Joint Operations

Insights & Best Practices

Third Edition

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and the Joint Training Division

Preface

This third edition of the "Joint Operations Insights and Best Practices" paper is written for a broad audience – the commanders and staff of joint force headquarters.[1]

The Joint Warfighting Center's Joint Training Division is afforded the unique opportunity to visit and support commanders and staffs of joint headquarters worldwide as they prepare for, plan, and conduct operations. We gain "insights" into their challenges and derived solutions. We also analyze and compare techniques and procedures among the different headquarters, reflect on their various challenges, collaborate with other agencies and the Services, and subsequently draw out and refine what we term "best practices." We share these vetted insights and best practices in this paper.

This paper incorporates many of our observations over the past two years of ongoing operations, particularly in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Haiti, Iraq, and the Horn of Africa, and joint exercises in CONUS, the Pacific, Europe, and Korea. We further elaborate on many of these insights and best practices in functional area "focus" papers which will be published over the next six months.

We continue to stress the commander-centric nature of planning and operations while addressing the important role of the staff. We continue seeing the critical importance of trust and personal relationships in today's operations, and address empowerment and decentralization that have the proven potential to increase the agility of the force.

We have all seen that success in today's complex environments often requires a long term approach with the military operating as part of a comprehensive, whole of government(s) effort – the essence of unified action. We see the continuing need for an inclusive mindset to harmonize and synchronize our military actions with the many stakeholders, both interagency and multinational. We have also gained many insights on how commanders are adapting to the complex and rapidly changing information environment. One aspect of this environment involves the orchestration of information across the interrelated areas of information operations, public affairs, and strategic communications to inform and influence multiple audiences both within the Area of Responsibility (AOR), Joint Operations Area (JOA), and worldwide. Another aspect involves managing information within the headquarters and across echelons of command to support the commander's decision-making.

We continue the discussion on "design," and further delve into the integration of kinetic and non-kinetic capabilities that produce both lethal and non-lethal outcomes. We also address effective staff structures and decision-making processes and the Service Title 10 aspects in generating and supporting the force.

Please pass comments to the Joint Training Division POC for insights and best practices, Mike Findlay at (757) 203-5939 or email: michael.findlay.ctr@jfcom.mil.

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[1] U.S. Army General (Retired) Gary Luck led development of the first two editions of this publication and subsequently supported development of this third edition as a Highly Qualified Expert employed by USJFCOM.

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1. Introduction

Our military has significantly evolved over the past 10 years as we have adapted to an increasingly complex environment in places such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Horn of Africa, Haiti, Korea, as well as supporting civil authorities in the United States.

- Complex Environment: Globalization, the information revolution, non-traditional adversaries, and our changing military capabilities have significantly changed today's security environment and the way we operate. Our operating environment has changed from that of the traditional cold war "battlefield" to also include today's complex irregular warfare "battlespace" involving the violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy, power, and influence over the relevant populations.[2] While our most likely enemy is currently the insurgent and terrorist, we must also be ready for traditional war, and as we have seen with the Hezbollah in Lebanon, hybrid warfare.[3] We recognize that many of today's conflicts are rooted in the human dimension, and defy full understanding and scientifically derived solution sets.
- Unified Action: Commanders have experienced the absolute requirement (and challenges) for unified action - working inclusively with our United States Government (USG) and international stakeholders to understand and work together in this complex environment. We must be able to integrate our military actions as part of a comprehensive, whole of government approach to achieve strategic objectives – Unified Action, while accounting for the very real capacity limitations of our partners.
- Commander-centricity: Observations clearly reinforce the absolute importance of commanders' guidance and intent, applying their experience, instinct and intuition in exercising "command" - the "Art of War." Mission-type orders laying out the "what" versus the "how" are even more important in today's environment. Mission-type orders provide subordinates the requisite maximum latitude to adapt to continually changing situations. This broad latitude for subordinates is essential; we must guard against the tendency and lure of technology to entice us to wrongly attempt to scientifically model outcomes and centrally control operations. We see successful commanders building personal relationships, inspiring trust and confidence, leveraging the analytical ability of their staffs, prioritizing limited resources, and decentralizing to the lowest appropriate level capable of integrating assets to empower their subordinates. However, we continue to see a tendency among commanders to control subordinates to a point where they unintentionally compromise the unit's agility and speed.

a. **The complex environment and catalysts for change:** The next quarter century will challenge U.S. joint forces with threats and opportunities ranging from regular and irregular wars in remote lands, to relief and reconstruction in crisis zones, to cooperative engagement in the global commons.[4] Our enemies are not only foreign states, but also non-state entities, loosely organized networks with no discernible hierarchical structure. These thinking adversaries cannot be defined only in terms of their military capabilities. Rather, they must be defined, visualized, and "attacked" more comprehensively by all

[2] We use the terms traditional and irregular warfare throughout this paper, not in a definitive, descriptive sense, but more to merely bring out the full spectrum perspective of operations. We recognize that there is no simple black and white delineation of traditional, convention, irregular or many of the other attempts to describe this.
[3] Simultaneous use of multiple types of warfare; combination of traditional warfare with terrorism & insurgency.
[4] Extract from Joint Operating Environment (JOE) 2010, USJFCOM, page 4.

elements of national and international power, both lethal and non-lethal, with a campaign versus single battle mindset.

We continue to see four major catalysts for change: globalization; the information revolution; the changing adversaries; and a more technologically enabled, expeditionary military force. These change agents have contributed to the complexity of this environment and fundamentally changed the way the United States military operates today across the spectrum of conflict.

- Globalization, the world's open economic system of interdependent global markets, global communication systems, ubiquitous media presence, and competition for scarce resources have all broadened security responsibilities beyond solely a military concern.
- Today's information environment allows unprecedented sharing of information both for us and for our adversaries. It has changed the nature and urgency by which we engage the media, influence target audiences, and manage information within the headquarters. The ongoing impact of Wikileaks clearly demonstrates the viral nature of the internet and its effect on the information environment.
- Our adversaries continue attempting to counter our conventional military superiority by conducting varying forms of warfare in their struggle for legitimacy, power, and influence over the relevant populations.
- Lastly, we've learned the value of an expeditionary mindset and the need to synergize our actions, both within the joint force and also with our interagency and multinational partners, to best achieve our common objectives.

The combination of these factors has led us to adopt a more integrated approach to national security planning which seeks to integrate military planning and operations with those of other government and non-government agencies and organizations, together with our international partners to achieve our objectives.

b. **Unified Action:** To a greater degree than ever, diplomatic, informational, and economic factors, as well as the military, (our elements of national power) affect and contribute to national security in this complex environment. We continually hear our operational commanders saying that they cannot achieve strategic objectives solely through military action, but must depend on the full government team to achieve success.

Unified Action - A Comprehensive, Whole of Government(s) Approach. Military operations must be carried out as part of a larger comprehensive, whole of government(s) approach to problem solving. This includes not only our USG agency partners, but also other nations and the private and non-governmental sector. We continue advocating several truisms:

- The need for continual dialogue with national leadership in understanding, framing and reframing the environment and the problem, assisting in the clarification of national strategic objectives, policy decisions, messages and development of feasible courses of action consistent with direction and available resources.
- Recognition of the complex, interconnected nature of the environment and need to continually work to better understand it and how it is changing.
- The need for inclusion with our stakeholders in gaining a common understanding of the environment, problem, desired overarching end states, and necessary conditions

to promote harmonized action. Then the follow through – working together to "get it done" while recognizing and working through any potential shortfalls in capacity and policy as well as those of our partners.

- The ultimate accountability of the commander for success regardless of the quality of higher direction, resources provided, and the degree of support by others.

Inclusiveness. We've observed numerous best practices in the area of inclusiveness with our interagency and multinational partners:

- Inclusiveness in understanding the complex environment and the problem: The environment is more than a military battlefield; it's a human-based network that is beyond a military-only ability to fully understand, visualize, and influence. We need the perspectives and support of our stakeholders to perform well in this environment. The stakeholders can help in defining the problem and visualizing / describing the way ahead.
- Inclusiveness in developing plans and during execution: The best plans and operations are those fully integrated with the other elements of national and international power – from the very beginning of planning.
- Inclusiveness in assessment: Our stakeholders have unique perspectives and expertise. Together they help us build a more enriched overall assessment. Inclusion of civilian stakeholders from the beginning in assessment, estimates, and planning allow for a more complete understanding of the nature of the problem to be solved and actions required to solve it.

Synergy and Harmony. We fight as one team with our joint, interagency, and multinational partners. These are not just words or a slogan; we depend on each other to succeed in today's complex environment.[5] Such interdependence may be viewed in some regards as a risk, for we are depending on capabilities that we don't control. However, access to others' unique capabilities is often essential to mission accomplishment. The joint force commander (JFC) achieves synergy and harmony among the various joint force components through building of trust and confidence to mitigate this risk, and deliberately crafts the task organization and command relationships to promote synergy. The challenges of gaining synergy and harmony with other USG agencies and multinational partners are somewhat greater than with our joint partners because there may be no clear authority directing a clear relationship with them to mitigate risks of interdependence. We see commanders mitigating this risk through development of personal relationships and trust, use of liaison elements, and conscious decisions on the degree of reliance upon those stakeholders for critical tasks.

Observed best practices continue to reinforce the value of gaining synergy and harmony within this interdependent framework with other USG agencies, international partners, and within the joint force. We've observed several best practices for achieving synergy:

- Development of strong personal relationships and the requisite trust and confidence that your partners will be there when you need their help to accomplish your assigned tasks. Some commanders use terms like "HANDCON" and "WARCON."

[5] Definitions: Synergy: Two or more agents working together to produce a result not obtainable by any of the agents independently. Harmony: Agreement in feeling or opinion; accord: live in harmony. A pleasing combination of elements in a whole.

- The higher commander's setting of conditions by establishment of clear command relationships, particularly supported / supporting command relationships between components of the joint and coalition force, together with agreed upon measures to achieve unity of effort with our interagency partners.
- Recognition that you don't need to "own" your partners' assets to have assured access to their capabilities if you have developed the requisite personal and command relationships.

c. **Commander-centric operations:** The commander's role in "command" - applying the "Art of War" - in this complex environment is essential. Without exception, we find that commander-centric organizations outperform staff-centric organizations. Clear commanders' guidance and intent, enriched by their experience, instinct, and intuition are ingredients found in high-performing units.

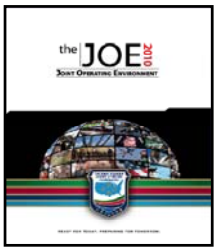
Insights for commanders:

- "The more things change, the more they stay the same" in leadership. Military operations remain subject to frequent and often unpredictable change, are unforgivingly brutal, and intensely demanding of leaders.[6]
- Personal relationships are essential, the foundation for successful operations in a joint, interagency, and multinational world. Build these relationships, and foster trust and confidence with your partners. We discuss trust building techniques later.
- Stay at the appropriate level (i.e., the theater-strategic level for Geographic Combatant Commands (GCC) and operational level for JTFs) to set conditions for subordinates' success.
- Commander's vision / guidance and intent provide clarity in today's dynamic, ambiguous environment. Mission-type orders remain the key to success.
- Rely on your instinct and intuition while recognizing and leveraging the value of the staff to assist in understanding the increasingly complex environment.
- Focus on unity of effort, not unity of command. Recognize the reality of different capabilities, perspectives and goals of your partners. Strive to arrive at a set of common desired outcomes to promote unity of effort.
- Build a command climate and organizational capability that fosters inclusion with your joint, interagency, and multinational partners in planning and operations.
- Decentralize where possible to retain agility and speed of action while recognizing the need for some centralization in planning / apportionment of high demand / low density resources. Some commanders have termed the phrase "Decentralize to the lowest appropriate level capable of integrating assets" as the only way to be agile enough to take advantage of opportunities in today's operational environment.
- Too much hierarchical structure in a large headquarters can be an impediment to information sharing and rapid decision-making.
- Working with your staffs, receiving benefit of their analysis, and giving guidance and staying with and guiding them, will result in better solutions in a fraction of the time.

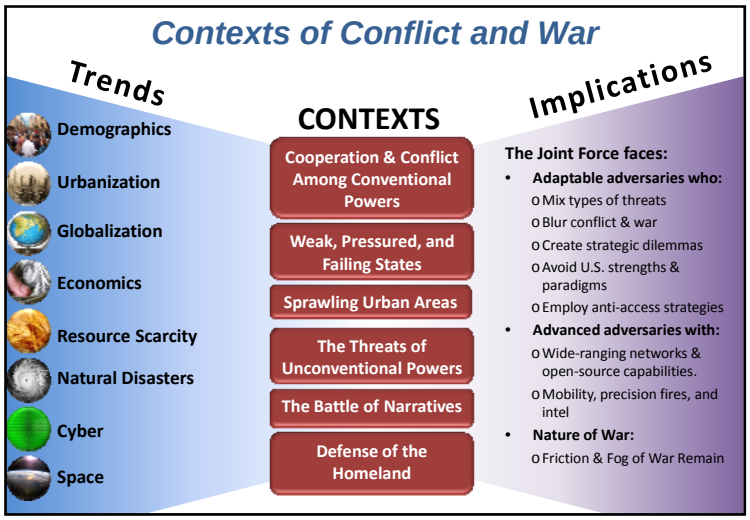
[6] Extract from an article by U.S. Army General Dempsey in the December 2010 Army magazine.

2. Today's Environment and the Unified Action approach

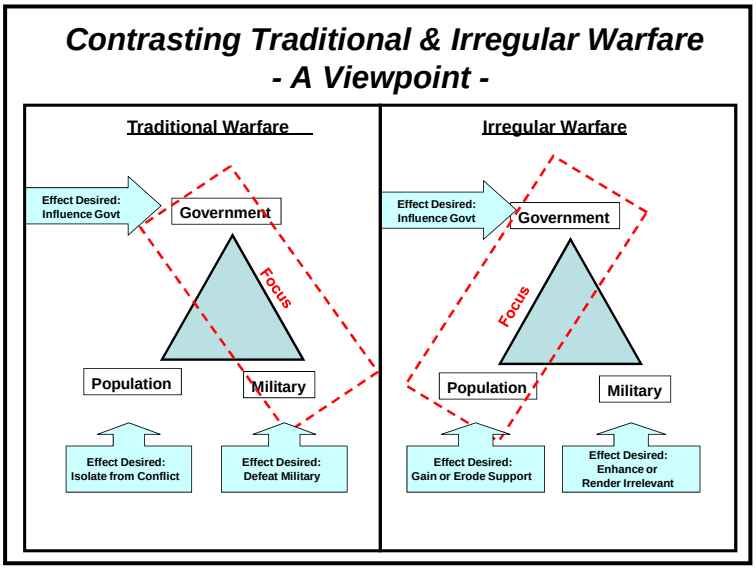
2.1 The Complex Environment.



Globalization, the information revolution, and the changing nature of adversaries have made today's environment much more complex than what we faced just a few years ago. The Joint Operating Environment (JOE) 2010 attempts to describe this environment.[7] It addresses the various contexts of conflict and war depicted on the adjacent figure in terms of trends, contexts, and implications on the joint force. Operational commanders are continually adapting to the changing realities of this dramatically different and more complex security environment. They operate in the irregular warfare "battlespace" while recognizing and preparing for the potential to fight on a more traditional battlefield.[8] They are also recognizing the challenges associated with hybrid warfare.



Globalization: Thomas Friedman, in The Lexus and the Olive Tree, defines globalization as "*The dispersion and democratization of technology, information, and finance.*" We see this today. Open economic systems allow for increased trade on a global scale. Global brands foster familiarity and interdependence of economies and institutions. Communications, transportation, and information technology, together with this interdependency of economies, connects activity around the world all the time. Events in one region have immediate impacts in other regions.



Globalization has also brought to the forefront other actors such as ethnic groups, transnational, non-state sponsored terrorism, and organized crime organizations. Globalization has precipitated more

[7] JOE 2010: http://www.jfcom.mil/newslink/storyarchive/2010/JOE_2010_o.pdf
[8] Regarding use of the traditional and irregular warfare as descriptive terminology, see footnote #2 on page 3

visible clashes of ideology through much fuller awareness of contrasts and gaps in cultural, religious, and value differences. There is more blurring of internal and external threats, and diminishment of traditional notions and authorities of national sovereignty.

This globalization also has security ramifications. The world is significantly more interdependent; it is more vulnerable to global and regional issues such as world oil flow, terrorism, and population displacements. This is reality; we're there, and we can't back away from it. Security in this global environment can no longer be guaranteed by traditional, military means alone. It has shifted from a military defense focus to that of using all elements of National Power – Diplomatic, Informational, Military and Economic (DIME).

Information Revolution: The information revolution has also clearly changed the way our world operates. We have unprecedented ability to transmit and receive data, and it is growing exponentially, both in speed and volume. The media has near instantaneous ability to broadcast events around the world, affecting both regional audiences as well as those in the United States. Most governments have access to information much more quickly and may unilaterally make national level policy decisions that has an effect on our operations. Our adversaries have also gained the ability to acquire and share information much more quickly and in some cases surreptitiously. The information revolution has also affected us in many ways: our command and control systems have changed; we have unparalleled situational awareness; and we are engaged in a full-fledged, real time fight in the strategic communication arena in the war of ideas and influence.

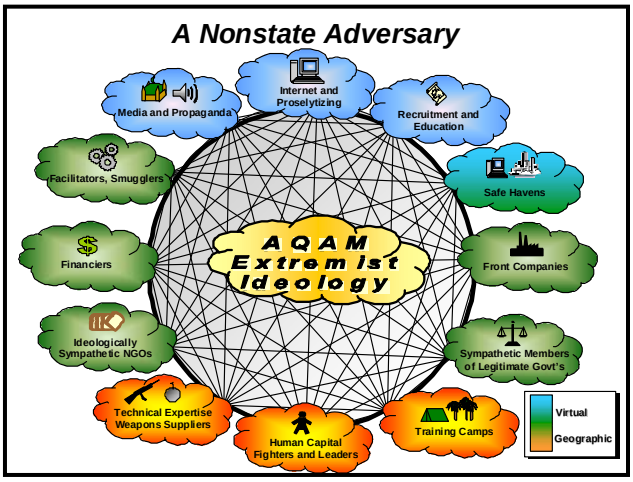
Challenges: Together with the benefits of information revolution has come many challenges. First, the amount of information often exceeds our ability to manage, fully understand, and respond to it. Vital information is often camouflaged / buried in the volume of transmitted data and the human brain has not grown exponentially to keep abreast of the flood of information. Second, not everyone is equal in their ability to send, receive, and understand data. The pipes are different; tactical units are often not able to receive and process what higher headquarters can pump out from their larger headquarters and more sophisticated systems. Third, we recognize our responsibility to better balance the "need to share" with "need to know" based on the realities of needing to protect sensitive material, sources and methods given the vulnerability of our networks.

