

VOLUME

III



COMMAND



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- **Green underlined text** denotes a link to glossary terms (definitions and acronyms).
- **Blue underlined text** denotes a link to another source document within the doctrine database.



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VOLUME 3 COMMAND

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO OPERATIONS

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Purpose of this Product

This product is a synopsis of key points across the doctrine database. Its purpose is to provide senior leaders with a quick review of key doctrinal points across a wide range of material. It is not meant as a substitute for deeper familiarization with the referenced material. Staff members supporting senior leadership should be familiar with the greater context found in the referenced sources.

(Note: The information in this section is condensed from material from Air Force Doctrine (AFD) Annex 3-0, *Operations and Planning*. Refer to that document for more detailed overall discussion and context. Other links may point to more specific discussion or to other supplementary sources. Also, any bolded emphasis is in the original text.)



OPERATIONS AND WAR

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- Not all military operations involve war, but war underpins the existence of all military Services, so doctrine should include an understanding of war and its consequences.
- The most fundamental and important purpose of military forces is their employment as **instruments of national power** to deter or win wars.
- War is a violent struggle between rival parties to attain competing objectives—also described as “socially sanctioned violence to achieve a political purpose” (Joint Publication 1, [Doctrines for the Armed Forces of the United States](#)).
- War has been deeply-rooted in human experience since the earliest times.
- War remains an instrument of policy used by nation states, sub-national entities, or supra-national groups to achieve disputed aims.
- *For the complete discussion of this topic, [click here](#).*

Traditional and Irregular Warfare

- Typically, US military doctrine frames warfare as “traditional” or “irregular.”
 - ✦ “Traditional warfare” is violent confrontation between nation states or coalitions and alliances of nation states (Joint Publication 1, [Doctrines for the Armed Forces of the United States](#)).
 - ✦ Traditional warfare typically involves force-on-force military operations in which adversaries employ a variety of conventional military capabilities against each other in the air, land, maritime, space, and cyberspace domains.
 - ✦ The objective in traditional warfare may be to coerce key military or political decision makers, defeat an adversary’s armed forces, destroy an adversary’s war-making capacity, or seize or retain territory in order to force a change in an adversary’s government or policies.
 - ✦ “[Irregular warfare](#)” (IW) is a violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant population(s). Irregular warfare favors indirect and **asymmetric** approaches, though it may employ the full range of

military and other capacities, in order to erode an adversary's power, influence, and will (JP 1).

- ✦ The focus of IW is not on large-scale combat or the destructive capability of an adversary's military forces. Typically, a less powerful adversary seeks to disrupt or negate the military advantage of a more powerful foe, often an established regime, through small engagements intended to demoralize the foe's military, or attacks on nonmilitary targets in order to influence or control a local populace.
 - **IW is not a lesser-included form of traditional warfare.** IW encompasses a variety of operations where the nature and characteristics are significantly different from traditional war.
 - IW consists of five principle activities or operations undertaken in sequence, in parallel, or in blended form in coherent campaigns to address irregular threats: [counterterrorism](#), [unconventional warfare](#), [foreign internal defense](#), [counterinsurgency](#), and [stability operations](#).
 - **Traditional warfare and irregular warfare are not mutually exclusive;** both forms of warfare may be present in a given conflict. Airmen should understand that the character of war may often change in the course of a conflict. This is especially true in irregular warfare where the conflict is often protracted and varies in intensity.
 - Traditional warfare can rapidly evolve into an irregular war and vice versa, requiring the military force to adapt from one form to the other.
 - ✦ Military forces should be prepared to conduct operations across the [range of military operations](#) (ROMO), but they are ultimately tested by their ability to prevail in war.
 - ✦ The advent of air forces revolutionized many aspects of armed conflict, but did not fundamentally change the nature of war or the enduring insights that guide strategy.
 - ✦ Opening of space and cyberspace domains to military action has not fundamentally changed these insights either, even though it increased complexity.
 - *For the complete discussion of this topic, [click here](#).*
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CROSS-DOMAIN INTEGRATION

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- Military operations take place in and through the air, land, maritime, space, and cyberspace domains and the [information environment](#).
- Control of one domain, particularly land, can secure success of a military operation, but control of, or influence through more than one domain usually helps achieve continuing advantage more effectively and efficiently.
- **The Air Force exploits advantages in the air, space, and cyberspace domains to achieve [joint force commander](#) (JFC) and national objectives in all domains and the information environment.**
- These functions can be conducted independently from land and maritime operations or can complement, support, or be supported by, land and maritime operations.
- [Air superiority](#) is normally a desired state *before all other combat operations*. Air superiority—and [air supremacy](#), when required—helps provide both the freedom to attack and freedom from attack, as well as enhancing freedom to maneuver. Operating without air superiority or supremacy radically increases risk to surface and air operations.
- [Space superiority](#) is important in maintaining unique advantages in precision applications, global [command and control](#) (C2), situational awareness and understanding, and operational reach.
- [Cyberspace](#) operations are also vital for maintaining advantages in *all* domains.
- *For the complete discussion of this topic, [click here](#).*



AIRPOWER AS MANEUVER IN WARFARE

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- **Airpower is the ability to project military power or influence through the control and exploitation of air, space, and cyberspace to achieve strategic, operational, or tactical objectives.**
 - ★ Airpower exploits the third dimension of the operational environment; the electromagnetic spectrum; and time to leverage speed, range, flexibility, precision, tempo, and lethality to create effects from and within the air, space, and cyberspace domains.
- Airpower leverages military, civil, and commercial capabilities, the industrial infrastructure, and a doctrine of employment. Airpower is an indivisible, unitary construct—one that unifies Airmen, rather than portraying them as a collection of “tribes” broken into technological or organizational “stovepipes.”
- Due to speed, range, and its multidimensional perspective, **airpower operates in ways that are fundamentally different from other forms of military power; thus, the various aspects of airpower are more akin to each other than to the other forms of military power.**
- **Airpower is the product, not the sum, of air, space, and cyberspace operations. Each depends on the others to such a degree that the loss of freedom of action in one may mean loss of advantage in all other domains.**
- Airpower has the ability to create effects across an entire theater and the entire globe, while surface forces, by their nature, are constrained to divide up the battlespace into discrete operating areas.
- Airmen view operations, including the application of force, more from a functional than a geographic perspective, and usually classify actions taken against targets (including non-destructive and non-kinetic actions) by the effects created rather than the targets’ physical locations within the battlespace.
 - ★ The physical structure of ground maneuver forces consists of fronts, flanks, and rears. While these concepts do not apply readily to airpower, it can be useful to make an analogy in surface terms in order to convey the Air Force’s contribution to joint warfare.

- ✦ In such terms, **airpower adds flanks in other dimensions that make the vertical and virtual battle as important as the horizontal battle.** The airspace above the battlespace is like an additional flank in the third dimension, which can be exploited to achieve a relative advantage.
- ✦ As with surface flanks, commanders should seek to gain positions of advantage by turning an enemy's vertical flank, and should no sooner expose their own vertical flank(s).
- ✦ Through cross-domain effects (effects created in one or more domains through operations in another), airpower can also create virtual "flanks" or "rears" in other dimensions, such as time and cyberspace (or assist the joint force in doing so).
- ✦ Airpower can help ensure the success of friendly actions, disrupt adversary strategies, and even paralyze adversary action by using time more effectively than the adversary through disruption of his operational rhythm.
- ✦ When given the authority, Airmen can create positions of decisive advantage (maneuver) through use of computer code and manipulation of electronic infrastructure in cyberspace.
- ✦ The nature of airpower also makes it an effective instrument to achieve information superiority, potentially undermining enemy will and decision-making ability.
- By exploiting this third dimension, the electromagnetic spectrum, and time, **airpower can strike directly at an adversary's centers of gravity, vital centers, decisive points (DPs), and critical vulnerabilities.** This enables airpower to create operational and strategic effects well beyond the tactical realm of specific combat actions, enabling US forces to gain continuing advantage over adversaries.
- **Airpower can wrest the initiative from the adversary, set the terms of battle, establish a dominant tempo of operations, better anticipate the enemy through superior observation, take advantage of opportunities, and thus strike directly at the adversary's capabilities and strategy by making effective use of the vertical dimension, the EMS, and time.**
- Both joint and Air Force doctrine recognize airpower as a form of maneuver. Rapid, long-range, multidimensional maneuver and fires; kinetic and non-kinetic actions; and lethal and non-lethal effects,¹ are inherent in airpower, as is the ability to inflict both physical and psychological dislocation on an adversary.

¹ These categories include nuclear weapons, which use both kinetic and non-kinetic means to create lethal and non-lethal effects.

- In cases where airpower presents the **[joint force commander](#)** with the preponderance of counter-surface effects, it may be appropriate for the **[joint force air component commander](#)** (JFACC) to be the **[supported commander](#)** for **affecting enemy surface forces**, with friendly surface force commanders acting in a supporting role. This is often the case when the JFACC's forces perform the theater-wide air interdiction and strategic attack functions.
 - *For fundamental discussion of airpower, see Air Force Doctrine [Volume 1](#).*
 - *For more complete discussion of airpower as maneuver in warfare, [click here](#).*
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PARALLEL AND ASYMMETRIC OPERATIONS

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- Air Force capabilities are often employed to greatest effect in **parallel, asymmetric operations.**
 - ✦ Parallel operations are those that apply pressure at many points across an enemy's system in a short period of time to cause maximum shock and dislocation effects across that system.
 - ✦ Sequential, or serial, operations, in contrast, are those that apply pressure in sequence, imposing one effect after another, usually over a significant period of time.
 - ✦ "Asymmetric," in this context, refers to any capability that confers an advantage for which the adversary cannot directly compensate.
 - ✦ Asymmetric operations can confer disproportionate advantage on those conducting them by using some capability the adversary cannot use, will not use, or cannot effectively defend against.
 - ✦ Asymmetric warfare pits friendly strengths against the adversary's weaknesses and maximizes our capabilities while minimizing those of the enemy to achieve rapid, decisive effects.
- **Experience has shown that parallel, asymmetric operations are more effective, achieve results faster, and are less costly than symmetric or serial operations.**
 - ✦ Symmetric, force-on-force warfare is often required, such as the air-to-air combat associated with achieving air superiority. At the beginning of a conflict, other operations can sometimes be accomplished in parallel with counterair operations.
 - ✦ If the enemy strongly challenges air superiority, however, forces may be constrained to conduct serial operations, in which all available assets should be dedicated to winning air superiority before any other offensive operations are conducted.

- **Airpower can provide simultaneous and rapid attack on key nodes and forces, producing effects that can overwhelm the enemy's capacity to adapt or recover.**
 - ✦ The effects of parallel operations can be achieved quickly and may have decisive impact, thereby maximizing the simultaneity, depth, timing, and tempo elements of [operational design](#).
 - ✦ The shock and surprise of such attacks, coupled with the uncertainty of when or where the next blow may fall, can decisively affect the enemy's morale.
 - **Parallel operations should be conducted in conjunction with other elements of a joint force to maximize synergy of effects against the adversary's critical vulnerabilities.**
 - ✦ For example, [counterland](#) operations, in conjunction with attack by surface forces, can overwhelm an enemy's reinforcement and resupply capacity or his ability to command his forces, creating synergistic effects that have an adverse impact throughout the enemy system.
 - ✦ Cyberspace capabilities can contribute disproportionately to asymmetric force strategy by disabling critical adversary systems, exploiting information, or disrupting adversary decision-making processes.
 - *For more complete discussion of this topic, [click here](#).*
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THE RANGE OF MILITARY OPERATIONS

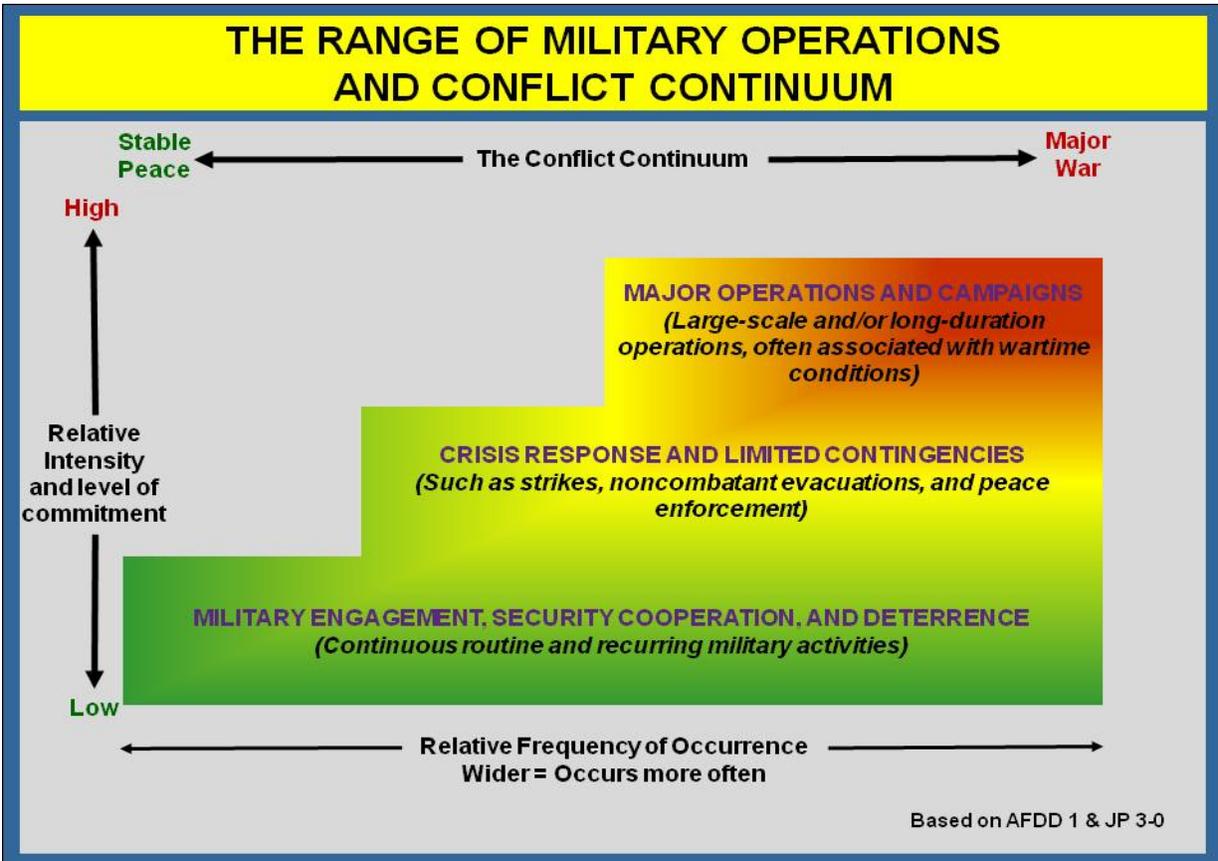
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- Military operations slide along an imprecise scale of violence and scale of military involvement from engagement, [security cooperation](#), and [deterrence](#) operations; to smaller scale [contingencies](#) and crisis response operations; to theater-wide [major operations](#) and [campaigns](#) (see following graphic, The Range of Military Operations and Conflict Continuum).
- No two conflicts are alike; scope, duration, tempo, and political context vary widely. Some conflicts may even change from one form to another, either escalating or de-escalating; several may exist simultaneously.
- Some operations involve open combat between regular forces; in others, combat may be tangential to the main effort. In some operations, the US military's contribution may not involve combat at all; simply providing an organizational framework for an interagency force and key elements of infrastructure may be all that's required.
- The various discrete military tasks associated with the ROMO are not mutually exclusive; depending on the scenario, there may be some overlap among the tasks. They may also occur within the context of a larger major operation.

