right time, or may simply overwhelm the commander with detail. Of equal importance is the fact that a commander’s staff can usually operate effectively only at one [level of war](#) at a time. **If a commander wears several hats, it is preferable that the associated responsibilities lie at the same level of war.** While it is normally inappropriate for either a Service or a functional component commander to also serve as the [joint force commander](#) (JFC), it is entirely appropriate for a [commander, Air Force forces](#), to also serve as the [joint force air component commander](#), [airspace control authority](#), [area air defense commander](#), [space coordinating authority](#), and [electronic warfare control authority](#), since all six functions lie at the [operational level of war](#) and all six functions are supported through the same command node (the [air operations center](#)). To alleviate the overload, a multi-hatted commander may delegate some functions (but not the ultimate responsibility) to appropriate deputies.

More challenging are those instances when a commander’s hats vertically span several levels of war, as in the case when the JFC (normally acting at the theater-strategic level) is also acting as a functional component commander (operational level), and also as the commander of one of the operating (tactical) units. In such cases, the commander may be inadvertently drawn to the tactical level of detail at the expense of the operational-level fight. Also, dual- or multi-hatting a functional or Service component commander as the JFC raises a special caution in itself:

“...dual-hatting a commander also means dual-hatting the commander’s staff which can result in forcing the staff to operate at the operational and tactical levels simultaneously” (Joint Publication 1, [Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States](#)).

Thus, although this option is available to [combatant commanders](#) when designing subordinate [joint task forces](#), caution is needed when vertically multi-hatting commanders, as it tends to create “part-time commanders.”



[ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL](#)

**COMMAND AND CONTROL MECHANISMS**

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

The [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR) requires [command and control mechanisms](#) to assist in exercising [operational control](#) (OPCON), [tactical control](#) (TACON), and [administrative control](#) (ADCON). The COMAFFOR normally uses some form of an [air operations center](#) (AOC) and a Service component staff, commonly called an [Air Force forces \(AFFOR\) staff](#), to exercise such control.

The core capabilities of the baseline AOC and AFFOR staff are well established, but should be tailored in size and function according to the operation. Not all operations require a “full-up” AOC with over 1,000 people or a large AFFOR staff. Smaller operations, such as some humanitarian operations, can in fact make do with a small control center that does little more than scheduling and reporting. Also, not all elements of the operations center or AFFOR staff need be forward; some may operate “over the horizon” using [reachback](#) to reduce the forward footprint. The goal is to maximize reachback and minimize forward presence as much as possible.

This section discusses the following topics:

- ✦ An [overview of the AOC](#).
- ✦ A similar [overview of the AFFOR staff](#).
- ✦ An overview of the various [liaisons that may be present in an AOC](#).
- ✦ An overview of the [joint air component coordination element](#) that is often used to provide an airpower focal point to other component headquarters in a joint force.



## ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

### AIR OPERATIONS CENTER

Last Reviewed: 7 Nov 2014

In general terms, an air operations center (AOC) is the Air Force component commander's command and control (C2) center that provides the capability to plan, direct, and assess the activities of assigned and attached forces. **AOCs do not work in isolation**; they require appropriate connectivity to operations centers of higher headquarters (e.g., to the joint force headquarters for the operational branch, and to senior Air Force headquarters for the administrative branch), to lateral headquarters (e.g., other joint force components), to subordinate assigned and attached Air Force units, and to other functional and geographic AOCs as necessary. The overall C2 structure should make maximum use of reachback.

An AOC, along with subordinate C2 elements, should be tailored in size and capability to the mission. An AOC should generally be capable of the following basic tasks:

- ✦ Develop the component strategy and requisite planning products.
- ✦ Task, execute, and assess day-to-day component operations.
- ✦ Plan and execute intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance tasks appropriate to assigned missions.
- ✦ Conduct operational-level assessment.

Depending on the nature of the mission and the tailoring of the component, additional AOC tasks may include, but are not limited to, integrating intertheater air mobility support; developing and issuing airspace control procedures; and providing overall direction of defense appropriate for the operating domains (e.g., theater air and missile defense; cyberspace defense; space defense). While these operations centers are organic to Air Force operations, with proper augmentation from the other Services and coalition partners they may evolve into a joint or combined AOC (JAOC or CAOC), depending on the type of operation and nature of the forces within the air component, and whether the commander, Air Force forces (COMAFFOR) is also acting as the joint force air component commander (JFACC) or combined force air component commander (CFACC).

AOCs and their subordinate C2 elements may be geographically oriented or functionally oriented. To bring all the Air Force's capabilities together for a given operation or activity, the AOCs normally work together in a mutually supporting command arrangement, with one of them designated as the supported center.

See [Appendix B](#) for a summary of baseline AOC organization. For more detailed guidance on internal structure and procedures, refer to [Air Force Instruction 13-1AOC, Volume 3, Operational Procedures—Air and Space Operations Center](#).

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ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

**AIR FORCE FORCES (AFFOR) STAFF**

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

The Air Force forces (AFFOR) staff is the mechanism through which the [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR) exercises responsibilities across the [range of military operations](#) (ROMO), from steady state operations in the engagement phase through [major operations](#) and [campaigns](#). These responsibilities include the deployment, basing, sustainment, and redeployment of Air Force forces. During steady-state operations, the AFFOR staff supports the COMAFFOR in both operational and administrative responsibilities. The operational responsibilities include the planning, execution, and assessment of steady-state operations in support of the [combatant commander](#) (CCDR) theater campaign plan. The administrative responsibilities include those activities for organizing, training, and equipping Air Force forces. Given that both the AFFOR staff and [air operations center](#) (AOC) perform aspects of [command and control](#) (C2) in support of the COMAFFOR, the AFFOR staff should develop a habitual working relationship with the AOC to help fulfill the COMAFFOR's full range of responsibilities and to integrate overall Service component staff efforts with the AOC [battle rhythm](#).

An AFFOR staff should be ready to fill one or more roles: that of a theater-wide Air Force Service component, an Air Force warfighting component within a [joint task force](#) (JTF), or the core within a JTF headquarters. **The COMAFFOR should avoid dual- or triple-hatting the AFFOR staff to the maximum extent possible. Dual- or triple-hatting may have detrimental consequences as the staff struggles to focus at the right level of war at the right time. Manning and distribution of workload may limit the staff's ability to cover all involved duties simultaneously.**<sup>1</sup>

The AFFOR staff's function is to support and assist the COMAFFOR in preparing the Air Force component to carry out the functions and tasks assigned by the [joint force commander](#) (JFC). The exact nature of the AFFOR staff's responsibilities will vary depending on the level of the JFC to which the Air Force component is assigned or attached. An AFFOR staff may support the COMAFFOR at either the theater or the JTF level and must be prepared to adapt its focus accordingly.

The structure and division of labor within an AFFOR staff that is dual-tasked as both a Service component to a CCDR and a Service component headquarters AFFOR staff supporting a JTF (for example, as currently found within the Air Force component in US

<sup>1</sup> The note on workload distribution and the recommendation on augmentation are lessons learned during Exercise AUSTERE CHALLENGE 2010.

Central Command) may find itself split between the broad theater-level Service responsibilities and the JTF-level operational responsibilities. This would likely require two groups within the AFFOR staff, one to focus on theater component staff activities and the other on operational warfighting issues. In accordance with Service and joint doctrinal admonitions against dual-hatting a commander vertically across different levels of war, it would similarly be a mistake to dual-hat a single AFFOR staff for both of these functions, as one function invariably suffers due to the inability to properly focus at the correct level of war at the right time; differences in battle rhythms within the joint force; differing levels of connection within [interagency](#) processes; and other similar challenges.

An AFFOR staff may have a third role in addition to operational staff and Service staff: forming the core for a JTF headquarters staff, as in scenarios when the COMAFFOR is dual-hatted as the JFC. In such a scenario, the AFFOR staff, either in whole or in part, would be augmented by joint and [coalition](#) staff as required. Another option for staffing a JTF headquarters might be to pull a slice from the AFFOR staff as an add-on to another Service's staff to form the core of the JTF staff. In either case, the AFFOR staff would require augmentation from outside the theater to backfill the manning requirements. As with the previously-described division of labor between a theater-wide Service component and operational warfighting component, the same caveats apply: those AFFOR staff individuals functioning as a JTF headquarters should be separate from the other AFFOR staff activities.

See [Appendix C](#) for a summary of baseline AFFOR staff organization.

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[ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL](#)

**LIAISONS IN THE AOC**

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

Depending on the nature of the operation, the [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR), may have a number of [liaison](#) teams and liaison officers (LNOs) within the [air operations center](#) (AOC) to facilitate planning and execution among the other components in the joint force.

**Component Liaisons.** Component liaisons work for their respective component commanders and with the COMAFFOR and staff. Each component normally provides liaison elements that work within the AOC and [AFFOR staff](#). These liaison elements consist of experienced specialists who provide component planning and tasking expertise and coordination capabilities. They help integrate, coordinate, and deconflict their component's participation in joint air component operations. The air component may require other liaison augmentation to support AOC functions such as Coast Guard, Defense Intelligence Agency, National Security Agency, Central Intelligence Agency, National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, Air Force ISR Agency, National Reconnaissance Office, and Federal Aviation Administration in various operational and support areas.

**Battlefield Coordination Detachment (BCD).** The BCD supports integration of air component operations with Army operations. BCD personnel are integrated into AOC divisions to support planning; operations; [air defense](#); [intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance](#); [airlift](#); [logistics](#); [airspace control](#); and communications. In particular, the BCD coordinates ground force priorities, requests, and items of interest. One of the BCD's most important functions is to coordinate boundary line and [fire support coordination line](#) changes and timing. The BCD provides ground [order of battle](#) (both friendly and enemy) situational awareness and expertise into the AOC and normally briefs the ground situation/intelligence update. The BCD may also provide current ground situation inputs to AOC teams for incorporation into daily briefings and intelligence summaries.

**Naval and Amphibious Liaison Element (NALE).** The NALE personnel from the maritime components support the AOC in integrating naval air, naval fires, and [amphibious operations](#) into theater air operations and monitor and interpret the maritime battle situation for the AOC. When required, the NALE brings maritime order of battle (both friendly and enemy) situational awareness and provides update and intelligence briefings. The NALE may also provide input to AOC teams for incorporation into daily briefings and intelligence summaries.

**Marine Liaison Element (MARLE).** MARLEs are representatives of the commander, Marine Forces (COMMARFOR) and the associated aviation combat element commander. The MARLEs support the COMAFFOR in integrating Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF) fires, maneuver, and Marine air into the theater campaign and supporting [joint air operations plan](#). This team should be well versed in the MAGTF commander's guidance, intentions, schemes of maneuver, and direct support aviation plan.

**Special Operations Liaison Element (SOLE).** The [joint force special operations component commander](#) (JFSOCC) provides a SOLE to the COMAFFOR (or appropriate Service component air command and control facility). The SOLE coordinates, synchronizes, and deconflicts SOF air and surface operations within the [area of responsibility](#) through the [air tasking order](#) and [airspace control order](#). The SOLE chief, serving as the JFSOCC's representative to the COMAFFOR, places LNOs throughout the AOC staff.

**Coalition/Allied LNOs.** LNOs representing coalition/allied surface forces may improve AOC situational awareness regarding the disposition of friendly forces, especially when those forces do not have a mature theater air control system. They are also essential for [unity of effort](#) for coalition air defense operations and airspace deconfliction. When teamed with linguists, they can help overcome language barriers with remote allied/coalition forces. In force projection scenarios into an immature theater, AOC directors should anticipate the need for LNOs and actively seek them out via the JFC staff, in-country military group, staff country team, or direct contact with coalition forces, if necessary.

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[ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL](#)

**THE JOINT AIR COMPONENT COORDINATION ELEMENT**

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

The [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR), when acting as the [joint force air component commander](#) may establish one or more joint air component coordination elements (JACCEs) with other [component](#) commanders' headquarters to better integrate the air component's operations with their operations, and with the supported [joint task force](#) (JTF) headquarters (if the theater COMAFFOR is designated in support to a JTF) to better integrate air component operations within the overall joint force. When established, these elements act as the COMAFFOR's primary representatives to the respective commanders and facilitate interaction among the respective staffs. (Note: in previous Air Force doctrine, the JACCE was simply known as the ACCE.)

The JACCE facilitates integration by exchanging current [intelligence](#), operational data, and support requirements, and by coordinating the integration of COMAFFOR requirements for [airspace coordinating measures](#), [fire support coordinating measures](#), [close air support](#), [air mobility](#), and space requirements. As such, the JACCE is a [liaison](#) element, not a command and control node; thus, the JACCE normally has no authority to direct or employ forces. The make-up of the JACCE is dependent on the scope of the operation and the size of the staff they liaise with. Element expertise may include plans, operations, intelligence, [airspace management](#), logistics, space, and air mobility, as needed. The JACCE also communicates the JFC's or component commander's decisions and interests to the COMAFFOR. However, the JACCE should not replace, replicate, or circumvent normal request mechanisms already in place in the component/JTF staffs, nor supplant normal planning performed by the [air operations center](#) (AOC) and [AFFOR staff](#). The JACCE director is the COMAFFOR's personal and official representative, and as such should have sufficient rank to effectively work with the component or JTF commander to which he or she is attached. Finally, to maintain proper perspective and focus, the JACCE director should not normally be dual-hatted as the commander of a tactical unit.

Normally, the JACCE should:

- ★ Ensure the COMAFFOR is aware of each commander's priorities and plans.
- ★ Ensure the COMAFFOR staff coordinates within their surface component/JTF headquarters counterparts to work issues.
- ★ Ensure appropriate commanders are aware of the COMAFFOR's capabilities and limitations ([constraints](#), [restraints](#), and restrictions).

- ✦ Ensure appropriate commanders are aware of the COMAFFOR's plan to support the surface commander's scheme of maneuver and the JFC's intent and objectives.
- ✦ Facilitate COMAFFOR staff processes with the surface/JTF commanders. Provide oversight of other COMAFFOR liaisons to component/JTF headquarters staffs, if directed.
- ✦ Ensure information flows properly between the AOC, sister components, and JFC.

For further readings on recent JACCE operations in Afghanistan, see the article "NATO Air Command–Afghanistan: The Continuing Evolution of Airpower Command and Control" in [Air and Space Power Journal](#).

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ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

**ORGANIZING AIR FORCE FORCES**

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

**Organization is critically important to effective and efficient operations. Service and joint force organization and command relationships—literally, who owns what, and who can do what with whom, and when—easily create the most friction within any operation.** Therefore, it is absolutely essential that Airmen understand the fundamentals of Air Force and joint organization, command relationships, and responsibilities of the senior Air Force commander.

Air Force organization and preferred command arrangements are designed to address unity of command, a key principle of war. **Clear lines of authority, with clearly identified commanders at appropriate echelons exercising appropriate control, are essential to achieving unity of effort, reducing confusion, and maintaining priorities.** During numerous deployments in the last decade, the Air Force has learned a great deal about the nuances of commanding Service operations afield.

**The key to successful employment of Air Force forces as part of a joint force effort is providing a single Air Force commander with the responsibility and authority to properly organize, train, equip and employ Air Force forces to accomplish assigned functions and tasks. The title of this commander is Commander, Air Force Forces (COMAFFOR).** Operationally, the COMAFFOR should be prepared to employ Air Force forces as directed by the joint force commander (JFC), and if directed be prepared to employ joint air forces as the joint force air component commander. In either event, the COMAFFOR should also ensure that Air Force forces are prepared to execute the missions assigned by the JFC.

The air expeditionary task force (AETF) is the preferred organization for Air Force forces afield. Even if an AETF is not formally formed (perhaps due to the size of the contingent or the nature of the operation), the AETF model can still be used as a template to answer some basic questions:

- ✦ What is the operational branch of the chain of command? Who is in charge of the operational mission and to whom does the Air Force contingent report?
- ✦ What is the Service administrative branch of the chain of command? Who is in charge of the Air Force contingent and to whom does that senior Airman look for Service support (which Air Force command, installation, or unit)?

