

PERSONNEL RECOVERY FUNCTIONS

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There are four core Personnel Recovery (PR) functions: preparation, planning, execution and adaptation.

PREPARATION

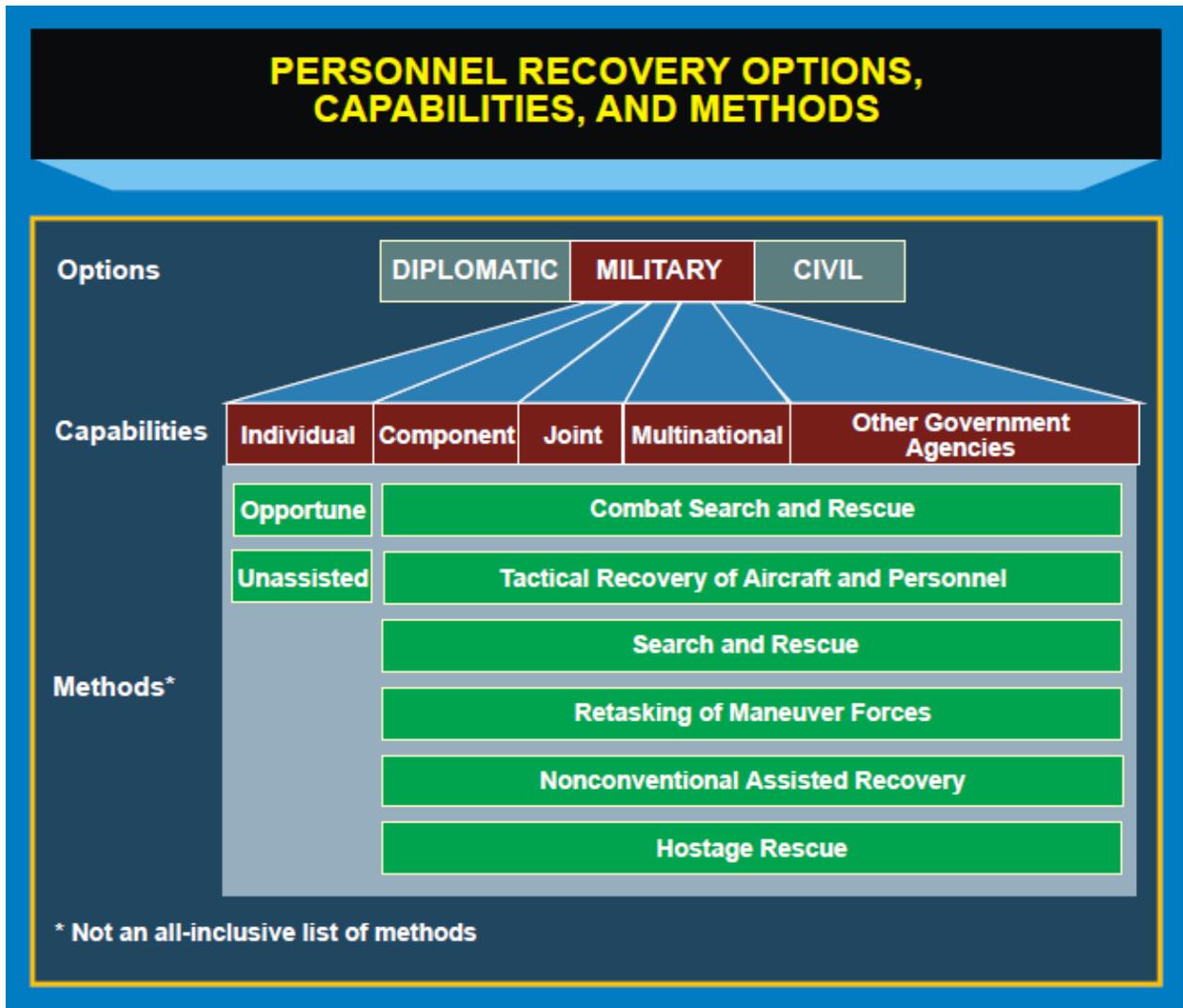
PR is, by nature, a reactionary event fraught with variables and complexities that are difficult to predict prior to their occurrence. It is also one that needs to be executed quickly in order to increase the likelihood of success. Historically, the successful recovery of an individual who has been on the ground behind enemy lines for greater than four hours falls below 20 percent. While PR events don't lend themselves to a great deal of prior planning, there is much we can do long before an event is declared to shorten our decision and execution processes—this is preparation.