Engagement, Security Cooperation, and Deterrence Operations

- Engagement, security cooperation, and deterrence operations establish, shape, maintain, and refine relations with other nations and domestic civil authorities. The general objective is to protect US interests at home and abroad. Examples of such operations include:
 - ★ Arms control operations.
 - ★ [Counterdrug operations](#).
 - ★ [Foreign humanitarian assistance](#).
 - ★ Military-to-military contacts.
 - ★ [Recovery operations](#).

- ★ Unilateral and multilateral exercises.
- Note: These operations are normally planned and conducted through theater campaign plans. See later discussion, “Campaigns in Peacetime.”



Contingencies and Crisis Response Operations

- Contingencies and crisis response operations may be single small-scale, limited-duration operations or a significant part of a major operation of extended duration involving combat. The general objectives are to protect US interests and prevent surprise attack or further conflict. These operations may occur during periods of slightly increased US military readiness, and the use or threat of force may be more probable. Many of these operations involve a combination of military forces in close cooperation with other organizations. Examples of such operations include:
 - ★ Combating terrorism.
 - ★ Some types of counterproliferation operations, in the event that arms control operations are not successful.

- ✦ Consequence management (especially of weapons of mass destruction [WMD]-related events).
- ✦ Enforcement of sanctions and maritime intercept operations.
- ✦ Enforcing exclusion zones.
- ✦ Ensuring freedom of navigation and passage, in both maritime and aerial operations, including protection of shipping and overflight.
- ✦ Ensuring freedom of action in air, space, and relevant portions of cyberspace.
- ✦ Noncombatant evacuation operations.
- ✦ Peacekeeping operations.
- ✦ Peace enforcement operations.
- ✦ Show of force operations.
- ✦ Strikes and raids.
- ✦ Support to counterinsurgency.
- ✦ Support to insurgency operations that support US and Allied security objectives.

Major Operations and Campaigns

- Major operations and campaigns are large-scale and include sustained combat operations to achieve national objectives and/or protect national interests. Such operations may place the United States in a wartime state.
- These operations are normally conducted against nation states that possess significant military capability with the will to employ that capability in opposition to or in a manner threatening to US national security.
- Such operations typically involve a joint campaign comprised of multiple phases. Operations DESERT STORM, ALLIED FORCE (OAF), ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF), and IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF) are examples of such campaigns.
- The goal is to achieve national objectives and conclude hostilities on conditions favorable to the United States and its multinational partners, generally as quickly, with as few casualties as possible, and in a manner that conveys continuing strategic advantage for the US and its partners.

- Major operations may entail traditional war combined with [irregular warfare](#)(IW), [stability operations](#), and [security cooperation](#) (SC) activities, sometimes even within the same [operational area](#).
 - Establishing conditions that convey continuing friendly advantage often requires follow-on stability operations to restore security, provide services and humanitarian relief, enable civil authority, and perform reconstruction.
 - *For the complete discussion of the ROMO, [click here](#).*
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CAMPAIGNS IN PEACETIME

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- Lessons from recent operations and changes in the global security environment have highlighted the importance of strengthening alliances and partnerships through consistent peacetime strategies.
 - This has inspired a new perspective on the concept of a “[campaign](#)” within the DOD. Although the definition has not changed, the term is increasingly used to refer to the portion of the ROMO that is conducted on a steady-state basis in peacetime and/or preceding a conflict.
 - Campaigns referred to in this sense are designed to shape the theater and/or global environment, deter aggression, build partner nations’ relationships and capabilities, ensure friendly access, mitigate risk, prevent conflict, and, when it cannot be prevented, shape how conflict evolves in ways favorable to friendly interests.
 - *For more complete discussion of this topic, [click here](#).*
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CHAPTER TWO: OVERVIEW OF OPERATIONAL PROCESSES

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(Note: The information in this section is condensed from material from Annex 3-0, [Operations and Planning](#). Refer to that document for more detailed overall discussion and context. Other links may point to more specific discussion or to other supplementary sources. Also, any bolded emphasis is in the original text.)



THE EFFECTS-BASED APPROACH TO OPERATIONS (EBAO)

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- The [effects-based approach to operations](#) (EBAO) is defined as “an approach in which operations are planned, executed, assessed, and adapted to influence or change systems or capabilities in order to achieve desired outcomes.”
- EBAO is not a planning methodology; it is a way of thinking about operations that provides guidance for design, planning, execution, and assessment as an integral whole. More specifically, EBAO is an approach in which:
 - ✦ Operations are driven by desired ends (objectives and [end states](#)), and should be expressed in terms of desired [effects](#), not defined by what available forces or capabilities can do.

Principles of EBAO

- EBAO is comprehensive—it cuts across all domains and dimensions, disciplines, levels, and [instruments of national power](#). EBAO provides an overarching way of thinking about action that encompasses [operational design](#), planning, execution, and [assessment](#) of operations across the [range of military operations](#).
- EBAO integrates [strategy](#)—all design, planning, execution, and assessment efforts—into a unitary whole.
- EBAO emphasizes that war is a uniquely human endeavor—a dynamic and often unpredictable process involving the collision of interactively complex, adaptive systems.
- EBAO emphasizes that warfare is non-linear and “interactively complex.”
- **Causes and effects are** usually hard to trace and harder to demonstrate, since common “linear” rules do not apply. **Most cause-effect relationships important to warfighters involve indirect and often intangible, unquantifiable linkages that are normally discerned inductively (through real-world observation), not deductively (by proving a theorized outcome through logic alone).**
- EBAO should account for how all actors, especially the adversary, may respond to planned actions.

- ✦ Commanders and strategists should also consider that the beliefs, customs, and habits of adversaries not trained in a Western worldview may not respond in ways anticipated by Americans (mirror imaging), potentially creating unanticipated and unfavorable higher-order effects.
- **EBAO is about creating effects, not about platforms, weapons, or particular methods.**
- **EBAO focuses on behavior, not just physical changes.**
- ✦ EBAO emphasizes that there are alternatives; that the ultimate aim in war is not just to overthrow the enemy's military power, but to compel them to do one's will.
- **EBAO seeks to achieve objectives most effectively, then to the degree possible, most efficiently.**
- **EBAO should consider all possible types of effects.**
- ✦ Warfare has traditionally focused on direct effects and more immediate indirect effects like attrition. An effects-based approach should consider the full array of outcomes in order to give decision-makers a wider range of options and provide a realistic estimation of unintended consequences.
- **EBAO is not new.**
- ✦ History's great commanders approached warfare from an effects-based perspective, though not so named, when they looked beyond mere destruction of enemy forces to the more general problem of bending the enemy to their will.

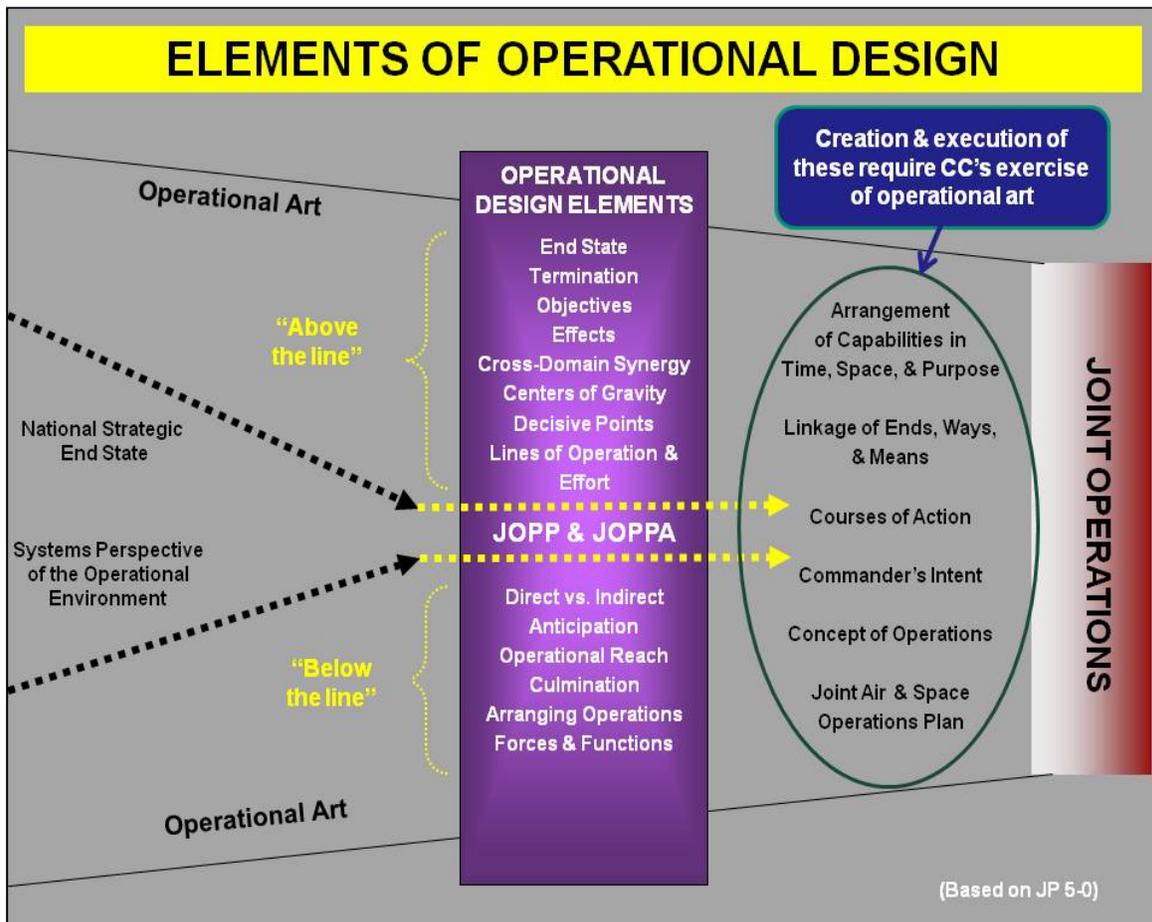
For more complete discussion of EBAO, [click here](#).



OPERATIONAL DESIGN

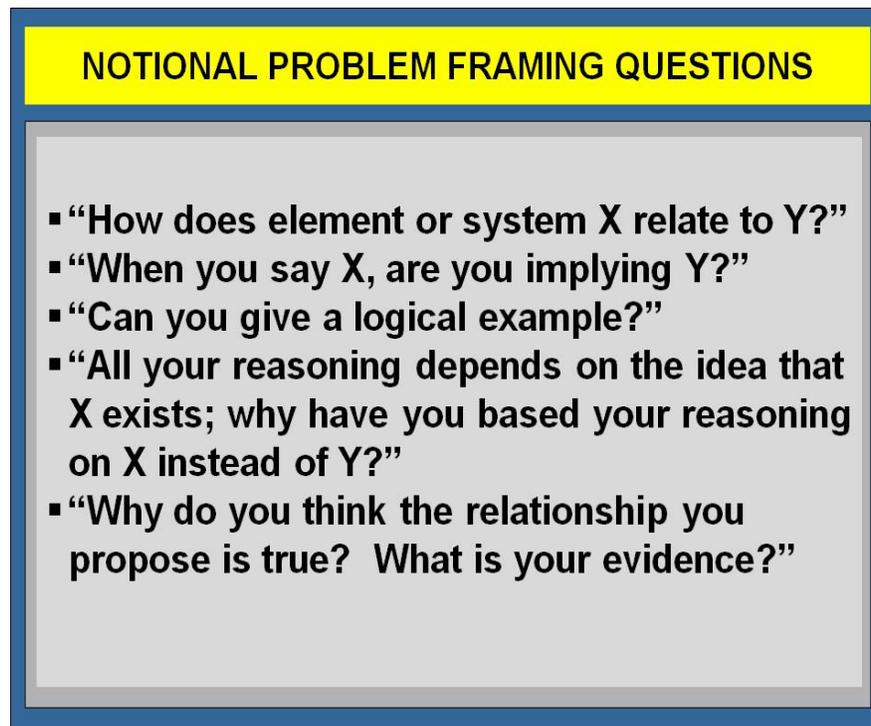
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- Operational design (OD) is the first level of strategy implementation and rests upon operational art, which is “the cognitive approach by commanders and staff–supported by their skill, experience, creativity, and judgment–to develop strategies, campaigns, and operations to organize and employ military forces by integrating ends, ways, and means” (JP 3-0, Joint Operations). This is illustrated in the following figure, Elements of Operational Design.