- ✦ What [command and control mechanisms](#) does the contingent need? A fully formed and staffed [air operations center](#) and [AFFOR staff](#)? A small planning cell? A slice of a squadron or wing operations center? Or just a cell phone or radio link back to the home station?
- ✦ What formal orders are required to attach the contingent or personnel to another agency? [Deployment orders](#), G-series orders, or simple temporary duty orders?
- ✦ What additional Service and joint training may be required to enable the deploying Airmen to properly accomplish the mission?

This section presents discussion on the following topics:

- ✦ The differences between [regionally and functionally organized Air Force forces](#).
  - ✦ An overview of the [Air Expeditionary Force](#) concept.
  - ✦ A detailed review of the [air expeditionary task force](#), including [internal organization](#) and [examples](#).
  - ✦ A discussion of [how regional and functional Air Force forces may be integrated](#) through the use of liaisons.
  - ✦ A brief summary of [nuclear support to regional commands](#).
  - ✦ Some [organizational considerations for operations in the homeland](#).
  - ✦ An overview of [how the Air Reserve Components are integrated](#) into Air Force operations.
  - ✦ A review of the responsibilities of a [senior/host installation commander](#), dealing with mixes of forces on a single installation.
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ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

**REGIONAL AND FUNCTIONAL ORGANIZATION**

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

**REGIONAL ORGANIZATION AND CONTROL**

All military missions are ultimately under the authority of a joint force commander (JFC) at the appropriate level. If the entire theater is engaged, the combatant commander (CCDR) may be the JFC. If the situation is less than theater-wide, the CCDR may establish a subordinate joint task force (JTF) commanded by a subordinate JFC. In either case, the CCDR should first look to assigned, in-theater forces. If augmentation is required, the JFC should request additional forces through the Secretary of Defense (SecDef). Upon SecDef approval, additional forces transfer into the theater and are attached to the gaining CCDR. The degree of control gained over those forces (i.e., operational control [OPCON] or tactical control [TACON]) should be specified in the deployment orders. The gaining CCDR then normally delegates OPCON of these forces downward to the JTF commander who should, in turn, delegate OPCON to the Service component commanders within the gaining JTF. All Air Force forces responding to operational tasking should be organized and presented as an air expeditionary task force (AETF).

It is important to understand that airpower is flexible in organization and presentation. Because it encompasses a wide range of capabilities and operating environments, it defies a single, general model for organization, planning, and employment. Some assets and capabilities provide relatively localized effects and generally are more easily deployable, and thus may organize and operate within a regional model. Other assets and capabilities transcend geographic areas of responsibility simultaneously, and thus have global responsibilities. Such forces may be better organized and controlled through a functional model. **However, at the focus of operations within any region, it is possible to place the collective capabilities of airpower in the hands of a single Airman through skillful arrangement of command relationships, focused expeditionary organization, reachback, and forward deployment of specialized talent.**

- ✪ Within a joint force, the JFC may organize forces in a mix of Service and functional components. **All joint forces contain Service components**, because administrative and logistics support are provided through Service components. Therefore, **every joint force containing assigned or attached Air Force forces**

**will normally have an Air Force Service component with a designated [commander, Air Force forces \(COMAFFOR\)](#).**

- ✦ The JFC may also establish [functional component commands](#) when forces from two or more military Services operate in the same dimension or domain or there is a need to accomplish a distinct aspect of the assigned mission. Functional component commanders, such as the [joint force air component commander](#) (JFACC), are established at the discretion of the JFC.
- ✦ If functional component commands are established, the Service component commander with the preponderance of forces to be tasked, and with the requisite ability to provide [command and control](#), will normally be designated as that functional component commander. Functional component commanders normally exercise TACON of forces made available for tasking. Through the Air Force component, the Air Force provides a COMAFFOR who is trained, equipped, and prepared to also be the JFACC if so designated by the JFC to whom he/she is assigned or attached. This has been the normal and highly successful method of providing and employing air forces since Operation DESERT STORM.

## **FUNCTIONAL ORGANIZATION AND CONTROL**

Not all Air Force forces employed in an operation may be attached forward to a geographic CCDR. Several aspects of [airpower](#) are capable of serving more than one geographic CCDR at a time. Such forces are organized under functional CCDRs to facilitate cross-[area of responsibility](#) (AOR) optimization of those functional forces. When such forces are deployed in a geographic CCDR's AOR, they may remain under the OPCON of their respective functional CCDR and operate in [support](#) of the geographic CCDR. Within a theater, this support relationship is facilitated through specially designated representatives attached to regional COMAFFORs. In some circumstances, after coordination with the owning commander and upon SecDef approval, control of such functional forces may be transferred to a geographic commander and attached with specification of OPCON or TACON.

**There will usually be a tension between regionally organized forces and functionally organized forces. The former seek effectiveness at the point of their operation, while the latter seek effectiveness and efficiency across several regions. At critical times, the requirement for effectiveness may trump efficiency, and additional functional forces may be transferred to the regional command and organized accordingly** (see related discussion on [transferring forces](#) in this annex). These situations require careful and continuing dialogue between competing senior commanders and their common superior commander.

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## ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

### THE AIR EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

Last Reviewed: 7 Nov 2014

To address growth in diverse regional commitments, the Air Force established the air expeditionary force (AEF) concept as a means to provide Air Force forces and associated support on a rotational, and thus, a relatively more predictable basis. AEFs however only provide a source of readily trained operational and support forces. They do not provide for a commander (specifically, a [commander, Air Force forces](#)) or the necessary [command and control mechanisms](#). Thus, AEFs by themselves are not discrete, employable entities. Forces sourced from AEFs should fall in on in-theater command structures, and link up with in-theater Air Force forces. Thus, while AEF forces may deploy, they stand up as part of an Air Force component (which may be in the form of an [air expeditionary task force](#)), not as their own warfighting entity.

In short, the AEF is the mechanism for managing and scheduling forces for expeditionary use; the AETF is the Air Force warfighting organization normally attached to a JFC.

Refer to AFI 10-401, [Air Force Operations Planning and Execution](#), for further details.



## ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

### THE AIR EXPEDITIONARY TASK FORCE

Last Reviewed: 7 Nov 2014

**The air expeditionary task force (AETF) is the organizational structure for Air Force forces in response to operational tasking.** The AETF provides a task-organized, integrated package with the appropriate balance of force, sustainment, control, and [force protection](#). To understand its basis, one should first look at the definition of a [task force](#):

1. A temporary grouping of units, under one commander, formed for the purpose of carrying out a specific operation or mission.
2. A semi-permanent organization of units, under one commander, formed for the purpose of carrying out a continuing specific task.

The AETF leverages this fundamental concept, presenting a scalable, tailorable organization with three elements: a single, clearly designated commander; appropriate command and control mechanisms; and tailored and fully supported forces. Each of these elements will be examined in detail.

AETFs may be established as an Air Force Service component to a [joint task force](#) (JTF), or as a subordinate task force within a larger Air Force Service component to address specific internal tasks. If an AETF is formed as the former, the AETF commander is also a [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR). Otherwise, the AETF commander is not a COMAFFOR, but reports to a COMAFFOR.

#### ✪ ***“Single Commander . . .”***

In the context of joint organization, a single commander presents a single Air Force face to the [joint force commander](#) (JFC) and results in clear lines of authority both ways. Internal to the task force, there is only one person clearly in charge; for a JFC, there is only one person to deal with on matters regarding Air Force issues. The axiom that “Airmen work for Airmen, and the senior Airman works for the JFC” not only preserves the principle of [unity of command](#), it also embodies the principle of [simplicity](#). The AETF commander is the senior Air Force warfighter and exercises the appropriate degree of control over the forces [assigned](#), [attached](#), or in support of the AETF. Within the joint force, these degrees of control are formally expressed as [operational control](#) (OPCON), [tactical control](#) (TACON), or [support](#). Within Service lines, the AETF commander exercises [administrative control](#) (ADCON).

## The Air Expeditionary Task Force

The air expeditionary task force (AETF) is a scalable, tailorable organization with three components: a single, clearly designated commander; appropriate command and control mechanisms; and tailored and fully supported forces. The elements of an AETF may be deployed forward in to a theater, or some may be available elsewhere, either in theater or even in the continental US, available via reachback.

The AETF may be a fully combat capable, numbered Air Force-sized composite force fighting a major operation with a substantial in-theater presence, as in Operation IRAQI FREEDOM.



It may be a few squadrons of combat aircraft with associated support as part of a standing operation, as in Operation NOBLE EAGLE.

It may be an air mobility-centric operation delivering food and medical supplies in a relief operation, as in Operation UNIFIED RESPONSE, the 2010 earthquake relief effort in Haiti.



An AETF's desired effect might not directly involve combat airpower. After supporting the initial insertion of forces into Haiti in 1994, the Air Force's main element in Operation UPHOLD DEMOCRACY was a medical unit.

AETFs should be sized for the assigned mission and force size, and may be as small as a group or as large as an expeditionary air force consisting of multiple wings. Thus, depending on the size of the AETF, the rank of the AETF commander may run from general to colonel. Within the AETF, units form up as expeditionary air forces, wings, groups, squadrons, flights, detachments, or elements, as necessary to provide reasonable spans of internal control and maintain unit cohesion. The AETF commander commands the AETF with authorities as delegated from the JFC (the operational branch of command) and from the superior Air Force command (the administrative branch of command).

## ✧ “*Appropriate Command and Control Mechanisms . . .*”

The AETF commander requires command mechanisms to exercise appropriate operational and Service administrative control. If acting as a COMAFFOR, the AETF commander exercises command in both the operational and administrative branches of the [chain of command](#) through an [air operations center](#) (AOC), an [Air Force forces \(AFFOR\) staff](#) (sometimes colloquially called an “A-staff”), and appropriate subordinate C2 elements. Because air, space, and cyberspace forces are not monolithic in execution and force presentation—[some are organized regionally, others functionally](#)—the nature of AOCs has been tailored to better plan and execute this mix. For regionally oriented Air Force components, the AOC may be one of the large, fixed AOCs found overseas, or a tailored AOC or AOC slice deployed for that operation. For functionally oriented components (e.g., space, air mobility), the AOC should be tailored accordingly. C2 elements subordinate to an AOC should also be appropriately tailored.

Within the authorities and responsibilities of ADCON, the COMAFFOR oversees the deployment and sustainment of Air Force forces, normally through the AFFOR staff and subordinate Service organizations (e.g., wings, groups, squadrons, etc.). These sustainment activities, sometimes referred to as “beds, beans, and bullets,” are critical to the successful accomplishment of operational functions. These activities should be fully integrated with and complementary to the AOC’s operational activities.

## ✧ “*Tailored and Fully Supported Forces . . .*”

The AETF should be tailored to the mission; this includes not only forces, but also the ability to command and control those forces for the missions assigned. It should draw first from in-theater resources, if available. If augmentation is needed, or if in-theater forces are not available, the AETF will likely draw as needed from the [air expeditionary force](#) currently on rotation. These forces, whether in-theater or deployed from out of theater, should be fully supported with the requisite maintenance, logistical, health services, and administrative elements. These forces form up within the AETF as expeditionary wings, groups, squadrons, flights, detachments, or elements, as necessary to provide reasonable spans of control and command elements at appropriate levels.

**In summary, the AETF is an expeditionary force established for a temporary period of time to perform a specified mission. The AETF provides a tailored package of air, space, and cyberspace capabilities in a structure that preserves Air Force unity of command. An AETF can be tailored in size and composition as appropriate for the mission.**

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## [ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL](#)

### **AETF ORGANIZATION**

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

[Air expeditionary task forces](#) (AETFs) can be sized and tailored to meet the specific requirements of the mission. The basic building block of an AETF is the squadron; however, a squadron normally does not have sufficient resources to operate independently. The smallest AETF is normally an air expeditionary group; larger AETFs may be composed of several expeditionary wings. Within an AETF, the AETF commander organizes forces as necessary into wings, groups, squadrons, flights, detachments, or elements to provide reasonable internal spans of control, command elements at appropriate levels, and to retain unit identity.

### **NUMBERED EXPEDITIONARY AIR FORCE**

Numbered expeditionary Air Force (NEAF) is the generic title for an AETF made up of multiple expeditionary wings and is the largest sized AETF. NEAFs normally carry an appropriate numerical designation based on numbered Air Forces (NAFs) historically associated with the region or command. Subordinate expeditionary units may retain their own numerical designations. Use of the NEAF designation is also intended to provide appropriate unit awards and honors credit for the units and staffs within the NEAF. The NEAF commander is normally a [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR).

### **AIR EXPEDITIONARY TASK FORCE-X**

“Air Expeditionary Task Force-X” (AETF-X) is the generic title used when a provisional Air Force command echelon is needed between a NEAF and an air expeditionary wing (AEW). AETF-X is used when a NEAF-level AETF establishes a subordinate provisional command echelon consisting of two or more AEWs. An example of this usage is when the Commander, US Air Forces Central (USAFCENT) established two subordinate AETFs, AETF-Iraq (AETF-I) and AETF-Afghanistan (AETF-A), to provide command over multiple AEWs in their respective joint operations areas.

Depending on why this echelon is established, and its relationship within Service and joint force organizations, the AETF-X commander may or may not be a COMAFFOR. See “[Air Force Component Presentation Considerations](#)” for further discussion.

### **AIR EXPEDITIONARY WING**

AEW is the generic title for a deployed wing or a wing slice within an AETF. An AEW normally is composed of the wing command element and subordinate groups and squadrons. AEWs normally carry the numerical designation of the wing providing the

command element. Subordinate expeditionary groups and support squadrons carry the numerical designation of the parent AEW. Subordinate mission squadrons and direct combat support units retain their numeric designation in an expeditionary status. Use of the AEW designation is also intended to provide appropriate unit awards and honors credit for the parent unit. An AEW may be composed of units from different wings, but where possible, the AEW is formed from units of a single wing. AEW commanders report to the COMAFFOR.

## **AIR EXPEDITIONARY GROUP**

Air expeditionary group (AEG) is the generic title for a deployed group assigned to an AEW or a deployed independent group assigned to an AETF. Unlike traditional “home station” groups, which are functionally organized (i.e., operations group, maintenance group, etc.), expeditionary groups deployed independent of a wing structure should contain elements of all the functions to conduct semi-autonomous operations. An AEG is composed of a slice of the wing command element and some squadrons. Since Air Force groups are organized without significant staff support, a wing slice is needed to provide the command and control for echelons smaller than the normal wing. An AEG assigned to an AEW carries the numeric designation of the AEW. An independent AEG normally carries the numerical designation of the unit providing the command element and/or the largest portion of the expeditionary organization. Deployed squadrons (assigned or attached) retain their numerical designation and acquire the “expeditionary” designation. Use of the AEG designation is also intended to provide appropriate unit awards and honors credit for the parent unit. An AEG may be composed of units from different wings, but where possible, the AEG is formed from units of a single wing. If deployed as an independent group as part of a larger AETF with other AEGs and/or AEWs, the AEG commander normally reports to the COMAFFOR. If deployed as a group subordinate to an expeditionary wing, the AEG commander reports to the AEW commander. The AEG is normally the smallest independently deployable AETF.

## **AIR EXPEDITIONARY SQUADRON**

Air expeditionary squadron (AES) is the generic title for a deployed squadron within an AETF. Squadrons are configured to deploy and employ in support of taskings. However, an individual squadron is not designed to conduct independent operations; it normally requires support from other units to obtain the synergy needed for sustainable, effective operations. As such, an individual squadron or squadron element should not be presented by itself without provision for appropriate support and command elements. If a single operational squadron or squadron element is all that is needed to provide the desired operational effect (for example, an element of C-130s performing humanitarian operations), it should deploy with provision for commensurate support and C2 elements. The structure of this AETF would appear similar to an AEG. In some operations, not all support and C2 elements need to deploy forward with the operational squadron. Some may be positioned “over the horizon,” constituting capabilities provided through reachback. A single squadron or squadron element may deploy without full support

elements if it is planned to augment a deployed AEW or AEG, and would thus obtain necessary support from the larger units.