The information revolution has also changed expectations. We're expected to keep up with or beat the virally rapid and often unverified media reports in an effort to be "first with the truth." Additionally, there is an almost insatiable demand for information from the media, national leadership, and higher headquarters that can easily overwhelm operational and tactical headquarters.

Adversary: Our adversary has also changed, and continues to change. They are not only foreign states, but increasingly are non-state entities, loosely organized networks with no discernible physical or hierarchical structure. They operate in an environment of failing and pressured states, ethnic stratification, religious violence, humanitarian disasters, stateless militants, proliferation of information technology, and increasingly

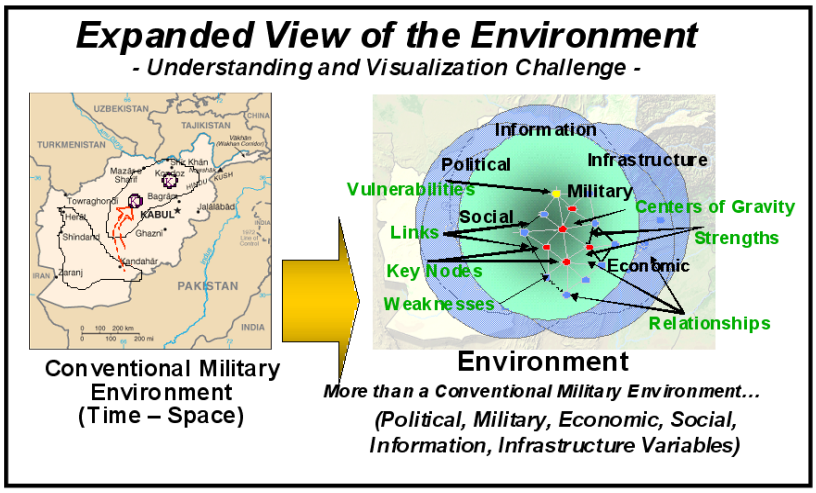
dangerous weapons. They are continually changing, on their own and in response to our actions.

Many of these adversaries realize the futility in symmetrically confronting us in a conventional military-on-military fight. Therefore, they operate across a range of means, including irregular warfare, favoring indirect and asymmetric approaches as they fight for influence over the relevant populations. As we've seen in numerous locations, these adversaries have innovatively combined forms of war and tactics to attack our vulnerabilities. They've discovered the more advantageous way of operating on the fringes – in domains not traditionally associated as being within the realm of conventional military operations.



Even our potential nation state adversaries will fight us by taking advantage of globalization, easily available weapon and information technologies, and the media. They will fight us using the internet, through terrorism, through diplomatic means by leveraging sympathetic governments and international organizations, through the use of the media, and by hurting us and our allies both economically and financially. Their strength is not through tanks, airplanes, and ships – it is financiers, webmasters, easy access to technology, hiding among the populace, and terrorists. These adversaries sustain themselves by non-traditional means – they work out of nondescript locations, internet cafes, hotels, and safehouses. Gone are the large, easily targeted supply depots, and the characteristic communication systems and headquarters.

Visualization challenge: We are challenged in both understanding and sharing our understanding of this ever-changing complex environment. The traditional, military-centric, analytical approach that worked so well in the Cold War fight doesn't allow us to accurately analyze, describe, and visualize today's networked, adaptable, asymmetric adversary nor the adversary's linkages with the environment in which he operates. This adversary has no single identifiable source of all power. Rather, because of globalization, the



information revolution, and, in some cases, the non-state characteristic of our adversary, this form of adversary can only be analyzed, described, and holistically attacked in a broader context through a prism of largely non-military variables.[9]

Understanding and Analyzing the Operational Environment: Every joint headquarters we've observed has taken a broader perspective in understanding and visualizing the complex environment to assist in campaign and operational level planning. They have all placed more emphasis on an expanded description of the environment beyond that solely of a conventional military battlefield view to a more multi-dimensional view. The need to view the world as complex and interconnected is becoming essential for many disciplines. Thomas Friedman described this well, "*For me, adding financial market dimensions to politics, cultural, and national security was like putting on a new pair of glasses and suddenly looking at the world in 4-D. I saw news stories that I would never have recognized as news before … causal chains of events that I never would have identified before. I saw invisible hands and handcuffs impeding leaders and nations from doing things I never imagined before*."[10]

Successful commanders understand this reality. They recognize the importance of understanding the various aspects of the environment – many use some form of Political, Military, Economic, Social, Informational, and Infrastructure (PMESII) variables to view and describe the broader aspects of the environment.[11] Additionally, they recognize the complexity, unpredictability and changing aspects of the interrelationships between these variables of friendly, adversary, and neutral or unaligned groups.

The use of this broader paradigm enables a shared visualization of the complex environment across both military and non-military audiences. We see development of a "common visualization framework" with our partners as the first key step in promoting cohesive action among disparate players.

In the past, some argued that our adversary could be precisely defined and modeled through "systems analysis," and we could predict their behavior. We, along with the operational warfighters, strongly disagree with this "scientifically-based predictability" point of view. Today's environment is far too complex and is continually changing in response to ongoing actions for any precise degree of reliable modeling and deterministic prediction of outcomes. That said, we have seen the value in using a systems perspective and some form of systems analysis to better analyze, visualize, and gain a baseline appreciation of the environment, and then organize this information in a form useful to the commander and stakeholders. We have also seen its value in helping to project - not predict - likely enemy courses of action, and identify centers of gravity and possible key nodes and links as decisive points for action. In all cases though, continued feedback and assessment remains critical to deepen our

[9] We use the term "variables" in lieu of the former use of the term "systems" to emphasize the changing nature of these variables, and to move away from any preconception that we can fully deconstruct and fully model the environment.

[10] Thomas Friedman, Lexus and the Olive Tree, p 22

[11] We use these variables and the acronym PMESII simply as one way to illustrate this broader view of the environment. These variables could be described differently and include other aspects.

understanding of the changing environment as we continue to adjust our actions to remain on course.

Friendly Forces: The **friendly environment** has also changed significantly. We've changed from the days when General Colin Powell made famous the so-called "Powell Doctrine", also known as the "Powell Doctrine of Overwhelming Force," as part of the run up to the 1990-1991 Gulf War. His doctrine was based on the large force structure we had in 1990. However, we subsequently reduced the size of the military, albeit to one more expeditionary and technologically advanced. But we could no longer solely rely on "massed forces" in accomplishing missions, especially against an evolving, adaptive enemy. We as a nation lost military force structure to pay for new technology in the years after Desert Storm. However, since 2001, we've increased our ground and certain other forces. As noted by the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), we have recognized the need to rebalance the force and integrate our actions with other United States Government agencies and allies and partners to meet today's challenges. Our field forces are discovering the best way to approach these new challenges and are developing new Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTP). We intend to capture many of these in this and subsequent papers.

2.2 Unified Action.

> **Unified Action: The synchronization, coordination, and/or integration of the activities of governmental and nongovernmental entities with military operations to achieve unity of effort.**
>
> **Unity of Effort: Coordination and cooperation toward common objectives, even if the participants are not necessarily part of the same command or organization - the product of successful unified action.**
>
> **Joint Doctrine JP 1-02**

Every headquarters we visit identifies the need for continuing efforts to maintain effective unity of effort with both our USG agencies and multinational partners as key to achieving success. All recognize the value of harmonizing and synchronizing military actions with the actions of other instruments of national and international power. This recognition is a basic and long standing understanding of how the United States operates; Joint Publication (JP) 0-2 states "*The United States relies for its security on the complementary application of the basic instruments of national power: diplomatic, informational, military, and economic (DIME).*" [12]

We've observed that commanders using an inclusive approach by working hand in hand with stakeholders (both interagency and multinational partners) are the most effective in achieving this unified action. These commanders understand the different perspectives and cultures among both our interagency and multinational partners, and focus on gaining unity of effort.

That said, the fact remains that for the most part, the ability of the interagency or even our multinational partners to produce the number of people required and develop an expeditionary culture lies in the future. In the absence, particularly of interagency depth and capability, the joint force assumes responsibility for tasks that are not habitually military. As we note further below, integrated military-interagency Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) are an example of "making the best" of the situation.

A comprehensive whole of government approach: Solutions to today's complex problems require changing our perspective from that of friendly versus enemy military warfare (military on military thinking) to the use of all elements of national power in achieving our objectives. Commanders are thinking this way, and developing and using end states, objectives, and conditions addressing the "PMESII variables" as means to provide common visualization and better achieve unity of effort with our partners. Combatant commanders, in conjunction with Department of State (DOS), USAID, and other USG agencies determine how to coordinate operations, actions, and activities at the theater strategic and operational level to achieve strategic objectives.

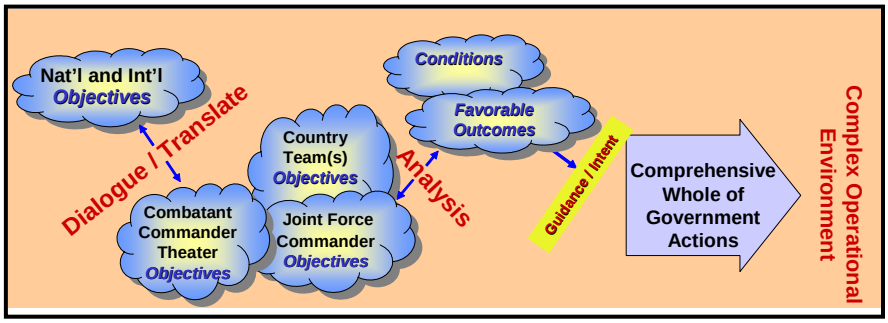
Four key insights (referring to the figure on next page):

1) Dialogue: We need continual dialogue with national and international leadership to ascertain the "real" (*and often changing*) problem, and clarify / develop national objectives, desired end states, risks, and feasible policy direction. We see continuing commander and staff dialogue with national and international leaders, and then translating what they see, hear, and feel into solid, clear Combatant Command level

[12] Many use the term DIME to express the diplomatic, informational, military, economic elements of power. The DIME is simply an iconic acronym that gets to the broader means to achieve objectives. There are numerous other acronyms / elements of national and international power.

objectives. This takes a lot of effort and never ends. National and international positions and objectives are continually changing. Our theater-strategic headquarters recognize this and maintain dialogue to ensure they remain nested within these national and international objectives. (The Ends)

2) Analysis: We recognize the complex, interconnected, and largely unpredictable nature of the environment and the need to work to better understand it and the problem. We need to be inclusive in gaining a common understanding of this environment. This combined analysis helps provide a "common" visualization and better achieves "unity of effort" with our partners – it bridges the gap between all elements of national and international power. (The Ways)



3) Actions: We strive to harmonize military actions with those of our stakeholders. The use of mission-type orders, coupled with guidance and intent, empower decentralized military operations that are synergized with those of our partners. We continually see the importance of establishing a "command climate" and an organizational capability that facilitates "inclusion" by all members of the joint, interagency, and multinational team. (The Means)

4) Accountability: We've seen over and over again that the combatant and JTF commander is ultimately held accountable for success in the end regardless of earlier higher direction, lack of resources, or absence of support by others.

Interagency Coordination:

We've observed numerous best practices, all centered on an atmosphere of inclusiveness, in how operational commanders and our interagency partners work together to achieve objectives, often in coordination with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. Our interaction with other USG agencies is different in domestic and foreign operations. We will address interagency coordination for domestic and foreign operations along with insights and best practices more fully in a separate focus paper.

There are challenges associated with unified action and interagency coordination. Our interagency partners do not have the budget, the number of personnel, nor the capacity of the military, and our cultures and perspectives are very different. Because of this the military is often tasked to fill roles it is not habitually accustomed to support. The development of PRTs in Afghanistan can be seen as one example of leveraging military capacity to support the traditionally civilian task of reconstruction and development.

Interagency coordination is not as easy as theory would suggest – the agencies have different authorities, different priorities, different organizations, and different capabilities. National level direction may not always be sufficiently clear to prevent differences in understanding of national goals and end states. However, experience continues to

reinforce the obvious – that we're all on the same team and everyone is trying to do the right thing to support national policy within a unity of effort framework.

We've observed the following interagency coordination insights and best practices gained from our joint commanders and their interagency, intergovernmental, and non-governmental partners.

- Today's complex environment demands Unified Action to achieve National Objectives.
- Personal Relationships with stakeholders are the key to generating Unified Action.
- Embracing a "C5" mindset (Command, Control, Cooperation, Collaboration, and Coordination) helps facilitate unity of effort.
- Understand partners' roles, authorities, perspectives, capabilities, and processes in both foreign and domestic operations, and how they differ from U.S. Armed Forces.
- Think inclusion rather than exclusion with stakeholders during planning, execution, and assessment. Recognize that this has significant classification and information sharing implications. Balance need to know with need to share. Where appropriate, write for release.
- Realize that the military is often in the supporting role to other agencies, particularly in Defense Support to Civil Authorities (DSCA) operations and Humanitarian Assistance / Disaster Relief (HA / DR) operations.

Multinational operations:

We are and will continue operating together with our multinational partners. They have become an inseparable part of our way of operating in both peace and war. We normally think of multinational operations in terms of the United States leading, and focus on working through the necessary command relationships, caveats, and information sharing with our multinational forces. However, as we've seen, we can also be a subordinate part of a coalition force.

Some insights on multinational operations.

- Key to multinational operations are personal relationships and trust. Coalitions are built on personal relationships, mutual trust and confidence between partners. Focus on building these at the earliest opportunity, ideally during the pre-deployment training phase. Personal relationships will overcome the bureaucratic impediments that can threaten synergy and harmony with your partners. Your coalition partners can communicate with and influence their national governments more quickly and effectively than you can through formal channels.
- Keep a "one-team one-fight" mentality. Don't allow anything to jeopardize the strength of the coalition. This requires a command climate and organizational design that facilitates inclusion and partnership. Socialize mission tasks before final determination and publishing in formal orders. And advise partners when work must be done in isolation for interests of national security and understand when they must do the same.
- Caveats will always exist among the forces including the United States. These caveats form the conditions for national commitment to any operation. Understanding these caveats and finding ways to usefully employ all multinational forces under an operational command is an essential part of multinational command.

It is clearly more effective to know the impacts of national caveats early in the planning process.

- Early collaborative planning between partners is essential to successful operations. Leverage the unique skill sets and capabilities of each coalition force. A simple planning reminder is C5: Command, Control, Cooperation, Collaboration, and Coordination.
- When preparing plans, briefs, standard operating procedures (SOPs), tactical directives, or other theater related correspondence, authors should consider how to best "write for release" while also recognizing the "need to protect" sensitive information. A simple guideline for sharing is to ask who needs to know, who cannot see what I can see, and what is the risk versus gain of sharing this information? By addressing these issues as part of the document drafting process you will assist Foreign Disclosure Officers (FDO) to move relevant material through the disclosure process more swiftly.
- Interoperability is far less technical than often portrayed. Coalition operations are human-based; don't allow technical limitations of information sharing networks, tools, and databases to fracture the coalition. Similarly, language differences can impose formidable challenges. Words have different meanings to different people. Select words carefully, avoid acronyms and confirm understanding early rather than risk confusion at a later time.
- The successful conduct of multinational operations requires common understanding and application, wherever possible, of doctrine applicable across all services and levels of military activities. Even for those activities that are conducted regularly, adherence to common doctrine can expedite operational planning and execution, help to ensure that no pertinent factors are overlooked, and enhance interoperability and common understanding among units.
- Training is an important aspect in ensuring success in multinational operations. Think your way through the planning and conduct of combined exercises, particularly for those that involve activities for which a partnered nation may not have broad or in-depth experience, and develop common training objectives and standards.
- Recognize the important role of national command element (NCE) and national support element (NSE). Forces participating in a multinational operation will always have at least two distinct chains of command: a national chain of command and a multinational chain of command.[13] The U.S. national chain of command also includes the "ADCON / Title 10" aspects of supporting the force with all of the attendant Theater Service Component responsibility linkages.

[13] JP 3-16 addresses this well. "Each nation furnishing forces normally establishes a national component, often called a national command element, to ensure effective administration of its forces. The national component provides a means to administer and support the national forces, coordinate communication to the parent nation, tender national military views and recommendations directly to the multinational commander, and facilitate the assignment and reassignment of national forces to subordinate operational multinational organizations. The logistic support element of this component is referred to as the national support element."

3. Command

3.1 Commander-centric Leadership.

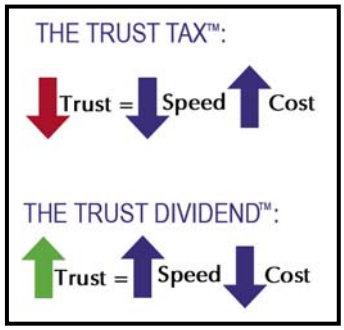
The commander's role employing the "Art of Command" in this complex, unified action environment remains critical, regardless of the technological and informational improvements in what many refer to as the "Science of Control."

Command and control includes both the art of command and the science of control. The art of command is the creative and skillful use of authority, instinct, intuition, and experience in decision-making and leadership while the science of control are those systems and procedures that improve a commander's understanding and support the execution of missions. We find that joint commanders must leverage both the art of command (focused on human interaction) and the science of control (focused on processes and technology) to best operate in today's complex environment.

We recognize that our pure technological and network advantages over the enemy can be eroded overnight especially at lower echelons. In practice, this translates to the need to empower subordinates to act without detailed instructions through commander's intent. Clear commander's guidance and intent, enriched by the commander's experience and intuition and quality staff analysis are attributes found in high-performing units. These units develop and implement ways to continually update their understanding of the operational environment, assess their progress in achieving assigned objectives, and guide and set conditions for the success of their subordinates.

This section addresses two aspects of this: first, the importance and the development and maintenance of trust and personal relationships; second, the associated thinking through the desired degree of centralization / decentralization of operations (and authorities) based on the situation to best accomplish the mission.