Problem Framing

- **Operational design begins with “problem framing”—establishing the context of a situation within which the commander should act in order to realize the operation’s aims, by examining the problem from many different perspectives.**
 - ★ Problem framing entails determining the overall boundaries and aims of the operation.
 - ★ Commanders and their staffs should be able to answer the kinds of disciplined questions depicted in the following figure, Notional Problem Framing Questions, which probe basic reasons and evidence for an emerging framework, “setting the stage” for breaking the problem down into medium- and well-structured components that planners can “solve.”

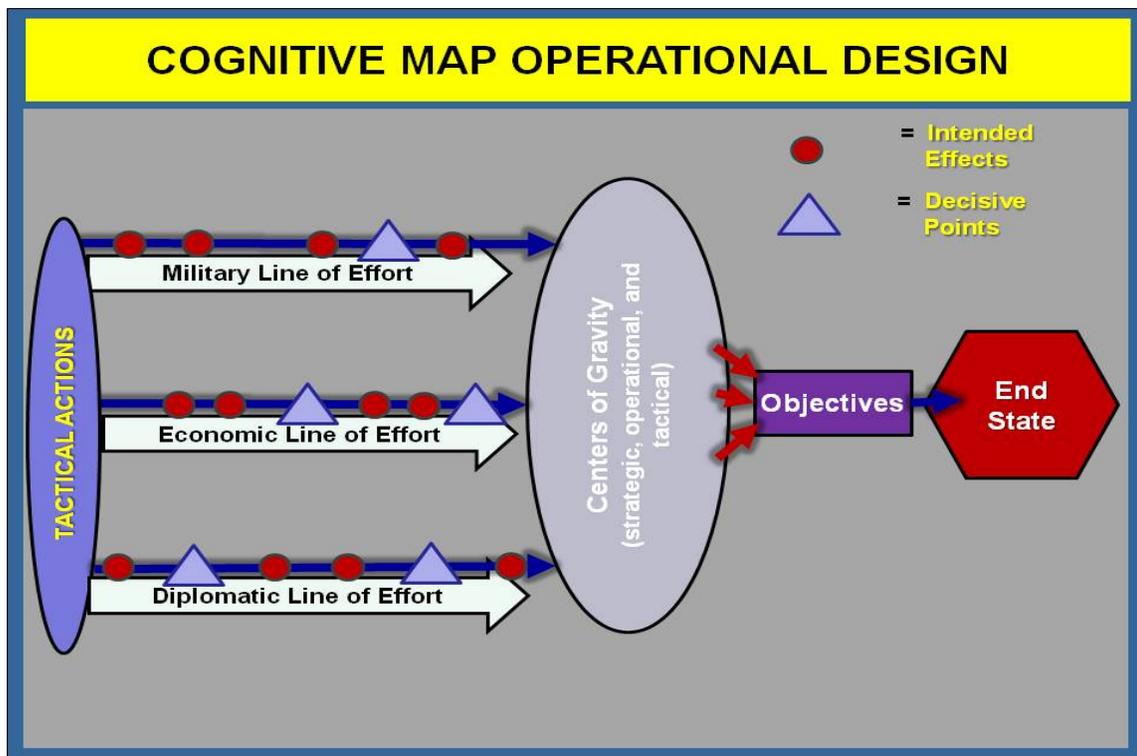


- As commanders and their staffs work through framing problems, they face several tasks that help provide structure to their efforts and make it easier to break ill-structured problems into smaller “chunks” of medium- to well-structured problems. These tasks are depicted in the following figure, Problem Framing Tasks.

PROBLEM FRAMING TASKS

- Determine the strategic context and systemic nature of the problem(s)
- Synthesize strategic guidance
- Identify strategic trends
- Identify gaps in knowledge and assumptions about the problem(s)
- Identify the operational problem
- Devise and gain approval for the initial mission statement

- The following figure, Cognitive Map Operational Design¹, depicts a summary “cognitive map” of the alignment of operational design’s key elements. It depicts how actions at the tactical level lead to effects, which can be usefully depicted using lines of effort (LOEs).



¹ Adapted from Jeffrey M. Reilly, *Operational Design: Distilling Clarity for Decisive Action*.

✦ LOEs lay out critical desired effects, decisive points (DPs), and other events along a timeline that relates these to centers of gravity, commander's objectives, and the operation's end state in a manner that shows relationships between all elements, but is easy to comprehend.

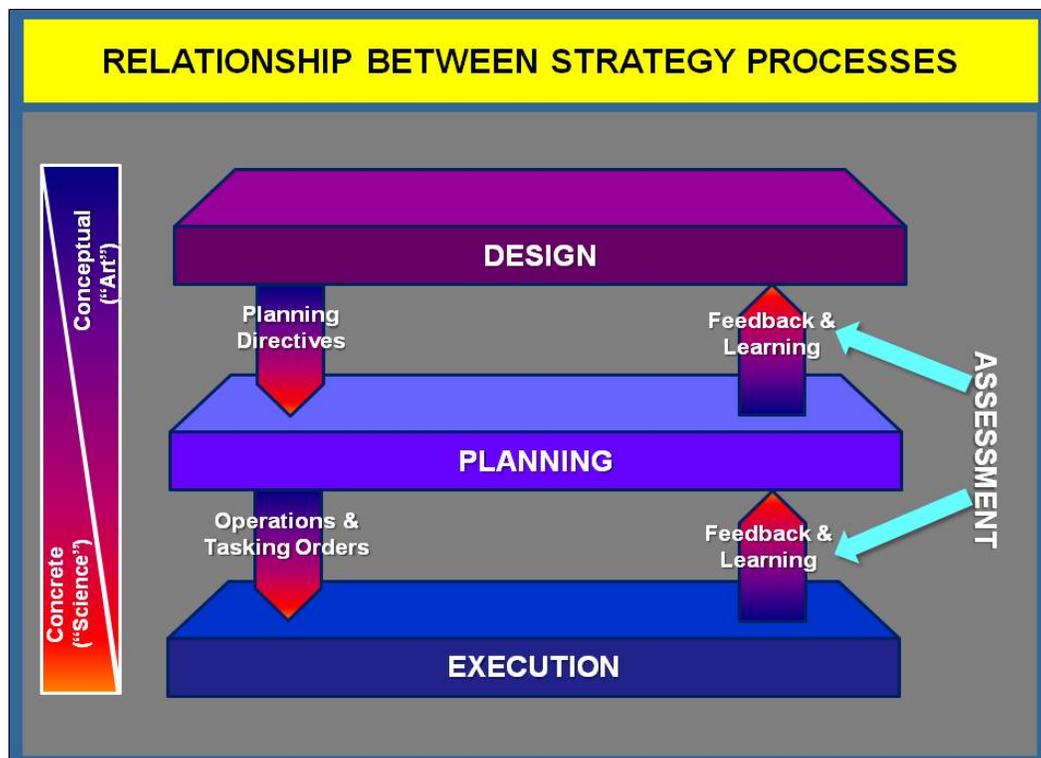
- *For more complete discussion of this topic, [click here](#).*
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PRACTICAL DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

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- Design can help formulate the commander's initial statements of mission and intent,
- These feed course of action (COA) analysis and selection, which in turn, feeds creation of detailed plans and assessment criteria.
- Plans are then executed through tasks at the tactical level.
- The results of task accomplishment are assessed and operations are adapted based on that assessment, providing input to strategy revision.
- Design is thus cyclic and iterative, like many other aspects of strategy creation, such as planning and assessment.
- Design, planning, execution, and assessment are closely interrelated, since planners take the commander's overarching design concept to create detailed COAs, plans, and orders for operations. Both are products of operational art. They make it possible to convert broad guidance from national leadership and senior commanders and turn it into discrete tasks at the tactical level. The following figure illustrates these relationships.



- Design requires close interaction between an organization's commander, staff, the commanders and staffs of higher and lower echelons, as well as supporting commanders and their staffs. Joint functional and Service components need to be involved at various levels in the initial planning stages of joint strategy development.
 - In some cases, however, the [joint force air component commander](#) (JFACC) and key [air operations center](#) (AOC) planners may need to volunteer to be included early in the JFC's design process. In such cases, **joint integration requires that a sufficient number of trained Airmen be included on the [joint force commander](#) (JFC) planning staff.**
 - ✦ The air component liaisons, if established, can help can help make the JFACC aware of pending or ongoing design and planning efforts, but it is also the JFC's responsibility to actively seek airpower expertise.
 - ✦ Each theater or [joint task force](#) (JTF) operation will likely be different, and prior coordination is required on how overall joint strategy development may occur and how airpower should be included in that effort. Theater-level design and planning exercises are vital to ensure proper integration when operations commence.
 - *For more complete discussion of this section, [click here](#).*
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PLANNING

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- Joint operation planning is conducted at every echelon of command, during peacetime as well as conflict, and across the [range of military operations](#) (ROMO).
- Plans are continuously reviewed and adapted to accommodate changes in strategic guidance, resources, the actions of adversaries and other actors, and the [operational environment](#).
- Joint operation planning also identifies capabilities outside the DOD, and provides the means of integrating military actions with those of other [instruments of national power](#) and multinational partners in time, space, and purpose to create all effects necessary to achieve objectives required to attain the [end state](#).

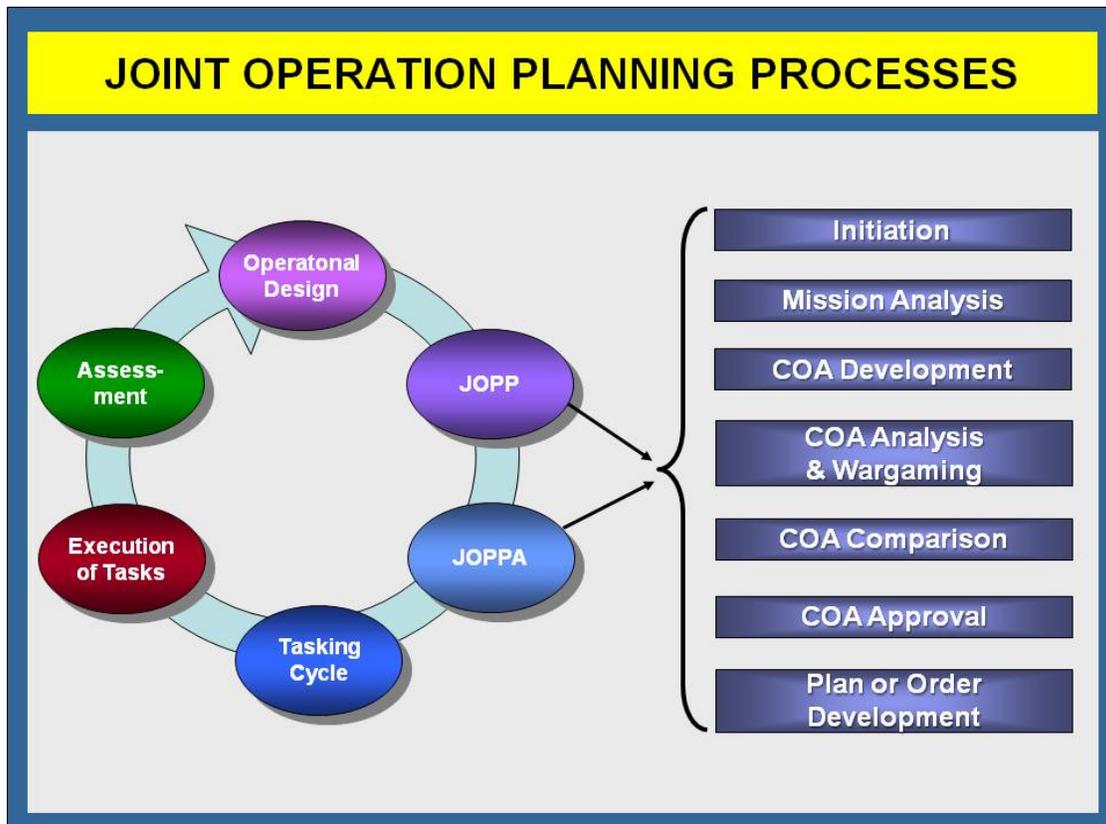
The Relationship Between Operational Design and Planning

- In many respects, [operational design](#) constitutes the “front end” of planning, since commanders should frame the problems he or she seeks to solve and determine its scope and parameters.
- It logically forms the first steps of [deliberate planning](#), [crisis action planning](#), and other operational planning. It makes sense to determine an operation’s overall end state before detailed employment planning begins (or, for that matter, before many aspects of deployment and force planning begin).
- In other respects, design and planning are complementary and even overlap:
 - ✦ Design may begin before initiation of the [joint operation planning process](#) (JOPP) or the [joint operation planning process for air](#) (JOPPA), but some portions of the mission analysis stage of the JOPP and JOPPA may provide insights needed to properly frame an operational problem.
 - ✦ Design often begins with step 1 of the JOPP (“Initiation”), but certain formal products of deliberate and crisis action planning (such as warning and planning orders) may be issued after design efforts have begun, but before more detailed planning has started.

- ✦ Design may also continue after completion of initial JOPP and JOPPA planning. There is no clear demarcation between when design ends and planning begins, especially during the “first round” of design and planning.
- ✦ Strategists often also identify possible [branches](#) and [sequels](#) at various points based on planning assumptions.
- Later, during plan execution and [assessment](#), operational design may be conducted in concert with planning to adapt to emerging situations or behaviors.
- ✦ In this part of the process, commanders and strategists determine whether to implement pre-planned branches or sequels, or even initiate complete re-design of an operation.