## EXPEDITIONARY ELEMENTS BELOW SQUADRON LEVEL

In addition to expeditionary wings, groups, and squadrons, the Air Force may deploy elements below the squadron level for specific, limited functions. These include individuals and specialty teams such as [explosive ordnance disposal](#) (EOD) teams, military working dog teams, security forces, liaison teams, etc. They may deploy as part of an AETF or independently of other Air Force units, in remote locations, and may operate directly with other Services. For [administrative control](#) (ADCON) purposes, these elements should normally be attached to the commander of a recognizable Air Force entity in the region, either a deployed AETF, the Air Force Service [component](#) to the engaged combatant commander, or an Air Force entity specifically established for this purpose. Examples of such deployed elements might be an Air Force military information support planner augmenting a [joint military information support task force](#), an EOD team augmenting a predominately surface force, or an Air Force element supplementing Army convoy operations. Air Force personnel assigned to a joint staff may also fall in this category.

In many circumstances, elements below squadron level and even individual persons may deploy to provide a specific capability. In such cases, formal establishment and designation of an AETF may not be warranted. However, the Air Force contingent should still be organized as a single entity (perhaps named simply an “Air Force element”) and led by the senior [Airman](#) in the contingent.

For such small deployments, even though an AETF may not be formed, the senior Airman should still be identified to provide a clear chain of command. The senior



Historically, when Airmen talked about augmentation, discussion was generally limited to augmenting the AOC or a joint staff. Recent experience has provided new examples of augmentation between Services, either to round out manpower or provide specific skills at a low echelon. Examples include Airmen supplementing Army convoy operations in Iraq and Army Guardsmen backfilling deployed Air Force security forces at Air Force installations in the continental US.

When Airmen are tasked to augment another Service, the AETF model should be applied as a template to help focus discussion of organization and command arrangements. The operational (OPCON/TACON) and administrative (ADCON) chains of command should be carefully specified, and an Air Force element, with an Airman in charge, should be identified to fulfill ADCON responsibilities.

Airman may be designated as, for example, detachment commander, team chief, or officer or noncommissioned officer in charge. This formally identifies the senior Air Force member as leader of the deployed element.

**Recent experience has revealed that tracking small, remotely located Air Force elements, especially in the distributed environment encountered in [irregular warfare](#), has posed challenges for the Air Force component headquarters.** These challenges may range from lack of administrative support to improper employment of small units and individual Airmen in tasks for which they have not been trained. The AFFOR staff should take special efforts to maintain effective oversight of such elements in order to fulfill proper ADCON oversight.

## PROVISIONAL UNITS

In some instances, expeditionary forces may not form around active numbered units. This may occur, for example, when there are insufficient active numbered units in the [air expeditionary force](#) rotation to satisfy a very large operation or a single major force provider cannot be identified. In such cases, provisional units may be created using predesignated inactive units. A unit under a single provisional unit designation should also be considered to provide continuity of operations for extended [contingency operations](#) in which units are frequently rotated in and out (e.g., Operations NORTHERN and SOUTHERN WATCH, and IRAQI FREEDOM). Upon completion of the operation for which the unit was formed, the unit designation and history are inactivated. Provisional wings, groups, and squadrons are normally generically designated simply as AEWs, AEGs, and AESs.

## DESIGNATION OF EXPEDITIONARY UNITS

An AETF is named based on the unit providing the senior-echelon command function, its size, and the operation name.

- ✦ For a NAF-sized AETF, use the numerical designation of the engaged NAF, followed by “EAF,” then the name of the operation. For example, a NAF-sized AETF (two or more wings) established under 12 AF (AFSOUTH) for Operation SAMPLE NAME would be designated as “12 EAF—SAMPLE NAME.” A NEAF would normally be commanded by the component NAF commander.
- ✦ For AETF-X sized AETFs, use the term “AETF” followed by the operation name or regional identifier. For example, for an AETF-X established in Iraq, the title would be either AETF-Iraq or AETF-Operation NEW DAWN.
- ✦ For wing- or group-sized AETFs, use the number of the senior echelon, followed by “AEW” or “AEG,” then the name of the operation. Following the above example, a wing-sized AETF would be designated “XX AEW—SAMPLE NAME,” and a group-sized AETF would be “XX AEG—SAMPLE NAME.”

Wings, groups, and squadrons are designated “expeditionary” from the time they are attached until no longer attached to an AETF. Within the task force, numbered units

simply add “expeditionary” to the normal designation of the unit. For example, the 123d Fighter Wing becomes the 123d Expeditionary Fighter Wing; the 456th Mission Support Group becomes the 456th Expeditionary Mission Support Group, and the 789th Air Refueling Squadron becomes the 789th Expeditionary Air Refueling Squadron. For planning purposes, wings, groups, and squadrons may be generically designated simply as AEWs, AEGs, and AESs.

Units operating from their normally assigned, in-place location, such as permanently assigned units in Korea under US Pacific Command, or North America-based Air National Guard units participating in homeland air defense within Operation NOBLE EAGLE, need not adopt expeditionary nomenclature since they are not truly expeditionary. The overall operation, however, should still be modeled as an AETF to delineate clear chains of operational and administrative authority. Other deployed wings, groups, and squadrons that are not assigned or attached to the AETF, but provide significant support (such as [airlift](#) and [air refueling](#) units in the intertheater air bridge or space and [special operations](#) units in [direct support](#)), may be designated “expeditionary” at the discretion of their owning MAJCOM or Service component commander. Normally, these “expeditionary” forces provide their support through their functional chains of command.

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[ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL](#)

**EXAMPLES OF AETFs**

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This section presents three recent usages of [air expeditionary task forces](#) (AETFs). AETFs may be [attached](#) to a joint force as an Air Force Service [component](#), provided in [direct support](#) of a joint force in lieu of attachment, or temporarily established to address an internal operational Service requirement.

**COMPONENT AETF**

When directed, an AETF may be formally attached to a joint force at the [combatant command](#) (CCMD), [subunified combatant command](#), or [joint task force](#) (JTF) level, usually with specification of [operational control](#) (OPCON), forming a [Service component command](#). In these cases, the AETF commander is a [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR), and a separate [air operations center](#) and [AFFOR staff](#) are normally required to employ and support the AETF. Examples of these components are found in the form of component major commands (C-MAJCOMs) and component numbered Air Forces (C-NAFs) established to support the [combatant commanders](#) (CCDRs).

**SUBORDINATE AETF**

During some operations, especially when there may be multiple [joint operations areas](#) (JOAs) with multiple JTFs, it may not be feasible to attach AETFs to each JTF due to C2 resource constraints. In such cases, subordinate AETFs may be established and placed in support of JTFs. Examples of this structure occurred in the later phases of Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM (redesignated Operation NEW DAWN), US Air Forces Central (USAFCENT) established subordinate task forces to directly support sub-theater-level JTFs operating in separate JOAs within US Central Command (USCENTCOM). With the approval of Commander, USCENTCOM (CDRUSCENTCOM), these subordinate task forces were not attached as separate Air Force components to those JTFs, but were established as supporting forces with OPCON retained by the CCDR-level COMAFFOR (Commander, USAFCENT). In this case, the USAFCENT commander delegated specified elements of OPCON and [administrative control](#) (ADCON) over forces to the subordinate task force commanders. These task forces were then provided in direct support of their respective JTF commanders. The USAFCENT commander, as the theater COMAFFOR and [joint force air component commander](#) to CDRUSCENTCOM, maintained a theater-wide perspective and the ability to re-apportion airpower across the USCENTCOM [area of operations](#) IAW CCDR priorities.

## “ADCON-ONLY” AETF

On occasion, AETFs may be established to address a specific but purely internal Service challenge and may have no direct relation to a joint force. Examples can be found during the initial phase of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, when the Air Force formed two task forces for ADCON purposes only, one in Pacific Air Forces (PACAF) under 13 AF on Guam and one in US Air Forces in Europe (USAFE) under 16 AF in Turkey. These AETFs were formed to provide more direct oversight of support activities of those forces bedded down in the US Pacific Command and US European Command AORs and supporting USCENTCOM's main effort. The operational branch of the [chain of command](#) ran through the commander charged with accomplishing the operational mission (i.e., Commander, USAFCENT, as delegated from CDRUSCENTCOM) while the administrative branch ran through the Air Force commander best positioned to provide the necessary support (i.e., Commander, 13 AF as delegated from Commander, PACAF, and Commander, 16 AF as delegated from Commander, USAFE). This solution provided a closer degree of ADCON oversight due to the size and complexity of the overall effort and, especially in PACAF's case, the distance between Diego Garcia and PACAF headquarters in Hawaii. The designation of forward-located Air Force commanders provided more informed and timely decision making affecting those forward-based Air Force elements. In this case, these task forces commanders only exercised ADCON; they were not delegated any operational authorities.

(Note: the above titles “subordinate AETF” and “ADCON-only AETF” above are descriptive, not formal.)

These are examples of extrapolating from baseline doctrinal concepts of organization and [command relationships](#) to tailor a solution to a particular set of circumstances. As with any tailored organization, there should be careful consultation among the Service and joint force commanders involved, and the CDR retains final decision on the laydown of subordinate organization and distribution of command authorities.

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## ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

### **INTEGRATING REGIONAL AND FUNCTIONAL AIR FORCE FORCES**

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As previously stated, [airpower](#) is usually presented through a mix of regional and functional models, with the latter usually supporting the former. Functional forces usually maintain a separate organization from the supported regional organization, and are integrated in the theater through specially trained liaisons attached to the regional [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR). The functional capabilities most likely to be provided in such a supporting relationship are [air mobility operations](#), [space operations](#), [special operations](#), [cyberspace operations](#), and [nuclear operations](#).

### **INTEGRATING AIR MOBILITY OPERATIONS**

Because air mobility forces serve several regions concurrently, their employment should be balanced between regional and intertheater requirements and priorities. At the same time, the air mobility systems performing [intratheater](#) and [intertheater](#) missions within a given region should operate in close coordination to provide responsive and integrated aerial movement to the supported [combatant commander](#) (CCDR).

Carefully constructed [command relationships](#) can allow an interlocking arrangement to manage intratheater and intertheater air mobility operations. Normally, intratheater air mobility forces are attached to the [joint force commander](#) (JFC), with [operational control](#) (OPCON) as appropriate delegated to the COMAFFOR. Intertheater air mobility forces normally remain under the control of US Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM), delegated downward within Air Mobility Command (AMC) to Eighteenth Air Force (18 AF) as appropriate. Within a regional operation, the [director of mobility forces](#) (DIRMOBFOR), with the air mobility division (AMD) in the [air operations center](#) (AOC), provides the pivotal link between the intertheater and intratheater air mobility operations.

#### ***The Director of Air Mobility Forces***

Within an Air Force component, the DIRMOBFOR is the COMAFFOR's designated coordinating authority for air mobility operations. The DIRMOBFOR, normally a senior Air Force air mobility officer familiar with the [area of operations](#), coordinates on behalf of the COMAFFOR with the AMD in the AOC. The DIRMOBFOR may be sourced from within the geographic CCDR's organizations or USTRANSCOM. To ensure close coordination with the overall theater effort, the DIRMOBFOR is normally assigned to the COMAFFOR's special staff. In those instances when no [joint force air component commander](#) (JFACC) is designated, or the JFACC is from another Service, the

DIRMOBFOR should normally report to the COMAFFOR. The DIRMOBFOR's specific authorities and responsibilities include:

- ✦ Coordinate the integration of intertheater air mobility support provided by USTRANSCOM.
- ✦ In concert with the AOC commander, coordinate the employment of mobility air forces assigned or attached to the joint force.
- ✦ Coordinate with the AOC commander and AMD chief to ensure all air mobility operations supporting the JFC are integrated into the air assessment, planning, and execution processes; and are deconflicted with all other air operations.
- ✦ Assists in the integration and coordination of the multinational air mobility plan.
- ✦ Coordinates with 618 AOC (Tanker/Airlift Control Center) and 18 AF (AFTRANS) to ensure joint force air mobility support requirements are met.
- ✦ As the air mobility working group chair, reviews and recommends for or against mobility operations into theater airfields. Recommends aircraft defensive system policy, flyaway security team policy, operational support airlift aircraft operating policy, aircraft armor policy/requirements, and tactical approach requirements, and advises commanders on proposed operations into high threat airfields. For some very high visibility/high threat missions, gives positive launch recommendations.
  - ✦ Acts as member of the joint logistics coordination board, chaired by the geographic CCDR's J4 (logistics directorate).
  - ✦ Acts as the senior air mobility officer point of contact for all air mobility operations with the joint deployment distribution operations center, USTRANSCOM, AMC, 18 AF (AFTRANS), 618 AOC (tanker/airlift control center (TACC), the GCC J4, and the USTRANSCOM deployment distribution operations center.
  - ✦ Participates in the daily video teleconference with USTRANSCOM J3 (operations directorate), and additional daily video teleconferences with 618 AOC (TACC).
- ✦ Establishes air mobility priorities for air mobility liaison officers operating in theater.
- ✦ Performs other duties as specified by the COMAFFOR.

Refer to Annex 3-17, [Air Mobility Operations](#), for more information.

## **INTEGRATING SPACE OPERATIONS**

Space presents another form of military operations that, much like air mobility, usually are best presented functionally to a regional commander through a supporting relationship if they are not attached. [Space command and control](#) brings another level of complexity because many space assets that support military interests come from a

variety of organizations, some outside of the Department of Defense (DOD). These capabilities often have nontraditional chains of command. In some cases, authority may be split between organizations due to shared [interagency](#) responsibilities. Much like air mobility through the DIRMOBFOR, space capabilities within a regional operation are normally focused by the designation of a single authority for space operations.

### ***Space Coordinating Authority***

Within a regional operation, the JFC should delegate [space coordinating authority](#) (SCA) to facilitate unity of effort with DOD-wide space operations and non-DOD space capabilities. Although JFCs may retain authority at the JTF level, they should normally delegate SCA to the component commander who provides the preponderance of military space capabilities, the requisite ability to command and control them, and the resident space expertise. In most cases, the COMAFFOR provides these capabilities through the Air Force's organic space command and control infrastructure.

Responsibilities of SCA include:

- ★ Recommend appropriate command relationships for space forces to the JFC.
- ★ Establish, deconflict, prioritize, and recommend military space requirements.
- ★ Recommend guidelines for employing space capabilities, such as [rules of engagement](#) (ROE), for the joint force.
- ★ Guide strategy development, operational planning, and space integration.
- ★ Provide status of space assets that affect the [joint operations area](#) (JOA) to key theater staffs.
- ★ Maintain [space situational awareness](#).
- ★ Ensure optimum interoperability of space assets with coalition forces.

