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FOR DOCTRINE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION



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.**¹

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

¹ 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.