Trust and Personal Relationships:



We've spoken a lot about the importance of personal relationship and building trust and confidence. Building trust with subordinates and partners may be the most important action that a commander will perform. Building this trust is a conscious act; it's not something that just happens. You've got to plan for it, actively build it through your words and actions, and continue reinforcing it throughout the time in command.

There's a great deal of literature on building trust. Stephen Covey in The Speed of Trust talks to trust as the "hidden variable" in the formula for organizational success.[14] He brings out how trust always affects two outcomes: speed and cost (see figure). When trust goes down, speed goes down and cost goes up. Covey notes 13 behaviors that establish trust (talk straight, demonstrate respect, create transparency, right wrongs, show loyalty, get better, confront reality, clarify expectations, practice accountability, listen first, keep commitments, and extend trust). These principles have direct applicability in military command.

[14] Dr Stephen Covey, The Speed of Trust.

History also provides us excellent examples of building trust and confidence as well as establishing the dialogue between the military and civilian leaders as discussed earlier in the comprehensive approach. For example, Joseph Glatthaar in Partners in Command addresses several key leadership relationships in the Civil War.[15] He states "*Political and military leaders had to collaborate, to establish effective partnerships that could translate strategic vision into battlefield execution*." The book is about those relationships and partnerships. It focuses on how the two commanders in chief interacted with their top field generals and how those generals worked with critical subordinates. Glatthaar brings out both good and bad relationships and how they directly affected mission success. He addresses the good relationships between Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson; Ulysses Grant and William Sherman; Grant and Abraham Lincoln. He also addresses bad relationships: between Lincoln and George McClellan, and Jefferson Davis and Joseph Johnston.

Trust and confidence is an essential prerequisite to achieving synergy and harmony, both within the force, and also with our interagency and multinational partners. We suggest you take time to think through how you gain and maintain trust and confidence with your higher commanders, your subordinates, and your partners.

Centralization / Decentralization of Operations – a need for analysis:

Trust and empowerment remain key to synergy and harmony, and we recognize that combat forces us to decentralize and empower our subordinates (if we have not already done so). Those who don't decentralize may lose agility, impair initiative, and risk mission failure. We find most commanders effectively centralizing and decentralizing selected assets and activities based on the situation, mission, capabilities of the subordinate units, and degree of trust and confidence. As we discuss later, in the countersurgency (COIN) fight, we have seen the need to decentralize to the lowest appropriate level capable of integrating assets. However, we find that some assets we may decentralize and provide to a tactical commander in a COIN population-centric environment might be retained at a higher level in a different, more traditional fight. We find that a careful assessment of the military situation is critical to determine the appropriate degree of centralization or decentralization of assets. Different situations may drive a different balance, and it may be different for different domains (air, land, sea, cyber…).

> Bottom line: One size doesn't fit all; we must think this through as we're designing our operations, and provide the right guidance and empowerment to subordinates to ensure synergy and harmony of operations within the overall intent for the operation.

The distinction in centralization between planning and execution is also addressed in U.S. military doctrine. JP 1 states:

> "*Unity of effort over complex operations is made possible through decentralized execution of centralized, overarching plans. Advances in information systems and communications may enhance the situational awareness (SA) and understanding of tactical CDRs [commanders], subordinate JFCs [joint force commanders], CCDRs [combatant commanders], and even the national leadership. These technological*

[15] Joseph Glatthaar, Partners in Command, 1998.

advances increase the potential for superiors, once focused solely on strategic and operational decision-making, to assert themselves at the tactical level. While this will be their prerogative, decentralized execution remains a basic C2 [command and control] tenet of joint operations."

Joint doctrine has even incorporated the term Mission Command, defined as the "conduct of military operations through decentralized execution based upon mission-type orders"[16] (i.e., orders to a unit to perform a mission without specifying how it is to be accomplished).

A view of Service perspectives:

Each Service views the balance toward centralization or decentralization slightly differently due to their different operating environments and application of their combat power. However, all understand the benefits and risks associated with both centralized and decentralized operations in planning and execution. They all recognize the need for agility and speed of operations. Their perspectives are relevant to joint force commanders as they develop their intent, organize the force, and set conditions for the success of their subordinates.

The U.S. Air Force tenet of centralized control, decentralized execution helps define its view on command. From an air perspective, a campaign employing strategic attack as a line of operation will require a high degree of centralization under an air commander. The air commander must have the authority to direct operations, including attack sequencing, and shift them as operations unfold. In contrast, tactical air operations in direct support of ground commanders, such as close air support and armed overwatch, are most effective when conducted with a high degree of decentralization.

Likewise, when there are limited resources, there must be some degree of centralized command and control. This is especially true at the strategic and operational levels of warfare. At the same time, decentralized execution allows for major gains in flexibility and tempo at the tactical level. This is true for all forms of military power, but again, looking from an air perspective, airpower's characteristics, including speed and geographical range, mean that its command and control tends to be more centralized than for other forms. This is especially true when airpower is applied directly to achieve operational and strategic effects.

The land-oriented Services – the U.S. Army and Marine Corps focus on "mission command," centered on empowerment and decentralization to provide subordinates the greatest possible freedom of action based on their recognition that ground combat is people centric, chaotic and unpredictable. The Army and Marine Corps both note that "the uncertainty and complexity of future operations will demand forces that can operate in a decentralized manner…"[17]

The maritime / naval commander employs uniquely adapted multi-mission platforms within the highly fluid, multidimensional maritime domain (consisting of undersea, surface, air, land, space and information environment.) Operations within the maritime domain necessitate seamless / coordinated cross boundary execution. The U.S. Navy

[16] JP 1-02 definition.
[17] This is addressed further in U.S. Army TRADOC PAM 525-3-3 on Mission Command, dated 13 October 2010.

uses the concepts of mission-type orders and intent, task organization and the composite warfare construct to enable coordinated decentralized execution through multiple levels of command from the numbered fleet to the platform level.

The Navy's traditional and doctrinal warfighting configuration is the fleet, commanded by a numbered fleet commander or Joint Force Maritime Component Commander (JFMCC). Typically, the fleet commander task-organizes their assigned and attached forces to create force packages able to execute assigned maritime missions.[18]

The composite warfare construct allows the Officer in Tactical Command (OTC) to assign some or all of the command functions associated with warfare commander and coordinator duties and supports the execution of a decentralized command philosophy. The composite warfare construct establishes a hierarchal organization of warfare commanders and functional commanders with established authorities within their warfare area and coordinators to act as asset and resource managers. This construct establishes complex yet flexible support relationships between these warfare area commanders allowing for dynamic, simultaneous use of multi-mission platforms to accomplish various tasks.

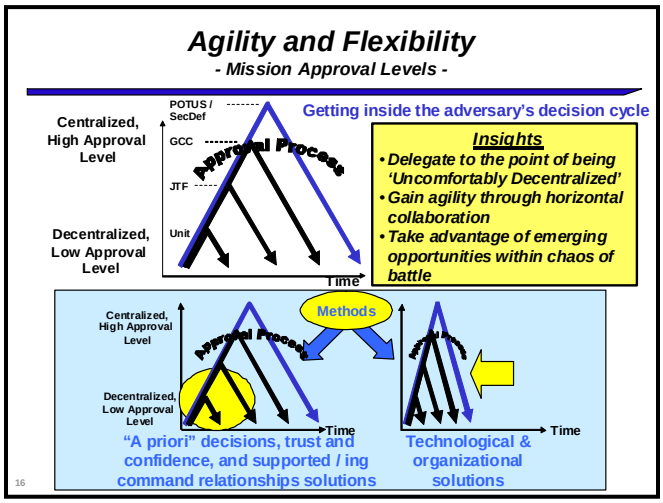
Effective execution of this dynamic and flexible task organization and decentralized control construct requires clear higher intent and direction, close coordination between the warfare commanders and high levels of tactical training. Navy tactical-level commanders are expected to exercise initiative without the need for intervention by the JFMCC / numbered fleet commander. As a result, maritime forces operate across the entire maritime domain, able to respond instantaneously to immediate threats and to conduct coordinated dynamic offensive operations without having to establish geographic boundaries.

The U.S. Coast Guard has a similar view. Their operations, for instance, responding to oil spills, searching for and rescuing mariners in distress, or interdicting smugglers are of an emergent, unpredictable nature. History has shown the Coast Guard that situations like these are best handled locally. Thus, they push both authority and responsibility to the lowest possible level. Their belief is that the person on scene can be depended upon to assess the situation, seize the initiative, and take the actions necessary for success. This style of operational command is based upon the trust that senior commanders place in their subordinates' judgment. Decisive action requires unity of effort - getting all parts of a force to work together. Rapid action, on the other hand, requires a large degree of decentralization, giving those closest to the problem the freedom to solve it.

Decentralized Authorities: Our commanders have made great strides in defining decentralized authorities to allow their subordinates to operate within the adversaries' decision cycle while accommodating necessary oversight and acceptable risk decisions by the higher headquarters. They recognize the reality that the higher the decision for

[18] Within each tactical organization there is an officer in tactical command (OTC). Under the cognizance of the fleet commander, OTCs promulgate an operations general (OPGENs) directive providing detailed organizational guidance to subordinate tactical forces. Additionally, operations tasks (OPTASKs) are promulgated by the OTC to provide warfare area detail and specific preplanned responses. OPGENs and OPTASKs describe generically how the force will operate and fight as a unit.

mission approval needs to go in the chain of command, the longer it will normally take. Thus the ability to rapidly take advantage of chaos in the environment may be lost, and initiative can be lost. Additionally, they realize that complicated mission approval processes take both time and effort – taking staffs and commanders away from the operations at hand to work through mission approvals. However, they have also found that some decisions cannot not be delegated (or decentralized) due to political risk, supporting resource limitations, limited capability of the subordinate unit to integrate required assets, or other reasons.



Mission Approval: The figure titled "Agility and Flexibility" portrays the challenges and means to operate inside the adversary's decision cycle. The vertical axis addresses the mission approval level – with all the various levels of command culminating with the President at the top. The horizontal axis is time – the time to request and gain mission approval. So, what we see is the higher one goes along the vertical axis (i.e., centralized / higher approval level), the longer it takes to gain mission approval and the more likely you will miss targets of opportunity.
At the bottom of the figure we depict two methods that we've seen out in operational headquarters to shorten the time required to gain mission approval.

The left side focuses on decentralizing mission approval levels – pushing them down into the lower left quadrant… Here we see the value of mission-type orders, trust and confidence, common situational awareness, common understanding of acceptable risk, and "a priori" decisions.

The right side addresses streamlining the processes, especially where mission approval can't be delegated. Here we see the value of technological and organizational solutions.

Insights:

- Delegate authorities to the lowest appropriate level capable of integrating assets to get inside the adversary's decision cycle. We must accept becoming uncomfortably decentralized to achieve mission success. However, recognize your responsibilities in providing clear guidance and intent, including your perspective on acceptable risk, as you empower your subordinates.
- Gain agility and flexibility through horizontal collaboration in which supporting commanders work directly with supported commanders, providing capabilities and delegating authorities to take advantage of emerging opportunities within the chaos of battle.

Command-centric Insights: Leadership remains a key force multiplier. We offer several insights and best practices gleaned from our observations (several are also noted in the executive summary):

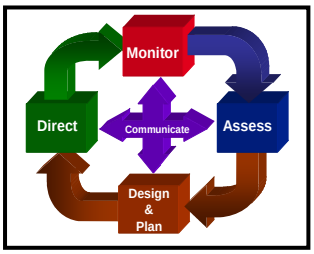
- Insights on Leadership: "the more things change the more they stay the same…"

- Commanders' courage and character remain paramount.
- Good leadership principles apply at all levels, like giving credit for success to subordinates, and personally accepting responsibility when things go poorly.
- Rely on your instincts and intuition. Commanders' vision / guidance and intent enriched by their experience, education, and training provide clarity in today's dynamic, ambiguous environment.
- Mission-type orders remain key to success. Work with and through your subordinate commanders. Continue battlefield circulation to build trust and enrich your situational understanding. Anticipate and seize opportunity.
- Commanders must maintain a broad perspective on the environment, adversary and "friendly forces – both military and non-military." It's more than a military versus military conflict. They understand the broader context in which their operations take place and the implications of those actions on that environment.
- Ensure planning and operations are Commander-centric versus Staff-centric. Provide guidance to your staff, and help them. You'll get better solutions in a "tenth of the time." Guard against the tendency to "over-control" operations.
- Be a learning organization before and during the fight, NOT after it.

- Commander Insights in the Interagency and Multinational World:
  - Personal relationships are essential in the joint, interagency, and multinational world. Build these relationships, and foster trust and confidence with your partners to keep this a one team, one fight.
  - Be inclusive versus exclusive with your joint, interagency, and multinational partners in how you assess, plan, and make decisions. Establish a command climate and organizational capability to facilitate inclusion.
  - Focus on unity of effort, not unity of command. Recognize the reality of different perspectives and goals of your partners. Strive to arrive at a set of common desired end states and conditions to promote unity of effort.

- Commander Insights in the "Joint" World:
  - Stay at the operational level while maintaining an understanding of the strategic level. Set conditions for operational and tactical success and understand the implications of your actions on both the tactical as well as the strategic level.
  - Prioritize in order that your subordinates can allocate assets appropriately to support each other. (more in the next section)
  - Delegate authority to subordinates to fight the tactical fight.
  - Instill a one team, one fight mentality. Build and reinforce trust and confidence.
  - Recognize the value of the "horizontal" piece of warfighting (further discussed in next section). Establish supported / supporting command relationships between subordinates. Demand integration and promote synergy.
  - Condition / teach subordinates to plan and execute within a framework of "access" to others' forces versus requiring "ownership" of those forces.
  - Establish mission approval processes that allow retention of agility and speed of action at all levels. This will likely entail decentralization; decentralize to the lowest appropriate level capable of integrating assets while providing clear intent to increase agility and take advantage of opportunities in today's battlespace.

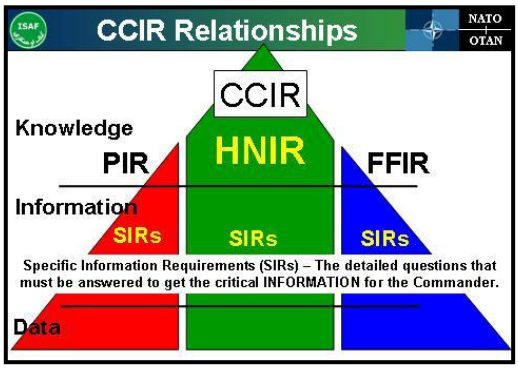
3.2 Commander's Critical Information Requirements (CCIRs).



CCIRs support mission command and commander-centric leadership. CCIRs as a related derivative of guidance and intent assist joint commanders in focusing information management activities to better support their decision-making process.[19]

We observe that CCIRs at most operational level headquarters are developed to support both the understanding of the increasingly complex environment (e.g., supporting assessments that drive framing and reframing considerations and planning guidance) and specific branch and sequel decision requirements. This is a broader usage than the more traditional, and widely used, tactical focus of CCIRs toward well-defined and predicted decision points. Commanders' direct involvement in guiding CCIRs development provides the focus for the entire range of collection, analysis, and management of information flow supporting decision-making across the current operations, future operations, and future plans event horizons.

Understanding the complex environment: Operational commanders spend much of their time attempting to understand the environment and how well they're doing in accomplishing their mission. As we will address later, this assessment piece is key to effective planning. We're finding the commanders identifying their critical measures of effectiveness as CCIRs to ensure appropriate prioritization of resources. This prioritization of both collection and analysis resources enhances the quality of assessments and ultimately results in the commander gaining better situational understanding, leading to better guidance and intent, and resulting in better likelihood of mission success.

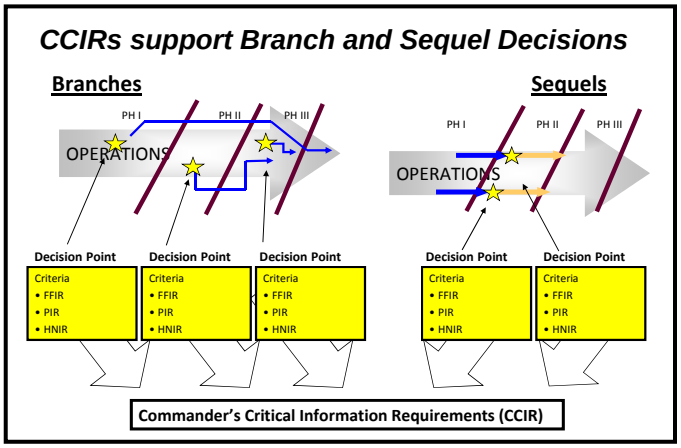


CCIRs doctrinally contain two primary components; priority intelligence requirements (PIR) is threat-focused, friendly force information requirements (FFIR) is friendly force based. We've seen many commands operating in the population-centric environment of COIN add a third component, Host Nation Information Requirements (HNIR), to better focus on information about the influencers of the population. HNIR is information the commander needs about friendly nation institutions or organizations in order to partner effectively, develop plans, make decisions, and to integrate with civilian activities. Depending on the circumstances, information may include the status of provincial, district or local governance, economic development, infrastructure, or security forces.[20]

Branch and Sequel Execution: Most operational level commands develop many of their CCIRs during design and the planning process. We normally see decision points transcending all three event horizons. Some decision points in the current operations event horizon may have very specific and time sensitive information requirements, while

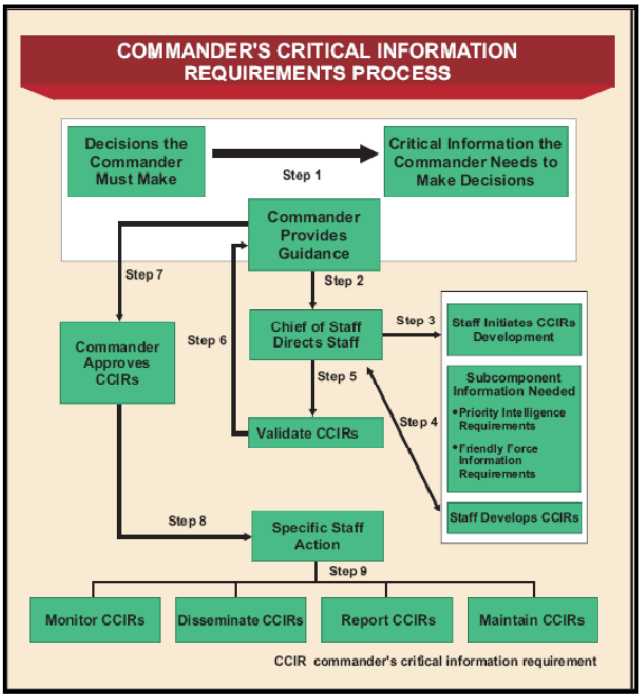
[19] CCIR: Information requirement identified by the commander as being critical to facilitating timely decision-making. JP 1-02.
[20] The ISAF Joint Command was a major proponent in defining the term HNIR. Now used by other commands.

those supporting branch and sequel execution are normally broader, assessment focused, and may be much more subjective. They will also probably include information requirements on DIME partner actions / capabilities and environmental PMESII conditions.