### ***The Director of Space Forces***

Within an Air Force component, the [director of space forces](#) (DIRSPACEFOR) serves as the senior space advisor to the COMAFFOR. The DIRSPACEFOR, an Air Force space officer, coordinates, integrates, and staffs activities to tailor space support to the COMAFFOR. In addition, when the COMAFFOR is delegated SCA, the DIRSPACEFOR works the day-to-day SCA activities on behalf of the COMAFFOR. If the COMAFFOR is neither delegated SCA nor designated as the JFACC, the COMAFFOR should establish a space liaison to the JFACC. The DIRSPACEFOR is part of the COMAFFOR's special staff. As is the case with the DIRMOBFOR, the COMAFFOR may choose to make the DIRSPACEFOR available to the JFACC in those cases when the COMAFFOR is not dual designated as the JFACC. Whether a permanent member of the theater major command staff or provided to the theater by Air Force Space Command (AFSPC), the DIRSPACEFOR should be pre-identified to allow

that officer time to become familiar with that theater's space requirements. The DIRSPACEFOR's specific responsibilities include:

- ★ Recommend appropriate command relationships for space forces to the COMAFFOR.
- ★ Advise on establishment, deconfliction, and prioritization of operational military space requirements.
- ★ Recommend policies for employing space capabilities, such as ROE.
- ★ Provide senior space perspective for [strategy](#) and daily guidance development, effects and target selection, and space integration throughout joint operations.
- ★ Monitor status of space forces that affect the JOA and provide status to JFC staff and components.
- ★ Maintain space situational awareness.
- ★ Request space inputs from JFC staff during planning and operations.
- ★ Coordinate optimum interoperability of space assets with coalition forces.
- ★ Execute day-to-day SCA responsibilities on behalf of the COMAFFOR or represent the COMAFFOR's equities if SCA is retained by or delegated to another commander.
- ★ Advise the COMAFFOR on command and control of Air Force space forces if another component is designated JFACC.

Refer to Annex 3-14, [Space Operations](#), for more information.

## INTEGRATING SPECIAL OPERATIONS

Commander, US Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) exercises [combatant command \(command authority\)](#) (COCOM) of worldwide special operations forces, while the geographic CCDR exercises OPCON of [assigned/attached](#) Air Force special operations forces (AFSOF) through the commander of the [theater special operations command](#). For conventional missions, the COMAFFOR may receive OPCON or [tactical control](#) of Air Force special operations forces (AFSOF) assets when directed by the JFC. However, in most cases, AFSOF will only normally be in a [direct support](#) relationship with conventional assets. When SOF operate in concert with "conventional" JTFs, they normally take the form of a separate [joint special operations task force](#) (JSOTF) within the JTF, commanded by a joint force special operations component commander (JFSOCC). AFSOF, like all Air Force units, organize using the [air expeditionary task force](#) construct. Due to their unique relationship with USSOCOM, AFSOF deployed unit designations differ slightly from the conventional Air Force model. Although the names differ (e.g., expeditionary special operations wing [ESOW] vice

AEW), AFSOF organizational patterns are similar to conventional unit orientation and functionality. Once deployed, JTF commanders establish appropriate command and control for SOF units. AFSOF force presentation is discussed in Annex 3-05, [Special Operations](#).

SOF can enhance operations across the range of military operations. SOF normally pursue SOF-unique objectives which prepare, shape or enhance broader JFC objectives. Due to specialized training which includes cultural, regional, and language orientation, SOF Airmen can provide key capabilities across the spectrum of irregular warfare tasks: [foreign internal defense](#), [counterinsurgency](#), [counterterrorism](#), [stability operations](#), and [unconventional warfare](#). They may also be tasked to operate in support of conventional objectives or require conventional support of their objectives.

- ✦ SOF may act as an [economy of force](#) measure by applying SOF unique capabilities against conventional targets to enhance joint air asset efficiency and effectiveness.
- ✦ SOF may conduct specialized operations beyond the capabilities of joint air component forces. For example, they may strike against [weapons of mass destruction](#) production or storage facilities inaccessible to joint air due to environmental or dispersal concerns.
- ✦ Because of unique training and multiple air/ground combat power delivery capabilities, SOF may synchronize with joint air component operations in a synergistic attack (e.g., terminal guidance operations).
- ✦ SOF may enhance joint air component operations with specialized personnel and platform capabilities to assist in locating deep targets.

Whether operating under control of the JFSOCC or in support of the COMAFFOR, SOF aviation missions are synchronized with other air activities supporting the theater [campaign](#). To ensure SOF aviation and surface assets are closely synchronized in all joint air operations, from planning through assessment, the JFSOCC provides the COMAFFOR a [special operations liaison element](#) (SOLE) to coordinate, deconflict, and synchronize SOF operations, strategy, and plans with other air operations. In return, the COMAFFOR may provide a [joint air component coordination element](#) (JACCE) to the JFSOCC.

### ***The Special Operations Liaison Element***

Whether operating autonomously or in conjunction with conventional forces, SOF aviation and surface assets should be closely synchronized with all joint air operations—from planning through execution—to provide coordination and deconfliction, prevent fratricide, and exploit synergistic effects.

The SOLE is a liaison team that represents the JFSOCC to the COMAFFOR. The SOLE synchronizes all SOF air and surface operations with joint air operations via the air tasking process. Additionally, the SOLE deconflicts SOF operations with other

component liaisons in the AOC. Specific functions include synchronization of SOF requirements into [air tasking order](#) (ATO) and [airspace control order](#) (ACO) generation, real time mission support within the AOC, operations and intelligence support for targeting, combat airspace control for prevention of fratricide, coordination with special plans functions, and coordination with the joint personnel recovery center. The SOLE also assists in the deconfliction of joint special operations areas and unconventional warfare operating areas with the COMAFFOR.

## INTEGRATING CYBERSPACE OPERATIONS

As with air mobility and space operations, global [cyberspace](#) capabilities may be presented to a regional commander through a supporting relationship, to supplement regional cyberspace capabilities. US Cyber Command (USCYBERCOM), as a [subordinate unified command](#) under USSTRATCOM, is the focal point for providing cyberspace capabilities to other CCDRs. Within USCYBERCOM, the Air Force [component](#) is 24th Air Force (24 AF) (Air Forces Cyber [AFCYBER]). 24 AF provides support through the 624th Operations Center (624 OC). To support regional operations, USCYBERCOM may also provide cyberspace expertise to regional staffs if necessary.

The 624 OC uses a process similar to the air tasking cycle to develop a [cyber tasking order](#) (CTO) for planning, coordinating, apportioning, allocating, executing, and assessing cyberspace operations. The CTO is derived from Commander, USSTRATCOM and Commander, USCYBERCOM orders and supported JFC orders. Every cyberspace operation during that period should be on the CTO for situational awareness and deconfliction purposes.

When the 624 OC is supporting a theater operation, the CTO development process is coordinated and integrated with the theater ATO development process. The 624 OC, using guidance from the supported COMAFFOR, helps develop cyberspace [courses of action](#) in support of theater operations. During the planning phase, the 624 OC uses COMAFFOR guidance, such as [rules of engagement](#), the [joint integrated prioritized target list](#), the [target nomination list](#), and the approved [master air attack plan](#), to finalize the CTO. After the ATO is finalized, the theater AOC disseminates it to all required users, including the 624 OC. 24 AF (AFCYBER) subsequently approves the CTO, ensuring it reflects theater taskings, and disseminates it to all required users including the theater AOC. The CTO tasks assigned and attached cyberspace forces to meet theater and global requirements for the next 24-hour period. Within the 24-hour period of execution, cyberspace tasking can occur dynamically to meet the supported commander's requests.

For further discussion, see Annex 3-12, [Cyberspace Operations](#).

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## ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

### **NUCLEAR SUPPORT TO REGIONAL COMMANDS**

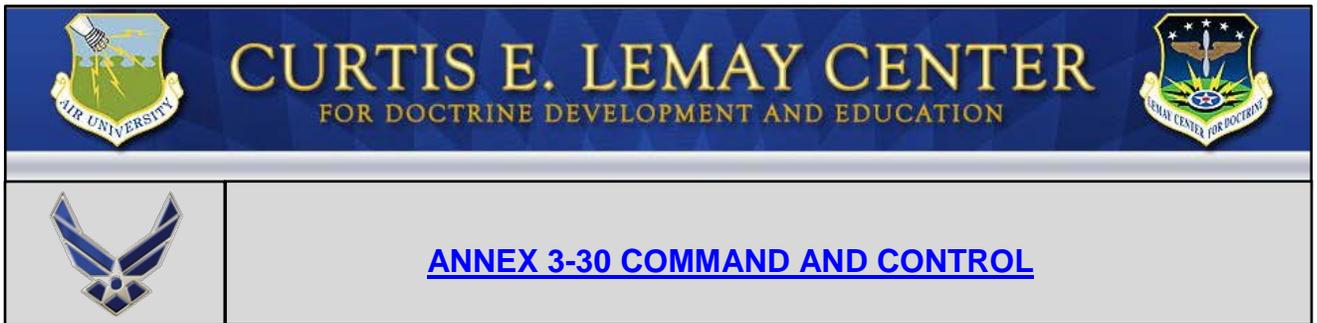
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Last Reviewed: 7 Nov 2014

The political and psychological effects of [nuclear weapons](#) confer upon them a unique nature. Therefore, the singular role of US Strategic Command during planning and employment necessitates close coordination with regional commanders to achieve desired results. Air Force nuclear capabilities are central to these considerations, and require precise integration to ensure effective employment within a particular region taking into account the larger political ramifications.

Refer to Annex 3-72, [Nuclear Operations](#), for more information.

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## HOMELAND ORGANIZATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

Military operations inside the United States and its Territories fall into two mission areas: [homeland defense](#), for which the Department of Defense (DOD) serves as the [lead federal agency](#) and military forces are used to conduct military operations in defense of the homeland; and [civil support](#) for which DOD serves in a supporting role to other agencies at the federal, state, tribal, and local levels.

For most homeland scenarios, Air Force forces should be presented as an [air expeditionary task force](#) (AETF) under the [operational control](#) (OPCON) of a [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR), just as in any other theater. Air National Guard (ANG) forces, whether activated and operating in Title 10 status, supporting a Federal mission or operation under Title 32 and attached to a [combatant command](#) (CCMD), or remaining under state control in Title 32 or state active duty status, should still be organized and presented within an AETF or equivalent structure.

For homeland operations, 1st Air Force (Air Forces Northern) (1AF [AFNORTH]) is the Air Force component to US Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) and the designated USNORTHCOM [joint force air component commander](#). Within North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), the Commander, 1AF (AFNORTH), is also the commander of the continental US (CONUS) NORAD region.

The command relationships between a [joint force commander](#) (JFC) and a COMAFFOR in a homeland context should be as previously described for any other region—although legal and [interagency](#) considerations may have significant impact, the homeland is not a special case regarding [command and control](#) (C2) or organization of air, space, and cyberspace forces. The COMAFFOR should still be under direct operational control of a designated JFC, should still normally exercise OPCON and [administrative control](#) (ADCON) over the Air Force Service [component](#) forces, and should still coordinate activities with other components and outside agencies to achieve JFC objectives. Additionally, when the ANG is operating in Title 32 or state active duty status under the authority of a state governor, a similar command relationship exists between the state Adjutant General or [joint task force](#) (JTF) commander and the designated ANG air commander.

Additionally, the Secretary of Defense may request State governors to allow their respective ANG personnel or units to support federal operations or missions such as providing intelligence and cyberspace support to [combatant commanders](#) (CCDRs) or supporting civil authorities pursuant to Title 32. ANG personnel and units would remain

in Title 32 status, but be attached to the Service component of a CCMD, and under the operational authority of the CCDR. The nature, extent, and degree of control exercised by the CCDR and his subordinate commanders, including dual-status commanders, would be set forth in a command arrangements agreement (CAA) agreed upon by the Secretary of Defense and State governors. The CAA would be similar to those negotiated for multinational operations. Administrative authority for ANG personnel and units would remain with the State.

In some civil support operations, a JFC may elect to allocate combat support forces to subordinate functional task force commanders (TFCs) with a specification of OPCON to the TFC. For example, a JFC in a major disaster relief operation might organize forces into separate engineering, transportation, and medical task forces. This organizational scheme—a legacy construct which sidesteps the role of Service components and Service component commanders—divides Air Force assets among other component commanders and fractures Service unity of command. This is not the most operationally effective scheme for achieving unity of command and unity of effort under a single Airman. Ideally, the JFC allows the COMAFFOR to retain OPCON of all assigned and attached Air Force forces. The COMAFFOR then provides direct support to the various functional TFCs with the COMAFFOR as a supporting commander.

In disaster relief operations, particularly in consequence management of a manmade or natural disaster, the Air Force contribution will likely include a Total Force mix of capabilities. ANG forces may be activated under Title 10; support a federal response remaining in Title 32 status, but attached to and under the control of a CCDR; or more normally operate under Title 32 or state active duty status under the authority of their governor.

Each state has a state joint force headquarters (JFHQ-State) that may provide a contingency C2 capability in support of homeland defense, civil support, and other related operations, and may thus function as a bridge between state and federal forces. Additionally, a governor may stand up a JTF-State to provide direction and control of assigned non-federalized National Guard forces and those attached from other states. ANG forces conducting operations in Title 32 or state active duty status should be organized as an AETF or equivalent within their state force structure to provide unity of command, with a single Airman in command of the ANG forces.

State and federal military forces may adopt a parallel command structure.

- ★ A parallel command structure exists when state and federal authorities have separate chains of command, and retain control of their deployed forces. Unity of effort and decisions of mutual interest are handled through a coordinated liaison effort of the political and senior military leadership of state and federal forces.
- ★ Federal statutes now provides the capability for a dual status command structure, in which a designated commander subordinate to a combatant commander may unify and streamline the command structure by simultaneously serving in Federal and

State duty statuses while performing the separate and distinct duties of those statuses over forces in Title 32 as well as forces in Title 10. The command authority for forces in Title 32 attached to the CCDR is exercised by a dual-status commander pursuant to a CAA. Additionally, the statute requires both presidential authorization and a governor's consent to invest a commander with dual status.

A similar situation may occur in a civil support scenario when a mix of medical and line Air Force forces are presented to a JTF commander. Because medical officers cannot command line forces, a senior line officer may have to be designated to serve as COMAFFOR.

For more detailed discussion on homeland operations in general, see Annex 3-27, [Homeland Operations](#). For more discussion on dual-status commanders, refer to Joint Publication 3-38, *Defense Support of Civil Authorities*, Appendix C, "[Department of Defense Dual-Status Commander](#)."

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## ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

### **INTEGRATING THE AIR RESERVE COMPONENTS**

Last Reviewed: 7 Nov 2014

The Air Force, under the Total Force construct, has a substantial part of its forces in the Air Reserve Component (ARC), which consists of the Air Force Reserve (AFR) and the Air National Guard. The ARC provides a strategic reserve and a surge capacity for the Air Force; in some instances, the ARC has unique capabilities not resident within the regular component. The Secretary of Defense may make these forces available during the planning process. While they may seamlessly operate alongside the regular Air Force, they are subject to different levels of activation and different degrees of [operational control](#) and [administrative control](#). Furthermore, differences in tour length availability pose continuity challenges for a [commander, Air Force forces](#), and planners should carefully consider such issues for any category of activation (whether by volunteerism or [mobilization](#)).

See [Appendix E](#) for more discussion on ARC organization and accessing ARC forces.



ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

**THE SENIOR / HOST AIR FORCE INSTALLATION COMMANDER**

Last Reviewed: 7 Nov 2014

Recent operations, notably Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM, highlighted the nuances in on-base command arrangements and support requirements that result from mixed forces deploying forward, often to bare bases.

An installation commander, regardless of Service, always exercises some authority over and responsibility for forces on the base for protection of assigned forces and assets, lodging, dining, and administrative reporting, regardless of the command relations of those forces. These are inherent in his/her responsibilities as an installation commander.

Ultimately, the Air Force Service component commander within a region is responsible for fulfilling administrative control (ADCON) responsibilities and common logistics support for all Air Force forces within his/her region, regardless of organization of assignment of those forces. These ADCON responsibilities are exercised through commanders at subordinate echelons. The ADCON chain of command is clear for non-deployed forces at home station during peacetime. However, the ADCON chain during expeditionary operations requires some fundamental guidance, especially during those fluid times when forces are initially building up in remote deployed locations.