Preparation involves the development of policy, doctrine, equipment, education and training in a standardized fashion as seen through the tactical, operational, theater strategic and national strategic lenses. All of this is directed at commanders and staffs, forces that could participate in a PR event, as well as potential isolated personnel (IP) to provide greater situational awareness that enhances their abilities to take expedient, decisive action. This is the doctrinal foundation which should be built long before the first event occurs and be the foundational response for future events. It is not inflexible, but it prescribes terms, capabilities and response options so that when properly employed, a coordinated, planned mission can occur where minimal time is expended between notification and execution. Preparation is an ongoing element of PR in both times of peace or conflict. The publication of this document is part of the preparation process, as is PR exercise participation, Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape (SERE) and Code of Conduct training and the proper organizing, training and equipping of both dedicated PR forces (rescue squadrons) and those who may be called upon to participate in a PR mission from actually flying to providing command and control capabilities in an air operations center (AOC). Proper preparation is crucial to rapidly providing an appropriate and tailored response.

PLANNING

Planning occurs during recurring deliberate or contingency planning processes. It is characterized by the Joint Operations Planning Process for Air with specific outcomes based on commander's intent. It entails a detailed PR mission analysis, course of action development and wargaming based on the plan's mission, goals and tasks development of the PR appendix (Appendix 5 to Annex C) of the basic operation plan,

or at the component level the component's supporting plan. A completed PR mission analysis will be the foundation for the PR operational concept and be used in the development of the PR appendix of the basic plan. Planning options available are found in the definition of PR: diplomatic, military and civil. As mentioned before there is little that can be done in preparation for diplomatic and civil, however, PR planners could be called upon to support those two options. Overall, the bulk of military PR planning is focused on the execution of the military option.



PR CAPABILITIES

Individual. The individual capability is exercised when an IP returns themselves to friendly control either through unassisted evasion or through the taking advantage of assistance from friendly or sympathetic persons. While IP are expected to survive, evade, resist and escape and otherwise assist in their own recovery for as long as possible, this capability is not typically a planned event. It can, however, occur to enable other capabilities and occasionally results in a self-recovery.

Component. Component commanders are expected to plan for and execute PR in support of their own operations. This usually results in the development of Service-unique PR capabilities for the environments in which those components normally operate in (air, maritime, and land) and with the specific tools and equipment available to them. It makes sense that the Navy should be best at, and have the appropriate equipment, to conduct maritime PR.

Joint. Although each component has unique capabilities, joint level planners look at all the component capabilities to develop an integrated plan for a [joint operations area](#) that provides broad PR coverage over a wider area.

Multinational. When [working with multinational partners](#) it is important to remember that most countries do not have the same capabilities. However, incorporating them for permissive PR or a civil search and rescue capability in host nations is useful. It also frees up low density, high demand PR assets to focus on the combat PR missions. Care should be taken when using multinational forces with security, communications, equipment interoperability and both language and cultural barriers.

Other Government Agencies. Because of more non-state actors participating in warfare and the wider use of other governmental agencies (OGAs) (such as the Drug Enforcement Agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigations) overseas, PR has become a greater concern for non-combatants. Many of these OGAs will have developed some recovery capability of their own to varying degrees of robustness. These capabilities are available to the air component through the joint personnel recovery center ([JPRC](#)) who has direct liaison authority (DIRLAUTH) through the State Department.

GENERAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The specific information required for pre-mission planning and for execution/launch authority includes such items as the location of IP, authentication, threat/weather/terrain assessment, and evaluation of safe passage corridors and air refueling capabilities. In order to improve mission planning effectiveness, it is optimal to co-locate all dedicated PR planning activities. Furthermore, direct communication with the AOC, the JPRC, [personnel recovery coordination cell](#) (PRCC), and wing operations centers is essential. This direct communication is most important when the battlefield conditions dictate the formation of a robust combat search and rescue task force (CSARTF).

Additionally, the COMAFFOR should consider the capabilities of the host nation, other Service/functional components, and multinational forces during all phases of PR mission planning. Accordingly, PR should be thoroughly integrated in deliberate mission planning and considered as early as possible in crisis action planning.

The dynamic nature of Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) creates the need to fully integrate PR considerations in the master air attack plan in order to ensure maximum flexibility and responsiveness for PR forces on the [air tasking order](#). PR should be coordinated throughout the combined air operation center and with other component liaisons, to include: the battlefield coordination detachment, naval liaison element, special operations liaison element, Marine liaison officer, [aeromedical evacuation](#) element, combat operations/plans directorates, airspace, etc.