CCIRs can also support agility of action. Decentralization of CCIRs supporting decentralized execution directly support empowerment of subordinates, while retention of CCIRs at the operational level for these type of events slow subordinates' agility, add undue reporting requirements, and shift operational level focus away from its proper role and responsibilities in setting conditions. The decentralization of both the decisions and the associated CCIRs is key to agility and flexibility.

Many of the CCIRs precipitating operational commanders' major decisions will likely not come off the Joint Operations Center (JOC) floor but rather through interaction with others and from the results of operational level assessment. Much of this information may not be in the precise form of answering a traditional, specifically worded branch or sequel oriented CCIR, but rather as the result of a broader assessment answering whether we're accomplishing the campaign objectives together with recommendations on the "so what."

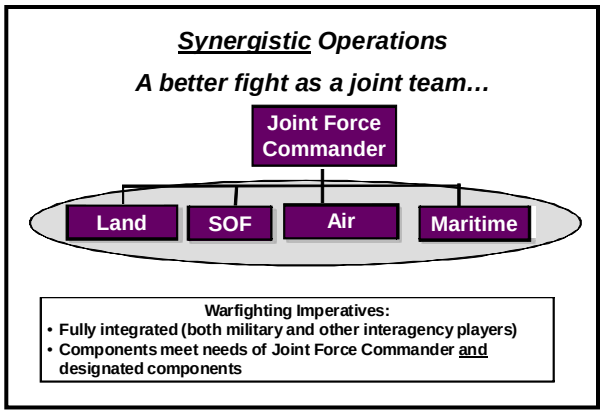


Commanders drive CCIRs. We've seen very successful use of the doctrinal process (noted in the figure) in managing CCIRs. This process includes laying out specific responsibilities for development, validation, dissemination, monitoring, reporting, and maintenance (i.e., modifying or deleting CCIRs).

Insights:

- CCIRs support commanders' situational understanding and their decision-making. Information flow is essential to the success of the decision-making process.
- Develop CCIRs during design and planning.
- Use CCIRs to prioritize limited resources – collection, processing, analysis, and management of information flow.
- Provide clear reporting procedures to ensure timely commander notification of CCIRs.

3.3 Command and Control.



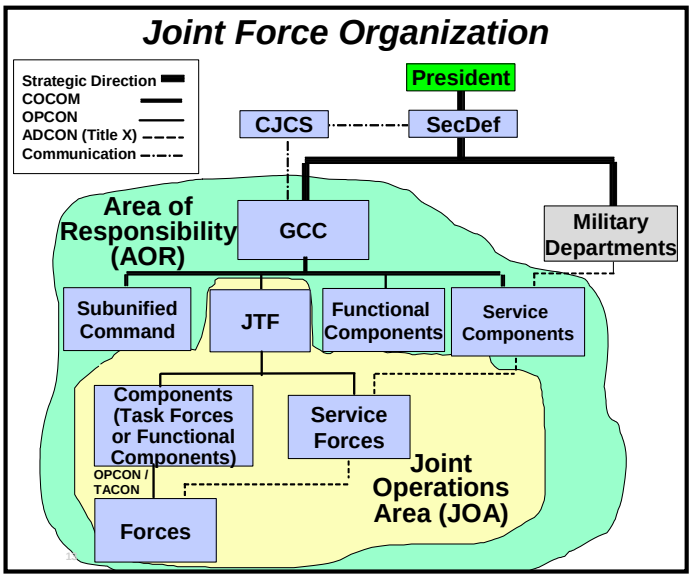
As noted upfront, our operational commanders are leading the way in the move away from independent, stovepipe operations to synergistic, and where appropriate, interdependent operations. This move toward synergy and harmonization is a mindset change from a "*vertical"* focus on receiving and unilaterally accomplishing tasks from the higher commander to that of working much more closely - harmoniously - with our *horizontal* warfighting partners as depicted by the oval in the adjacent figure. This synergy results from more than interoperability – loosely defined as the technical ability to work together. Rather, it is the recognition that we function best, using a comprehensive approach, as one team of joint, interagency, and multinational partners – and depend on access to each other's capabilities to succeed. We are interdependent, achieving synergy and harmony is one of the most important and urgent tasks of a joint commander in setting conditions for subordinates' success; we have to get it right from the beginning.

Interdependence with one's joint, interagency, and multinational partners can be viewed in some aspects as a risk; we depend on capabilities we don't own or control for success. However, this is the reality of today's world. As a general rule, we find that those commanders who accept this interdependence do better in today's environment than those who don't. We live this interdependence within our joint force daily, in which the joint force commander (JFC) purposely crafts the task organization and command relationships to achieve synergy and harmony among the various joint force components, directing that each support the other in an atmosphere of teamwork to accomplish the mission. The risks associated with "interdependence" with other USG agencies and multinational partners are somewhat greater than with our military services because there is often no clear authority defining a command relationship with them that specifies authorities, fixes responsibility and ensures synergy and harmony. We see commanders mitigating this risk through establishing a climate of cooperation, coordination, and collaboration by developing personal relationships and trust, use of liaison elements, and making conscious decisions on the degree of reliance with those stakeholders for critical tasks. This relationship with our interagency and multinational partners is an area that is very important and must be continually reinforced by the commanders.

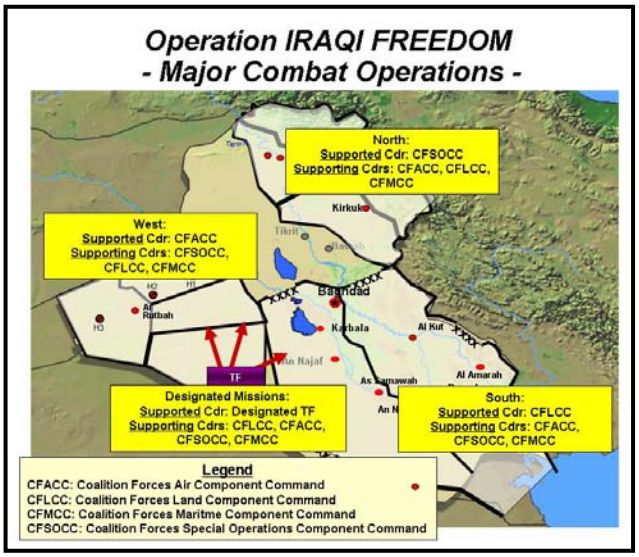
This section addresses our observations and insights on how our operational commanders are setting command and control conditions for their subordinates' success. We find that they focus on several key elements. These elements are interrelated; together they set conditions for success:

- A focus on personal relationships, and building trust and confidence.
- Absolute inclusion with our interagency partners, recognizing that they are an essential part of the team.
- Mission-type orders providing the "what" versus "how" of operations.

- A task organization comprised of both battlespace[21] owners and functional task forces to take best advantage of all of the military force capabilities.
- A battlespace geometry that provides sufficient control measures in terms of boundaries and fire support coordination measures without over-controlling the fight.
- Command relationships that promote synergy among the components, instill a one team one fight mentality, and provide authorities commensurate with responsibilities.
- Clear prioritization and decentralized authorities that empower subordinates to operate within commander's intent and take advantage of unforeseen opportunities within the chaos of the complex environment.



Task Organization: We've seen a huge evolution in how joint force commanders are following the well-known adage "Form follows Function" in task organizing their joint force and even naming their subordinate task forces. They've evolved beyond the traditional Service force (e.g., ARFOR, NAVFOR…) and even the air, land, and maritime-based functional components (e.g., JFACC, JFLCC, JFMCC…) to that of tailored organizations comprised of both battlespace owners and capability-oriented functional task forces (e.g., SOF, Counter-IED (CIED)) to take best advantage of all the military force capabilities in accomplishing the mission. We're seeing three key insights in task organizations.

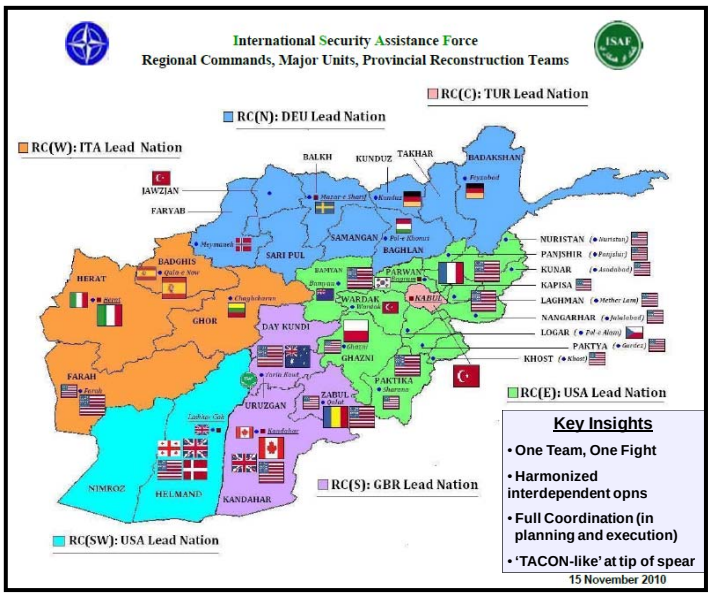


Insights:

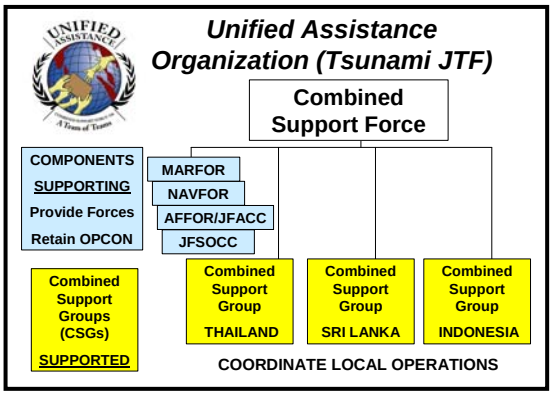
- Clear designation of battlespace owners. Our joint commanders still primarily organize to fight along a geographic orientation with battlespace owners being largely empowered as the supported commander within their battlespace. For smaller contingencies, we're seeing the GCCs establishing subordinate JTFs with focused missions and geographic oriented JOA. For larger GCC-controlled operations, we're

[21] We use the term battlespace vice the more doctrinally correct operational environment term throughout this paper to directly address the joint operations area (JOA) and area of operation (AO) associated battlefield geometry considerations of C2.

seeing the GCC use of traditional functional components (i.e., JFLCC and JFMCC) being given AOs. We've even seen in some cases the JFACC and the JFSOCC being given AOs. At the JTF level in land-centric operations we've seen geographically-based organizations (e.g., the Regional Commands (RC) in Afghanistan, MNDs in Iraq and Bosnia, and CSGs in the Unified Assistance operation – see figure).[22]



- <u>Use of capabilities oriented, functional task forces</u> (e.g., special operations, CIED, Medical, Engineer). This is a significant evolution in JTF task organization or usage. In addition to the above use of battlespace commanders, and air, land, and maritime-focused functional commanders, we've seen almost every joint force commander establish more capabilities-based, functional task forces to conduct specific mission sets required throughout the joint operations area. Often, the forces capable of performing these specific missions are high demand / low density forces, and the expertise and C2 capabilities necessary for their employment may not be resident in each of the battlespace headquarters (e.g., an RC HQ). We discuss how the joint force commander promotes harmony and synergy between the battlespace owners and these functional task forces in succeeding sections on battlespace geometry, command relationships, and challenges.



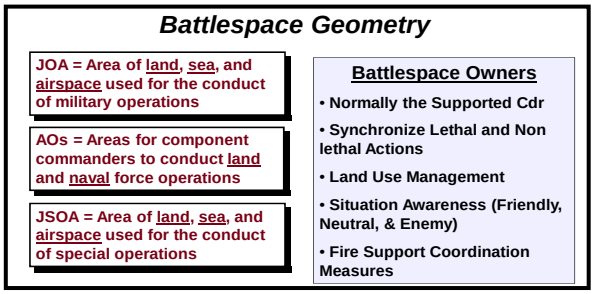
- <u>Dual-hatting Service force commanders to increase efficiency and effectiveness</u>. We're seeing very few cases of separate and distinct service force command headquarters within the joint task forces. In almost every case, the joint commander opts to dual hat either himself or his subordinates as service force commanders. The joint commanders are also using their authorities to consolidate selected Service Title 10 responsibilities for more efficient use of resources. We discuss this further in a later part of this section.

<u>Battlespace Geometry</u>: As noted above, we see joint commanders establishing control measures such as joint operations areas (JOA) and areas of operation (AO) within the

[22] Source of ISAF map (above figure) is http://www.isaf.nato.int

battlespace, and identifying battlespace owners (BSO). They then empower these BSOs with the requisite authority commensurate with their responsibilities.

Insights:



- Today's operational environment is very complex. Many non-military stakeholders and other forces operate in the BSOs' JOAs and AOs. The battlespace owners would optimally like to have the support of these other players, or at least situational awareness of their activities, even though they may not actually "own" them. We've seen a huge evolution in this area in which the BSOs are becoming increasingly more comfortable "harmonizing" with these non-assigned players in their battlespace.
- Delineation of battlespace together with supported / supporting command relationship provides sufficient control measures without overly restricting the commanders. Commanders are increasingly using horizontal linkages such as supported / ing command relationships (discussed below), situational awareness tools, liaison, and commander crosstalk to create synergy.
- Empower BSOs with "coordinating authority" over other units that may operate within their battlespace. A continuing challenge in today's decentralized operations is maintaining situational awareness by the BSO of everything happening in the battlespace with numerous forces all operating in close proximity. We sometimes find that military forces not assigned to the BSO and other interagency players do not always keep the BSO apprised of their planned activities and movements. Nor are some of their activities fully supportive of BSO requirements. We've heard several joint commanders and subordinates emphasizing the need for these other players to keep the BSO informed and involved in planning. We find that these other players must recognize the BSO's authorities and responsibilities as they all work to accomplish the same mission. This includes working with the BSOs from the very beginning during planning to ensure synergy in execution. BSOs must also understand functional task force responsibilities in accomplishing their respective higher command-directed missions.

> **Coordinating Authority:** A commander or individual assigned responsibility for coordinating specific functions or activities involving forces of two or more Military Departments or two or more forces of the same Service. The commander or individual has the authority to require consultation between the agencies involved, but does not have the authority to compel agreement. In the event that essential agreement cannot be obtained, the matter shall be referred to the appointing authority. Coordinating authority is a consultation relationship, not an authority through which command may be exercised.

> The joint commander in Afghanistan has clearly stated the broad authority of the BSOs for all military activities occurring in their AOs. This has markedly improved synergy of operations.

- Direct functional task force commanders to understand the BSO's responsibilities and comply with the BSO's coordinating authority for activities occurring within their assigned AOs. Direct functional task force commanders and subordinates to conduct

the necessary coordination with BSOs during planning, and keep them apprised of all activities within their AO.

Command relationships: We've seen that getting the command relationships right up front is absolutely critical to success.

We see the use of OPCON, TACON, and Supported / ing Command relationships to allow for both unity of command of habitually organized forces (primarily OPCON and TACON authorities), and access to the capabilities of other forces (primarily Support authority). We often work in a multinational environment, and at times a NATO command structure. NATO has several unique command relationships that will affect how we operate. We'll discuss those command relationships later in this section.

OPCON provides for "ownership" of the forces. It allows the commander to task both "what to do" and "how to employ." It requires expertise in planning and employment. It remains the preferred command relationship over forces that the commander will continuously own and employ, and for which he and his staff have the expertise and capability to command and control.

TACON, a subset of OPCON, also provides for "ownership" of the forces. It allows for local direction and control for accomplishment of a specific mission.

We often see supporting commanders providing forces TACON to a supported commander. While most normally attribute this forces provided TACON to air sorties provided by the Navy or Marines TACON to the JFACC, another, very effective use is the supporting commander horizontally providing ground or SOF forces TACON to a supported commander. The key significance is that it's the supporting commander directly delegating the TACON authority. This TACON is not directed from the higher commander in the form of a FRAGO, but rather delegated horizontally between supporting to supported commander. This TACON authority provides for unity of command, and agility, at the tip of the spear – at the tactical level. We see this delegation of TACON, or in some cases a direct support relationship, as a best practice.

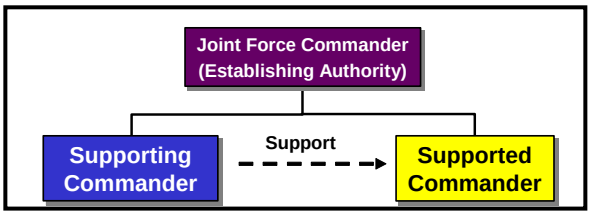
Supported / Supporting

"Support is a command authority...

The support command relationship is, by design, a somewhat vague, but very flexible arrangement.

...The establishing authority is responsible for ensuring both the supported and supporting commander understand the degree of authority granted." ***Joint Pub 0-2***

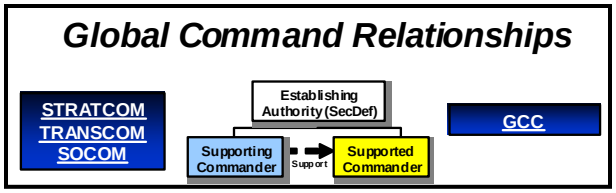
Support. We have learned in OEF, OIF (and now Operation New Dawn - OND), that the support command relationship continues to be the most powerful command relationship in terms of gaining access to additional capabilities. It provides the authority and basis for synergy and harmony, and may be the most appropriate in today's operational environment. This support relationship in essence makes the supporting commanders responsible for the success of the supported commander. They can't simply provide some forces and walk away from the challenge. Rather, it requires them to stay involved with the supported commander and continue to aid and assist him as he conducts operations – thus creating harmony.



