



## ANNEX 3-60 TARGETING

### ASSESSMENT

Last Updated: 10 Jan 14

**Purpose of the Phase.** Assessment is a continuous process that measures the overall effectiveness of employing joint force capabilities during military operations. It is also the determination of the progress made toward accomplishing a task, creating a condition, or achieving an objective.<sup>1</sup> It helps answer basic questions such as:

- ★ “Are we doing things right?”
- ★ “Are we doing the right things?”
- ★ “Are we measuring the right things?”

The first question addresses the **performance** of planned air operations by assessing the completion of tasks. The second question addresses the level at which the commander’s desired *effects* are being observed in the operational environment and prompts examination of the **links** between performance and effects. The third question addresses the process of assessment itself and the importance of understanding how we choose to measure the links between performance, cause, and effect. When determined properly, the answers to these questions should provide the commander with valid information upon which to base decisions about strategy.

In an effects-based construct, it is not possible to think about actions and effects without considering how accomplishment of those effects should be measured. Effects and objectives should always be measurable and planning for them should always include means of measurement and evaluation. Assessment is not a separate phase of the air tasking—or any other—cycle, as descriptions and graphics often imply for the sake of conceptual clarity. Rather, it is interwoven throughout the planning and execution phase and is inseparable and integral component of the effects-based approach to conflict. Planning for assessment begins prior to commencement of operations and continues well after operations are over. It is a central part of an effects-based approach to conflict assessment that occurs at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels. From an Air Force perspective, assessment is conducted at unit level with intelligence and operational personnel identifying estimated level of mission success with supporting data (e.g., mission reports [MISREP], weapon system video [WSV],

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<sup>1</sup> JP 3-0, *Joint Operations*.

etc.) and at the operational level by AOC, JSpOC, and 624th OC personnel, who may leverage other organizations for reachback support. Each lower level feeds the levels above it and provides a basis for broader-based evaluation of progress. Products from each level provide the foundation for strategic level assessments that include target system and overall campaign assessment.

Any comprehensive view of assessment should tie evaluation of progress at the tactical level to all other levels of war, up to and including the national strategic level. The proper focus of assessment conducted by the air component should be on the operational level of war. An effective assessment construct should also support commanders' objectives at all levels, support commanders' decision cycles in real time, and provide the basis for analysis. To accomplish these things, an effective assessment construct should address the entire spectrum of operations and all levels of war, permit component validation of assessment elements, focus on effects, standardize federation, utilize intelligence specialties effectively, and integrate analysis efforts to the maximum extent possible.

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