The Joint Operation Planning Process for Air

- The Air Force plans using the process known as the JOPPA.
 - ✦ This is the process by which [commanders of Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFORs) create the detailed plans they require to effectively employ airpower, including the [joint air operations plan](#) (JAOP), [operation orders](#) (OPORDs), etc.
 - ✦ The JOPPA produces the JAOP and, as part of an ongoing battle rhythm, the guidance that helps create the air operations directive (AOD), which guides the tasking cycle through its iterative execution.
 - ✦ The JOPPA may also be used to produce required supporting plans and concepts, such as a long-range phased air targeting scheme (PATS), an area air defense plan (AADP), an [airspace control plan](#) (ACP), operation orders required by the COMAFFOR’s staff, and others. **The JOPP and JOPPA each consist of seven steps**, as depicted in the following figure, Joint Operation Planning Process.



Initiation

- Planning begins when an appropriate authority recognizes potential need to employ military capabilities in response to a potential or actual crisis and initiates strategy creation and operational design.
 - ✦ At the strategic level, the initiating authority is national leadership—the President, Secretary of Defense (SecDef), and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.
 - ✦ Below the national strategic level, that authority is usually a joint force commander (JFC) (combatant commander [CCDR] or joint task force [JTF] commander).
 - ✦ It is vital for Airmen to become involved in the planning process at the JFC-level as soon as possible to understand the JFC's design concept and ensure that the capabilities of airpower are properly represented, integrated, and employed.

Mission Analysis

- The primary purpose of mission analysis is to understand the problem at hand, the purpose of the operation, and to issue appropriate commander's guidance to focus the planning process.
- Mission analysis may already have been accomplished as part of operational design, but there is significant value in conducting an "airminded" mission analysis in dialog with the commander and air operations center (AOC) strategists, reviewing the products or reiterating the process of framing the problem "the plan" is intended to solve.
- The commander's mission and intent statements should be created in this step of the process if they have not already been created during earlier design effort.
 - ✦ These statements should include the military end state (MES) and the portion of it that the [joint force air component commander](#) (JFACC) is tasked to deliver.
 - ✦ If the problem the plan is intended to solve is not adequately framed, then the commander responsible for planning (e.g., the JFACC for the JOPPA) should "go back up the chain of command"—even to the level of national leadership—and request that it be further clarified.

COA Development

- A [course of action](#) (COA) consists of the following information: what type of action should occur; why the action is required; who will take the action; and the expected outcomes. A valid COA is one that is:
 - ✦ **Adequate**—Can accomplish (or appropriately support) the JFC's mission within given commanders' guidance.
 - ✦ **Feasible**—Can accomplish the mission within the established time, space, and resource limitations.
 - ✦ **Acceptable (Balanced)**—Should balance cost and risk with the advantage gained and maintained.
 - ✦ **Distinguishable**—Should be sufficiently different from other COAs.
 - ✦ **Complete**—Should incorporate objectives, effects, and tasks to be performed; major forces required; concepts for deployment, employment, and sustainment; time estimates for achieving objectives; mission success criteria; and end state. It may also delineate appropriate trigger points for pre-planned branches and sequels.

COA Analysis and Wargaming

- COA analysis should identify the advantages of each proposed friendly COA on its own merits; COAs are not compared with each other in this step.
- Wargaming provides a means for the commander and staff to analyze COAs in light of the adversary's possible countermoves, improve their understanding of the operational environment, and obtain insights that they may not have otherwise gained.

COA Comparison

- COA comparison is a process where wargamed COAs are evaluated and compared against a set of criteria established by the staff and commander.
- The commander and staff should develop and evaluate a set of important criteria or governing factors against which to evaluate COAs. Risks to forces and risks to mission should always be considered as evaluation criteria.

COA Approval

- The staff should determine the best COA to recommend to the commander.
 - ✦ The recommendation should take the form of a commander's estimate document or briefing.
 - ✦ **Branches** and **sequels** that the staff considers most likely or most dangerous may be reviewed and approved as part of this process as well. The approved COA is then developed into the appropriate plan or order.

Plan or Order Development

- Deliberate planning results in plan development (e.g., an **operation plan** [OPLAN], contingency plan, or commander's estimate); crisis action planning typically leads to OPORD development; and the JOPPA yields a JAOP, often a long-range PATS, and possibly other products.
- During plan or order development the commander and staff in collaboration with subordinate and collaborating organizations, expand the approved COA into a detailed plan. The detailed plan:
 - ✦ States (or restates) the commander's mission and intent.
 - ✦ Describes the central approach the commander intends to take to accomplish the mission.

- ★ Provides for the application, integration, sequencing, and synchronization of forces and capabilities in time, space, and purpose (including interagency, multinational, and nongovernmental organizations).
 - ★ Describes when, where, and under what conditions any supported commander intends to conduct or refuse combat, as required.
 - ★ Focuses on adversary and friendly COGs and their associated critical vulnerabilities.
 - ★ Avoids discernable patterns and makes full use of ambiguity and deception.
 - ★ Provides for controlling the tempo of operations.
 - ★ Visualizes the campaign or operation in terms of the forces and functions involved.
 - ★ Relates the assigned operational objectives, identified tactical objectives and desired tactical effects to the JFC's campaign plan and to other organizations' schemes as necessary; this enables the subsequent development of detailed tactical tasks and schemes of maneuver, and support requests to supporting commanders.
- There are no separate joint or Air Force procedures for deliberate and crisis action planning beyond some internal coordination and staffing procedures at the various component headquarters.
 - *For complete discussion of the JOPPA, [click here](#).*

Service Component Planning

- The Service component commander develops Service aspects of the JFC's course of action (COA), determines force and resource requirements, and builds or contributes to time-phased force and deployment data (TPFDD) documents to implement the deployment and sustainment aspects of the COA.
- ★ This effort should go hand-in-hand with employment concepts and COAs being developed by the joint force air component commander (JFACC) portion of the commander, Air Force forces (COMAFFOR)/JFACC's staff.
- ★ The Service component command staff also works within Service channels to identify combat support forces, critical materiel, sustaining supplies, filler and replacement personnel, and Reserve Component asset availability.

- ✦ Simultaneously and in coordination, the COMAFFOR's staff, usually led by the A3 (Director of Operations) or A5 (Director of Plans), should develop an Air Force component supporting [operation plan](#) (OPLAN) or [operation order](#) (OPORD) to capture that information pertinent to Air Force forces deploying to and employing within the particular [operational area](#).
 - The Service component supporting OPLAN or OPORD should be comprehensive enough to cover all combat support aspects of how the Air Force component should be employed.
 - ✦ The Service OPORD should include a basic plan plus appropriate annexes and appendices. Ownership of the annexes and appendices is divided amongst the Air Force forces (AFFOR) staff, and, once developed and approved, should be made available to all Air Force units within the [air expeditionary task force](#).
 - *For complete discussion of Service component planning, [click here](#).*
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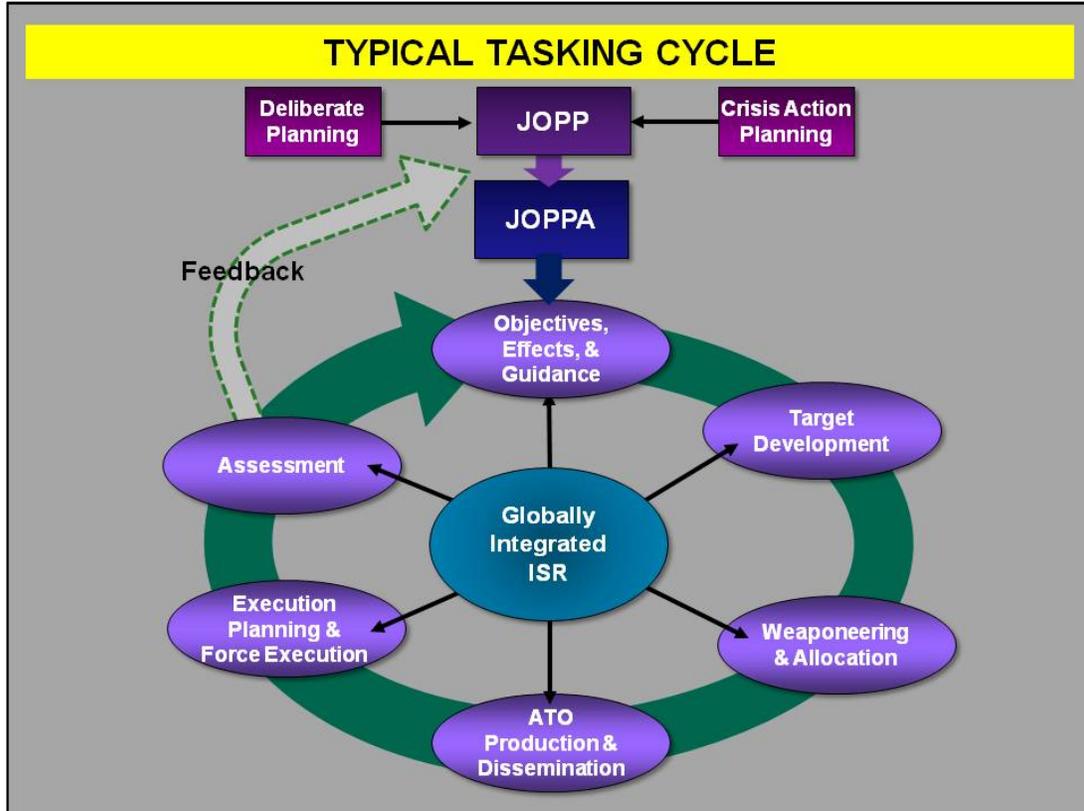
EXECUTING OPERATIONS

Last Updated: 5 Jun 2013

- Execution of operations is an integral part of the overarching effects-based approach construct. Many Air Force operations are executed by means of a tasking cycle. The cycle is used with some modifications for tasking operations in the air, space, and cyberspace and is the heart of the Air Force battle rhythm.
- Once execution begins, the commander continues to guide and influence operations through the air operations directive (AOD) (and, in some cases, equivalent space and cyberspace operations directives).

The Tasking Cycle

- Many Air Force operations are executed by means of a tasking cycle. The tasking cycle creates a daily articulation of the overall airpower [strategy](#) and planning efforts. The tasking cycle is the means Airmen use to accomplish deliberate and [dynamic targeting](#), among other requirements. For further details on the targeting process, see Annex 3-60, [Targeting](#), and Joint Publication 3-60, [Joint Targeting](#).
- The tasking cycle develops the products needed to build and execute an [air tasking order](#) (ATO) and related products, and accomplish assessment.
- Although it is presented below as six separate, sequential stages, in reality **the tasking process is bi-directional, iterative, multidimensional, and sometimes executed in parallel**. It is built on a foundation based on thorough joint [intelligence preparation of the operational environment](#) (JIPOE). The cycle typically consists of the following stages performed at various levels of command (illustrated in the following figure, Typical Tasking Cycle):



- The cycle is built around finite time periods that are required to plan, integrate and coordinate, prepare for, conduct, and assess operations in air, space, and cyberspace.
- These time periods may vary from theater to theater and much targeting effort may not be bound specifically to the cycle's timeframe, but the tasking cycle and its constituent processes drive the [air operations center's](#) (AOC's) battle rhythm and thus help determine deadlines and milestones for related processes, including targeting.
- Some assets may not operate within the tasking cycle. These include:
 - ✦ Most space assets, which are tasked via the space tasking order, although some theater-specific space operations will probably be included in the daily ATO for the sake of situational awareness/understanding, [integration](#), and [synchronization](#).
 - ✦ Special operations most often operate within the dynamic targeting process.

- ✦ Many IO, cyberspace, and [intertheater air mobility](#) assets commonly operate within a different cycle
 - ✦ In large operations, the existence of differing planning cycles among components can lead to increased complexity in the process.
 - ✦ Most component planning cycles are approximately 72-96 hours. However, the requirement within the air tasking cycle to manage as many as five separate ATOs drives the requirement for discipline to manage defined inputs and outputs during particular slices of time. Also, dynamic targeting and collection take place within a much more time-constrained framework.
 - ✦ Some long-range combat assets based outside the [area of operations](#), but operating within the [joint operations area](#), may be airborne on a tasked mission before the ATO that covers their weapons' times over target is published. These assets require the most current draft ATO information and all updates that affect their missions.
 - ✦ Other missions that are not under the COMAFFOR's control may be included in the ATO to provide visibility and assist coordination and deconfliction.
 - The tasking cycle supports every part of the JOPP and JOPPA, as well as the joint targeting cycle, and is interwoven throughout these other processes up to and including execution planning and force execution.
 - *For the complete discussion of the tasking cycle, [click here](#).*
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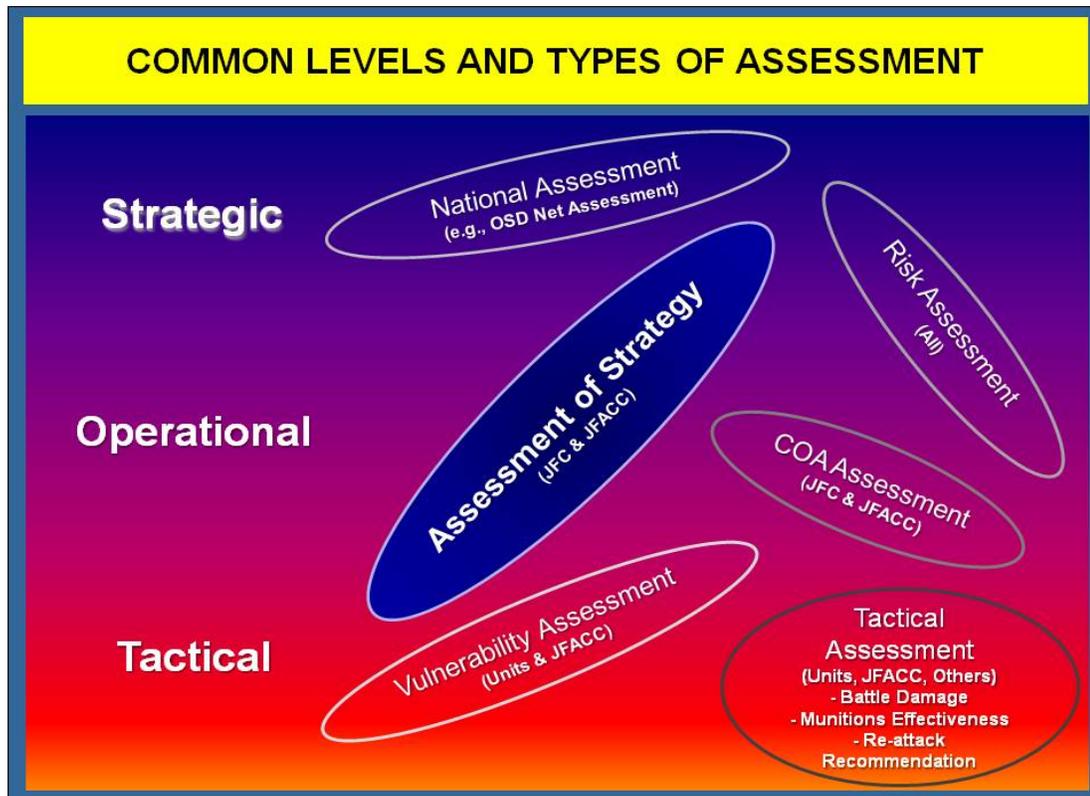
ASSESSMENT