This support relationship allows for the horizontal integration discussed upfront in this section. The support command authority is increasingly being used to provide a supported commander access to capabilities that he doesn't own. The flexibility of this support command relationship is one of its greatest advantages. It supports decentralized execution within mission-type orders and commander's intent. There will normally be multiple, concurrent supported and supporting commanders – often the commanders will be in mutual support - thus there is a need for clear priorities being established by the establishing authority.

Insights:

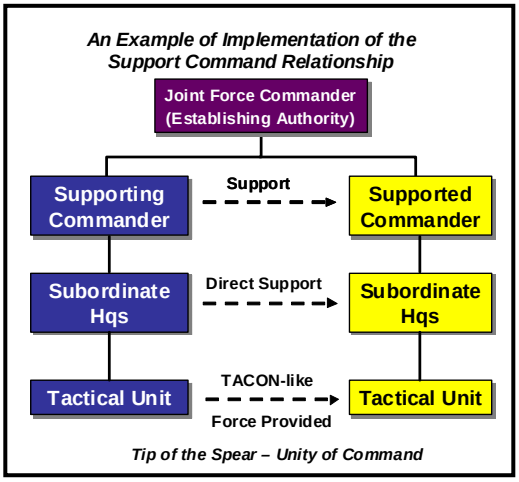
- The establishing authority is the higher joint commander – it may be a combatant commander, a JTF commander, or even at the SecDef level in the case of certain activities such as those between combatant commanders (see figure). This higher commander defines the support command relationships among his subordinates in terms of who is supported and supporting, the respective degree of authority, and overall priorities – especially where there are limited resources supporting numerous operations. SOF and Air are good examples of some limited resources. He is also the referee, the tie breaker, when subordinates cannot work out the necessary balance of access to capabilities. Some establishing authority best practices:
    - Give clear direction to subordinates in terms of priorities and intent to allow subordinates to work horizontally with each other in accomplishing tasks. This kind of direction is best provided in OPORDs and FRAGOs.
    - Set conditions for and demand crosstalk among supported and supporting commanders to build and reinforce the necessary horizontal personal relationships, and trust and confidence.
    - Challenge your subordinates to "self-regulate" their apportionment of capabilities to one another through horizontal crosstalk. This crosstalk among your components will allow them to arrive at the optimal apportionment of capabilities to accomplish both their assigned tasks and support the designated supported commanders.
    - Staying involved when necessary to arbitrate / resolving conflicting understanding of priorities – or to revise guidance based on subordinate input.



- Supported Commander. The supported commander is given access to supporting capabilities and has the authority to provide general direction, designate and prioritize missions, targets, or objectives, and other actions for coordination and efficiency (to include requesting liaison and directing of reporting requirements). Some supported commander best practices:
    - Identify needs to supporting commanders. This is a continuing, not one time, activity.
    - Request liaison from supporting commanders to help coherently integrate supporting capabilities in the operation.

- Bring lack of support issues to supporting commanders first, and if necessary to establishing authority for resolution.

- Supporting Commander. The supporting commander is responsible to both ascertain and satisfy the needs of the supported commander within the priorities directed by the establishing authorities. Some supporting commander best practices:
  - Recognition of your role in ensuring the success of the supported commander. We see those believing and following through on the "one team one fight" view set the conditions for success.
  - Understand and respect the authority of supported commander. Recognize that your support to another supported commander may have an even higher priority than a mission for which you have been tasked. That said, address to both the supported commander and / or establishing authority those perceived undue or significant risks that such support may entail to other ongoing operations.
  - Take time in ascertaining supported commanders' requirements and understanding the overall priorities in apportioning your forces to accomplish both your assigned tasks and those of other supported commanders.
  - Send liaison to supported commanders to assist them in planning and in ascertaining your requirements.
  - Direct appropriate command relationships to your subordinates to ensure you fulfill your supporting responsibilities. You, as the supporting commander, can provide forces or capabilities in a direct support or even TACON relationship to a respective supported commander to ensure his success.

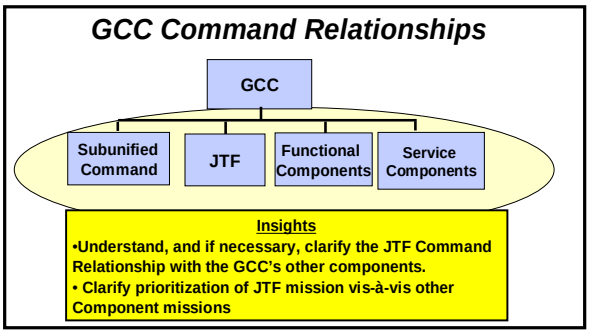


Administrative Control (ADCON). Defined as "The direction or exercise of authority over subordinate or other organizations in respect to administration and support," ADCON normally includes the organization of Service forces, control of resources and equipment, personnel management, unit logistics, individual and unit training, readiness, mobilization, demobilization, discipline, and other matters not included in the operational missions of the subordinate or other organizations. ADCON for the numerous Service Title 10 responsibilities remains an important authority and responsibility. This is another area in which we're seeing the combatant commanders, JTF commanders, and service component commanders focusing on making administration and support as efficient and effective as possible. It is further discussed below and later in the sustainment section.

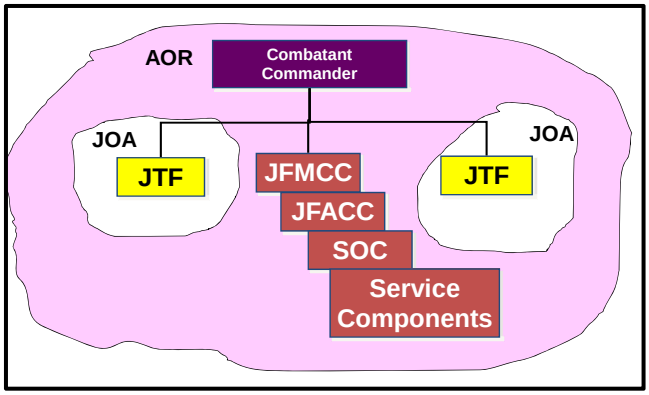
Combatant Command, Functional Component and Multinational C2 Insights:

Combatant Command Insights: We've seen all of the Combatant Commands exercising a combination of the use of JTFs in conjunction with Sub-unified Commands, their Service Components and Functional Components coupled with establishment of JOAs to satisfy their AOR-wide and more focused regional responsibilities.

- Cross AOR Coordination: We're seeing continued excellent coordination between GCCs and also with functional Combatant Commands such as SOCOM, TRANSCOM, and STRATCOM.[23]



- Establishment of JTFs: Establishment directives are generally very clear; delineating roles, authorities and the supported/supporting command relationships with other GCC components (e.g., Theater SOCs, JFACC, and Service Components).
- Employment of Theater Service Component Commands: Two aspects – Operational role and Title 10 support. We find that the Service Components remain tasked with much of the GCC Theater engagement activities while also being held <u>responsible for their Title 10, ADCON, and Executive Agent responsibilities</u>. We normally see some form of direction in terms of the respective authorities and responsibilities of the JTF for <u>synchronization</u> of the Service Component Title 10, ADCON, Executive Agent, and Common User Logistics (CUL) activities within the JOA. This synchronization is normally delineated through detailed MOUs between the JTF and the Theater Service Components Commands.



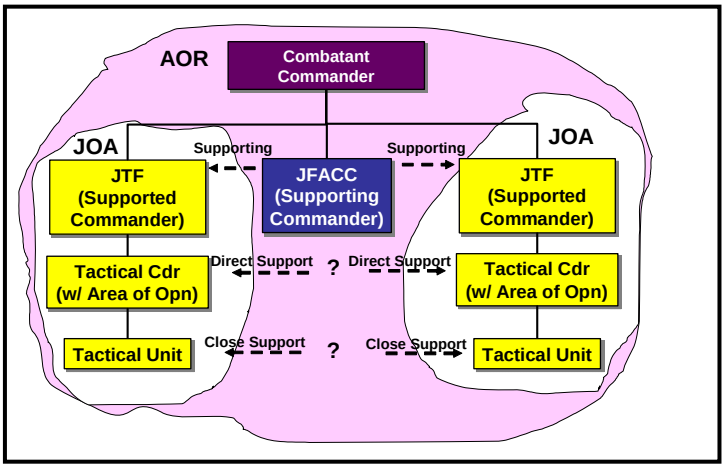
A case in point is HQ, USFOR-A, dual hatted as both the national command and national support element in Afghanistan. CENTCOM directed that it be responsible for *<u>synchronization</u>* of Title 10 support activities in Afghanistan to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of Title 10 support in this landlocked and austere environment with a very limited ground transportation network. ISAF Joint Command, the operational headquarters in the CJOA, was on built on an Army organization (such as MNC-I was built around an Army Corps). However, there was no designated Army Forces (ARFOR) Headquarters in Afghanistan. This lack of a senior Army headquarters taxed the joint-manned USFOR-A staff on purely service-related matters and deprived subordinate organizations of Army-specific oversight and assistance. ARCENT sent a robust ARCENT Coordination and Support Element (ACSE-A) to aid the USFOR-A HQ. ACSE-A remained under the OPCON of ARCENT with a Direct Support (DS) relationship to USFOR-A. AFCENT did much the same, augmenting its liaison element in USFOR-A.

[23] At times, a mutual support command relationship can exist with both forces assisting each other for designated activities. At time, a Functional Combatant Command such as SOCOM or STRATCOM may also be the supported command for a specific operation.

- Employment of Functional Components: Two aspects – AOR-wide activities and support to established JTFs. The global nature of challenges and responses coupled with high demand / low density forces have increased the need for agility at the GCC level across an AOR in enabling rapid access to capabilities. This has led to an increased use of supported and supporting command relationships between the combatant command level functional components (e.g., the Theater JFACC) with established JTFs. We find that the GCCs are providing more of the requisite direction, particularly, more clear prioritization for the interaction of these theater-level functional components with established JTFs. We have seen a challenge when functional components and JTFs do not receive this direction and subsequently don't share the same understanding of the GCC's concept of operation and priorities. This has sometimes resulted in a lack of responsiveness and agility in support of the JTFs, such as apportionment, allocation, ISR, and targeting challenges.

Functional Components (focused on JFACC and SOF) Insights:

Theater JFACC. We're seeing the use of theater level JFACCs throughout all the GCCs coupled with the use of air component coordination elements (ACCEs) at adjacent functional components and JTFs. The USAF instituted the Theater JFACC concept for several reasons: a requirement to optimize airpower across multiple JTFs in an AOR (i.e., the CENTCOM model as depicted in the adjacent figure); a requirement to optimize high demand / low density airpower assets in general; and insufficient Air Force resources to establish additional Air Operations Centers (AOCs) below Theater JFACC level. The Theater JFACC model retains the Geographic Combatant Commander's (GCC) agility and flexibility of airpower, enabling centralized planning, and allowing for rapid shifting of airpower throughout the AOR. Recognizing that irregular warfare requires much of the air supporting ground force missions, the Theater JFACC model can work when combined with a robust coordination element at the JTF and a robust Theater Air Control System (TACS).



We've found that the GCC can set the conditions for success by clearly stating (and emphasizing) the supported command relationship of geographic JTFs and the supporting command relationship of the JFACC. The GCC must make the hard calls on apportionment decisions working with the supported JTFs to provide the Theater JFACC sufficient apportionment direction for their subsequent allocation decisions. The GCC must also establish a robust ISR and targeting oversight capability to ensure theater-wide intelligence collection and targeting is occurring in accordance with GCC priorities. We have seen cases where the GCCs delegated some of their key apportionment, ISR management, and targeting responsibilities to the theater JFACC to the possible detriment of the JTFs.

Insights:

- Clarify and enforce the supporting command relationship of Theater JFACC to other GCC organizations, particularly JTFs.
- Ensure sufficient liaison / coordination and C2 capability (e.g., TACS elements) is provided from supporting commands (e.g., JFACC and AFFOR) to supported commands (e.g., JTF) and at relevant tactical echelons to ascertain, provide, and coordinate support. These elements should be capable of fully integrating and coordinating fires and airspace over and within the BSO's AO.
- Clarify GCC, JTF, and JFACC roles and authorities for targeting and ISR nomination, approval, and dynamic retasking to ensure responsive support in accordance with GCC priorities.
- Clarify airspace control authority (ACA), ROE and collateral damage estimate (CDE) approval authorities of the JTF and JFACC.
- Ensure establishment of a sufficiently robust Theater Air Control System (TACS) to enable agile, responsive support to ground force decentralized operations.

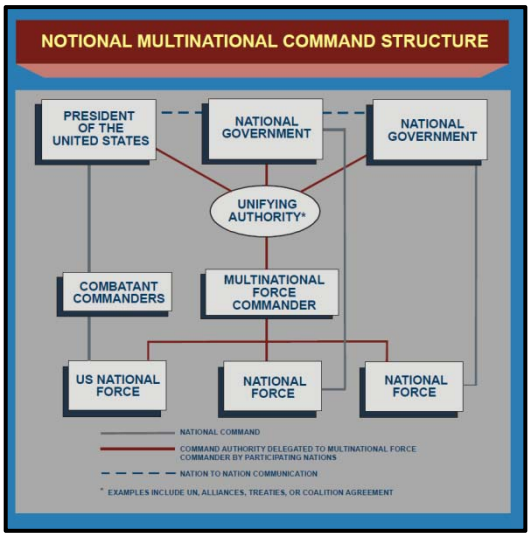
SOF. The global networks of terrorist organizations transcend JTF JOA boundaries. Both National and Theater SOF are focused on attacking these global networks while supporting JTF operations in their respective JOAs.

National SOF operations are global, require national level agility, and may transcend GCC AORs. Thus National SOF is normally subordinated directly under the respective GCCs for operations in their AORs. National SOF typically has a mutual support relationship with other GCC forces including JTFs. They normally enjoy the benefit of a high priority for resources from the GCC to accomplish their missions. Theater SOF is focused on regional threats that may cut across JTF JOAs within the AOR. The Theater SOC is normally tasked with AOR-wide missions for which they may be specified as the supported command. They also normally have a supporting command relationship with JTFs and may provide a joint special operations task force (JSOTF) to the JTF in an OPCON or TACON role to ensure unity of command. We've seen the provision of a General officer-led JFSOCC / CFSOCC and subordinate JSOTF provided OPCON to JTFs. We find that this General officer-led CFSOCC has greatly improved integration of SOF within the joint force. We see potential for further flattening of the command structure by having the CFSOCC subsume the role of its subordinate JSOTF or CJSOTF to further increase agility of the force.

Despite major increases in transparency and synergy of SOF operations in JTF battlespace, we still see some periodic challenges in tactical level coordination and integration. We still see some cases, albeit far fewer, where the brigade or battalion level battlespace owners are not fully aware of rapidly developing SOF operations in their battlespace. At times, SOF operations have disrupted battlespace owner operations and relationships with the population. But this is becoming more the exception than the norm. We find this is more often a result of limited proactive crosstalk between headquarters, normally due a physical lack of liaison elements available to maintain full time presence at every tactical headquarters. While liaison and planning elements and other coordination means attempt to mitigate this shortfall, we find that the friction of war can still exist for rapidly developing operations.

Insights:

- Instill an atmosphere of mutual trust and confidence at all levels to mitigate the risks associated with interdependence. This is a command climate issue. Articulate the need for synergy of operations in intent, planning guidance, and orders.
- At GCC level, clarify command relationships between the JTFs and both national and theater SOF. Establish at a minimum a mutual support relationship together with delegating Coordinating Authority to BSOs for operations in JOAs and AOs. Clarify TACON command relationship authorities between the JTFs and the Theater SOC.
- At JTF level, establish appropriate command relationships (typically mutual support) between SOF and tactical units. Develop horizontal linkages with SOF at all levels down to brigade combat team (BCT) level to ensure decentralized, tactical level integration with SOF. Direct the exchange of LNOs and delegate coordinating authority down to tactical level battlespace owners.
- At battlespace owner level, request liaison elements from national and theater SOF HQs (i.e., the Theater SOC), and / or from any provided or attached SOF HQs to better integrate their capabilities. Ensure the liaison elements have planning, current operations information sharing, and intelligence liaison capabilities.
- Provide JTF liaison elements to any national SOF HQs operating in the JTF JOA to facilitate information exchange.
- Develop clear staffing processes for coordinating and supporting SOF operations in JOAs and AOs. Articulate the level at which different types of operations (e.g., politically sensitive, high risk...) must be approved, or as directed by the joint commander, coordinated. Include public affairs release, casualty evacuation, site exploitation, intelligence exchange, ISR support, quick reaction force, and detainee handling staffing procedures.
- Be prepared to provide logistical support on a common user logistics basis to SOF. Plan for this upfront.
- We've seen both the use of a focused liaison / coordination team, or in some cases, establishment of a short term JSOA to assist in tactical level integration of SOF operations with a BSO.



Multinational Command Relationships:

Operations conducted by forces of two or more nations are termed "multinational operations." Such operations are usually undertaken within the structure of a coalition or alliance. Other possible arrangements include supervision by an International Government Organization (IGO) such as the UN or the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Other commonly

used terms for multinational operations include allied, bilateral, combined, coalition, or multilateral, as appropriate. The basic structures for multinational operations fall into one of three types: integrated; lead nation; or parallel command.[24]

Regardless of how the multinational force (MNF) is organized operationally, each nation furnishing forces normally establishes a national component (often called a national command element) to ensure effective administration of its forces (see figure). The national component provides a means to administer and support the national forces, coordinate communication to the parent nation, tender national military views and recommendations directly to the multinational commander, facilitate the assignment and reassignment of national forces to subordinate operational multinational organizations, and maintain personnel accountability. In an administrative role, these national components are similar to a Service component command at the unified command level in a U.S. joint organization. The logistic support element of this component is referred to as the national support element.