The senior Air Force commander on any base where Air Force forces are present has responsibilities for care and provisioning of the Air Force forces on that installation, regardless of organization. For example, a conceivable mix of host and tenant Air Force organizations at a single base could include:

- ✦ A small permanent party at the group or detachment level.
- ✦ A wing or group sized air expeditionary task force (AETF) conducting sustained operations from that base.
- ✦ Air Force Special Operations Command assets operating in-theater but not attached to the host Air Force component.
- ✦ Air mobility forces bedded down in-theater, supporting an air bridge under the operational control (OPCON) of US Transportation Command (through Air Mobility Command).
- ✦ Transient forces using the base for a staging base for further deployment.

Other scenarios may have forces belonging to other Service components operating from an Air Force-owned base, such as Army special operations forces or Marine aviation units. Although the provision of logistics support is inherently a Service-specific responsibility, the senior Air Force commander, as the host base commander, has responsibility for providing protection and other base operating support as directed by the governing operations order or inter-service agreements. In scenarios where another Service is the host, clear lines of authority over critical issues, especially airfield operations, should be delineated, preferably in writing.

G-series orders should detail which commanders are responsible for providing specific elements of specified ADCON to deployed units and what authority that commander may use to carry out these responsibilities. The orders are not required to spell out all support and sustainment responsibilities. For a notional example, the orders might specify that lodging, dining, and force protection be provided by the 36 AEW from Air Forces Pacific (AFPAC) and Pacific Air Forces. The minimum ADCON responsibilities and authorities to go forward should be responsibility for UCMJ, protection of assigned forces and assets, lodging, dining, and force reporting. These responsibilities apply under a wide variety of basing situations:

- ✦ Whether the base is owned and operated by the Air Force, by another US Service, or by the [host nation](#).
- ✦ Whether or not the senior Air Force officer on a given installation is the host installation commander.
- ✦ Whether or not the Air Force forces present on the installation are assigned or attached to the senior Air Force officer's same expeditionary unit or even to the same AETF.
- ✦ Whether or not the Air Force forces present are regular, Guard, or Reserve, and regardless of whether or not the Guard forces are federalized.

For example, when Air Force aircraft are operating from a dual-use base where the installation commander is neither Air Force nor an [Airman](#), clear lines of authority over airfield operations should be established.

To properly fulfill ADCON responsibilities on an installation, a senior Air Force line officer (preferably a commander of a designated echelon; that is, an "A-coded" commander) should be clearly identified. If such a senior officer is not clearly identified, either by position (as, for example, by his/her standing as the designated host installation commander) or otherwise in writing, the senior Air Force line commander present on an installation should assume responsibility for ADCON issues for all Air Force forces on that installation. The following guidelines are offered for further clarification:

- ✦ Preferably, the designated senior officer should also be the commander of a clearly identifiable echelon, such as an AEW or AEG, and not lower than squadron level (AES).
- ✦ When operational and support forces are present on the same base, the senior officer should normally be appointed or designated from the operational forces by the COMAFFOR.
- ✦ When two or more equally-sized units are present on the same installation, and a single host installation commander has not yet been formally designated, the senior-ranking line officer commander should assume ADCON responsibilities for all Air Force forces on that installation until such time as either the COMAFFOR or [joint force commander](#) formally designates a host installation commander or host Service.
- ✦ This senior officer is responsible for coordinating all required aspects of support with the host nation, any supporting Service, and the owning major command (MAJCOM) or [combatant command](#) as required.
- ✦ Specified elements of ADCON should always be written in the G-series orders and clearly identify the support to be provided to a subordinate expeditionary or host unit.
- ✦ A commander's UCMJ authority only extends to regular, Reserve, and federalized Guard forces.
- ✦ If support is provided to deployed units on a lengthy, recurring basis, Air Force MAJCOMs should specify ADCON relationships between MAJCOMs in standing command-to-command agreements.

Refer to AFI 38-101, [Air Force Organization](#), for more specific policy guidance.

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[ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL](#)

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**PRESENTING AIR FORCE FORCES**

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

Modern operations require flexibility in execution to adapt to a wide variety of scenarios, which drives a need to assemble the right mix of forces from the appropriate Services to tailor the operation. This need to assemble the right forces drives a corresponding need for proper organization, [command and control mechanisms](#), and appropriate [command relationships](#). Current Service and joint doctrine provide useful guidance on organization; however, assembling a joint organization demands careful, conscious thought.

The following section draws from doctrine and experience to provide the basics of setting up and commanding an air component within a joint force:

- ✦ A high-level overview of the [component structure of a joint force](#).
  - ✦ A discussion of some key points regarding [air component relationships within a joint force](#).
  - ✦ A primer on the various [considerations for establishing an Air Force component](#) at various levels within a combatant command.
  - ✦ Some considerations on [composition and uses of joint staffs](#).
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ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

**JOINT FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL BASICS**

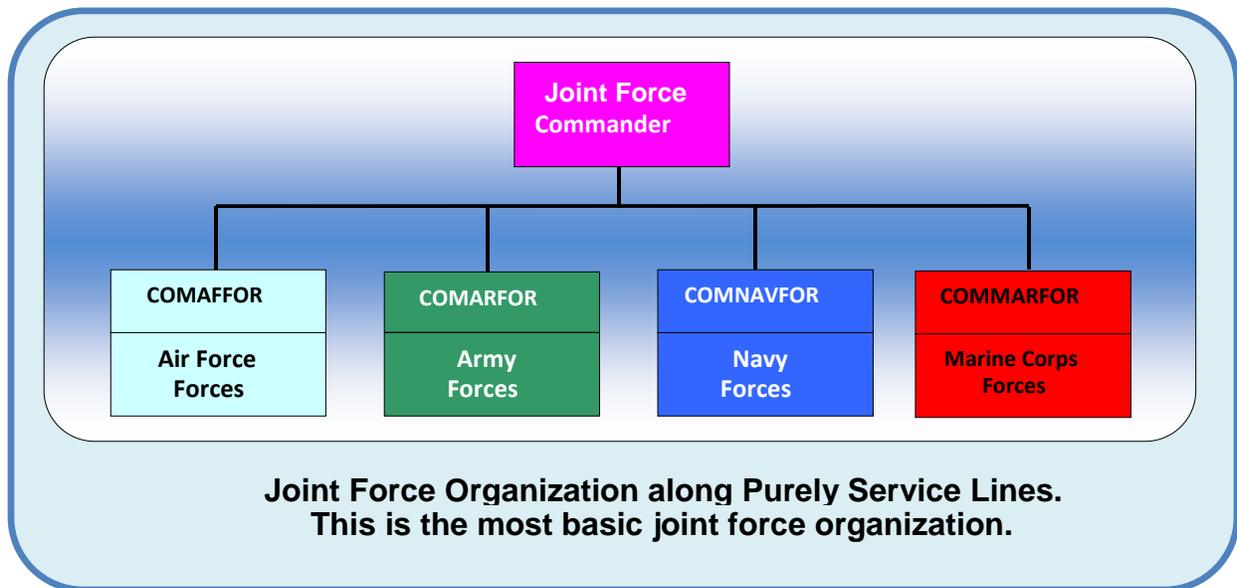
Last Reviewed: 7 Nov 2014

When a crisis requires a military response, the geographic [combatant commander](#) (CCDR) will usually form a tailored [joint task force](#) (JTF). If Air Force forces are attached to the JTF, they stand up as an [air expeditionary task force](#) (AETF) within the JTF. The AETF commander, as the [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR), provides the single Air Force face to the JTF commander. Other Services may also provide forces, and normally stand up as separate Army, Navy, and Marine forces, each with their respective commander (Commander, Army forces [COMARFOR]; Commander, Navy forces [COMNAVFOR]; and Commander, Marine Corps forces [COMMARFOR]). This JTF organization, along purely Service lines, is the most basic joint force organization. (See figure, Joint Force Organization along Purely Service Lines.) Each separate Service component commander normally exercises [operational control](#) (OPCON) over [assigned](#) and [attached](#) Service forces, as delegated from the [joint force commander](#) (JFC).

In all cases, the JFC is ultimately responsible for delineating the command relations of forces under his or her OPCON and empowering subordinate commanders appropriately. Normally, a JFC receives OPCON of assigned or attached forces and delegates that control (OPCON) to the appropriate Service component commanders.

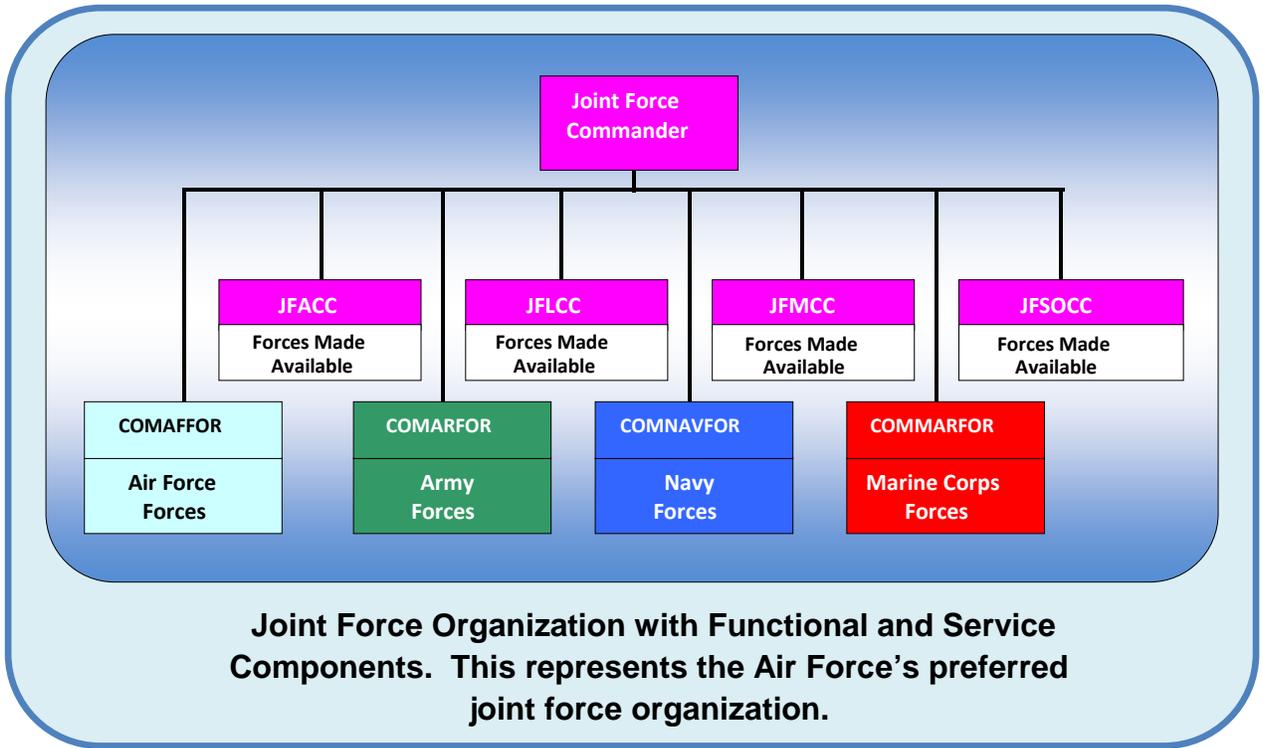
Delegation of OPCON allows Service component commanders the necessary authority to fully organize and employ their forces:

“[Operational control] is the authority to perform those functions of command over subordinate forces involving organizing and employing commands and forces, assigning tasks, designating objectives, and giving authoritative direction over all aspects of military operations and joint training necessary to accomplish the mission. **It should be delegated to and exercised by the commanders of subordinate organizations; normally this authority is exercised through subordinate JFCs, Service, and/or functional component commanders.**” (Joint Pub 1, [Doctrines for the Armed Forces of the United States](#)) (Emphasis added)



Organizing and employing forces through Service component commands, however, does not allow for the true integration of key functional activities—especially airpower. Further, Army, Navy, and Marine forces are usually assigned individual areas of operations (AOs) which are subsets of the JFC’s joint operations area (JOA) and which presents a less-than-total view of the theater. By comparison, an air component commander typically has a similar operational level, JOA-wide perspective as the JFC.

Because all four Services have forces that operate in the air domain, and two of them have land forces, the designation of functional commanders allows greater synergy by integrating similar activities across Service boundaries. Functional component commanders can also focus their planning and execution above the tactical level of war at the operational level of war. However, the designation of joint force air, land, maritime and special operations component commanders (JFACC, joint force land component commander [JFLCC], joint force maritime component commander [JFMCC], and joint force special operations component commander [JFSOCC] respectively) is at the discretion of the JFC. This functional component model has the added benefit in that, of all possible models, it most easily transitions to one that supports combined (coalition) employment, and the functional component commanders become combined component commanders (i.e., combined force air component commander [CFACC], combined force land component commander [CFLCC], combined force maritime component commander [CFMCC], and combined force special operations component commander [CFSOCC]). See figure, Joint Force Organization with Functional and Service Components.





ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

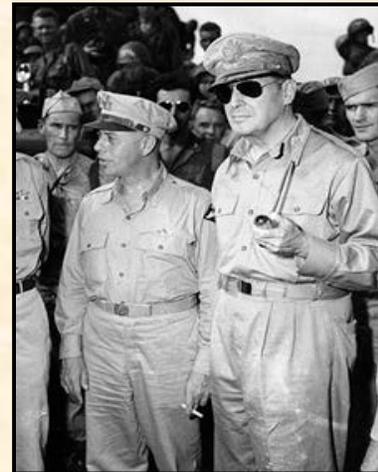
**AIR COMPONENT RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN  
A JOINT FORCE**

Last Reviewed: 7 Nov 2014

The joint force commander (JFC) normally assigns broad missions to the component commanders; with each mission comes a specification of supported commander for that mission. As an example, the JFC may designate the commander, Air Force forces (COMAFFOR) as the supported commander for strategic attack, air interdiction, and theater airborne intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (among other missions). As such, the COMAFFOR would be responsible to the JFC for planning, coordinating, and executing these missions, and other component commanders support the COMAFFOR. When outlining supported/supporting relationships, the JFC usually does not specify the degree and timing for that support; the subordinate commanders normally work that out.

**The commander responsible for a mission should be given the requisite authority to carry out that mission.** For some missions or functions, specification of support alone may be insufficient in order for a functional component commander to fully integrate and employ forces made available. In such instances, the JFC may delegate to a subordinate commander tactical control of specific elements of another component's resources (this, in fact, is the usual command authority exercised by functional component commanders over forces made available to them). This provides that commander with a better degree of control. Finally, written establishing directives are extremely useful in clearly outlining the supporting/supported relationship between commanders and providing guidance for staffs.

The COMAFFOR should establish a close working relationship with the JFC to ensure the best representation of airpower's potential. When possible, the COMAFFOR should co-locate with, or at least be positioned close to, the JFC, so they may benefit from frequent personal interaction. This fosters the personal trust between senior



*During World War II, General MacArthur and his senior Airman, Lt Gen Kenney, had a close working relationship. As a result, General Kenney enjoyed a high level of trust to employ air power as best fit his commander's objectives.*

commanders essential to joint operations. It also helps keep a greater air component presence in the joint force headquarters, especially during planning, as well as keeping the joint force headquarters staff from trying to plan and run air component operations in the perceived absence of the JFC's senior Airman. To facilitate this, in some situations the COMAFFOR may even elect to co-locate with the JFC at the expense of residing in the [air operations center](#).

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## ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

### AIR FORCE COMPONENT PRESENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

There are many possible options for presenting forces in support of a [joint force commander](#) (JFC). To provide an initial baseline for organizational decisions, there are three general models for presenting Air Force components in support of a JFC: <sup>1</sup>

- ✦ **Theater-level component.** This model establishes an Air Force component at the [combatant commander](#) (CCDR) level, attached with specification of [operational control](#) (OPCON) and commanded by a theater [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR) who may also be designated as a [joint force air component commander](#) (JFACC).
- ✦ **Sub-theater-level component.** This model establishes an Air Force component at the [subordinate unified command](#) or [joint task force](#) (JTF) level, attached with specification of OPCON, with a COMAFFOR (prepared to act as a JFACC) at a level below the CCDR. This component may be in the form of an [air expeditionary task force](#) (AETF).
- ✦ **Sub-theater-level AETF in support of a JTF.** This model establishes a dedicated Air Force force, in the form of an AETF, in [direct support](#) of a subordinate JTF, with OPCON retained by the theater COMAFFOR.