Last Updated: 5 Jun 2013

- **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 toward accomplishing a task, creating an effect, or achieving an objective.”
- The purpose of assessment is to support the commander’s decision-making process by providing insight into the effectiveness of the **strategy** and accompanying plans.
- Many types of assessment exist, and may be used in support of operations, but assessment in this document refers to activities that support the commander’s decision-making process.
- In an effects-based approach, assessment should provide the commander with the answers to these basic questions:
 - ✦ Are we doing things right?
 - ✦ Are we doing the right things?
 - ✦ Are we measuring the right things?
- For a more complete overview of assessment, [click here](#).

Levels of Assessment

- Assessors perform many types of assessment across the strategic, operational, and tactical levels to inform a wide array of decisions. The following figure, Common Levels and Types of Assessment, displays some common types of assessment and, broadly, the levels where each would most likely be applied (the depiction is not all-inclusive).



- ★ The figure also shows the level of commander who commonly directs a given type of assessment (e.g., the [joint force commander](#) [JFC] and [joint force air component commander](#) [JFACC]).
- ★ At all levels – but especially at the operational level -- the JFACC and staff should observe how the JFC takes information “on board” and craft assessment products that convey the Airman’s perspective without seeming “air-centric” or presenting a biased view.
- **Tactical assessment** (TA) is generally performed at the unit or joint force component level and typically measures physical, empirical achievement of direct effects.
 - ★ TA is an umbrella term covering [battle damage assessment](#) (BDA), munitions effectiveness assessment, and recommendations for re-attack (and often referred to in joint doctrine as “[combat assessment](#)” [CA]).¹ These forms of assessment focus on offensive and kinetic actions.
 - ★ TA should also be accomplished following tactical employment of non-kinetic actions and non-offensive capabilities.

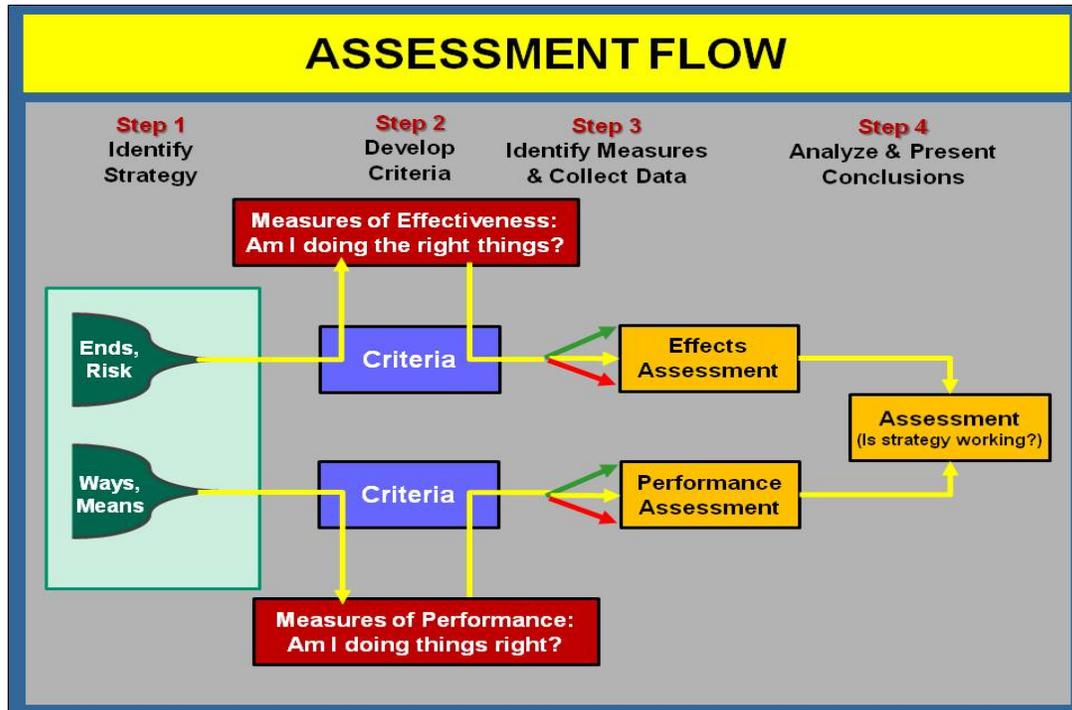
¹ The Air Force has chosen “TA” over “CA” because it is more broadly applicable and descriptively accurate: Not all operations (and hence not all assessments at the tactical level) involve combat. The name should apply to tactical-level evaluation across the ROMO. The terms, however, are functionally equivalent for most purposes.

- **Operational Assessment.** Assessment at the operational level begins to evaluate complex indirect effects, track progress toward operational and strategic objectives, and make recommendations for strategy adjustments and future action extending beyond tactical re-attack.
 - ✦ Assessment at this level often entails evaluation of course of action (COA) success, assessment of the progress of overall strategy, and joint force vulnerability assessment.
 - ✦ Some measures can be expressed empirically (with quantitative measures); others, like psychological effects, may have to be expressed in qualitative and subjective terms.
- **Strategic assessment** addresses issues at the joint force (“theater strategic,” as in bringing a particular conflict to a favorable conclusion) and national levels (enduring security concerns and interests).
- The time frames considered by the various assessment types may vary widely, from rather short intervals at the tactical level to longer time horizons at the strategic level, even reaching well beyond the end of an operation, as lessons learned are determined and absorbed. The relationship among the various assessment types is not linear, with outputs from one type often feeding multiple other types and levels.
- *For the complete discussion of levels of assessment, [click here](#).*

Assessing Strategy

- The purpose of assessing strategy is to give commanders dependable insights into whether their strategy is effective and to measure progress toward the end state(s) that the commander is tasked to deliver. This type of assessment can be conducted for any commander from the tactical through the strategic level and should address the four main components of a strategy:
 - ✦ **Ends**—The commander’s end state and the objectives required to obtain it. These are generally derived from the commander’s intent statement.
 - ✦ **Ways**—The tasks or actions undertaken to help achieve the effects that achieve the ends, as generated during the detailed planning process.
 - ✦ **Means**—The resources put toward accomplishing the ways. The doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities (DOTMLPF) construct is often a useful source for examining and developing the means.
 - ✦ **Risk**—The cost and amount of uncertainty and vulnerability the commander is willing to accept in executing the strategy.

- Assessment considers all these components, with the goal of developing insights into whether a strategy is working and what areas may need to be re-evaluated if that strategy is not working. The following figure, Assessment Flow, depicts this strategy-centric approach to assessment.



- For the complete discussion of strategy assessment, [click here](#).

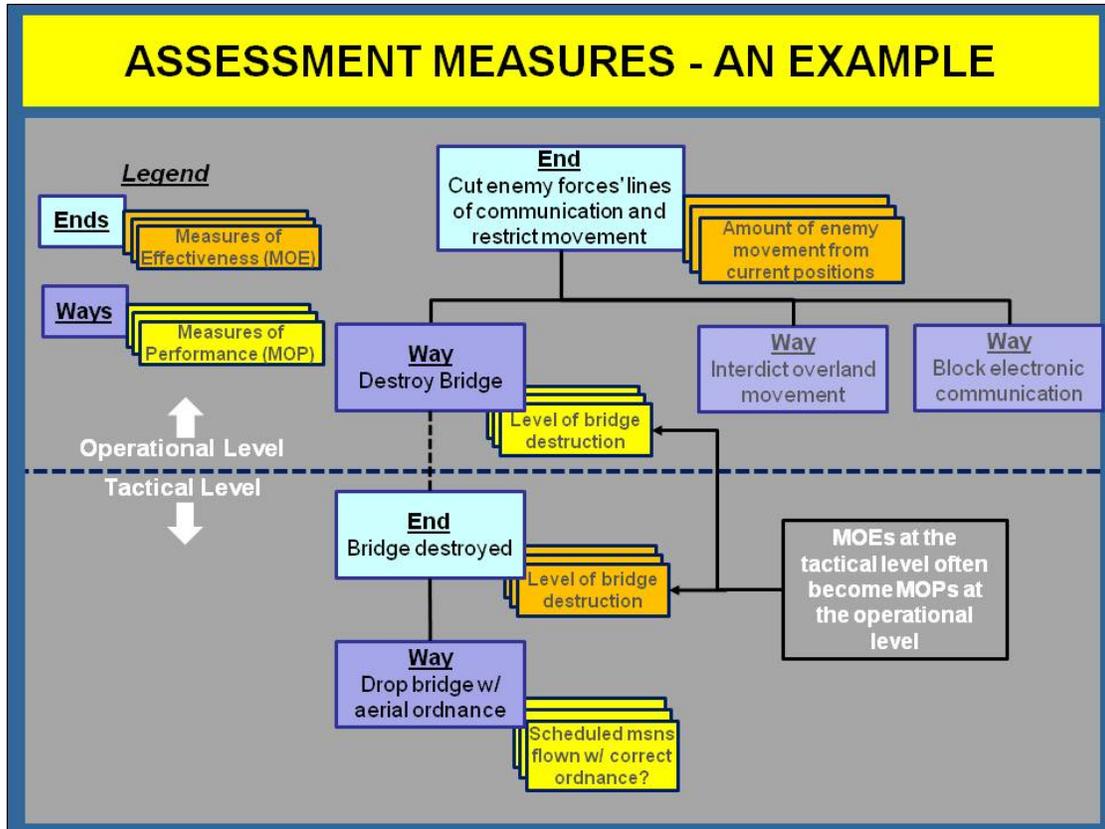
Assessment Criteria

- Criteria define the attributes and thresholds for judging progress toward the end state and accomplishment of required tasks. **Development of assessment criteria is the critical component of the assessment process and should be accomplished before specific measures or data requirements are defined.** Developing measures without a clear understanding of how those measures fit into a judgment of the effectiveness of the overall strategy often leads to laborious data collection and analysis processes that provide little to no value to the decision-makers.
- Criteria help focus data collection by ensuring that assessment measures relate clearly to the elements of the strategy being assessed. Criteria should be developed for the ends, ways, and means at each level of assessment. Well-written criteria should adhere to some basic attributes:

- ✦ **Relevant to the effect or action being assessed.** The criteria should relate directly to the commander's end state, tasks, and success thresholds as outlined in the strategy.
 - ✦ **Mutually exclusive across the assessment categories** (e.g., good, marginal, poor) for a given effect or action assessed. This ensures that only one category is appropriate for a given outcome.
 - ✦ **Collectively exhaustive across the range of outcomes for a given effect or action.** This helps ensure that most, if not all, potential outcomes are covered by the criteria.
 - ✦ **Well-defined.** Specific and relevant definitions should be developed for any confusing or ill-defined terms used in the criteria. Planners should attempt to objectively define success thresholds and the boundaries between assessment categories whenever possible (e.g., what are the criteria for transition between the 'good' and 'marginal' categories?). Nonetheless, judgment is always necessary when assessing the overall strategy.
- *For the complete discussion of assessment criteria, [click here](#).*

Assessment Measures

- Assessment measures are simply the data elements that, via the criteria, provide insight into the effectiveness of the commander's strategy. Assessment measures are commonly divided into two types:
 - ✦ **Measure of performance (MOP)**—A criterion used to assess friendly actions that are tied to measuring task accomplishment.
 - ✦ **Measure of effectiveness (MOE)**—A criterion used to assess changes in system behavior, capability, or operational environment that is tied to measuring the attainment of an end state, achievement of an objective, or creation of an effect.
- MOPs address the ways and means that are employed during execution to help achieve desired effects; they indicate progress toward accomplishing planned tasks or actions. MOEs assess progress toward creating desired effects and thus achieving the objectives and end state (simply put, MOPs help tell us if we are doing things right; MOEs help tell us if we are doing the right things).
- The distinction between MOEs and MOPs can depend on their context within the commander's strategy. The exact same measure can be an MOP for one commander and an MOE for another, lower echelon commander. The following figure, Assessment Measures – An Example, illustrates a practical example of this delineation.