Authority	US COCOM (Most control)	US OPCON	NATO OPCOM	NATO OPCON	CFC/USFK COMBINED OPCON	NATO TACOM	US & NATO TACON (Least control)
Direct authority to deal with DOD, US diplomatic missions, agencies	X						
Coordinate CINC boundary	X						
Granted to a command	X		X				
Delegated to a command		X		X	X	X	X
Set chain of command to forces	X	X					
Assign mission/designate objective	X	X	X				
Assign tasks	X	X	X			X	
Direct/employ forces	X	X	X	X	X		
Establish maneuver control measures	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Reassign forces	X						
Retain OPCON	X	X	X				
Delegate OPCON	X	X	X	X with approval			
Assign TACOM	X	X					
Delegate TACON	X	X	X	X	X		
Retain TACON	X	X	X	X			
Deploy forces (information/within theater)	X	X	X	X			
Local direction/control designated forces	X	X					X
Assign separate employment of unit components	X	X	X				
Directive authority for logistics	X						
Direct joint training	X	X					
Exercise command of US forces in MNF	X	X					
Assign/reassign subordinate commanders/officers	X	May suspend or recommend reassignment					
Conduct internal discipline/training	X						

NATO *Full Command* and CFC/USFK *Command less OPCON* are basically equivalent to US COCOM, but only for internal matters

X – has this authority

– denied this authority, or not specifically granted it

LEGEND

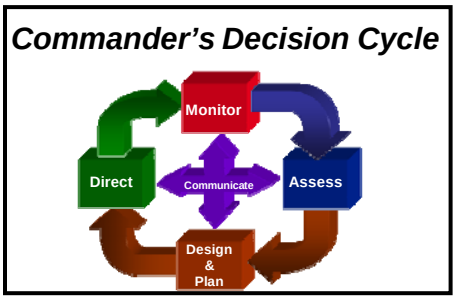
COCOM – Combatant command
OPCON – Operational control
OPCOM – Operational command
TACOM – Tactical command
TACON – Tactical control

Insights:

- Understand the important role and command relationships inherent in the national command element. Forces participating in a multinational operation will always have at least two distinct chains of command: a national chain of command and a multinational chain of command. The U.S. national chain of command includes the "ADCON / Title 10" aspects of supporting the force with all of the attendant Theater Service Component responsibility linkages.
- Understand the differences between U.S. and NATO and CFC / USFK command relationships.

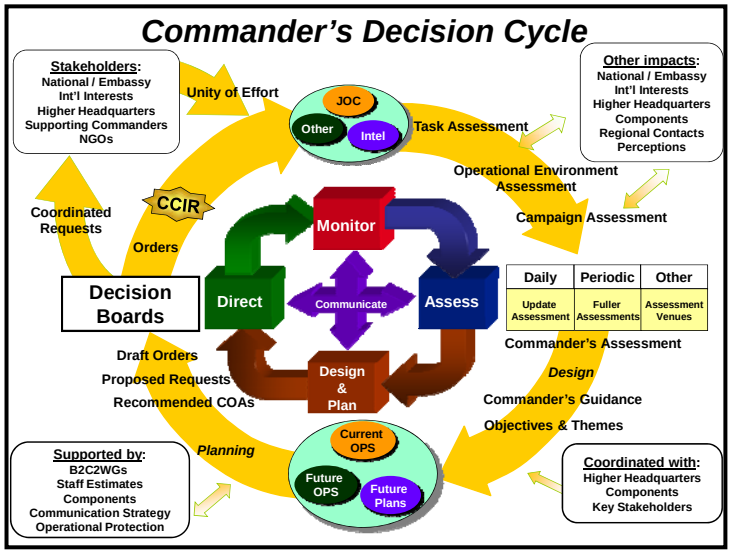
[24] More on the three types can be found in Joint Pub 1, 02 May 2007 Incorporating Change 1, 20 March 2009

4. Commander's Decision Cycle



4.1 Decision Cycle.

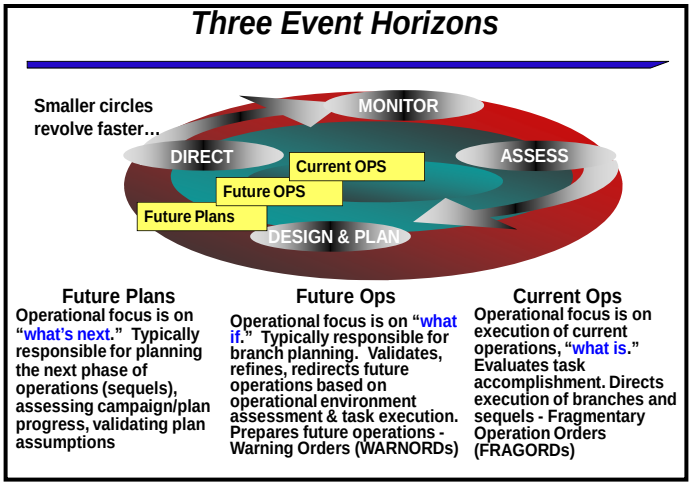
The decision cycle assists the commander in understanding the environment and in focusing the staff to support critical decisions and actions. We see every command using a cycle similar to the one depicted here. They all assess how they're doing, conduct design and planning based on this assessment, direct tasks to subordinates, request or recommend actions to stakeholders, and monitor operations and the environment to support assessment. They communicate throughout this cycle, both within the headquarters and with higher, adjacent, and subordinate commands.



We have observed that inclusion of stakeholders in this decision cycle is critical for achieving unity of effort. We will further describe this cycle after touching on event horizons and how the headquarters interact in terms of their decision cycle with its higher, adjacent, and subordinated headquarters.

Three Event Horizons: We find that the joint headquarters orient on three general event horizons – current operations, future operations, and future plans. We find each event horizon moves (spins) at different rates in terms of how it goes through the key aspects of the decision cycle (see figure below). Each event horizon also requires battle rhythm events that support its planning, execution, and assessment.

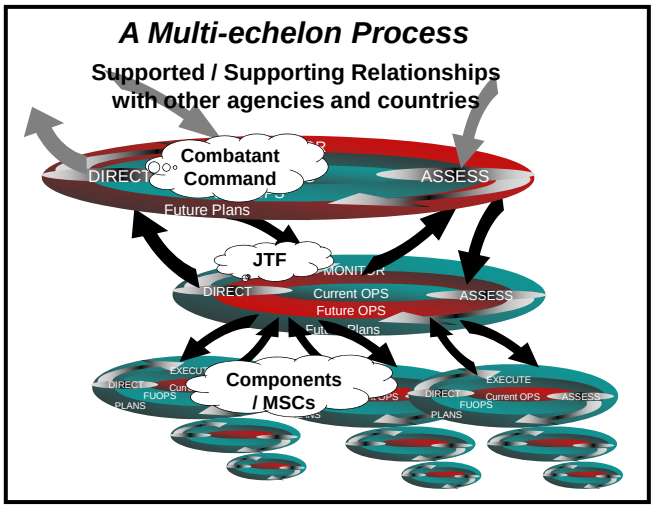
- The current operations event horizon focuses on the "what is," and can rapidly progress through the decision cycle – sometimes within minutes for quick breaking events. Current operations produce a larger volume of orders including fragmentary orders (FRAGOs). These kinds of activities generally do not require detailed full staff integration entailing the full headquarters. They do, however, require some limited planning capability within the Joint Operations Center (JOC). Because there is representation from all the J-codes, the expertise for this



planning capability already resides in the JOC.

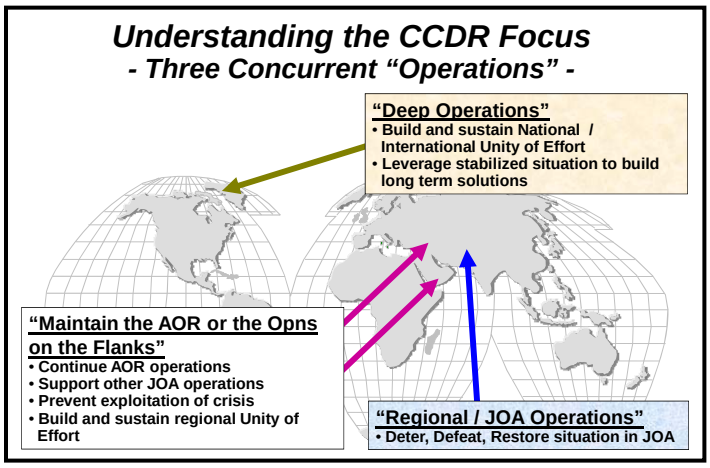
- The future operations event horizon focuses on the "what if," and normally moves slower with more deliberate assessment and planning activities resulting in such things as major FRAGOs directing major tactical actions (e.g., named operations) and troop movements within theater (e.g., movement of a brigade from one area to another). It generally requires full staff integration.
- The future plans event horizon is focused on the "what's next," interacts heavily with higher headquarters planning efforts, and moves very deliberately through the decision cycle. It focuses on activities such as development of OPLANs and FRAGOs to Campaign Plan and Policy directives or major troop rotations. These kinds of activities also require full staff integration.

This decision cycle nests with other echelon headquarters' decision cycles across all three event horizons as depicted in the adjacent figure. It continually interfaces with the higher headquarters' decision cycle (which is normally more deliberate and slower moving), with adjacent units, and with subordinate unit decision cycles (which will likely be moving more rapidly).

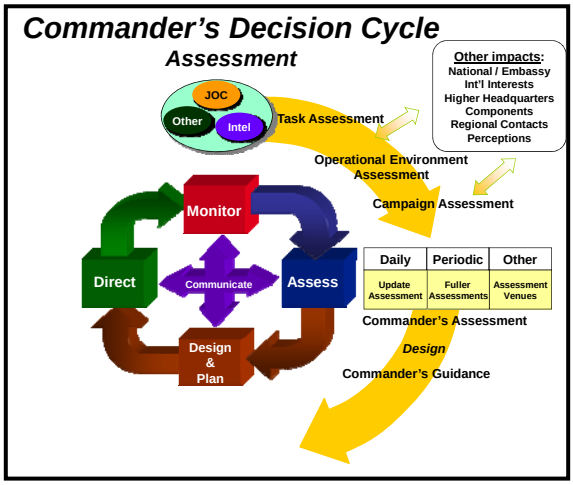


At the Combatant Command level, we observe one additional "complication" to this decision cycle – the numerous concurrent operations. Every GCC is concurrently operating on three "planes," conducting three concurrent operations as depicted in the below figure. These three operations are the "deep global operations" sustaining international unity of effort, AOR operations focused on theater strategic objectives, and setting conditions and supporting crisis operations in JOAs - what we loosely term the close fight. Each of these three operations contains current operations, future operations, and future plans event horizons within them. Many of these senior headquarters can be tempted to focus on "JOA" operations at the expense of the other two areas.

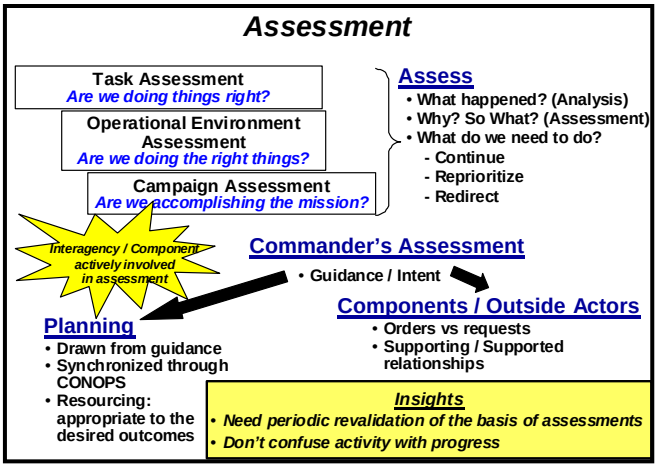
These three concurrent operations across the three event horizons result in nine (3X3) potential planning and monitoring challenges at the Combatant Command level. In the planning section, we'll discuss means by which we see the GCC managing planning and prioritizing staff resources for these activities.



4.2 Assessment. Assessment drives both design and planning, and assists commanders in prioritizing / allocating resources. It is an important best practice whose need is reinforced time and again in operational headquarters. These headquarters all recognize that they need both quantitative and qualitative analysis to deepen their understanding of the environment and adversary. They recognize they cannot precisely model the behavior of the complex environment nor predict results. Assessments help to inform how they're doing (see the three areas of assessment – task, operational environment, and campaign assessment on the adjacent figure) and then adjust (following commander's guidance and intent) and put back into the planning process in all three event horizons.



Over-engineering and Over-structuring Assessment: A balance is needed between a quantitative and qualitative approach to assessment. Assessment, especially assessing the operational environment and the campaign, is tough, and in many cases subjective. Because of the difficulty in measuring and documenting progress on attainment of operational or strategic objectives, we've seen some staffs over-engineer assessment, building massive quantifiable briefings and overwhelming subordinates with information reporting requirements.



These briefings do not always logically or clearly support a commander's assessment requirement nor assist him in developing guidance and intent. Some assessments incorrectly focus on assessing activity versus progress toward achieving the objectives. We find that quantitative indicators should only serve as a potential start point for commanders' and staffs' subjective assessments based on their observations and experience.

Commanders balance a possible staff tendency toward a quantitative solution, limit the amount of time and effort their staffs put into quantifying assessments, and recognize their personal role in applying their experience, intuition, and own observations in an art of war approach to assessment. They also recognize that activity does not necessarily equal progress.

Recommendations based on Assessment: Another staff challenge is developing and making recommendations to the commander on "what needs to be done" based on assessments. Often, just developing the "what happened" and the "so what" of assessment consumes the staff and they don't get to the most important aspect – recommending "what needs to be done."

A strong assessment framework involves staff wide integration to provide the staff assessment to the Commander. The commander then uses that staff assessment to compare his assessment developed through battlefield circulation, key leader engagement and various boards.

Focus of Assessments: Different level headquarters have a different assessment focus. Lower level headquarters focus on how well they are performing assigned or implied tasks ("doing things right?" - Task Assessment) so that they may improve future actions (e.g., work on TTPs). They also assess tactical mission accomplishment. Operational level headquarters focus their assessment on whether they are achieving the necessary conditions for the larger mission success ("doing the right things" - Operational Environment Assessment). Theater level headquarters look more broadly at the AOR assessing whether they are achieving theater-strategic or campaign objectives ("accomplishing the mission" - Campaign Assessment).

Frequency and Venues for Assessment: Assessment is continuous with numerous venues for informing and being informed by the commander. We've observed that tactical and operational level headquarters conduct task assessments fairly frequently using friendly measures of performance answering "are we doing things right." These task level assessments normally occur within the current operations event horizon. (Think hot washes after an operation) Venues for this type assessment at HQs are both formal (at daily and weekly update assessments) and informal (based on battlefield circulation, crosstalk, and other informal venues such as discussions with stakeholders).

Operational level headquarters (i.e., most of the JTF headquarters we observe) assess the operational environment, specifically the achievement of conditions (or desired outcomes) answering "are we doing the right things" at the frequency (weekly or monthly) to drive future operations and future planning. Venues for this level of assessment also range from formal to informal with formal assessments presented by the staff.

Theater-strategic headquarters normally focus on campaign assessment answering "are we accomplishing the mission" (achieving our objectives). These theater-strategic venues are fairly formal, occur quarterly or semi-annually, and are heavily influenced by other stakeholders.

Stakeholder Involvement: Every command we've visited extensively reaches out to stakeholders and other venues in arriving at their assessments. Without exception, these stakeholders' perspectives enrich the assessments. In many cases, the stakeholders have not traditionally conducted these types of assessments, may not always understand the benefits, and may be leery to commit to a position.

In some cases, it is recognized that assessments efforts support outside stakeholders. For example, in a humanitarian assistance operation, the military's primary goal may be to serve in support of diplomatic efforts. Therefore, the measure of mission progression may be the minimization of military assistance to aiding the crisis response. That transition back to the other instruments of national power (Diplomatic, Informational, and Economic) gives a holistic approach to the coordination of outside stakeholders with military efforts.

Periodic Validation of the Basis of Assessments: We noted earlier that we can't predict outcomes in the complex environment we operate in today. We also recognize that our actions will change the environment and often require that we relook or reframe the problem and subsequent design and plan.

We've seen joint headquarters periodically reframe their understanding of the problem, relook their paradigm, and revalidate their developed objectives and actions based on this analysis.

This is different from the assessment process discussed earlier. It often necessitates a change to the plan. Like the assessment process, this review / validation is also conducted at different levels and with different frequencies. Obviously, revalidation of the objectives occurs at the level at which they were developed – normally the theater-strategic or above level. Review of the attainment of necessary conditions or desired outcomes occurs at the operational level, while review of our actions occurs at both the operational and tactical level.

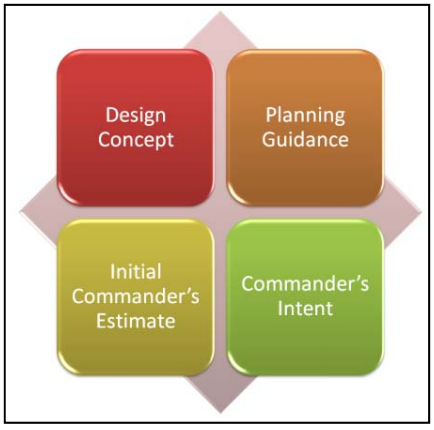
Insights and Best Practices:

- Use a balance of quantitative and qualitative input to assessment with the commander using numerous venues (including battlefield circulation and discussion with commanders and stakeholders) to gain his personal assessment.
- Always provide recommendations to the commander during all assessment venues (daily, weekly, monthly, other).
- When developing and managing assessments, it's key to establish a strong collection plan. This includes data from components, subordinate units, outside stakeholders, and through surveys and polling.
- Consider establishment of an Assessment Cell either as a separate staff directorate or in Plans to oversee the overall assessment process.
- Consider assigning the staff ownership of the various Measures of Effectiveness (MOE) or lines of effort most closely associated with their staff responsibilities rather than restricting the assessment function to one staff section or cell. This will provide a deeper assessment and ensure staff wide inclusion in the assessment process.
- Regardless of the venue or frequency, the operational headquarters should attempt to minimize unnecessary assessment reporting workloads on subordinate headquarters.
- Recognize the value of Interagency and multinational involvement in the assessment process, they share their perspectives and enrich (and influence) the process.
- Reviews and revalidations keep the units on course by taking into account both higher level direction, adversary actions, and other changes in the security environment.

4.3 Design.

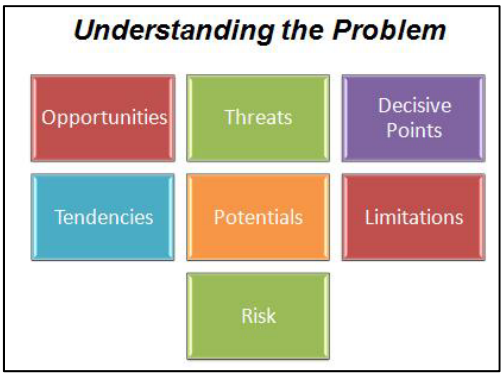
Design as a concept has grown immensely over the past several years both in the Services as well as in the Joint community. Commanders use "design" as a means to address the complexity of the problems they face as well as the environment in which they operate. We've seen joint force commanders at every level address these issues with great skill and success, leveraging their experience, intuition, instincts along with staff inputs to visualize a framework to accomplish the mission.