As part of the planning process, Air Force personnel conducting and supporting PRs should be thoroughly familiar with the laws of armed conflict (LOAC) and applicable rules of engagement (ROE). This is particularly important when addressing issues of the use of force during CSAR operations (to include self-defense considerations), as well as treatment and release of persons captured or detained. LOAC application during low-intensity operations may be complicated by organizational structures, responsibilities, and status of potential adversaries. Only extensive LOAC training can provide PR forces the proper foundation that enables sound judgment in ambiguous situations.

Another key concept that enables successful recovery operations, while properly adhering to LOAC, is clear and consistent rules of engagement. PR forces should attempt to influence the ROE development process as early as possible, in order to gain maximum flexibility in recovering isolated personnel.

Personnel Recovery Coordination Cell. As part of planning and preparing for executing PR in support of their own operations, component commanders stand up PRCCs or a functional equivalent. Component commanders execute operational control over their own PR Forces through PRCCs which should be embedded in the Component operations centers where they have the greatest situational awareness and the ability to provide a direct response with the appropriate resources. The PRCC is the focal point for all Component PR activities. Joint Forces Commanders (JFC) may designate the commander, Air Force forces (COMAFFOR) as the supported commander for PR. In doing so the AFFOR PRCC chief will become the JPRC director and the whole PRCC will become dual-hatted as the JPRC as well as the AFFOR PRCC. At this point the other components should provide joint level PR expertise to the JPRC to work their component's joint PR equities.

Joint Personnel Recovery Center. When employed under a [joint task force](#), joint force commanders will stand up a Joint Personnel Recovery Center (JPRC) within their own joint operations center. The JPRC coordinates PR resources between component PRCCs whose capabilities may be exceeded by a PR mission. Having DIRLAUTH between outside agencies (State Department, national intelligence organizations, etc.), the JPRC is a valuable resource for additional resources and information that the component PRCCs may require to execute their mission. JPRCs are coordination nodes only. They do not exercise formal control over any resources (resources belong to the component commanders who execute that authority through the PRCCs).

Joint Personnel Recovery Agency. The Joint Personnel Recovery Agency within the Joint Staff provides operational support teams and exercises support to assist Combatant Commanders' CCDR planning and deployed/deploying forces executing PR to meet a commander's force protection requirement.

Communications. Rapid, reliable, and secure flow of information is a key factor that contributes to PR planning success. The JPRC and the Air Force's three CSAR components (PRCC, the recovery forces, and IP) should be able to communicate over long distances, with minimum interference or intrusion, and with low probability of detection or interception. JPRCs and PRCCs should have access to dedicated communication systems that provide redundant capabilities for secure inter- and intra-

theater data and voice transmission. Proper planning, coordination, and brevity optimize the use of communications systems.

Communication planning requires integrating theater, component, and unit operating instructions and execution checklists. The importance of good communications between isolated personnel and rescue forces cannot be overstressed.

Communications-out procedures, or procedures for handling situations when communications are disrupted, or personnel/units are unexpectedly out of contact, are often warranted but should be commensurate with the enemy's signal intelligence capabilities. Brevity words and terminology can be found in Air Force Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (AFTTP) 3-2.5, [Multi-Service Brevity Codes](#), theater directives and tasking orders. The PR plan should provide adequate redundancy to compensate in the event of equipment or communications failure during any phase of mission execution.

Intelligence. Successful PR requires timely and accurate [intelligence](#) support. Intelligence support is always an integral part of PR. As such, intelligence specialists should be assigned to, and deploy with, PRCCs and operational rescue units.

A thorough understanding of the geography, enemy [order of battle](#), the local population's social and political attitudes, enemy tactics, techniques, and procedures, as well as friendly order of battle is imperative in all combat operations. But considering the dynamic nature of PR, these factors make intelligence products especially significant for rescue operations. Based on this information, JFC, JPRC, COMAFFOR, PRCC, and PR units decide whether or not to commit PR assets, consider tactics and recovery force composition, and coordinate support requirements.

Threat analysis, targeting, collection management, and order-of-battle data should be thoroughly integrated in PR mission planning. Due to PRs' rapid-response requirements during the recovery phase, however, the CSARTF may have to launch with incomplete threat information. Under these circumstances, intelligence specialists make the full use of intelligence assessments, automated data processing, and mission-planning systems that interface with intelligence databases, in order to provide the most up-to-date threat information to PR forces.