- Developing good measures is an art, though there are some general guidelines that can aid in developing high-quality measures:
 - ✦ **Measures should be relevant and necessary.** Measures should relate to the effect or task they are intended to describe and should feed directly into the already-established criteria. Collection of irrelevant measures that do not shed light on the effectiveness of the commander's strategy is a misuse of valuable time and resources. Focusing primarily on collecting the data necessary to apply to the developed criteria should help avoid the creation of superfluous measures.
 - ✦ **Measures should represent a scale, not a goal or objective.** Metrics developers may be tempted to write a goal or criterion as a measure. Instead, the goal should be included in the criteria in accordance with the commander's risk tolerance and thresholds. Operators and planners should establish these goals (objectives) in coordination with the assessors.
 - ✦ **The data satisfying a measure should be observable, or at least inferable.** The measurements can be quantitative (numerical) or qualitative (non-numerical). In general, the more objectively measurable the better. However, **commanders and planners should avoid "the numbers trap:" blindly using rates, numbers, and other quantitative metrics, especially in assessing effects, since their seemingly "empirical" and quantified elements may be**

based on wholly subjective assumptions and the number may be meaningless—thus they may often lack direct linkages to the objectives or ends outlined in the strategy, while sometimes also imparting an illusion of “scientific validity” merely because they are quantified.

- *For the complete discussion on assessment measures, [click here](#).*
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CHAPTER THREE: COMMANDING AND ORGANIZING AIR FORCE FORCES

Last Updated: 5 Jun 2013

(Note: The information in this section is condensed from material from Annex 3-30, [Command and Control](#). Refer to that document for more detailed overall discussion and context. Other links may point to more specific discussion or to other supplementary sources. Also, any bolded emphasis is in the original text.)

- Organization is critically important to effective and efficient operations. Service and joint force organization and [command relationships](#)—literally, who owns what, and who can do what with whom, and when—easily create the most friction within any operation.
- Organization and preferred command arrangements are designed to address [unity of command](#), a key [principle of war](#). Clear lines of authority, with clearly identified commanders at appropriate echelons exercising appropriate control, are essential to achieving [unity of effort](#), reducing confusion, and maintaining priorities.
- The key to successful employment of Air Force forces as part of a joint force effort is providing a single Air Force commander with the responsibility and authority to properly organize, train, equip and employ Air Force forces to accomplish assigned functions and tasks.
 - ✦ The title of this commander is [Commander, Air Force Forces](#) (COMAFFOR).
 - ✦ Operationally, the COMAFFOR should be prepared to employ Air Force forces as directed by the [joint force commander](#) (JFC), and if directed be prepared to employ joint air forces as the [joint force air component commander](#) (JFACC). In either event, the COMAFFOR should also ensure that Air Force forces are prepared to execute the missions assigned by the JFC.
- The requirements and responsibilities of the COMAFFOR and JFACC are inextricably linked; both are critical to operational success.
- *For the complete discussion on command authorities, see Annex 3-30, [Appendix A](#).*



THE COMMANDER, AIR FORCE FORCES

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- The title of Commander, Air Force Forces (COMAFFOR) is reserved exclusively to the single Air Force commander of an Air Force Service component command assigned or attached to a joint force commander (JFC) at the unified combatant command, subunified combatant command, or joint task force (JTF) level.
- If Air Force forces are attached to a JFC, they should be presented as an air expeditionary task force (AETF).
 - ✦ The AETF becomes the Air Force Service component to the JTF and the AETF commander is the COMAFFOR to the JTF commander. Thus, depending on the scenario, the position of COMAFFOR may exist simultaneously at different levels within a given theater as long as each COMAFFOR is separately assigned or attached to and under the operational control of a different JFC.
 - ✦ The COMAFFOR provides unity of command. To a JFC, a COMAFFOR provides a single face for all Air Force issues. Within the Air Force Service component, the COMAFFOR is the single commander who conveys commander's intent and is responsible for operating and supporting all Air Force forces assigned or attached to that joint force.
 - ✦ The COMAFFOR commands forces through two separate branches of the chain of command: the operational branch and the administrative branch.
- The COMAFFOR should normally be designated at a command level above the operating forces and should not be dual-hatted as commander of one of the subordinate operating units. This allows the COMAFFOR to focus at the operational level of war, while subordinate commanders lead their units at the tactical level of war.

Operational Responsibilities of the COMAFFOR

- When Air Force forces are assigned or attached to a JFC, the JFC normally receives operational control (OPCON) of these forces. This authority is best exercised through subordinate JFCs and Service component commanders and thus is normally delegated accordingly.

- If not delegated OPCON, or if the stated command authorities are not clear, the COMAFFOR should request delegation of OPCON.
- When the COMAFFOR is delegated OPCON of the Air Force component forces, and no [joint force air component commander](#) (JFACC) has been designated, the COMAFFOR has the following operational and tactical responsibilities: (Note: if a JFACC is designated, many of these responsibilities belong to that functional component commander. Refer to Joint Publication 3-30, *Command and Control for Joint Air Operations*, for more complete discussion of the [JFACC's role](#) and the [planning processes](#) that support joint air component employment.)
 - ✦ Prepare component plans to support the JFC's estimate.
 - ✦ Develop and recommend [courses of action](#) (COAs) to the JFC.
 - ✦ Develop a [strategy](#) and [operation plan](#) that states how the COMAFFOR plans to exploit Air Force capabilities to support the JFC's objectives.
 - ✦ Establish (or implement, when passed down by the JFC) theater [rules of engagement](#) (ROEs) for all assigned and attached forces. For those Service or functional components that operate organic air assets, it should be clearly defined when the air component ROEs also apply to their operations (this would normally be recommended).
 - ✦ Make [air apportionment](#) recommendations to the JFC.
 - ✦ Task, plan, coordinate, and allocate the daily Air Force component effort.
 - ✦ Normally serve as the [supported commander](#) for [counterair](#) operations, [strategic attack](#), the JFC's overall [air interdiction](#) effort, most [space control](#) operations, theater airborne [reconnaissance](#) and [surveillance](#), and other operations as directed by the JFC. As the supported commander, the COMAFFOR has the authority to designate the target priority, [effects](#), and timing of these operations and attack targets within the entire [joint operations area](#) (JOA).
 - ✦ Function as a [supporting commander](#), as directed by the JFC, for operations such as [close air support](#) (CAS), air interdiction within other components' [areas of operations](#) (AOs), and maritime support.
 - ✦ Act as [airspace control authority](#) (ACA), [area air defense commander](#) (AADC), and [space coordinating authority](#) (SCA), if so designated.
 - ✦ Coordinate [personnel recovery](#) operations, including [combat search and rescue](#) (CSAR).

- ✦ Direct intratheater air mobility operations and coordinate them with intertheater air mobility operations.
- ✦ Conduct joint training, including the training, as directed, of components of other Services in joint operations for which the COMAFFOR has or may be assigned primary responsibility, or for which the Air Force component's facilities and capabilities are suitable.

Service Responsibilities of the COMAFFOR

- Commanders of Air Force components have responsibilities and authorities that derive from their roles in fulfilling the Service's administrative control (ADCON) function.
 - ✦ Within the administrative branch, the COMAFFOR has complete ADCON of all assigned Air Force component forces and specified ADCON of all attached Air Force component forces.
 - ✦ The specified responsibilities listed below apply to all attached forces, regardless of major command or Air Force component (regular, Guard, or Reserve).
- As the Service component commander to a JFC, the COMAFFOR has the following responsibilities:
 - ✦ Make recommendations to the JFC on the proper employment of the forces in the Air Force component.
 - ✦ Accomplish assigned tasks for operational missions.
 - ✦ Organize, train, and sustain assigned and attached Air Force forces for combatant commander (CCDR)-assigned missions.
 - Prescribe the chain of command within the AETF.
 - Maintain reachback between the Air Force component and other supporting Air Force elements. Delineate responsibilities between forward and rear elements.
 - Provide training in Service-unique doctrine, tactical methods, and techniques.
 - Provide for logistics and mission support functions normal to the command.
 - ✦ Inform the JFC (and the CCDR, if affected) of planning for changes in logistics support that would significantly affect operational capability or sustainability sufficiently early in the planning process for the JFC to evaluate the proposals prior to final decision or implementation.

- ✦ Provide lateral liaisons with Army, Navy, Marines, special operations forces, and [coalition](#) partners.
 - ✦ Maintain internal administration and discipline, including application of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ).
 - ✦ Establish [force protection](#) and other local defense requirements.
 - ✦ Provide Service [intelligence](#) matters and oversight of intelligence activities to ensure compliance with laws, executive orders, policies, and directives.
 - At the CCDR level, the Air Force Service component commander also has the following additional responsibilities:
 - ✦ Develop program and budget requests that comply with CCDR guidance on war-fighting requirements and priorities.
 - ✦ Inform the CCDR (and any intermediate JFCs) of program and budget decisions that may affect joint operation planning.
 - *For more complete discussion of the COMAFFOR, see [Annex 3-30, Command and Control](#).*
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REGIONAL versus FUNCTIONAL ORGANIZATION

Last Updated: 5 Jun 2013

- It is important to understand that airpower is flexible in organization and presentation. Because it encompasses a wide range of capabilities and operating environments, it defies a single, general model for organization, planning, and employment.
 - ✦ Some assets and capabilities provide relatively localized effects and generally are more easily deployable, and thus may organize and operate within a regional model.
 - ✦ Other assets and capabilities transcend geographic areas of responsibility simultaneously, and thus have global responsibilities. Such forces may be better organized and controlled through a functional model.
- **However, at the focus of operations within any region, it is possible to place the collective capabilities of [airpower](#) in the hands of a single Airman through skillful arrangement of [command relationships](#), focused expeditionary organization, reachback, and forward deployment of specialized talent.**
- **There will usually be tension between regionally-organized forces and functionally-organized forces. The former seek effectiveness at the point of their operation, while the latter seek effectiveness and efficiency across several regions. At critical times, the requirement for effectiveness may trump efficiency, and additional functional forces may be transferred to the regional command and organized accordingly (see related discussion later in this chapter on “Transfer of Functional Forces to a Geographic Command” and the complete discussion in [Annex 3-30, Command and Control](#)). These situations require careful and continuing dialogue between competing senior commanders and their common superior commander.**

Regional Organization and Control

- **All military missions are ultimately under the authority of a [joint force commander](#) (JFC) at the appropriate level. If the entire theater is engaged, the [combatant commander](#) (CCDR) may be the JFC. If the situation is less than theater-wide, the CCDR may establish a subordinate [joint task force](#) (JTF) commanded by a subordinate JFC. In either case, the CCDR should first look to assigned, in-theater forces. If augmentation is required, the JFC should request**

additional forces through the Secretary of Defense (SecDef). Upon SecDef approval, additional forces transfer into the theater and are attached to the gaining CCDR. The degree of control gained over those forces (i.e., [operational control](#) [OPCON] or [tactical control](#) [TACON]) should be specified in the [deployment orders](#). The gaining CCDR then normally delegates OPCON of these forces downward to the JTF commander who should, in turn, delegate OPCON to the Service [component](#) commanders within the gaining JTF. All Air Force forces should be organized and presented as an [air expeditionary task force](#) (AETF).

- ✦ Within a joint force, the JFC may organize forces in a mix of Service and functional components. **All joint forces contain Service components**, because administrative and logistics support are provided through Service components. Therefore, **every joint force containing assigned or attached Air Force forces will have an Air Force Service component in the form of an AETF with a designated [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR)**.
- ✦ The JFC may also establish [functional component commands](#) when forces from two or more military Services operate in the same dimension or domain or there is a need to accomplish a distinct aspect of the assigned mission. Functional component commanders, such as the [joint force air component commander](#) (JFACC), are established at the discretion of the JFC.
- ✦ If functional component commands are established, the Service component commander with the preponderance of forces to be tasked, and with the requisite ability to provide [command and control](#), will normally be designated as that functional component commander. Functional component commanders normally exercise TACON of forces made available for tasking. Through the Air Force component, the Air Force provides a COMAFFOR who is trained, equipped, and prepared to also be the JFACC if so designated by the JFC to whom he/she is assigned or attached.

Functional Organization and Control

- Not all Air Force forces employed in an operation may be attached forward to a geographic CCDR. Several aspects of [airpower](#) are capable of serving more than one geographic CCDR at a time. Such forces are organized under functional CCDRs to facilitate cross-[area of operations](#) (AOR) optimization of those functional forces.
- ✦ When such forces are deployed in a geographic CCDR's AOR, they may remain under the OPCON of their respective functional CCDR and operate in [support](#) of the geographic CCDR. Within a theater, this support relationship is facilitated through specially designated representatives attached to regional AETFs.
- ✦ In some circumstances, after coordination with the owning commander and upon SecDef approval, control of such functional forces may be transferred to a geographic commander and attached with specification of OPCON or TACON.

- *For more complete discussion of regional and functional organization, see [Annex 3-30](#).*
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THE AIR EXPEDITIONARY TASK FORCE

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- The air expeditionary task force (AETF) is the organizational structure for Air Force forces in response to operational tasking (i.e., established for a temporary period of time to perform a specified mission). It provides a task-organized, integrated package with the appropriate balance of force, sustainment, control, and [force protection](#).
- AETFs may be established as an Air Force Service component to a [joint task force](#) (JTF), or as a subordinate task force within a larger Air Force Service component to address specific internal tasks. If an AETF is formed as the former, the AETF commander is also a [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR). Otherwise, the AETF commander is not a COMAFFOR, but reports to a COMAFFOR.
- A **single commander** presents a single Air Force face to the [joint force commander](#) (JFC) and results in clear lines of authority both ways.
 - ✦ Internal to the task force, there is only one person clearly in charge; for a JFC, there is only one person to deal with on matters regarding Air Force issues.
 - ✦ The AETF commander is the senior Air Force warfighter and exercises the appropriate degree of control over the forces [assigned](#), [attached](#), or in [support](#) of the AETF.
 - ✦ Within the joint force, these degrees of control are formally expressed as [operational control](#) (OPCON), [tactical control](#) (TACON), or [support](#). Within Service lines, the AETF commander exercises [administrative control](#) (ADCON).
- **Appropriate Command and Control Mechanisms.** If acting as a COMAFFOR, the AETF commander exercises command in both the operational and administrative branches of the [chain of command](#) through an air operations center (AOC), an Air Force forces (AFFOR) staff (sometimes colloquially called an “A-staff”), and appropriate subordinate C2 elements. *The AOC and the AFFOR staff are discussed in more detail in Annex 3-30, [Command and Control](#).*
- **Tailored and Fully Supported Forces.** The AETF should be tailored to the mission; this includes not only forces, but also the ability to command and control those forces for the missions assigned.