However, we must recognize both the high levels of support and criticism for design as we believe the best approach is somewhere in the middle. There is clearly a need for a focus on better understanding the environment and on better defining the problem. At the same time there is a concern expressed by some that this understanding and problem framing is too nebulous and doesn't directly support planning with deliverables. Additionally, there is often the tendency to continue to "admire the problem" too long and never fully progress toward developing solutions. We suggest that the value of design is improving understanding that can be expressed as better commander's guidance in support of planning, and this comes from the structured dialogue and discourse during design.



"*Design does not replace planning, but planning is incomplete without design*."[25] This focus is inherently commander-enabled, conceptual in nature, and either establishes or questions assumptions and methods, while attempting to gain a fuller understanding of the nature of the problem to be solved and the context within which subsequent planning and execution will attempt to solve it. JP 5.0 states "*Operational Design is the conception and construction of the framework that underpins a joint operation plan and its subsequent execution."* Design links initial thoughts to the more established joint operation planning process (JOPP) through the design concept, and integrates the operational approach into traditional mission analysis products such as the commander's intent, and planning guidance. An initial commander's estimate may also be prudent to crystallize ideas and share them with critical stakeholders in the theater and national strategic level.

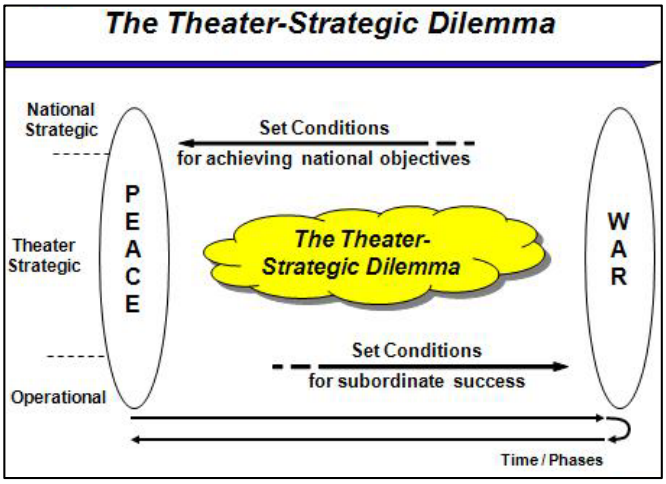
The investment of time in understanding the environment is critical to the ability to define the "right problem" the joint force will be charged to solve. As the problem becomes more clearly defined, elements of design are incorporated to bring greater conceptual understanding of the problem in relation to the operational environment.



[25] General Mattis, "Vision for a Joint Approach to Operational Design"

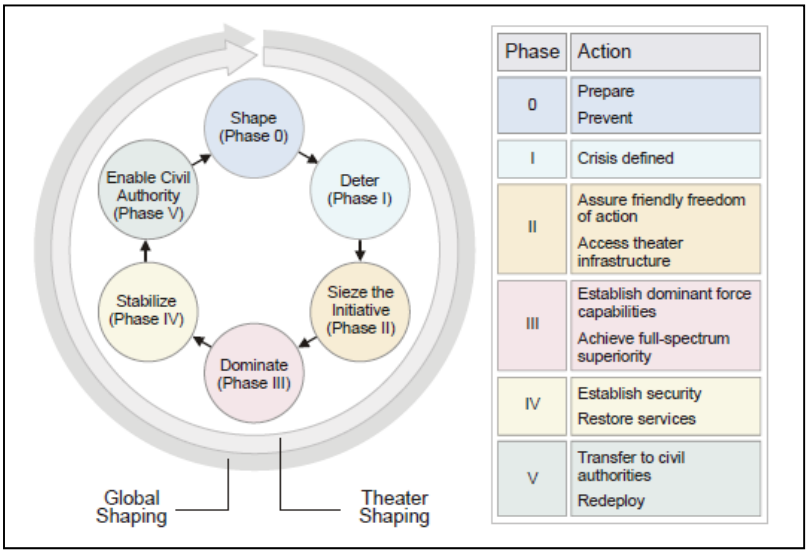
Understanding risk assumed as a commander, the risk to mission and forces for subordinates, and communicated to senior leaders underlines the essence of the problem.

We've seen the requirement for this design kind of thinking throughout the joint community over the past decade. We've learned the importance of the continual dialogue with national decision makers to determine the end state, define (and redefine) the problem, determine the key assumptions, and set the appropriate paradigm that will provide the basis for planning. This focus on design is a key responsibility of the theater-strategic and operational level commander. Another key responsibility is in the subsequent "socialization" of the paradigm / design with the many stakeholders to gain their support to the plan.



At the Combatant Command level, we have observed some challenges informing national policy makers on the theater level realities and requirements as they continue pursuing peaceful solutions. Gaining necessary authorities and ROE early on in a crisis is an example of the support a potential JTF may need to conduct successful operations. Essential to setting conditions in a potential JOA or for achieving national objectives is the consistent partnering with interagency, intergovernmental, multinational and other stakeholders to maintain harmony in action at both levels; the push for peace and the preparation for war (the "theater-strategic dilemma" depicted in the figure). Balancing and resourcing the planning efforts supporting these two competing requirements often requires continuing attention and guidance by the commander.

We see the value of design-thinking in this theater-strategic dilemma challenge as the Combatant Commander continues to support national objectives oriented toward peace, while concurrently ensuring that subordinates are prepared to fight. Every combatant command we visit experiences this dilemma. Again, we see the CCDR's dialogue informing and being informed by national level debate as a key factor in achieving the right balance to working through this.

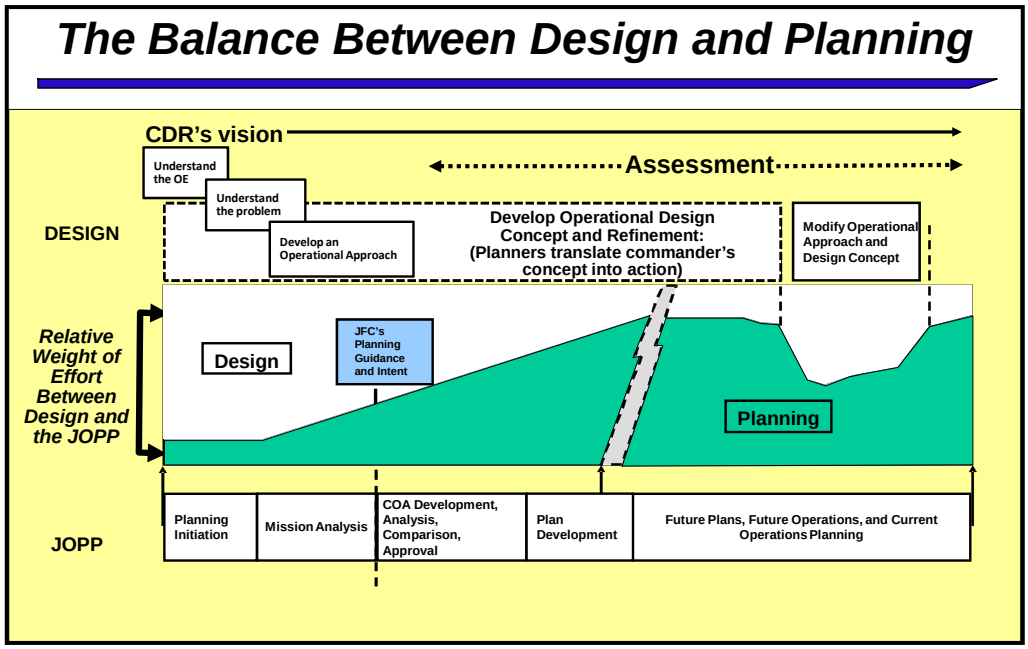


One method of approaching this dilemma is through an artful approach to deterrence. We see many commanders and commands using the depicted

generic campaign model in deliberate planning (see figure). We recognize that activities may bridge multiple phases and each phase is labeled with respect to the preponderance of activity in that phase. However, the graphical depictions in the figure and method of writing often suggest the joint force is compelled to execute each phase sequentially, precluding opportunities to skip phases, or return to earlier phases.

This applies particularly to the early phases of a campaign. We note that we never plan for failure, with one exception…if deterrence fails. To further complicate the dilemma, often those actions we take militarily in deterrence may be provocative and work against efforts to de-escalate.

We have seen different commands work through deterrence design with a full appreciation that deterrence requires all elements of national power, in which the military plays an important role. They realize that in order for deterrence to be effective, they must fully understand and enable the other elements of national power. Every action must be fully and coherently integrated with the others, particularly on the diplomatic front. These commands work in consonance with the other elements, using some combination of "carrot and stick" language in which a thought-out communications strategy is critical. Approaches may range from appeasement to intimidation, yet include accommodation.



The adjacent figure depicts the balance over time between design activities and the planning process. We see the relative weight of the commander's and staff's time spent up front in understanding the operating environment and defining the problem, then developing a conceptual idea of how to solve that problem through an operational approach.

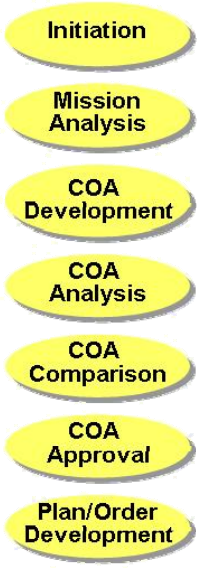
Joint headquarters can use the design attributes noted here to more fully inform their joint operation planning process initial steps of planning initiation and mission analysis. This can allow the joint command to shift from a conceptual to the more detailed planning process which occurs in Course Of Action (COA) development, analysis, comparison and approval. Subsequently, during execution of the operation, assessment activities may reveal indicators that demonstrate a significant change within the operating environment or the problem that necessitate revisiting design activities as depicted on the figure.

JP 3-0 (Operations) discusses operational design in terms of ends, ways, and means to help commanders understand, visualize, and describe complex combinations of combat power and help them formulate their intent and guidance. The elements of operational design are essential to identifying tasks and objectives that link tactical missions to achieve the strategic end states.

Insights:

- Spend time up front defining the problem. This requires gaining an understanding of the operating environment, as well as engaging in dialogue with senior leaders and stakeholders to gain a common understanding. This is a commander-centric activity.
- Understanding the problem and conceiving a solution are complementary and simultaneous cognitive processes. This is particularly true with the problems commanders face in today's complex environment. Periodic assessment during ongoing operations enables iterative solution updates based on changes in the operating environment or the problem. Understanding the operating environment, defining the problem, then forming this knowledge into a common operational approach serves to enrich the existing planning process
- Commanders' actions include both design and planning. It is incumbent on commanders to ensure planners understand where they are in the continuum of design and planning. This guidance drives the kinds of actions the planners take. Design actions generally consist of more brainstorming and creative thinking, where planning actions consist of more detailed and focused analytical thinking and production of plans and orders.

4.4 Planning.

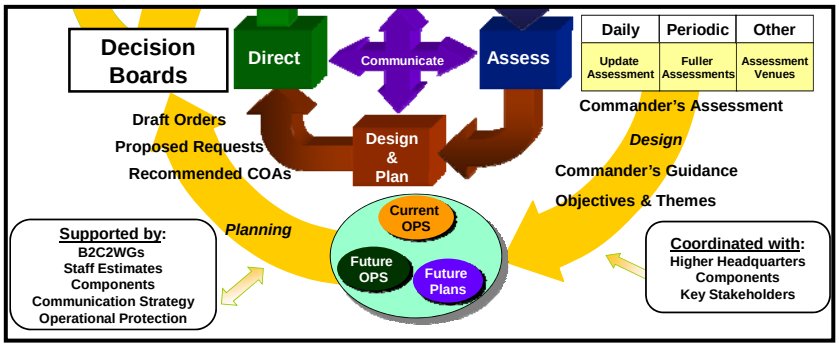


Planning is the problem-solving piece of the "design and planning continuum" introduced in the last section. It is procedural, following the joint operation planning process (see the 7 steps in the adjacent figure), and produces the requisite plans and orders to direct action. While not prescriptive, it provides a common framework for joint planning. It also provides interagency and multinational partners an outline for how United States joint forces plan and where to provide their input as stakeholders.

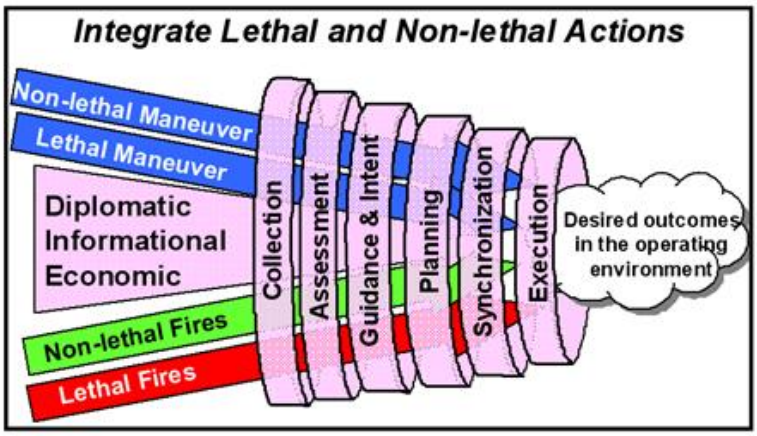
We frame planning as occurring from the 3 to 9 o'clock position on the decision cycle as depicted in the figure below. Planning efforts are driven by assessment and resultant commander's guidance.

Insights gained in planning:

- Commander involvement up front in design, and then subsequently in the planning process enhances and focuses planning efforts. Commander's guidance and intent, informed by assessment, focus and guide planning efforts.
- Recognition of the more complex environment and need to determine desired outcomes and conditions is necessary before attempting to develop solutions to achieve success. Consider using PMESII as a means to gain and maintain a broad perspective and understanding of the environment; it's more than a military on military conflict. We find that staffs and commanders, together with stakeholders, are continually deepening their understanding of the operational environment through both traditional and non-traditional collection means (e.g., polls), analysis, and both subjective and objective assessment venues to better guide planning and operations.



- Integrating lethal and non-lethal actions is not an intuitive process. To be successful, this integration must be conducted from the very beginning (see figure). Key to this process is ensuring the integration of crucial stakeholders from



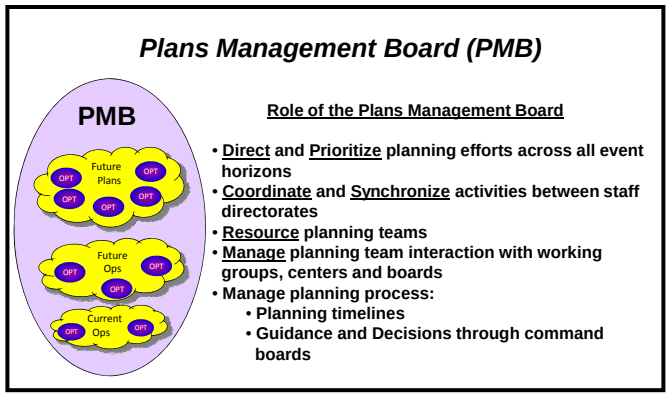
both the lethal and non-lethal realms. Together, the staff and these stakeholders can integrate actions and maneuver throughout the processes of collection, assessment, guidance, planning, near term synchronization and execution. Though each situation requires a different mix of violence and restraint, lethal and non-lethal actions used together complement each other and create dilemmas for opponents. Thus planning of lethal and non-lethal actions is inseparable. We must use both traditional (e.g., Mission Reports (MISREPs) and nontraditional (e.g., polling data, Key Leader Engagement (KLE) meetings) collection means to gauge adversary and population reaction to our lethal and non-lethal actions. Our assessment must also take both into account. Planners must integrate lethal and non-lethal actions upfront in the planning process rather than "adding on" non-lethal actions at the end.

- We find that planning guidance, commander's intent, and the operational framework provide the right type of direction for the coherent development of effective lethal and non-lethal planning efforts at the operational level while leaving detailed synchronization to subordinate tactical units. Appropriate measures of effectiveness (MOE) and measures of performance (MOP) can also be established at the onset with this kind of guidance. We have seen the requirement for near term synchronization of certain actions at the operational level ensuring certain actions match our words in execution to avoid "effects" fratricide. However, we emphasize that the operational level headquarters cannot "synchronize" every lethal and non-lethal action for two reasons. First, it is contrary to the reasoning behind mission command and mission-type orders, and second, it's impossible to do so.

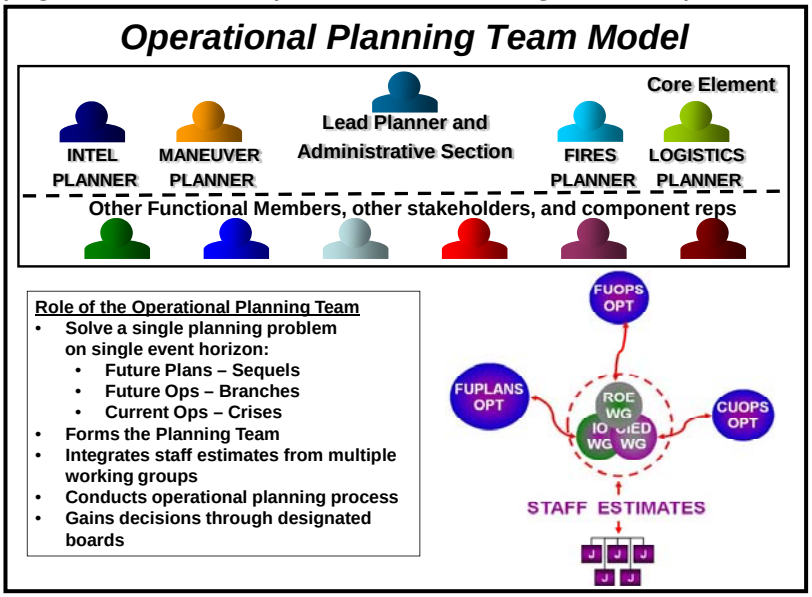
<u>Best Practices:</u>

- Depending on the mission, a "Communication" Line of Effort (LOE) may be appropriate. In relatively non-lethal environments or in a COIN setting when non-lethal influence campaigns are required, this LOE can serve as the overarching umbrella that supports and is supported by the other LOEs as necessary (e.g., Governance, Security, Development LOEs).
- Bring stakeholders fully into planning from the very beginning (in design), enriching mission analysis through COA development and analysis to orders development. Commanders have found that extensive consultation with stakeholders in visualizing the environment, developing guidance and intent, determining broader analysis criteria to analyze COAs, and making decisions pay big benefits in arriving at optimal plans and subsequent success in achieving objectives. This requires an important commitment to establishing and maintaining a command climate and organizational capability that actively seeks out and integrates stakeholder input into all phases of planning, operations, and assessment.
- The staff wide planning effort must be managed to ensure limited staff resources are properly focused on the most important tasks. Limited manpower and functional expertise will force the prioritization of branch and sequel planning and the corresponding Operational Planning Teams (OPT).
- We recommend some form of Plans Management Board (PMB) chaired as necessary by the Chief of Staff (COS) to provide direction and prioritization, and coordinate, synchronize and resource planning activities staff wide as depicted in next figure.