The placement of an Air Force component within the CCDR's command structure, as well as the formal [command relationships](#) necessary to enable it to interface with other joint forces, requires careful deliberation based on the situation and capabilities available. At times, Air Force forces and capabilities may be best positioned at the theater (i.e., CCDR) level and at other times at the JTF level.

### LEVELS OF FORCE PRESENTATION

Joint and Service doctrine explicitly describe three levels for organizing joint forces within a geographic CCDR's [area of responsibility](#) (AOR): the CCDR level (i.e., the CCDR acts as the JFC), the subordinate unified command (subunified command) level, as in Korea; and at the subordinate JTF level. The three force presentation models discussed above are not meant to limit the CCDR's authority to organize forces to best accomplish assigned missions but instead to enable the Air Force to effectively support the CCDR and any subordinate organizations. Careful consultation between the

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<sup>1</sup> There may be additional considerations during homeland operations that impact command arrangements and command relationships. See Annex 3-27, [Homeland Operations](#).

respective JFCs and the Air Force component commanders is required. The following discussion summarizes some of the considerations that may affect the CCDR's organizational construct and force attachment decisions. Each force presentation model will require an appropriately tailored C2 capability.

## THEATER-LEVEL COMPONENT

This unified command-level model establishes a Service component and COMAFFOR at the CCDR level, with the COMAFFOR poised to act as a theater JFACC if so designated. This is known as the "theater-level COMAFFOR" model. This model optimizes allocation of scarce [airpower](#) assets against competing demands across the AOR. As the JFC, the CCDR establishes priorities for employment of all [assigned](#) and [attached](#) forces, and resolves competing demands among the subordinate commands. In this model, the forces form up under the CCDR's Air Force component command.

The CCDR's decision to use this model will likely incorporate many factors, including the demands of the strategic environment, the required integration of capabilities at the theater level, the character and availability of air, space, and cyberspace forces, and the ability to command and control those forces. When the CCDR decides the most effective way to accomplish the mission is by retaining forces at the theater level, the theater-level COMAFFOR will operate in support of the subordinate JTF commander(s) according to the CCDR's theater-wide priorities.

To support planning and operations with subordinate JTFs and other components, the theater-level COMAFFOR may then deploy [joint air component coordination elements](#) (JACCEs) to ensure the JTFs receive appropriate support. The JACCE provides on-

### **"Deputy Commander—Air" in the Afghanistan JOA**

Due to the complexity of operations in the USCENTCOM AOR, the AFCENT commander created two subordinate AETFs (9th AETF-Iraq and 9th AETF Afghanistan) to better focus airpower support in those two joint operations areas. In Afghanistan, a NATO organization, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) also required a clearly identified command relationship with Air Force forces.

To support US force presentation to ISAF, the commander of 9th AETF-Afghanistan was also designated as the "Deputy Commander-Air" to the commander, US Forces-Afghanistan (USFOR-A), the US component to ISAF. This arrangement provided ISAF with an Air Force commander who could exercise command authorities over Air Force forces in support of ISAF.

While a non-standard organization structure, the Deputy Commander-Air leverages basic doctrinal concepts to achieve unity of command within a complex command structure.

hand air component expertise and the direct link back to the theater COMAFFOR and the [air operations center](#) (AOC).

The key advantage of this model is that it allows the COMAFFOR to optimize CCDR priorities across the AOR. The key disadvantage is that the JACCE(s) may be inadequate if subordinate JTFs require detailed support and physical leadership presence.

## **SUB-THEATER-LEVEL COMPONENT**

This model establishes a subordinate AETF and COMAFFOR within a subordinate JTF, responsible for an operational area below the theater (i.e., CCDR) level. This model may be preferable when the span or scope of operations is less than theater-wide, or when operations are sufficiently fluid to require planning and execution at more tactical levels.

Under this model, the CCDR-level COMAFFOR, as directed by the CCDR, relinquishes OPCON of the forces attached to the subordinate AETF, and the designated commander of the JTF accepts OPCON for the duration of the attachment. In accordance with joint and Air Force [doctrine](#), the JTF commander then normally delegates OPCON of attached Air Force forces to the JTF COMAFFOR (i.e., the AETF commander). [Administrative control](#) (ADCON) is retained within the Service chain from the CCDR-level COMAFFOR downward to the JTF-level COMAFFOR. The JTF-level COMAFFOR is poised to also act as the JFACC within the JTF, if so designated by the JTF commander.

The key advantage of this model is that it provides fully integrated airpower to a subordinate JTF, while the theater COMAFFOR maintains control of high-demand, low density capabilities. The key disadvantage is that Air Force forces attached to the JTF are not normally available to address demands outside their JTF.

### ***Mix of Theater- and Sub-Theater-Level Components***

Some theater requirements may drive a mix of the two previous models. This may be desirable when there are competing requirements for low density/high demand Service capabilities (e.g., [intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance](#); remotely piloted aircraft; and [air refueling](#)) across the AOR, yet there is also sufficient demand for dedicated airpower at subordinate levels to drive attachment of Air Force forces to a subordinate JTF.

In these circumstances, the theater COMAFFOR, as directed by the CCDR, relinquishes OPCON over those Air Force forces that are attached to the JTF as an AETF, but retains OPCON over all other Air Force forces assigned or attached to the CCDR. As a reminder, the theater COMAFFOR retains ADCON over all Air Force forces assigned or attached to the CCDR, either through the JTF level COMAFFORs for

AETFs attached to the JTFs or through established commanders for those Air Force forces that are retained at the CCDR level.

The key advantage of this model is that it provides fully integrated airpower to a subordinate JTF, while the theater COMAFFOR maintains control of high-demand, low density capabilities. The key disadvantage is this model creates coordination challenges between the theater- and JTF-level COMAFFORs and their staffs. There may also be a scarcity of AOC and A-staff resources.

## **SUB-THEATER-LEVEL AETF IN SUPPORT OF A JTF**

When the CCDR establishes one or more sub-theater JTFs, but elects to retain all (or most) Air Force forces at the theater level, the size and complexity of the mission may lead the theater COMAFFOR to determine the best way to support the JTF(s) is by establishing subordinate AETF(s) and designating them in direct support of the sub-theater JTF commander(s).

When employing this construct, the theater COMAFFOR retains OPCON and delegates appropriate aspects of OPCON or tactical control (TACON) to the AETF commander, while maintaining theater-wide perspective and responsibility for recommending apportionment of airpower capabilities across the theater of operations to the CCDR. The AETF commander (who is not a separate COMAFFOR, because the AETF is not attached to the JTF) remains subordinate to the theater COMAFFOR.

The key advantage of this model is that it provides an Airman empowered with command authorities to the JTF commander, vice a liaison role, while allowing the theater COMAFFOR to retain OPCON of forces across the AOR to address the CCDR's priorities. The key disadvantage to this model is that there is usually no dedicated AOC to fully integrate airpower with JTF operations; reachback to the theater AOC and A-staff are still required.

## **FORCE ATTACHMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

The CCDR decides whether effective accomplishment of the operational mission at the JTF level outweigh competing missions at the CCDR's AOR level and can best be accomplished by attaching Air Force forces with specification of OPCON to a JTF commander. Deliberations should examine the interplay of priority, tempo, intensity, duration, and scope of operations. For example:

- ★ Do the operational tempo, intensity, duration, and scope warrant near full-time use of an attached AETF?
- ★ Do the operational tempo, intensity, duration, and scope justify a dedicated AETF that, once attached to the JTF, may not be available to support operations elsewhere?

- ★ Does the priority of the JTF mission, relative to other theater missions, justify a dedicated AETF that, once attached to the JTF, may not be available to support operations elsewhere?
- ★ If the choice is to attach an AETF to a JTF, does the Air Force have the ability to provide the required command and control of Air Force forces?
- ★ Does the provision of forces to a subordinate JTF, either by attachment or direct support, effectively demonstrate and enable the Air Force component's commitment to the joint force effort?

If the decision is to attach forces, the follow-on question is whether the forces should be attached with specification of either OPCON or TACON.

- ★ **Specification of OPCON:** OPCON is the more complete—and preferred— choice of control because it includes organizing and employing commands and forces, assigning tasks, designating objectives, and giving authoritative direction necessary to accomplish the mission, to include repositioning of forces.
- ★ **Specification of TACON:** TACON is the more limited choice of control, as it is limited only to the detailed direction and control of movements or maneuvers. TACON may provide sufficient authority for controlling and directing the application of force or tactical use of combat support assets within the assigned mission or task. Attaching forces with specification of only TACON may make for a more confused chain of command since OPCON and TACON would be split between two different commanders. However, that must be balanced against other needs, for example, the ability to quickly swing the forces elsewhere, based on the CCDR's directions.

**These situations require careful and continuing dialogue between the respective joint and Service component commanders and their common superior commander.** Finally, the decisions, including the delineation of operational and administrative authorities to be held among the involved commanders, should be captured in written orders such as operation orders, execute orders, or fragmentary orders; Air Force decisions may also be captured in G-series orders, such as those appointing the COMAFFOR.

## ACHIEVING UNITY OF EFFORT

To achieve unity of effort across an AOR, the CCDR should provide the requisite guidance for the interaction between theater-level and subordinate components. This should include clarity of supported and supporting command relationships between the JTFs and theater COMAFFOR, together with clear priorities of effort and support, and apportionment. The theater COMAFFOR should then allocate effort across the AOR using CCDR guidance and priorities.

The CCDR sets the conditions for success by clearly stating and emphasizing the supported command status of subordinate JTFs and the supporting command role of a

theater-level COMAFFOR and by providing sufficient guidance for the theater COMAFFOR's subsequent allocation decision. The CCDR is the ultimate arbiter for prioritization and apportionment decisions among subordinate JTF commanders.

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## ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

### JOINT STAFFS

Last Reviewed: 7 Nov 2014

This section presents some considerations on composition and uses of joint staffs.

#### JOINT STAFF COMPOSITION

Effective joint operations require real integration of significant multi-Service capabilities. The composition of a truly joint staff should reflect the composition of the subordinate joint forces to ensure that those responsible for employing joint forces have a thorough knowledge of the capabilities and limitations of assigned or attached forces. **The presence of liaisons on a single-Service staff does not transform that Service staff into a joint staff.** The joint staff should be composed of appropriate members in key positions of responsibility from each Service or functional component having significant forces assigned to the command.

The same general guidelines for joint staffs apply to [coalition](#) operations. Key staff positions ought to be a representative mix of US and allied officers. As with a joint staff, the key concepts are shared responsibilities and trust. And as with a joint staff, liaisons alone don't make a Service staff into a coalition staff.

#### COMMANDERS AND STAFF

**“Commanders command, staffs support.”** Within a joint force, only those with the title of “commander”—i.e., the [joint force commander](#) (JFC), the Service component commanders, and the functional component commanders—may exercise any degree of operational control over forces. **Only commanders have the legal and moral authority to place personnel in harm's way. Under no circumstance should staff agencies, including those of the JFC's staff, attempt to command forces.** Special cells formed within a joint staff to oversee or advise the JFC on special interest activities should not exercise direct control over component forces. In accordance with joint doctrine, it is permissible for joint staff agencies to issue orders and directives in the name of the commander of the higher command to the commander of the immediate subordinate command. Staff agencies should neither attempt to nor be permitted to directly command or control elements of the subordinate forces. As a final note, while this guidance is aimed at joint staffs, it also applies to Service staffs.

#### JFACC STAFF

When the [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR) is designated the [joint force air component commander](#) (JFACC), he/she may need to establish a small joint or combined staff to deal with joint issues beyond the purview of the [AFFOR staff](#).

Additionally, some AFFOR staff personnel may be present in the [air operations center](#) (AOC) to provide access to Air Force component information; normally, such AFFOR staff personnel should not be dual-hatted within the AOC. Augmentation within each AOC directorate from relevant Service components and [coalition](#) partners ensures adequate joint representation on the staff. At the discretion of the COMAFFOR, officers from other Services and coalition partners may fill key deputy and principal staff positions. Finally, for very large and complex operations—as might be encountered with large coalition operations—a COMAFFOR dual-hatted as a JFACC may delegate some aspects of COMAFFOR functions to a subordinate deputy COMAFFOR to ensure that they receive the proper attention.

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ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

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**APPENDIX A: COMMAND AUTHORITIES AND RELATIONSHIPS**

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

Clear and effective **command relationships** are central to effective operations and organizations. A working understanding of command terminology is essential to understanding the relationships among components and the responsibilities inherent in organizations.

This section discusses the following command authorities:

- ✦ Combatant command (command authority) (COCOM)
  - ✦ Operational control (OPCON)
  - ✦ Tactical control (TACON)
  - ✦ Support
  - ✦ Administrative control (ADCON)
  - ✦ Coordinating authority
  - ✦ Direct liaison authorized (DIRLAUTH)
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## ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

### **COMBATANT COMMAND (COCOM)**

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

Combatant command (command authority) (COCOM) is defined as “**nontransferable command authority, which cannot be delegated, of a combatant commander to perform those functions of command over assigned forces involving organizing and employing commands and forces; assigning tasks; designating objectives; and giving authoritative direction over all aspects of military operations, joint training, and logistics necessary to accomplish the missions assigned to the command.**”

COCOM is exercised by commanders of combatant commands (CCMDs) as directed by the President or the Secretary of Defense. COCOM should be exercised through the commanders of subordinate organizations such as subordinate joint force commanders and Service and/or functional component commanders. COCOM provides full authority to organize and employ commands and forces as the combatant commander (CCDR) considers necessary to accomplish assigned missions. (Note that the acronym “COCOM” refers only to the command authority, not to an individual or an organization.)



ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

**OPERATIONAL CONTROL (OPCON)**

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

Operational control (OPCON) is defined as **“the authority to perform those functions of command over subordinate forces involving organizing and employing commands and forces, assigning tasks, designating objectives, and giving authoritative direction necessary to accomplish the mission.”**

OPCON is able to be delegated from a lesser authority than [combatant command \(command authority\)](#) (COCOM). OPCON normally provides full authority to organize commands and forces and to employ those forces as the commander in operational control considers necessary to accomplish assigned missions. It does not include authoritative direction for logistics or matters of administration, discipline, internal organization, or unit training. For example, OPCON does not include the authority to change the Service’s internal organization of its forces.

Component forces (e.g., the [air expeditionary task force](#) and its subordinate mix of expeditionary wings, groups, or squadrons) “should remain organized as designed and in the manner accustomed through training to maximize effectiveness.” (Joint Publication 1, [Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States](#)). OPCON should be exercised through the commanders of subordinate organizations, such as subordinate JFCs and Service and/or functional component commanders. Normally, JFCs exercise OPCON of [assigned](#) and [attached](#) Air Force forces through the [commander, Air Force forces](#).



ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

**TACTICAL CONTROL (TACON)**

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

Tactical control (TACON) is defined as “**the authority over forces that is limited to the detailed direction and control of movements or maneuvers within the operational area necessary to accomplish missions or tasks assigned.**”

TACON is able to be delegated from a lesser authority than [operational control](#) (OPCON) and may be delegated to and exercised by commanders at any echelon at or below the level of [combatant command](#) (CCMD). TACON provides sufficient authority for controlling and directing the application of force or tactical use of [combat support](#) assets within the assigned mission or task. TACON does not provide organizational authority or authoritative direction for administrative and logistic support.