- *For more complete overview of the AETF, See [Annex 3-30](#).*
-



AETF ORGANIZATION

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- The basic building block of an air expeditionary task force (AETF) is the squadron; however, a squadron normally does not have sufficient resources to operate independently. Thus, the smallest AETF is normally an air expeditionary group (AEG); larger AETFs may be composed of several expeditionary wings.
- Within an AETF, the AETF commander organizes forces as necessary into wings, groups, squadrons, flights, detachments, or elements to provide reasonable internal spans of control, command elements at appropriate levels, and to retain unit identity.
- *For more complete discussion of internal AETF organization and designation of expeditionary and provisional units, see [Annex 3-30, Command and Control](#).*
- **Expeditionary Elements below Squadron Level.** The Air Force may deploy elements below the squadron level for specific, limited functions. These include individuals and specialty teams such as [explosive ordnance disposal](#) (EOD) teams, military working dog teams, security forces, liaison teams, etc. They may deploy as part of an AETF or independently of other Air Force units, in remote locations, and may operate directly with other Services.
- NOTE: Recent experience has revealed that tracking small, remotely located Air Force elements, especially in the distributed environment encountered in [irregular warfare](#), has posed challenges for the Air Force component headquarters.
 - ✦ These challenges may range from lack of administrative support to improper employment of small units and individual Airmen in tasks for which they have not been trained.
 - ✦ The COMAFFOR staff should take special efforts to maintain effective oversight of such elements in order to fulfill proper ADCON oversight.



COMMAND AND CONTROL MECHANISMS

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- The [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR) requires [command and control](#) (C2) assets to assist in exercising [operational control](#) (OPCON), [tactical control](#) (TACON), and [administrative control](#) (ADCON). The COMAFFOR normally uses some form of an AOC to exercise control of operations and a Service component staff, commonly called the AFFOR staff, to exercise support operations and administrative control.
- The core capabilities of the air operations center (AOC) and AFFOR staff are well established, but they should be tailored in size and function according to the operation.
 - ✦ Not all operations require a “full-up” AOC with over 1,000 people or a large AFFOR staff. Smaller operations, such as some humanitarian operations, can in fact make do with a small control center that does little more than scheduling and reporting.
 - ✦ Not all elements of the operations center or AFFOR staff need be forward; some may operate “over the horizon,” using [reachback](#) to reduce the forward footprint. The goal is to maximize reachback and minimize forward presence as much as possible.
- **Air Operations Center.** In general terms, an AOC is the Air Force component commander’s C2 center that provides the capability to plan, direct, and assess the activities of assigned and attached forces.
 - ✦ AOCs do not work in isolation; they require appropriate connectivity to operations centers of higher headquarters (e.g., to the joint force headquarters for the operational branch, and to senior Air Force headquarters for the administrative branch), to lateral headquarters (e.g., other joint force components), to subordinate assigned and attached Air Force units, and to other functional and geographic AOCs as necessary. The overall C2 structure should make maximum use of reachback.
 - ✦ An AOC, along with subordinate C2 elements, should be tailored in size and capability to the mission. An AOC should generally be capable of the following basic tasks:

- Develop the component [strategy](#) and requisite planning products.
 - Task, execute, and assess day-to-day component operations.
 - Plan and execute [intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance](#) (ISR) tasks appropriate to assigned missions.
 - Conduct [operational-level assessment](#).
- ✦ *For an AOC baseline description, see [Annex 3-30, appendix B](#).*
- **AFFOR Staff.** The AFFOR staff is the mechanism through which the COMAFFOR exercises Service responsibilities and is also responsible for the long-range planning and theater engagement operations that fall outside the AOC's current operational focus.
- ✦ 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 JTF, or the core or "plug" 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 and augmentation may be necessary.
- ✦ *See baseline AFFOR staff description in [Annex 3-30, appendix C](#).*
-



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DISTRIBUTED/SPLIT OPERATIONS

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- Distributed operations involve conducting operations from independent or interdependent nodes in a teaming manner. Some operational planning or decision making may occur from outside the joint area of operations.
 - Split operations is a type of distributed operation conducted by a single command and control (C2) entity separated between two or more geographic locations. A single commander must have oversight of all aspects of a split C2 operation.
 - Reachback, which can be applied to both distributed, and the more specific case of split operations, is the process of obtaining products, services, and applications or forces, equipment, or materiel from Air Force organizations that are not forward deployed.
 - Note: The decision to establish distributed or split operations invokes several tradeoffs. *For more detail see Annex 3-30, Command and Control.*
-



COMMAND RELATIONSHIP MODELS FOR AIR FORCE FORCES

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- When employing military forces, a combatant commander (CCDR) first turns to those forces already assigned. Assigned forces are delineated in the Secretary of Defense's (SecDef's) "Forces for Unified Commands" memorandum, and the CCDR exercises combatant command (command authority) (COCOM) over them.
- Additional forces beyond those assigned to the CCDR may be attached by SecDef action. These forces may come from one of two specific Global Force Management allocation supporting processes: rotational force allocation in support of CCDR annual force needs and emergent force allocation in support of CCDR emerging or crisis-based requests for capabilities and forces. Since the additional forces are normally assigned to a different CCDR, the deployment order should clearly delineate the degree of command authority to be exercised by the gaining commander. Forces temporarily transferred via SecDef action are normally attached with specification of operational control (OPCON) to the gaining CCDR.
- For Air Force forces, there are four general models for command relationships. Considerations for these relationships should include the ability of gaining commands to receive the forces and to command and control them appropriately; the characteristics and support requirements of the forces involved; and the operating locations of the forces.
 - ✦ Forces deployed and executing operations within the theater to which they are attached.
 - ✦ Forces executing missions inside the theater of operations but based outside the theater (i.e., across areas of operations).
 - ✦ Functional forces with global missions.
 - ✦ Transient forces.
- *For more detail on command relationship models, see discussion in [Annex 3-30, Command and Control](#).*



TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONAL FORCES TO A GEOGRAPHIC COMMAND

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- In some situations, a geographic commander may request additional functional forces beyond those apportioned or allocated during deliberate or crisis action planning. The decision to transfer functional forces, with specification of operational control (OPCON), to a geographic combatant commander (CCDR) should be balanced against competing needs across multiple areas of operations (AORs).
- In some cases, the requirement for OPCON over specific forces to accomplish the geographic CCDR's missions may be of higher priority than the competing worldwide mission requirements of the functional CCDR. Therefore, after coordination with the owning functional commander and upon SecDef approval, functional forces may be transferred to the geographic command and organized accordingly. The decision to attach additional functional forces has two parts. First, the decision should consider whether:
 - ✦ The geographic CCDR will use the forces at or near 100 percent of their capability with little or no residual capability for other global missions.
 - ✦ The forces will be used regularly and frequently over a period of time, not just for a single mission employment.
 - ✦ The geographic commander has the ability to effectively command and control the forces.
- **If the answer to all three questions above is “yes,” then the functional forces should be attached to the geographic combatant command. If any of the above questions are answered “no,” then the functional forces should remain under the OPCON of the functional CCDR's commander, Air Force forces (COMAFFOR) and be tasked in support.**
- If the decision is to attach forces, the second question is whether the forces should be attached with specification of either OPCON or tactical control (TACON).
 - ✦ **Specification of OPCON:** OPCON is the more complete—and preferred—choice of control. OPCON “normally provides full authority to organize commands and forces and to employ those forces as the commander in operational control considers necessary to accomplish assigned missions; it does

not, in and of itself, include authoritative direction for logistics or matters of administration, discipline, internal organization, or unit training.”

- ★ **Specification of TACON:** TACON is the more limited choice of control. Joint Publication 1, [*Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*](#), states “when transfer of forces to a joint force will be temporary, the forces will be attached to the gaining commands and JFCs, normally through the Service component commander, will exercise OPCON over the attached forces.” Thus, transfer and attachment with specification of TACON is not the expected norm. While it is possible for the SecDef to attach forces across combatant command lines with the specification of TACON in lieu of OPCON, such action would result in a more confused chain of command with OPCON and TACON split between two different CCDRs.
 - Regional COMAFFORs have inherent responsibilities for such issues as local [force protection](#), lodging, and dining.
 - ★ Thus, if a regional COMAFFOR holds OPCON of forces outside the AOR, he or she is not responsible for such issues—that is the responsibility of the COMAFFOR in the region in which they are bedded down.
 - ★ In a parallel fashion, if such out-of-region forces divert into bases in his/her region (for example, for emergencies), that COMAFFOR is now responsible for basic support and protection.
 - For more complete discussion on transferring functional forces, see [Annex 3-30, Command and Control](#).
-



INTEGRATING REGIONAL AND FUNCTIONAL AIR FORCE FORCES

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- [Airpower](#) is usually presented through a mix of regional and functional models, with the latter usually supporting the former.
- Functional forces usually maintain a separate organization from the supported regional organization, and are integrated in the theater through specially trained liaisons attached to the regional [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR).
- The most likely functional capabilities to be provided in such a supporting relationship are [air mobility operations](#), [space operations](#), [special operations](#), [cyberspace operations](#), and [nuclear operations](#).
- **Integrating Air Mobility Operations.** Because air mobility forces serve several regions concurrently, their employment should be balanced between regional and intertheater requirements and priorities.
 - ✦ The air mobility systems performing [intratheater](#) and [intertheater](#) missions within a given region should operate in close coordination to provide responsive and integrated aerial movement to the supported [combatant commander](#) (CCDR).
 - ✦ Carefully constructed command relationships can allow an interlocking arrangement to manage intratheater and intertheater air mobility operations.
 - ✦ **The Director of Air Mobility Forces** (DIRMOBFOR). Within an air expeditionary task force (AETF), the DIRMOBFOR is the COMAFFOR's designated coordinating authority for air mobility operations. *For more discussion of the DIRMOBFOR, see Annex 3-17, [Air Mobility Operations](#).*
- **Integrating Space Operations.** Space presents another form of military operations that, much like air mobility, usually are best presented functionally to a regional commander through a supporting relationship if they are not attached.
 - ✦ Space command and control brings another level of complexity because many space assets that support military interests come from a variety of organizations, some outside of the Department of Defense (DOD). *For more detail see Annex 3-14, [Space Operations](#).*

- ✦ **Space Coordinating Authority (SCA).** Within a regional operation, the [joint force commander](#) (JFC) should designate SCA to facilitate unity of effort with DOD-wide space operations and non-DOD space capabilities. *For more on SCA including space capabilities and responsibilities see [related discussion in Annex 3-14](#).*
- ✦ **The Director of Space Forces** (DIRSPACEFOR) serves as the senior space advisor to the COMAFFOR. The DIRSPACEFOR, an Air Force space officer, coordinates, integrates, and staffs activities to tailor space support to the COMAFFOR (and the [joint force air component commander](#) [JFACC] when the COMAFFOR is so designated). *For more on DIRSPACEFOR roles and responsibilities see [related discussion in Annex 3-14](#).*
- **Integrating Special Operations.** The geographic CCDR normally exercises [combatant command \(command authority\)](#) (COCOM) of [assigned](#) Air Force special operations forces (AFSOF) and [operational control](#) (OPCON) of all [attached](#) AFSOF through the commander of the [theater special operations command](#).
 - ✦ For conventional missions, the JFACC may receive OPCON or [tactical control](#) (TACON) of AFSOF assets when directed by the JFC. However, in most cases, AFSOF will only normally be in a [direct support](#) relationship with conventional assets.
 - ✦ When SOF operate in concert with “conventional” JTFs, they normally take the form of a separate joint special operations task force (JSOTF) within the JTF, commanded by a joint force special operations component commander (JFSOCC). *For more on special operations forces capabilities and roles see [Annex 3-05, Special Operations](#).*
 - ✦ The [Special Operations Liaison Element](#) (SOLE). The SOLE is a liaison team that represents the JFSOCC to the COMAFFOR/JFACC. The SOLE integrates all SOF air and surface operations with joint air operations via the air tasking process. Additionally, the SOLE deconflicts SOF operations with other component liaisons in the AOC.
- **Integrating Cyberspace Operations.** Global [cyberspace](#) capabilities may be presented to a regional commander through a supporting relationship, to supplement regional cyberspace capabilities. US Cyber Command, as a [subordinate unified command](#) under US Strategic Command, is the focal point for providing cyberspace capabilities to other [combatant commanders](#). *For details on cyberspace operations see [Annex 3-12, Cyberspace Operations](#).*
- **Integrating Nuclear Operations.** The political and psychological effects of [nuclear weapons](#) confer upon them a unique nature. Therefore, the singular role of US Strategic Command during planning and employment necessitates close coordination with regional commanders to achieve desired results. Air Force nuclear

capabilities are central to these considerations, and require precise integration to ensure effective employment within a particular region taking into account the larger political ramifications. Refer to Annex 3-72, [Nuclear Operations](#).



