



CURTIS E. LEMAY CENTER

FOR DOCTRINE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION



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.