Security. Information security and [operations security \(OPSEC\)](#) are also critical to PR. Security of information is vital to PR forces from initial planning stages through execution and even after mission completion. OPSEC denies the enemy information about friendly capabilities and intentions, including advance notice of mission unique training, joint preparations, deployment, and employment. PR forces can maintain OPSEC by carefully identifying, controlling, and protecting indicators and actions associated with the operation. Failure to implement an effective OPSEC Program could result in mission compromise and loss of personnel and resources.

Information Operations. Traditionally, [information operations](#) (IO) serves to amplify the effects of traditional military operations. PR can influence IO planning in four primary ways. First, PR operations return isolated personnel to friendly control, allowing them to fight again. Second, PR operations often influence the course of national and international politics by denying adversaries the opportunity to exploit the [intelligence](#) and [propaganda](#) value of captured personnel. Third, the presence of a robust and viable CSAR force increases morale, with a resultant increase in operational

performance. Finally, PR contributes to the IO campaign by countering the adversary's [deception](#) efforts.

For example, if enemy forces have already captured IP, they may try to deceive PR forces in order to lure them into an ambush. Even if IP have not been captured, the enemy may try to provide false data to PR forces and, at the same time, move additional air defense assets into the area in an attempt to ambush the recovery force.

While friendly force communications discipline and adherence to PR standard operating procedures may counter enemy deception operations, PR operations' success or failure can impact the JFC's IO campaign significantly. PR planners should appreciate the influence of PR operations well beyond the actual recovery of the isolated person. Similarly, IO planners should keep in mind the intrinsic value of PR operations to an IO campaign. PR and IO planners should work together to maximize the influence of successful PR and minimize the impact of mission failure.

Medical. Due to the variety of injuries to IP, [medical](#) personnel should be integrated into planning, deployment, and support of PR. The PRCC is the focal point for PR coordination with military medical facilities in order to provide medical advice beyond the expertise of the recovery team.

Space Requirements. Air Force PR forces require timely, accurate, and current space products and support during all phases of PR, from initial planning through deployment and execution. PR forces should work closely with integrated [space support](#) to determine the most appropriate space products necessary to complete the mission, and forward requirements through established channels to space-derived information and services suppliers. Product requirements can be obtained via the director of Space Forces in the AOC's combat operations division.

Weather, Illumination, and Topological Considerations. Air Force PR forces require timely and accurate [weather support](#) during all phases of planning, deployment, employment, and redeployment. This allows PR forces to use weather conditions to their advantage. Temperature, barometric pressure, precipitation, humidity, ground and low-level flight visibility, predicted winds, fog, cloud cover, radio frequency propagation, sensor detection ranges, and other hazards to recovery forces and the IP greatly impact PR planning and execution. PR forces are capable of conducting operations in a wide range of topographical environments. Terrain features often determine the type of capabilities required to conduct recovery operations. Additionally, sunrise, sunset, moonrise, moon phase, predicted ambient light, and hydrographic data affect PR significantly. These conditions play an important role in the timing and tempo and should be considered critical planning factors for PRs.

Host Nation and Multinational Considerations. Military planners should work with interagency and [international partners](#) to develop a PR umbrella across the [range of military operations](#), regardless of titles of authority. Gaining knowledge of partner PR capabilities and command and control (C2) infrastructure through building partnership capacity is essential to the AF recovery capability. Similarly, a COMAFFOR should consider the capabilities of other service/functional components, [multinational and host nation \(HN\) forces](#) during all phases of PR mission planning. Where possible, detailed PR planning should include coordination and the implementation of legal agreements to affect a multinational PR effort and recognize constraints. HN security force and

emergency response personnel may not always possess the capabilities required to respond effectively to an isolating incident involving US personnel. The US may need to partner with a HN to build upon or supplement their capabilities for a given mission. A PR relationship with multinational forces may be the deliberate intent of the JFC or it may be directed from higher authority. In most cases, the JFC will have to consider the PR coordination between US forces and the host nation military. The JFC's PR concept of operations should address the multinational PR architecture to promote detailed planning, coordination, and the implementation of legal agreements to affect a multinational PR effort and recognize constraints. Achieving balance and unity of effort among multinational forces is a major challenge that can be mitigated by planning, training, and rehearsing.