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INTEGRATING THE AIR RESERVE COMPONENTS

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- The Air Force, under the Total Force construct, has a substantial part of its forces in the Air Reserve Components (ARC), which consists of the Air Force Reserve (AFR) and the Air National Guard (ANG).
 - The ARC provides a strategic reserve and a surge capacity for the Air Force; in some instances, the ARC has unique capabilities not resident within the regular component.
 - The SecDef may make these forces available during the planning process. While they may seamlessly operate alongside the regular Air Force, they are subject to different levels of activation and different degrees of operational control and administrative control. Also, differences in tour length availability pose continuity challenges for a commander, Air Force forces (COMAFFOR), and planners should carefully consider such issues for any category of activation (whether by volunteerism or mobilization).
 - See [Annex 3-30, Appendix E](#) for more discussion on ARC organization and accessing ARC forces.
-



HOMELAND ORGANIZATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

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- Military operations inside the United States and its Territories fall into two mission areas: homeland defense, for which DOD serves as the lead federal agency and military forces are used to conduct military operations in defense of the homeland; and civil support for which DOD serves in a supporting role to other agencies at the federal, state, tribal, and local levels.
- For most homeland scenarios, Air Force forces should be presented as an air expeditionary task force (AETF) under the operational control of a commander, Air Force forces (COMAFFOR), just as in any other theater. Air National Guard forces, whether federalized and operating in Title 10 status or remaining under state control in Title 32 or state active duty status, should still be organized and presented within an AETF or equivalent structure.
 - ✦ State and federal military forces may adopt a parallel or dual status command structure. A parallel command structure exists when state and federal authorities have separate chains of command, and retain control of their deployed forces.
 - ✦ Federal statute now provides the capability for a dual status command structure, in which a commander is subject to both federal and state chains of command. This allows National Guard officers, familiar with the state and local area of operations, to operate within both state and federal chains of command to provide unity of effort. Command authorities for federal and state chains of command remain separate.
- *For more detailed discussion, see Annex 3-27, Homeland Operations.*



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THE SENIOR/HOST AIR FORCE INSTALLATION COMMANDER

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- Recent operations, notably Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM, highlighted the nuances in on-base command arrangements and support requirements that result from mixed forces deploying forward, often to bare bases.
 - An installation commander, regardless of Service, always exercises some authority over and responsibility for forces on his/her base for protection of assigned forces and assets, lodging, dining, and administrative reporting, regardless of the command relations of those forces. These are inherent in his/her responsibilities as an installation commander.
 - *For more detailed discussion, see [Annex 3-30](#); refer to AFI 38-101, [Air Force Organization](#), for more specific policy guidance.*
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VOLUME 3 COMMAND

CHAPTER FOUR: THE AIR FORCE COMPONENT WITHIN THE JOINT FORCE

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(Note: This information is condensed from material from Volume 1, *Basic Doctrine*. Refer to that document for more detailed overall discussion and context. Other links may point to more specific discussion or to other supplementary sources. Also, any bolded emphasis is in the original text.)

- 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]).
- *For more on joint force organizational basics see [Annex 3-30](#).*



THE JOINT FORCE AIR COMPONENT COMMANDER

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- Historically, when Air Force forces have been attached to a [joint task force](#) (JTF), the [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR) has normally been dual-hatted as the [joint force air component commander](#) (JFACC), not merely due to preponderance of forces but also due to the ability to [command and control airpower](#) through an air operations center (AOC), which forms the core of the JFACC's JAOC.
 - ✦ This is why the COMAFFOR trains to act as the JFACC.
 - ✦ The instances when sizeable Air Force forces have been present in a JTF, and the COMAFFOR has not been the JFACC, are very rare.
- If aviation assets from more than one Service are present within a joint force, the [joint force commander](#) (JFC) normally designates a JFACC to exploit the full capabilities of joint operations.
 - ✦ The JFACC should be the Service component commander with the preponderance of forces to be tasked and the ability to plan, task, and control joint air operations (Joint Publication P 3-30, [Command and Control for Joint Air Operations](#)).
 - ✦ If working with allies in a coalition or alliance operation, the JFACC may be designated as the combined force air component commander (CFACC).
- Because of the wide scope of joint air operations, the JFACC typically maintains a similar theaterwide or [joint operations area](#) (JOA)-wide perspective as the JFC. The JFACC:
 - ✦ Recommends the proper employment of air component forces from multiple components.
 - ✦ Plans, coordinates, allocates, tasks, executes, and assesses joint air operations to accomplish assigned operational missions.
 - ✦ As with any component commander, should not also be dual-hatted as the JFC, as the scope of command is usually too broad for any one commander and staff.

- **Functional component commanders normally exercise tactical control (TACON) of forces made available to them by the JFC.** Thus, a COMAFFOR normally exercises operational control (OPCON) of assigned and attached Air Force forces and, acting as a JFACC, normally exercises TACON of forces made available for tasking (i.e., those forces not retained for their own Service's organic operations).
 - ✦ The other Services have developed their air arms with differing doctrinal and operating constructs in mind, and may retain control of some or all of their assets to perform their organic scheme of maneuver.
 - ✦ These tactical mission priorities (primarily support of surface forces) may constrain their availability to conduct the broader scope of joint air component operations at the strategic and operational levels of war.
 - ✦ Similar concerns also apply to the aviation arms of our allies.
 - ✦ The JFACC should consider these differing philosophies when developing the air component portion of a joint campaign. *For further detail on Army, Navy, Marine, and SOF aviation assets made available to a JFACC, see [Annex 3-30](#).*

JFACC Responsibilities

- The JFACC should be prepared to assume the following responsibilities, as assigned by the JFC:
 - ✦ Organize a JFACC staff manned with personnel from each component to reflect the composition of capabilities and forces controlled by the JFACC.
 - ✦ Develop a joint air operations plan (JAOP) to support the JFC's objectives.
 - ✦ Plan, coordinate, allocate, and task the joint capabilities and forces made available to the JFACC.
 - ✦ Develop the air operations directive (AOD).
 - ✦ Recommend apportionment of the joint air effort to the JFC.
 - ✦ Control execution of current joint air component operations to include:
 - [Counterair](#), to include integrated air and missile defense.
 - [Strategic attack](#).
 - [Counterland](#).
 - [Countersea](#).

- [Space control](#).
- [Air mobility](#).
- [Information operations](#).
- [Personnel recovery](#) operations, including [combat search and rescue](#), for assigned and attached forces.
- ★ Coordinate [special operations](#) with the [joint force special operations component commander](#) (JFSOCC) or the [joint special operations task force](#) (JSOTF) commander.
- ★ Perform [assessment](#) of joint air component operations at the operational (component) and tactical levels.
- ★ Serve as [airspace control authority](#), [area air defense commander](#), and [space coordinating authority](#) and develop plans and products associated with these responsibilities.
- ★ Serve as the joint electronic warfare coordinator, if so appointed.
- ★ Serve as the [supported commander](#) for counterair operations, strategic attack, the JFC's overall air interdiction effort, and theater airborne [intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance](#) (ISR). As the supported commander, the JFACC has the authority to designate the target priority, [effects](#), and timing of these operations and attack targets across the entire JOA in accordance with JFC guidance, to include coordinated targets within land and maritime [areas of operations](#) (AOs).
- ★ Serve as the [supporting commander](#) for operations such as [close air support](#), [air interdiction](#) within the land and naval component AOs, and maritime support.
- If the JFACC is ever appointed from another Service, the COMAFFOR passes control of air component forces to be made available to the JFACC as directed by the JFC.
 - ★ In such cases, the COMAFFOR maintains an effective C2 structure to perform Service-specific functions.
 - ★ In addition, the COMAFFOR should coordinate with the JFACC through a [liaison](#) element.

- Refer to Joint Publication 3-30, [Command and Control for Joint Air Operations](#), for more complete discussion of the JFACC's role and the planning processes that support joint air component employment.
-



AIR FORCE COMPONENT PRESENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

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- There are many possible options for presenting forces in support of a [joint force commander](#) (JFC). This section discusses three general models for presenting an Air Force component in support of a JFC.
 - ✦ **Theater-level component.** This model establishes an [air expeditionary task force](#) (AETF) and [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR) at the [combatant commander](#) (CCDR) level, with the COMAFFOR poised to act as a theater [joint force air component commander](#) (JFACC) if so designated—i.e., the “theater COMAFFOR,” poised to act as theater JFACC.
 - ✦ **Sub-theater-level component.** This model establishes a subordinate AETF and COMAFFOR at the [subordinate unified command](#) or [joint task force](#) (JTF), responsible for an [operational area](#) below the CCDR level—referable when the span or scope of operations is less than theater-wide, or when operations are sufficiently fluid to require planning and execution at more tactical levels.
 - ✦ **Sub-theater-level AETF in support of a JTF.** When the CCDR establishes one or more sub-theater JTFs, but elects to retain all (or most) Air Force forces at the theater level, the size and complexity of the mission may lead the theater COMAFFOR/JFACC to determine the best way to support the JTF(s) is by establishing subordinate AETF(s) and designating them in [direct support](#) of the sub-theater JTF commander(s).
- The placement of an Air Force component within the CCDR’s command structure, as well as the formal [command relationships](#) necessary to enable it to interface with other joint forces, requires careful deliberation based on the situation and capabilities available. At times, Air Force forces and capabilities may be best positioned at the theater (i.e., CCDR) level and at other times at the JTF level. **Careful consultation between the respective JFCs and the Air Force component commanders is required.**
- To achieve [unity of effort](#) across an [area of responsibility](#) (AOR), the CCDR should provide the requisite guidance for the interaction between theater-level and subordinate components. This should include clarity of supported and supporting command relationships between the JTFs and theater COMAFFOR/JFACC, together with clear priorities of effort and support, and [apportionment](#). The theater

COMAFFOR/JFACC should then allocate effort across the AOR using CCDR guidance and priorities.

- The CCDR sets the conditions for success by clearly stating and emphasizing the supported command status of subordinate JTFs and the supporting command role of a theater-level COMAFFOR/JFACC and by providing sufficient guidance for the theater COMAFFOR/JFACC's subsequent [allocation](#) decision. **The CCDR is the ultimate arbiter for prioritization and apportionment decisions among subordinate JTF commanders.**
 - *For the complete discussion of this topic, [click here](#).*
-



VOLUME 3 COMMAND

JOINT AIR COMPONENT COORDINATION ELEMENT

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- The [joint force air component commander](#) (JFACC) may establish one or more JACCEs with other [component](#) commanders' headquarters to better integrate the air component's operations with their operations, and with the supported [joint task force](#) (JTF) headquarters (if the theater JFACC is designated in support to a JTF) to better integrate air component operations within the overall joint force.
- The JACCE facilitates integration by exchanging current [intelligence](#), operational data, and support requirements, and by coordinating the integration of JFACC requirements for [airspace coordinating measures](#), [fire support coordinating measures](#), [close air support](#), [air mobility](#), and space requirements. As such, the JACCE is a [liaison](#) element, not a [command and control](#) (C2) node; thus, the JACCE normally has no authority to direct or employ forces. The JACCE should not replace, replicate, or circumvent normal request mechanisms already in place in the component/JTF staffs, nor supplant normal planning performed by the [air operations center and AFFOR staff](#).
- Normally, the JACCE should:
 - ✦ Ensure the JFACC is aware of each commander's priorities and plans.
 - ✦ Ensure the JFACC staff coordinates within their surface component/JTF headquarters counterparts to work issues.
 - ✦ Ensure appropriate commanders are aware of the JFACC's capabilities and limitations ([constraints](#), [restraints](#), and restrictions).
 - ✦ Ensure appropriate commanders are aware of the JFACC's plan to support the surface commander's scheme of maneuver and the JFC's intent and objectives.
 - ✦ Facilitate JFACC staff processes with the surface/JTF commanders. Provide oversight of other JFACC liaisons to component/JTF headquarters staffs, if directed.
- *For the more complete discussion in Annex 3-30 (Command and Control) of this topic, [click here](#).*



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VOLUME 3 COMMAND

MISCELLANEOUS JOINT NOTES

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- **Joint staff composition.** The composition of a truly joint staff should reflect the composition of the subordinate joint forces to ensure that those responsible for employing joint forces have a thorough knowledge of the capabilities and limitations of assigned or attached forces. **The presence of liaisons on a single-Service staff does not transform that Service staff into a joint staff.**
 - **Relationship between Commanders and Staffs. “Commanders command, staffs support.”** Within a joint force, only those with the title of “commander”—i.e., the [joint force commander](#) (JFC), the Service component commanders, and the functional component commanders—may exercise any degree of operational control over forces. **Only commanders have the legal and moral authority to place personnel in harm’s way. Under no circumstance should staff agencies, including those of the JFC’s staff, attempt to command forces.** Staff agencies should neither attempt to nor be permitted to directly command or control elements of the subordinate forces. While this guidance is aimed at joint staffs, it also applies to Service staffs.
 - *For expanded discussion of this topic, [click here](#).*
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MULTI-HATTING COMMANDERS/SPAN OF COMMAND

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- Caution should be applied when multi-hatting commanders. Too many “hats” may distract a commander from focusing on the right level of war at the right time, or may simply overwhelm the commander with detail. Of equal importance is the fact that a commander’s staff can usually operate effectively only at one [level of war](#) at a time. **If a commander wears several hats, it is preferable that the associated responsibilities lie at the same level of war.**
- ✦ While it is normally inappropriate for either a Service or a functional component commander to also serve as the [joint force commander](#) (JFC), it is entirely appropriate for a [joint force air component commander](#) (JFACC) to also serve as the [airspace control authority](#), [area air defense commander](#), and [space coordinating authority](#), since all four functions lie at the operational level and all four functions are supported through the same command node (the JAOC). To alleviate the overload, a multi-hatted commander may delegate some functions (but not the ultimate responsibility) to appropriate deputies.
- ✦ More challenging are those instances when a commander’s hats vertically span several levels of war, as in the case when the JFC (normally acting at the theater-strategic level) is also acting as a functional component commander (operational level), and also as the commander of one of the operating (tactical) units. In such cases, the commander may be inadvertently drawn to the tactical level of detail at the expense of the operational-level fight.

AT THE HEART OF WARFARE LIES DOCTRINE...