An example of TACON is when the [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR), acting as the [joint force air component commander](#) (JFACC), produces an [air tasking order](#) that provides detailed instructions for joint air assets made available for tasking. For example, a JFACC functioning as the [area air defense commander](#) (AADC) with TACON over Army PATRIOT surface-to-air missile forces would have the authority to specify which asset/battery would be responsible for providing which portion of the air defense coverage for the joint force (exact placement of the assets/battery necessary to achieve the required coverage should normally be left to the Army component commander). The commander exercising TACON is responsible for ensuring communications with the controlled unit.



## ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

### SUPPORT

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

Support is a command authority that aids, protects, complements, or sustains another force. It is used when neither [operational control](#) (OPCON) nor [tactical control](#) (TACON) is appropriate. The Secretary of Defense (SecDef) specifies support relationships between [combatant commanders](#) (CCDRs); the CCDR may establish support relationships between components [assigned](#) or [attached](#) to the command.

Over several years of experience, the most common example of this between CCDRs is seen when a functional CCDR (e.g., Commander, USTRANSCOM) is established by the SecDef as a [supporting commander](#) and a geographic CCDR (e.g., Commander, USCENTCOM) is established as the [supported commander](#). Within a [combatant command](#), the best example is the last several years of experience within USCENTCOM, in which the [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR) (Commander, USAFCENT) is the supporting commander with the [joint force commanders](#) in Operations IRAQI FREEDOM (redesignated Operation NEW DAWN) and ENDURING FREEDOM designated by Commander, USCENTCOM as supported commanders.

The supported commander should ensure that the supporting commanders understand the assistance required. The supporting commanders should then provide the assistance needed, subject to a supporting commander's existing capabilities and other assigned tasks. When a supporting commander cannot fulfill the needs of the supported commander, the establishing authority should be notified by either the supported commander or a supporting commander. The establishing authority is responsible for determining a solution.

An [establishing directive](#) is normally issued to specify the purpose of the support relationship, the effect desired, and the scope of the action to be taken. It also should include: the forces and resources allocated to the supporting effort; the time, place, level, and duration of the supporting effort; the relative priority of the supporting effort; the authority, if any, of the supporting commander to modify the supporting effort in the event of exceptional opportunity or an emergency; and the degree of authority granted to the supported commander over the supporting effort.

There are four defined categories of support that a CCDR may direct over assigned or attached forces to ensure the appropriate level of support is provided to accomplish mission objectives. These include general support, mutual support, direct support, and close support.

- ★ **General support.** That support which is given to the supported force as a whole rather than to a particular subdivision thereof.
- ★ **Mutual support.** That support which units render each other against an enemy because of their assigned tasks, their position relative to each other and to the enemy, and their inherent capabilities.
- ★ **Direct support.** A mission requiring a force to support another specific force and authorizing it to answer directly to the supported force's request for assistance.
- ★ **Close support.** That action of the supporting force against targets or objectives that are sufficiently near the supported force as to require detailed integration or coordination of the supporting action with the fire, movement, or other actions of the supported force.

A supported relationship does not include authority to position supporting units but does include authority to direct missions or objectives for those units. An example would be a COMAFFOR's request for a supporting commander, Army forces or [joint force land component commander](#) to provide joint fire support to engage a [time-sensitive target](#) (TST). It would be up to the supporting commander to choose whether to use an Army Tactical Missile System, long range artillery, or some other weapon system as long as the TST is engaged with the effect and timing as directed by the supported commander. Under a supported relationship, the supporting unit is responsible for ensuring connectivity.

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ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

**ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL (ADCON)**

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

Administrative control (ADCON) is defined as the “**direction or exercise of authority over subordinate or other organizations with respect to administration and support.**” This includes organization of Service forces, control of resources and equipment, personnel management, unit logistics, individual and unit training, readiness, mobilization, demobilization, discipline, and other matters not included in the operational missions of the subordinate or other organizations.

ADCON is not a warfighting authority like that found in combatant command (command authority), operational control, tactical control, or support relationships. Normally the commander, Air Force forces (COMAFFOR) exercises ADCON over assigned Air Force personnel, and at least those elements of ADCON that are necessary to ensure mission accomplishment over those Air Force personnel attached to the Air Force component command. G-series orders implement Service ADCON authority by detailing those aspects of support that are necessary for the mission, and the relationship the gaining organization possesses over assigned or attached units and personnel. For example, the authority to exercise ADCON could include such elements as building a tent city, ordering supplies and equipment, authorizing training sorties, conducting exercises, working assignment actions for personnel, developing budget requests, protecting personnel, and recommending awards and decorations.

Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) authority is inherent in command authority, and is distinct from ADCON. However, G-series orders implementing ADCON may incorporate references to UCMJ authority. In specific contingency operations, the G-series order may retain one or more of these authorities in the parent unit. For attached forces, those elements of ADCON that are not specified to be gained by the COMAFFOR to whom the forces are attached, are retained by the parent Service organization to whom the Air Force forces are permanently assigned.



ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

**COORDINATING AUTHORITY**

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

Coordinating authority is defined as **“the commander or individual who has the authority to require consultation between the specific functions or activities involving forces of two or more Services, joint force components, or forces of the same Service or agencies, but does not have the authority to compel agreement.”** In the event that essential agreement cannot be obtained, the matter shall be referred to the appointing authority. Coordinating authority is a consultation relationship, not an authority through which command may be exercised.

Coordinating authority may be exercised by commanders or individuals at any echelon at or below the level of combatant command. Coordinating authority may be granted and modified through a memorandum of agreement to provide unity of effort for operations involving Reserve component and regular component forces engaged in interagency activities. The common task to be coordinated should be specified in the establishing directive without disturbing the normal organizational relationships in other matters.

Coordinating authority is more applicable to planning and similar activities than to operations. Coordinating authority is not in any way tied to force assignment. Assignment of coordinating authority is based on the missions and capabilities of the commands or organizations involved.



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## ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

### **DIRECT LIAISON AUTHORIZED (DIRLAUTH)**

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Direct liaison authorized (DIRLAUTH) is defined as **“that authority granted by a commander (any level) to a subordinate to directly consult or coordinate an action with a command or agency within or outside of the granting command.”**

DIRLAUTH is more applicable to planning than operations and always carries with it the requirement of keeping the commander granting DIRLAUTH informed. DIRLAUTH is a coordination relationship, not an authority through which command may be exercised. DIRLAUTH is most appropriately used to streamline communications and operations between tactical elements without relinquishing command by the higher authority.



[ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL](#)

**APPENDIX B: THE AIR OPERATIONS CENTER**

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

The following discussion outlines the basic geographic air operations center (AOC).

The AOC provides operational-level [command and control](#) (C2) of air component forces as the focal point for planning, executing, and assessing air component operations. The AOC can be tailored and scaled to a specific or changing mission and to the associated task force the [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR) presents to the [joint force commander](#) (JFC). Air Force Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures 3-3 AOC, *Operational Employment—Air and Space Operations Center* and [Air Force Instruction 13-1AOC, Volume 3, Operational Procedures—Air and Space Operations Center](#) provide further detail concerning the structure, functions, processes, and personnel within the AOC.

The primary functions of the AOC are to:

- ✦ Develop air component operations strategy and planning documents that integrate air, space, and cyberspace operations to meet COMAFFOR objectives and guidance.
- ✦ Task, execute, and assess day-to-day air component operations; provide rapid reaction, [positive control](#), and coordinate and deconflict weapons employment as well as integrate the total air component effort.
- ✦ Receive, assemble, analyze, filter, and disseminate all-source [intelligence](#) and weather information to support air component operations planning, execution, and assessment.
- ✦ Integrate space capabilities and coordinate space activities for the COMAFFOR when the COMAFFOR is designated as [space coordinating authority](#).
- ✦ Issue [airspace control procedures](#) and coordinate airspace control activities for the [airspace control authority](#) (ACA) when the COMAFFOR is designated the ACA.
- ✦ Provide overall direction of air defense, including theater missile defense (TMD), for the [area air defense commander](#) (AADC) when the COMAFFOR is designated the AADC.
- ✦ Plan, task, and execute the theater air- and space-borne [intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance](#) (ISR) mission.

- ✦ Conduct component-level [assessment](#) to determine mission and overall air component operations effectiveness as required by the JFC to support the theater assessment effort.
- ✦ Plan and task [air mobility](#) operations according to the theater priorities.

The baseline AOC organization includes an AOC commander, five divisions (strategy, combat plans, combat operations, ISR, and air mobility), and multiple support/specialty teams. Each integrates numerous disciplines in a cross-functional team approach to planning and execution. Liaisons from other Service and functional components may be present to represent the full range of joint air, space, and cyberspace capabilities made available to the COMAFFOR. The following provides a summary of the major elements of an AOC.

**The AOC commander** is charged with effectively managing air component operations and establishing the AOC battle rhythm. The AOC commander develops and directs processes to plan, coordinate, allocate, task, execute, and assess air component operations in the [area of operations/joint operations area](#) based on JFC and COMAFFOR guidance. The AOC commander commands the AOC weapons system (but not [air expeditionary task force](#) forces) and should be prepared to direct a joint AOC (JAOC) when the COMAFFOR is designated as the [joint force air component commander](#).

**The strategy division** concentrates on long-range planning of air component operations to achieve theater objectives by developing, refining, disseminating, and assessing progress toward achieving the COMAFFOR component strategy. The strategy division is normally task organized into four functionally oriented core teams: the strategy plans team, the strategy guidance team, the operational assessment team, and the information operations team. Key products include the [joint air operations plan](#), the air operations directive (AOD), and other COMAFFOR guidance.

**The combat plans division** applies operational art to develop detailed execution plans for air component operations. The combat plans division is normally task organized into four functionally oriented core teams: the targeting effects team; the [master air attack plan](#) (MAAP) team; the [air tasking order \(ATO\)](#) production team; and the C2 planning team. The division's key products are an area air defense plan, [airspace control plan](#), and a daily ATO, [airspace control order](#) (ACO), special instructions, and joint integrated prioritized target list.

**The combat operations division** monitors and executes current operations. The combat operations division is also the focal point for monitoring the execution of joint and combined operations, such as time-sensitive targeting, TMD, joint [suppression of enemy air defense](#) supported by theater forces, and joint air attack team. The combat operations division is normally task-organized into four functionally oriented core teams: offensive operations, defensive operations, senior intelligence duty officer team, and interface control team. The division's main products are daily ATO/ACO changes, the airspace control plan, and air defense plan.

**The ISR division**, in conjunction with the other AOC divisions, plans and executes airborne ISR operations and provides combat ISR support to air component planning, execution, and assessment activities. The ISR division has four core teams: the analysis, correlation and fusion team; the targets/tactical assessment team; the ISR operations team; and the processing, exploitation, and dissemination management team. Major products include: the reconnaissance, surveillance, and target acquisition annex to the ATO (or the ISR collection plan); updated intelligence preparation of the operational environment; air component target nomination list; and intelligence summaries.

**The [air mobility division](#)** (AMD) plans, coordinates, tasks, and executes the theater air mobility mission. Unlike the other AOC divisions that work solely for the AOC commander, the AMD coordinates with the [director, air mobility forces](#) (DIRMOBFOR) but remains responsive to the tempo and timing of the AOC commander's operation. The DIRMOBFOR is responsible for integrating the total air mobility effort for the COMAFFOR and, in this capacity, coordinates with the AMD on behalf of the COMAFFOR to execute the air mobility mission. The AMD coordinates with the theater deployment distribution operations center and the 618 AOC. The AMD is comprised of [four core teams](#): the airlift control team, the air refueling control team, the air mobility control team, and the aeromedical evacuation control team. Major products include airlift apportionment plans and air refueling inputs to the MAAP, ATO, ACO, and special instructions.

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## APPENDIX C: THE AIR FORCE FORCES (AFFOR) STAFF

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

This appendix supports the basic discussion of the AFFOR staff. More specific guidance can be found in [Air Force Instruction 13-103, AFFOR Staff Operations, Readiness and Structures](#).

An Air Force forces (AFFOR) staff (sometimes also called an A-Staff) supports the [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR) at the [combatant command](#), [subordinate unified command](#), or [joint task force](#) level. The AFFOR staff is the vehicle through which the COMAFFOR fulfills operational and administrative responsibilities for [assigned](#) and [attached](#) forces across the [range of military operations](#), from steady state operations in the engagement phase through [major operations](#) and [campaigns](#). In the steady state, the AFFOR staff performs administrative responsibilities (organize, train, and equip), and also plans, executes, and assesses operations in support of the CCDR's theater campaign strategies and plans. The AFFOR staff is also responsible for the operational planning that occurs outside the air tasking cycle (e.g., deliberate planning). The AFFOR staff consists of functionally oriented directorates, a command section, a personal staff, and any required liaisons. The AFFOR staff issues [mission type orders](#) on behalf of the COMAFFOR to direct subordinate units to execute actions outside of the scope of the [air tasking order](#) (ATO). Examples of such orders may include setting a baseline force protection condition, directing the move of a unit to another operating base, and overseeing the execution of steady-state or security cooperation operations.

**The following discussion of AFFOR staff duties is not intended to be all-inclusive. The differing mission requirements of any given operation may dictate different task emphasis and staff arrangements.** Very large or complex operations, for example, may require all staff directorates. In some cases, senior component liaison elements may not be needed; in other cases, some of the required support may be obtained through [reachback](#). For very small or limited operations, a full AFFOR staff may not be required. As a rule of thumb, the size and span of the AFFOR staff should normally be held to the smallest number of divisions necessary to handle the demands of the operation; in some cases, the COMAFFOR may combine some leadership positions (e.g., A-3/5; A-4/7). Other operations may employ an AFFOR staff split into forward and rear elements, using reachback to maintain [unity of effort](#). In each case, based upon regional requirements, the COMAFFOR determines the size, shape, and location of the AFFOR staff and [air operations center](#) (AOC) to best support the operation.

## COMMAND SECTION

The command section is normally composed of the commander (i.e., the COMAFFOR), vice commander, chief of staff, command chief master sergeant, executive assistant, and appropriate administrative support personnel. Within the command section, the chief of staff coordinates and directs the daily activities of the AFFOR staff; approves actions, orders, and plans, as authorized by the COMAFFOR; and ensures COMAFFOR decisions and concepts are implemented by directing and assigning staff responsibilities.

## PERSONAL STAFF

The COMAFFOR has several staff activities that normally function outside the AFFOR staff directorates. These activities fulfill specific responsibilities usually related to providing close, personal advice or services to the commander, or assist the commander and the component staff with technical, administrative, or tactical matters. These activities may include the commander's legal advisor, political advisor (POLAD), public affairs advisor, inspector general, protocol advisor, historian, chaplain, counterintelligence and special investigations, financial management, force protection, air mobility operations ([DIRMOBFOR](#)), space operations ([DIRSPACEFOR](#)), medical, knowledge operations management, and safety. Based on the needs of the operation and the requirements of the AFFOR staff, some of these activities may be located within the AFFOR staff directorates.

## SENIOR COMPONENT LIAISONS

The senior liaison officer (LNO) from each component represents his or her respective commander to the COMAFFOR. Subordinate LNOs from each component may perform duties throughout the staff as required, providing weapon system expertise. LNOs should be knowledgeable of the capabilities and limitations of their units and Service.

## MANPOWER, PERSONNEL, AND SERVICES (A-1)

The director of manpower, personnel, and services is the principal staff assistant to the COMAFFOR for total force accountability, personnel policy and procedures, the establishment and documentation of manpower requirements, organizational structures, mortuary affairs, food and force [beddown](#) operations, the coordination of exchange services, and the provision of quality of life programs to enable and sustain forces assigned and attached to the COMAFFOR.

## INTELLIGENCE, SURVEILLANCE, AND RECONNAISSANCE (A-2)

The director of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) is the principal staff assistant to the COMAFFOR for policy and guidance for all Air Force ISR operational architectures, personnel, systems, and training. The A-2 provides intelligence support

to forces within the assigned [area of operations](#). The A-2 does not normally direct ISR collection assets when an ISR division is resident in the AOC; this is normally directed by ISR division chief.