MOBILITY PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Early identification of requirements, inclusion in the force enhancement/flexible deterrent option (FE/FDO), appropriate PR priority in the flow of [time phased force deployment data](#) (TPFDD), and frequent reevaluation are keys to sustaining PR support. Historically, during [contingencies](#), PR requirements are often an afterthought rather than a preplanned consideration of the joint operation planning and execution system. Similar to Air Tasking Order (ATO) planners, PR action officers on a JFC's staff and PR officers at the COMAFFOR level should consider PR requirements in conjunction with other operational requirements when developing [operation plans](#) (OPLAN), [operations orders](#), FE/FDO and/or TPFDD, etc. For additional information on combat support requirements see [Annex 4-0, Combat Support](#). For TPFDD information, consult [Air Force Policy Directive 10-4, Operations Planning: Air & Space Expeditionary Force](#), Capabilities Allocation Annex, and the Air Force Wartime Unit Type Code Summary statements.

Deployment. Air Force PR forces should have the ability to execute time-sensitive deployments and to deploy as deliberately planned elements of an [air expeditionary task force](#) (AETF). PR forces should consider the following deployment factors: PR forces should deploy in theater prior to the start of hostilities and be prepared to provide immediate PR mission capability with minimal support airlift. Tailored rapid-response deployment packages support the intent of the AETF concept and follow-on in-theater contingency operations.

The initial deployment of PR forces in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF) represents a perfect example of the significant emphasis that CCDRs and Service chiefs put on PR. Military commanders delayed decisive operations until the JFC established an adequate PR capability. Another way to look at this, OEF demonstrated the need to have PR forces in place prior to commencement of combat operations. Based on OEF and other historical data, the PR forces should be listed high on the combatant commander's time phased force deployment list.

Operating Locations. Air Force planners should determine beddown locations for rescue forces based on factors including response time, operations tempo, [force protection](#), and other variables. Best practices reflect that support and deployment concepts include the capability to operate from main operating bases, forward operating bases, forward operating locations, and staging bases for rotary wing assets. Planners should tailor logistical support requirements based on the most likely operating location.

To decrease response time and improve the chances of a successful recovery, rescue forces should be positioned as far forward as the situation allows. As an initial planning consideration, the COMAFFOR should have the ability to deploy PR assets to bare bases and austere environments for up to 14 days with minimum base operating support (BOS).

Main Operating Base (MOB). An MOB is a base established in friendly territory to provide sustained command and control, administration, and logistical support to PR activities in designated areas. MOBs Provide significant levels of base operating support , a well-organized and extensive logistical support organization, and a robust communications infrastructure that enables the recovery forces' access to battlefield C2 and Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) information. If the MOB is significantly removed from potential PR objective areas, planners should consider the establishment of airborne alert holding areas, in order to expedite recovery operations.

Forward Operating Base (FOB). An airfield used to support tactical operations without establishing full support facilities. Support from an MOB may be required if PR forces operate out of an FOB for an extended amount of time.

Forward Operating Locations (FOL). Under these conditions, PR forces should be able to maintain alert status at FOLs. Most support for FOLs come from FOB/MOBs. For vertical-lift PR forces, an FOL may or may not be an airfield; it may be a forward arming and refueling point. FOL capability requires, as a minimum, organic communication packages to provide the necessary C2 and ISR for successful mission execution. Again, it is important to understand that for FOL operations, fuel, ammunition, medical supplies, and other mission essential material typically, but not always, come from FOBs or MOBs.

Staging Base Operations. When land-based MOBs, FOBs, or FOLs are unavailable, staging base operations offer a unique alternative. Although staging base operations do not require extensive host nation coordination, environmental conditions and the intricacies of shipboard operations offer unique challenges.

EXECUTION (The PR Essential Tasks)

Report. Awareness and notification initiate the PR process. Rapid and accurate notification is essential for a successful recovery. Threat conditions permitting, IP should attempt to establish contact with friendly forces IAW notification procedures as outlined in the PR special instructions (SPINS) portion of the ATO.

Initial Response. Once an actual or potential PR incident or potential isolating event is reported, the PRCC initially assumes the duties of PR mission coordinator, initiates PR planning, and provides search and rescue incident reports and search and rescue situation reports to inform the JPRC. As the PR mission coordinator, the PRCC tasks and coordinates mission requirements with subordinate PR capable units.

