



ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

JOINT FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL BASICS

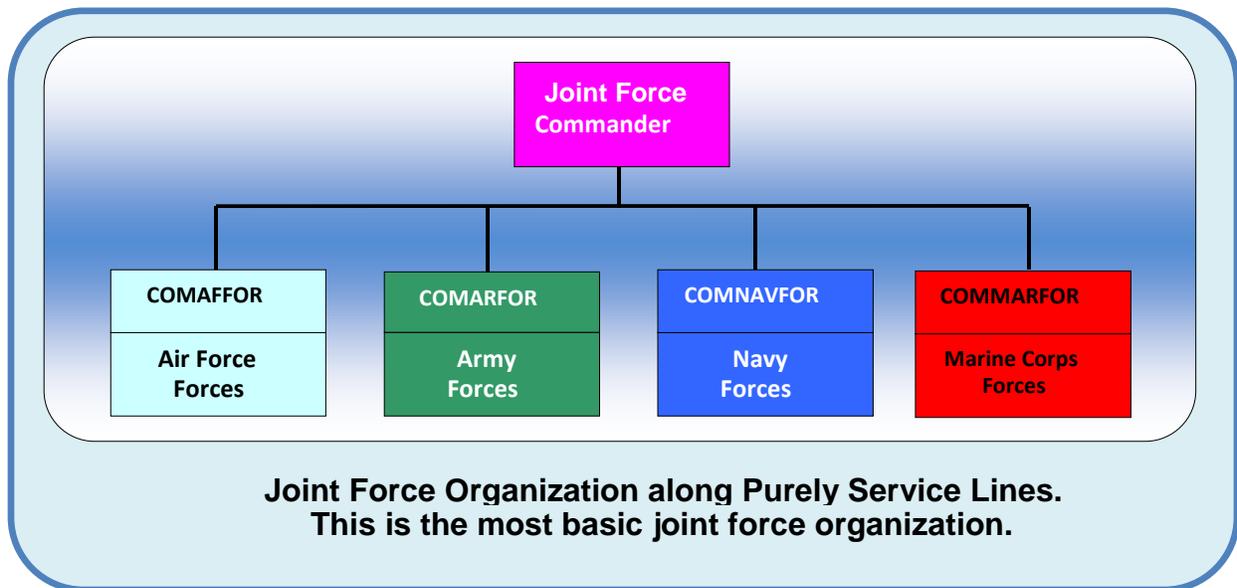
Last Reviewed: 7 Nov 2014

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.