## **OPERATIONS (A-3)**

The director of operations serves as the principal staff assistant to the COMAFFOR in the direction and control of all assigned and attached Air Force forces. When [operational control](#) (OPCON) of Air Force units is formally transferred to the COMAFFOR, the A-3 ensures they are capable of performing tasked missions. This includes monitoring unit deployments and beddown locations, combat readiness, mission rehearsals, force protection, and training activities. The A-3 is the focal point for executing component operations outside the purview of the AOC.

## **LOGISTICS (A-4)**

The director of logistics is the principal staff assistant to the COMAFFOR for logistics and sustainment support of assigned and attached Air Force forces. This includes oversight, integration, and operational level planning for and management of logistics capabilities for deploying units and the AOC, and similar support to other US government agencies, [nongovernment organizations](#) (NGOs), and private voluntary organizations as appropriate. Most of the challenges confronting this division will likely be Air Force component-unique.

## **PLANS AND REQUIREMENTS (A-5)**

The director of plans and requirements serves as the principal staff assistant to the COMAFFOR for all consolidated planning functions. In coordination with the A-4, the A-5 conducts comprehensive force-level movement and execution planning throughout the campaign. This involves preparation and subsequent refinement of the force flow, beddown, and redeployment in the [time-phased force and deployment data](#). The A-5 is the focal point for planning not under the purview of the AOC, to include the COMAFFOR campaign support plan and security cooperation country plans. This planning is normally preceded by the development of a COMAFFOR strategy. The A-5 is also the focal point for the operational [assessment](#) of such plans. In addition, the A-5 leads in the development of the organizational structure and [command relationships](#) for the Air Force component within the framework of the joint operation. The A-5 normally publishes the Air Force component [operations order](#) to support the JFC's campaign.

## **COMMUNICATIONS (A-6)**

The director of communications is the principal staff assistant to the COMAFFOR for communications-electronics and information capabilities. This includes establishing the theater communications and automated systems architecture to support operational and command requirements.

## **INSTALLATIONS AND MISSION SUPPORT (A-7)**

The director of installations and mission support is the COMAFFOR's primary advisor for installations; mission support; [force protection](#); civil engineering; [explosive ordnance disposal](#); firefighting; emergency management; chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear passive defense and response; contracting; and all cross-functional expeditionary combat support. Additionally, the A-7 works in coordination with the A-4 and A-1 on formulation of beddown plans and coordination and supervision of force beddown.

## **STRATEGIC PLANS AND PROGRAMS (A-8)**

The director of strategic plans and programs provides the COMAFFOR comprehensive advice on all aspects of strategic planning and programming. The A-8 also conducts program assessment and provides coordinated resource inputs to the supporting MAJCOM's Program Objective Memorandum processes.

## **STUDIES, ANALYSES, ASSESSMENTS, AND LESSONS LEARNED (A-9)**

The director of studies, analyses, assessments, and lessons learned, collects, documents, reports, and disseminates critical information necessary to analyze, assess, and document Air Force aspects of [campaigns](#) and [contingencies](#), and to document lessons identified. (Note: A-9 functions do not include campaign [operational assessment](#), a task performed within the AOC). This information provides the primary source documents for both contemporary and future Air Force planning and analysis. Moreover, they serve as an official permanent record of component mission accomplishment.

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ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

**APPENDIX D: THE THEATER AIR CONTROL SYSTEM**

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

The [theater air control system](#) (TACS) is the Air Force's mechanism for commanding and controlling theater [airpower](#). It consists of airborne and ground elements to conduct tailored [command and control](#) (C2) of airpower operations throughout the [range of military operations](#), including [counterair](#) and [counterland](#) operations, [airspace control](#), and coordination of space mission support not resident within theater. The structure and positioning of the TACS elements adapt as needed to effectively control airpower. As an organic Air Force system, the TACS remains under the [operational control](#) of the [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR). In [multinational](#) commands, the name and function of certain TACS elements may differ, but multinational air components have similar capabilities.

As the senior C2 element of the TACS, the [air operations center](#) (AOC) includes personnel and equipment of the necessary disciplines to ensure the effective conduct of air component operations (e.g., communications, operations, intelligence, weather, etc.). When the COMAFFOR is designated as [the joint force air component commander](#) (JFACC), [airspace control authority](#), [area air defense commander](#), [space coordinating authority](#), and [electronic warfare control authority](#), these functions are also performed through the AOC. The AOC should have secure and redundant communications with higher and lateral headquarters, as well as subordinate units. The TACS provides the COMAFFOR connectivity from the theater strategic level down through tactical elements such as Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS), Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System (JSTARS), control and reporting centers (CRCs) to tactical air control parties (TACPs) and joint terminal attack controllers (JTACs) organized under expeditionary air support operations groups (EASOGs) or expeditionary air support operations squadrons (EASOSs).

When the TACS is combined with other components' C2 elements, such as the Army air-ground system, the Navy tactical air control system, and the Marine Corps air command and control system, they become the theater air-ground system (TAGS), and collectively support the JFACC.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Each Service component of a joint force employs its respective element of the TAGS. When the COMAFFOR is designated as the JFACC, then the JFACC will normally exercise control of component forces made available for tasking using TACS. If another Service component commander is designated as the JFACC, then he/she would likely employ their own Service component element of TAGS as the primary system for control of air component forces made available for tasking. For a description of each Service's TAGS element see [AFTTP 3-2.17, TAGS](#).

The TACS is divided into ground and airborne elements as described below.

## GROUND TACS ELEMENTS

Ground TACS elements include the CRCs, the air support operations center (ASOC), and TACPs.

- ★ The CRC is subordinate to the AOC and conducts air surveillance and supports [strategic attack](#), [counterair](#), [counterland](#), [air refueling](#) operations, and other airpower functions/missions as directed.

Responsibility as the region/sector air defense commander may be decentralized to the CRC, which acts as the primary integration point for air defense fighters and air defense artillery (ADA) fire control in its assigned area. It also enhances the joint forces' situational awareness by disseminating the air picture over data-links. The CRC may deploy mobile radars and associated communications equipment to expand radar coverage and communications range within its assigned operating area. These remote radars are capable of providing early warning, surveillance, weapons control, and identification functions.

- ★ The ASOC, which reports to the AOC, receives, coordinates, and processes air support requests from subordinate TACPs, which are transmitted through the joint air request net (JARN). ASOCs distribute allocated sorties to satisfy requests for air support and integrate those missions with the supported units' fires and maneuver. An ASOC is normally tasked to support an Army unit but can also support units from other organizations (e.g., special operations, coalition forces). It may also augment other missions requiring C2 of air assets (e.g., humanitarian efforts).



### **The AOC is the senior element within the theater air control system (TACS).**

The TACS includes the AOC plus subordinate ground and airborne elements, and is directly involved in the command and control of most air missions. Collectively, the TACS has the capability to plan, direct, integrate, and control all air, space, and cyberspace forces assigned, attached, or made available for tasking; monitor the actions of both friendly and enemy forces; plan, direct, coordinate, and control air defense and airspace control; and coordinate for required space and cyberspace support.

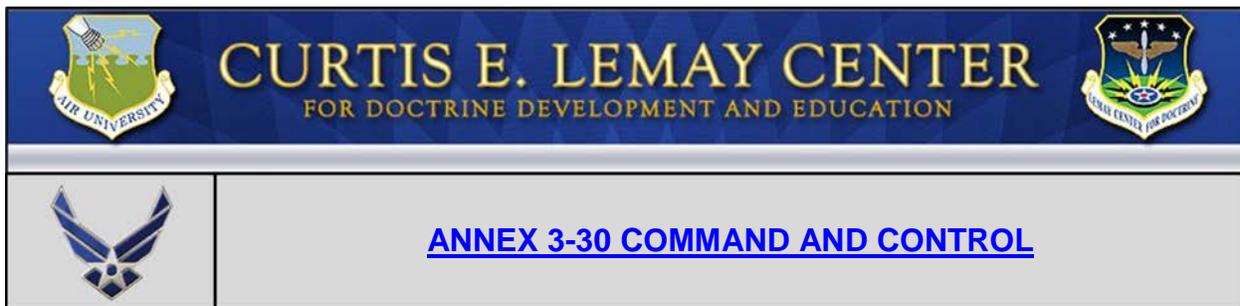
It is important to remember that **the entire TACS is necessary for the COMAFFOR's effective command of airpower.**

- ✦ TACPs are aligned with Army maneuver elements, battalion through division level. They are primarily responsible for [decentralized execution](#) of [close air support](#) (CAS) operations. TACPs request, coordinate, and control CAS missions as required. For more information on TACPs and ASOCs, see Annex 3-03, [Counterland](#).

## AIRBORNE TACS ELEMENTS

Airborne elements of the TACS include AWACS, JSTARS, and the forward air controller (airborne) (FAC [A]).

- ✦ AWACS is subordinate to the AOC and conducts air and maritime surveillance and supports strategic attack, counterair, counterland, [countersea](#), air refueling operations, and other airpower functions/missions as directed. Responsibility as the region/sector air defense commander may be decentralized to AWACS, which acts as the primary integration point for air defense fighters and ADA fire control in its assigned area. It also enhances the joint forces' situational awareness by disseminating the air and maritime picture over data-links.
  - ✦ JSTARS conducts ground and maritime surveillance and supports strategic attack, counterair, counterland, countersea, and other airpower functions/missions as directed. It primarily provides dedicated support to ground commanders and attack support functions to friendly offensive and defensive air elements and may be employed as an airborne extension to the ASOC. It also enhances the joint forces' situational awareness by disseminating the ground and maritime picture over data-links.
  - ✦ The [FAC\(A\)](#) is an airborne extension of the TACP and has the authority to direct aircraft delivering ordnance to a specific target cleared by the ground commander. The FAC(A) provides additional flexibility in the operational environment by enabling rapid coordination and execution of air operations. It also enhances the TACS' situational awareness by disseminating information on the flow of aircraft on target.
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## APPENDIX E: THE AIR RESERVE COMPONENTS

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

The Air Reserve Components (ARC) are the Air Force Reserve (AFR) and the Air National Guard of the United States (ANGUS). The ARC provides operational capabilities and strategic depth to meet US defense requirements across the range of military operations. ARC forces are normally employed to take advantage of military opportunities, cover shortfalls in regular component critical skills, and to support short duration national priorities. The importance of this factor—the part-time nature of the force—should be fully considered. When evaluating which ongoing operational missions are best suited for ARC participation, factors such as predictability, tour length, and duty location should all be considered.

The AFR consists of the [Ready Reserve](#), the [Standby Reserve](#), and the [Retired Reserve](#), which includes retirees from both the ARC and regular component. The Ready Reserve consists of the [Selected Reserve](#) and the [Individual Ready Reserve](#).

The ANGUS consists of members of the Air National Guard (ANG) who are on active duty under Title 10 USC. The ANG consist of the federally recognized organized militia of the States and Territories, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia. [Administrative control](#) (ADCON) for Guardsmen not in federal status flows to their respective adjutant general and governor. When activated under Title 10 USC, ADCON is maintained through the ANG Readiness Center.

The AFR and the ANG both provide forces to the Selected Reserve, which the Air Force maintains at the same readiness level as the regular component. AFR and ANG are full partners ready to meet Air Force mission requirements at all times. This enables the ARC to provide operational capability on a continual basis.

Leveraging the ARC to provide operational capability involves a process of using both volunteer forces and/or forces mobilized as described below. The ARC provides sustainable, rotational support across numerous operational missions, such as [airlift](#), [air refueling](#), North American Air Defense Command [air sovereignty mission](#), and [combat support](#). Voluntary duty is encouraged to meet mission requirements and volunteers provide the bulk of the ARC's sustainable rotational capability to operations. ARC forces may need to be mobilized during a surge operation and for activities requiring critical skills.

Historically, ARC forces were allocated to regular component major commands (MAJCOMs) which then managed, mobilized, and presented forces to fulfill operational

requirements. With the increased operational commitment of the ARC, more of the roles and responsibilities currently performed by the regular component MAJCOMs related to generating ARC forces are shifting to the ARC.

## ARC ORGANIZATION

The majority of the ARC is organized into two types of units: unit-equipped or associate. Unit-equipped units have their own organic equipment; associate units share the weapon systems of an equipped host unit and train to perform the same mission. These unit associations allow for consistent training, leveraging of resources, and familiarization between the regular component and ARC. The associate models are:

- ✦ **Classic Associate:** A host regular unit retains principal responsibility for a weapon system that it shares with one or more associate ARC units. Each component exercises ADCON of its respective members.
- ✦ **Active Associate:** A host ARC unit has principal responsibility for a weapon system which it shares with one or more associate regular units. Reserve and regular units retain separate organizational structures and chains of command.
- ✦ **ARC Associate:** An ANG and an AFR unit train and operate integrally, with one retaining principal responsibility for the weapon system as host unit. Each unit retains separate organizational structures and chains of command.

## AIR FORCE RESERVE

The AFR also provides individual reservists through the [individual mobilization augmentee](#) (IMA) program and the participating individual ready reserve (PIRR) program. IMAs are trained reservists who augment regular units to support mobilization requirements, [contingency operations](#), or other specialized requirements. Their experience helps the regular component accomplish its mission by augmenting (or rounding out) the regular unit, backfilling positions that have been vacated by deploying regular component members, or performing missions at the normal duty station. IMAs perform the full range of Air Force missions. The ARC retains ADCON of IMAs and PIRR personnel.

## AIR NATIONAL GUARD

National Guard Airmen can be called to long-term active duty under five different statutes, as authorized in Title 10 USC. They range from full mobilization, which requires a declaration of war or national emergency by the Congress, to reserve component volunteers, which requires consent of the individual reserve component member and consent from the governor to activate individuals in the National Guard. The various mobilization statutes determine how many reservists can be called up, to whom the call up applies, and the duration of the call up.

## ACCESSING ARC FORCES

ARC forces can be activated both voluntarily and involuntarily to support national requirements. Once activated, there are different degrees of operational and administrative control applicable to ARC members. The ARC structure normally retains full ADCON; the gaining [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR) normally exercises specified elements of ADCON, which should be articulated in appropriate orders. OPCON transfers in accordance with SecDef orders.

- ★ **Voluntary.** Volunteers are placed on Federal active duty by the SECAF as authorized by Title 10 USC.
- ★ **Involuntary.** There are three authorities that outline the limits and requirements for involuntarily activating members of the ARC:
  - ★ ★ **Presidential Reserve Callup.** This provides the President a means to activate, without a declaration of national emergency, not more than 200,000 members of the Selected Reserve and the Individual Ready Reserve (of whom not more than 30,000 may be members of the Individual Ready Reserve), for not more than 365 days to meet the requirements of any operational mission. Members activated under this provision may not be used for disaster relief or to suppress insurrection. This authority has particular utility when used in circumstances in which the escalatory national or international signals of partial or full mobilization would be undesirable. Forces available under this authority can provide a tailored, limited-scope, deterrent, or operational response, or may be used as a precursor to any subsequent mobilization.
  - ★ ★ **Partial Mobilization.** Expansion of the active Armed Forces resulting from action by Congress (up to full mobilization) or by the President (not more than 1,000,000 for not more than 24 consecutive months) to mobilize Ready Reserve Component units, individual reservists, and the resources needed for their support to meet the requirements of a war or other national emergency involving an external threat to the national security.
  - ★ ★ **Full Mobilization.** Expansion of the active Armed Forces resulting from action by Congress and the President to mobilize all Reserve Component units and individuals in the existing approved force structure, as well as all retired military personnel, and the resources needed for their support to meet the requirements of a war or other national emergency involving an external threat to the national security. Reserve personnel can be placed on active duty for the duration of the emergency plus six months. Under full mobilization, ADCON transfers to the gaining COMAFFOR and OPCON transfers in accordance with SecDef orders.

Refer to Joint Publication 4-05, [Joint Mobilization Planning](#), for more complete discussion on mobilization of the ARC.

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