The JPRC coordinates and tasks PR support requirements when those PR missions involve forces from more than one component, to conduct PR missions, other than NAR missions. When the JPRC receives a request for PR support, it initiates action to locate the IP (if not already accomplished), makes recommendations for, and coordinates the tasking of forces. This coordination is essential to prevent duplication of PR efforts,

facilitate efficient exchange of PR information, and provide the most efficient use of PR resources. Coordination is particularly important when a PR incident occurs near the boundary between two components' operational areas. When a component independently initiates a PR mission, it is required to notify the JPRC through its PRCC, to help ensure effective coordination and deconfliction. Thereafter, the JPRC will monitor the mission and be prepared to support, as required.

Locate. Methods used to locate IP may include: theater electronic surveillance, reconnaissance, C2 aircraft, global satellites, wingman reports, and visual and electronic search by dedicated PR forces. Even with precise coordinates that can pinpoint the isolated person's location, PR forces still have to authenticate the isolated person's identity prior to facilitating successful support and recovery operations.

An effective authentication system is essential to prevent the compromise of vital information and minimize risk to IP and the recovery force. This holds true because rescue assets are extremely vulnerable during the execution phase and need exact and reliable authentication information. Accordingly, IP and rescue forces should take extreme care not to compromise authentication information and allow its use over an extended period. Some of the ways that rescue forces authenticate IP include CSAR code words, letters, numbers, and visual signals, as well as Isolated Personnel report (ISOPREP) data. Ordinarily, theater or [area of responsibility](#) (AOR)-specific additional procedures are published in appropriate directives, OPLANs, and/or PR SPINS.

Support. Support is the planned effort necessary to ensure the physical and psychological sustainment of IP. The five objectives in supporting an IP are: situational awareness, protection, establishing two-way communications, providing morale-building support and aerial resupply (including aerial escort to a supply cache or more secure area). Protection may also encompass the suppression of enemy threats to the IP. This may preclude capture for the isolated person and disruption of the adversary's response to rescue efforts. When possible, combat rescue officers/pararescuemen and/or equipment may be pre-positioned to support the IP until the recovery phase. Besides support to the IP, this task also includes physical and psychological assistance to the IP's family.

Recover. This task reflects activities by commanders, staff, recovery force, and IP to physically recover the IP. CSAR is the Air Force's preferred recovery mechanism. As information of a potential PR incident becomes available, the PRCC should assess the situation quickly, determine mission feasibility, and disseminate data to units that may participate in the rescue mission. Once mission execution appears feasible, units may be tasked to initiate/continue planning or launch from alert. If they launch, the recovery force should include all the necessary supporting forces required to execute a recovery operation. The JFC or the designated PR supported commander can issue the "execution order." Theater PR concept of operations, or SPINS, will direct specific launch and execution authority as determined by the JFC.

Alert. Immediate response missions commence from a dedicated ground or airborne alert posture. In order to decrease flight time to the anticipated recovery area and reduce air refueling requirements, rescue forces may be located on the ground at a forward location or loitering in anticipation of an execution order. Additionally, these forces may be embedded in existing airborne missions to further reduce response time.

Deliberate. Commanders choose this method when an immediate response may not be possible due to environmental, political, or threat considerations. Deliberately planned missions give planners the flexibility to utilize all necessary assets to complete the recovery.

Hold. A PR mission is never closed because of risk or inability to locate the IP; however, a mission may be placed on hold for these reasons. Generally a “hold” status on a mission means that the information required to execute does not meet the commander’s execute criteria (i.e., location, intelligence, etc.).

Reintegrate. The reintegration task begins when the recovery force relinquishes physical control of IP to a designated team member or organization in the theater reintegration process. Reintegration occurs in three phases and is designed to collect perishable essential intelligence and SERE information, while at the same time tending to the physical and psychological welfare of recovered IP. The welfare portion of the reintegration process may be a long-term (Phase III) endeavor with no specific end date and may become a service responsibility. Ultimately, theater reintegration procedures are supported by the COMAFFOR in two phases in accordance with CDR guidance. Phase III reintegration may be conducted by the Service if warranted.

ADAPTATION

Adaptation is dependent on the collection of PR information and data from after action reports, PR mission logs, debriefings, and oral interviews. This information enables a process that includes continuous analysis of everything that is going on in PR as it happens, the recognition of what is working correctly and what is not, and implementing change when and where needed. Adaptation can re-enter the PR functional chart where needed, through updated policy, doctrine, equipment or training in the Preparation Function to different tactics used in the recovery task in the Execution Function. The purpose of adaptation is to make changes that promote more effective and safer PR and achieve higher rates of success.
