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FOR DOCTRINE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION



ANNEX 3-59 WEATHER OPERATIONS

CONVENTIONAL ARMY WEATHER SUPPORT

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Air Force [weather](#) operations support Army commanders by effectively integrating and exploiting weather information and knowledge within mission command, the Army operations process, warfighting functions, and operational framework to enable successful prosecution of the [Army's Unified Land Operations doctrine](#). Air Force weather personnel provide Army commanders and their staffs an estimate of the confidence level for all weather analytical assessments and weather knowledge exploited within the Army's operational structure. Air Force weather personnel supporting the U.S. Army ensure weather effects knowledge across the six warfighting function capabilities enables commanders to integrate and synchronize the force at the decisive time and place on the battlefield to achieve the desired effects and win decisively. The capability of commanders and their staffs to anticipate, exploit, and mitigate weather effects on the employment of friendly and adversary combat power is important to achieving asymmetric advantages and decisively defeating the adversary. Weather effects information and knowledge is critical to commanders' situational understanding and decision making and is exploited within the [military decision-making process](#)¹, including intelligence preparation of the operational environment, fires and targeting protection, risk management, and information collection.

Conventional Army weather support is provided through habitually-aligned weather squadrons (WSs), typically positioned under an air support operations group, which may belong to an air-ground operations wing under a numbered Air Force or with an Air Force component commander. A WS is comprised of personnel, trained in basic soldier skills,² who deploy with and provide direct support to Army force echelons. Weather support should be seamlessly integrated within the Army corps, division, aviation brigade/battalion, and brigade combat team battle rhythms. In addition, weather personnel coordinate, establish and/or maintain weather reporting networks within their respective operational areas for use during operational planning and execution. Weather personnel are trained and equipped to operate for extended periods in austere conditions that are removed from traditional airbase logistics support. Additionally, select airmen receive special training and equipment to support forcible entry operations (e.g., airborne and air assault) as part of a brigade, division, or corps assault command post.

¹ Also see Army Doctrine Publication 3-0, [The Operations Process](#).

² "Basic soldier skills" refers to training mandated and provided by the Army for weather personnel embedded in Army units IAW US Army STP 21-1-SMCT, *Soldier Manual of Common Tasks* (http://armypubs.army.mil/doctrine/STP_1.html).

Because of its diverse mission, a conventional Army support weather squadron is organized to maximize training efficiencies in functional skills, combat survival and tactical equipment operations and maintenance. Each WS is aligned with specific Army force echelons and provides Air Force command and control of subordinate detachments and operating locations that are co-located with that supported Army unit.

When deployed to support conventional Army operations, Air Force weather personnel are typically assigned to an expeditionary weather squadron (EWXS) comprised of mission-ready weather personnel sourced from WSs located on Army installations throughout the world. The EWXS is normally a subordinate unit within an expeditionary air support operations group. The EWXS may be augmented by theater-level weather systems support cadre (WSSC) personnel when necessary to maintain Air Force weather sensors within the EWXS area of interest. The WSSC is a theater asset that uses personnel from the communications maintenance career field and is responsible for set-up, maintenance, and theater logistics of Air Force weather sensors in accordance with the theater [sensing strategy](#).

When appropriate, the EWXS commander tailors conventional Army weather support to forward deploy in support of Army modular force echelons. These forward-deployed weather personnel leverage characterization information from centralized weather organizations via a combination of reachback and distributed operations to provide tailored weather and weather effects information essential to planning and executing operations. The [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR) retains operational control (OPCON) and administrative control (ADCON) of conventional Army weather support units and provides those units in direct support of Army operations. As an alternative, the Joint Force Commander may specify tactical control (TACON) of both the EWXS and/or its subordinate units to the commander, Army forces (COMARFOR).