- There are activities that need to be executed prior to the execution of the Plans Management Board. These activities include:
  - Planners prioritize planning efforts within their event horizons (CUOPS, FUOPS, FUPLANS).
  - Decide on venue to prioritize planning efforts prior to PMB. TTP: A command group decision-maker (DCOS) gathers representatives from CUOPS, FUOPS, FUPLANS to prioritize planning efforts. This can be an informal weekly huddle to execute this effort.
  - Prioritized planning efforts are briefed to the COS at the PMB. The COS then provides direction and prioritization to planning activities so the staff can coordinate, synchronize and resource planning activities.



- Planning teams are central to integrating staff efforts in planning. Integral to the J3 and J5, these planning teams should be the conduit to both inform and be informed by functional working groups (e.g., Information Operations, ROE, logistics, etc). The planning team should then provide coherent, fully coordinated staff recommendations to the commander at regular intervals (we use the term "touch points" to denote the various meetings with the commander) during the planning process for guidance and decision. As depicted on the figure, the J-code directors and sections remain important players in this OPT and WG interaction. They monitor planning and working group actions, and provide the functional staff estimate input that provide much of the basis for the OPT and Working Group (WG) analysis and recommendations.

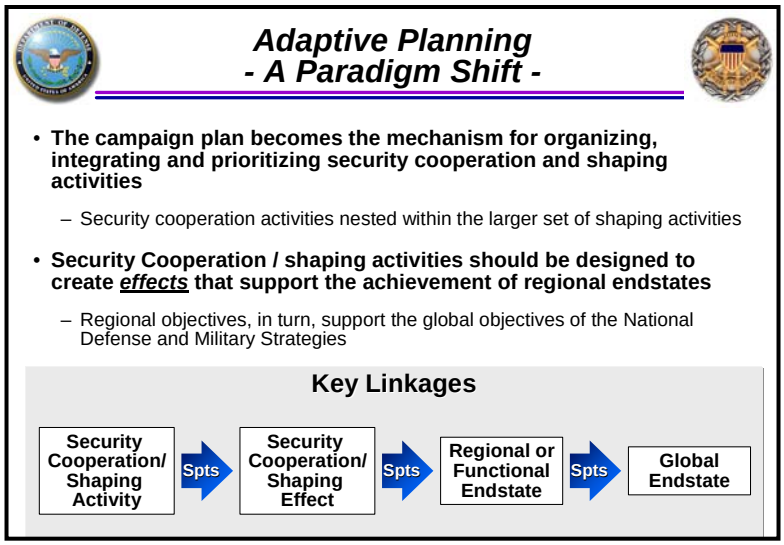


- The composition of these planning teams should be tailored based on the planning task; we normally see a minimum of a maneuver planner, an intelligence planner, and a logistics officer as the core of the planning team.

<u>GCC Planning challenges:</u> GCC commanders have a unique challenge in that they have broad theater responsibilities that both shape and define how they respond to crisis within their AOR. With adoption of the Adaptive Planning process we've seen the implications of this DOD-wide attempt to provide longer range guidance, more

responsive planning efforts and senior level involvement in development of those plans. The Adaptive Planning process provides the foundation for a constellation of joint and combined operations, and living plans designed and resourced to achieve national defense, and military strategic objectives in a manner that is both militarily and politically acceptable.

This constellation of planning efforts centers on a strategic-level "Capstone" plan that provides the framework for other plans that address contingencies that could happen in the GCC's AOR. The adaptive planning process ensures each of the contingency plans take into account national interests so that actions addressing one contingency do not inadvertently impact U.S. national interests in another area. The process also allows for continual update and shared awareness of the plans. Planners have to work through procedures to conduct revisions of these plans. They have to utilize collaborative planning tools and there is a personnel and professional development piece to these plans.

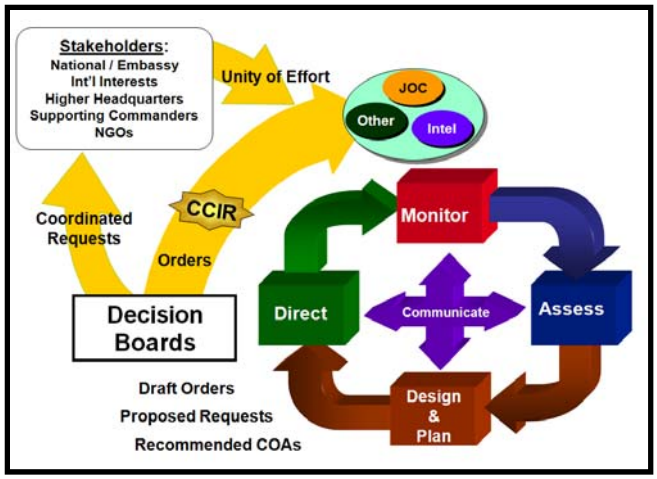


The adaptive planning process incorporates two key planning guidance documents, the Guidance for Employment of the Force (GEF) and Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP). The GEF combines guidance from the SecDef to combatant commanders on theater security cooperation and contingency planning. The JSCP, issued by the CJCS, refines guidance provided in the GEF based on current military capabilities. It apportions limited forces and resources to combatant commanders. For both Combatant Commands and JTFs, these documents provide guidance and establish requirements for:

- Need for "inclusion and a whole of Government" approach
  - Interagency and coalition partners involvement early in planning
  - Know what Interagency organizations and agencies "bring to the fight"
- Integration of Phase 0 (current Theater Security Cooperation (TSC) activities) within a campaign plan, and linking these steady state TSC actions to contingency requirements to achieve strategic end states. Linking ongoing campaign planning and phase 0 activities to authorities, approvals, funding and sourcing (contingency and execution sourcing) is key to success.
- Address short term contingency responses within the context of a broader, longer term theater campaign strategy.
- Synchronize theater plans with global plans – requires cross GCC coordination.
- Organization. Avoid internal HQ "stovepipes" (J3 and J5) – a common problem.

4.5 Directing and Monitoring.

Every command that we visit has some type of an operations center, usually called a Joint Operations Center (JOC) with dedicated manning focused on developing and maintaining situational awareness for the commander and broader staff within the current operations event horizon. These JOCs typically, have robust communication, information display and management resources. They bring together representation from across the staff, components, and other stakeholders, and assume a great deal of the responsibility for directing and monitoring operations for the commander.



Directing:

- Commanders provide guidance, intent and direction to subordinates through mission-type orders. We observe the effectiveness of an orders section within the JOC that has the requisite experience and authorities to release orders in a timely manner. Ensuring transmittal via standard message channels to proper addressees, verifying receipt, and standardizing control and dissemination of both incoming and outgoing orders is essential to the performance of this section.
- Verbal Orders of the Commanding Officer (VOCO) are another means of directing operations. We occasionally see staffs, and subordinate staffs, struggle with verbal orders given by the commander at venues such as the daily update brief without written direction, uncertainty regarding whether a commander's comment is guidance, intent, or authoritative direction to take action may arise. A well-functioning orders section within the JOC is used by many staffs to reduce this uncertainty and rapidly provide authoritative direction to subordinates via FRAGOs.
- We've seen the value of having a resident planning capacity in the JOC to solve emergent challenges in the current operations event horizon. Absent such a planning capacity, the future operations section (e.g., J35) is given this task, which pulls its focus away from its important future operations event horizon planning function into current operations. This directly reduces the overall headquarters ability to stay ahead of the fight and appropriately set conditions for subordinate success through proactive planning.
- As discussed earlier, having defined mission approval authorities (who can say yes or no for the commander) in advance is a best practice that is vital to the success of JOCs, especially during crisis or time sensitive operations. Decentralized authorities, defined and rehearsed in advance, allow the commander's decision cycle to spin quicker and build trust and confidence in the organization.
- Many JOCs have not codified Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), resulting in reduced efficiency, effectiveness and confusion among watch standers regarding

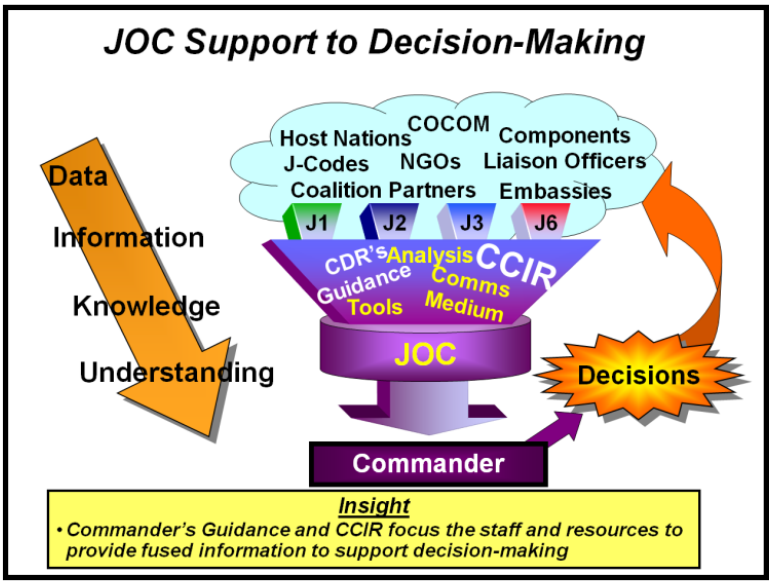
their duties and responsibilities. JOC performance is enhanced when an SOP defining responsibilities by billet, reporting requirements, authorities, order formats, story board templates, and JOC displays have been produced and are understood across the JOC floor.

- Staff battle drills based on likely contingencies should be developed and rehearsed to minimize confusion, facilitate simultaneous action across JOC sections, and enable the directing function to proceed rapidly during crises. Understanding and rehearsing the flow of information with some sense of urgency (e.g., “What do I know? What do I need to know? Who else needs to know? Did I tell them?”) - with a sense of urgency is critical to successful operations. Battle drill execution is an “All Hands” event for the JOC.
- Within the Current Operations (CUOPs) event horizon, we find it extremely beneficial for the staff to develop and build tools to assist the commander in his decision-making process. These tools can take the form of a decision support matrix or template. A decision support matrix will prioritize and evaluate a list of options for the commander. Further, it will provide the implications of each decision. For example, when the staff brings forward a decision requesting the commander to change the Force Protection Condition (FPCON) level, the commander most likely may not understand each of the measures within a particular FPCON level. By providing an easily understood matrix laying out the options, the commander will be able to make a timely, better informed decision, while at the same time avoiding any unintended impacts. A point to consider is that while some matrices may only require specific functional expertise such as an FPCON change, other decision support matrices, such as those designed for operational decision-making will require a broader staff input to ensure an overall situational understanding by the commander.
- JOC synchronization. Whether as part of a formal shift change brief or as a separate event, we find that synchronization briefings are used by many successful JOCs to rapidly build situational awareness throughout the center. The key elements of successful synchronization include: a review of resources and priorities, an update, by JOC section, of items working and priorities as well as guidance and priorities of the Chief of Operations (CHOPS). This synchronization will identify any potential conflicts in operations and resources that may occur within the current operations event horizon.
- The daily update brief. This event has different names depending on the command (e.g., Commander’s Update Assessment / Battle Update Assessment (CUA / BUA)), however the methodology is the same. The brief is given to the commander. It is an opportunity to brief the commander on what he needs and wants to know, and to receive guidance. Finding out what the commander requires is part of the art in building the daily update brief. The JOC typically has the responsibility for collating the various elements of this brief, ensuring standardization, and ensuring that it remains on track during presentation. We find a best practice to be ensuring that briefers address the “So what?” of their portions of the brief, contributing to situational awareness and facilitating movement of the decision cycle, vice just presenting information.

Monitoring:

Joint headquarters monitor the environment consisting of friendly, adversary, and other elements of the operational environment within their area of responsibility (AOR). The JOC is often the focal point for monitoring and reporting relevant information to the commander and for sharing it across the broader staff.

- Planners help develop Commander's Critical Information Requirements (CCIRs) during the planning process. Proactive attention to CCIRs is essential for JOC (and other staff) personnel to focus limited resources in support of commander's decision-making.[26] To promote awareness and attention to the commander's information requirements, we recommend prominent display of CCIRs within the JOC. We also recommend posting current CCIRs on the current operations section of the JTF portal to facilitate component awareness of CCIRs.



- The Common Operational Picture, or COP, and other JOC displays are also important in building situational awareness. A simple tool to use in assessing the effectiveness of the JOC displays is to ask whether an understanding of the current situation can be gained after only a short time reviewing the JOC displays. The displays should be tailored to the commander's needs and preferences and, if possible, shared electronically with the broader staff, components, and higher HQ. Having standardized COP displays with the correct decision-making products, to include ramification of making the decision, will enhance the commander's decision-making.

- Liaison elements can assist in situational understanding, but should not be the conduit for subordinate unit reporting. These liaison elements assist in monitoring operations primarily by addressing their commanders' issues, and will likely spend most of their time in the planning area where they can provide their respective components' perspectives and ideas to enhance planning. Liaison elements should be armed with knowledge of the capabilities of their parent command. Current operations desk officers should be responsible for maintenance of communications and reporting with subordinate and adjacent commands.

- We see JOCs struggle with notification and in determining what constitutes a reportable event, other than CCIR triggers. One very effective tool used by some JOCs is a "notification criteria" matrix that spells out who needs to be notified of

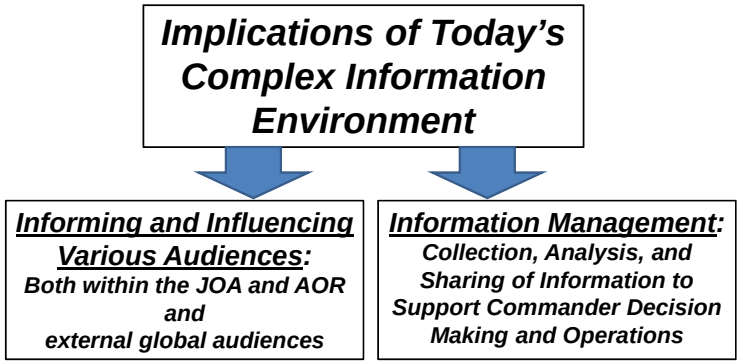
[26] We discuss CCIRs more fully in section 3.2.

various events outside the rhythm of the scheduled update brief. Notification criteria and the reporting chain should be clearly understood to prevent stovepiping of information or inadvertent failures in notification.

- Significant Events (SIGEVENT). SIGEVENTs should be defined, tracked, reported and monitored until all required staff action has been completed. We have seen some JOCs preemptively remove some SIGEVENTs from their “radar” before required follow-on actions have been accomplished. Once a SIGEVENT has been closed, it should be archived for record purposes and to assist the intelligence and assessment functions.
- Plans Hand-Off. We broadly see the need for a more formal hand-off of plans for execution from FUOPS (J35) to CUOPS (J33). A best practice is to have a FUOPS planner brief the entire JOC on plans entering the current operations event horizon. This practice helps mitigate the natural seam between the J35 and J33, and results in improved execution of the plan as monitoring and directing occur in the JOC.
- Requests for Information (RFI). We find excellent results in JTF staffs that have two RFI managers: one in the J2 managing intelligence RFIs, and another on the JOC floor managing other RFIs. By using a sharepoint portal page, the JOC RFI manager provides visibility on the questions, answers, and identification of those providing answers to the broader organization. This information sharing function is more important than merely allowing requestors to get information. RFIs, however, should not take the place of routine staff coordination. A priority should be affixed to each RFI submitted. Many staffs find that tracking the commander’s RFIs through this same system to be effective.

5. Information

Our military operates in a very complex and daunting information environment. It affects how we communicate both in the JOA and AOR, and with the many external, global audiences. It also affects how we collect, analyze, and share information within the force to support decision-making and conduct operations.



We have gained many insights on how commanders and staffs are adapting to this complex and ever-changing information environment. They have developed new approaches, processes, and some tools to address both the orchestration of information dissemination across the interrelated areas of information operations and public affairs as part of the strategic communication effort, and the challenge of managing information within the force to support the commander's decision-making.

While not explicitly covered in this document, another information-related area distinct from the two mentioned above is in the cyberspace domain. While Computer Network Operations (CNO) is a subset of information operations, we find that most headquarters align this capability more closely to their targeting than their inform and influence process.

5.1 Information – to Inform and Influence.

The need for a Communication Strategy within the HQ (i.e., a strategy to inform and influence the many target audiences)

Strategic Communication is the foundation upon which all communication actions are built. As detailed extensively in the JWFC Commander's Handbook for Strategic Communication and Communication Strategy (V.3 24 June 2010), there is an undeniable contribution by the military to the United States' strategic message, but the military alone cannot present that message. It is an interorganizational effort that spans the full breadth of the USG. Our messages must not only be nested with higher headquarters and overall USG strategy, but also provide guidance to subordinate units. This strategy of communicating the commander's message must be synthesized with the commander's guidance, then promulgated to the staff and subordinates. In every case, it must be commander driven, support the broader USG strategic communication effort and be supporting of and supported by subordinate units' actions and deeds at all levels. This ensures we do exactly what we say we will, strengthens our credibility and improves our ability to inform and influence the audiences of our choosing. We have gained many key insights from observing operational headquarters as they have developed several effective ways to implement this Communication Strategy at the Operational level of war.

Informing and Influencing:

One of the greatest challenges facing our military commanders at every level in the information age is that of informing and influencing the numerous and disparate audiences in, and often beyond the operating area. We are faced with adversaries and enemies that will tell their version of the story to an intently listening global and local audience. We need to be proactive at broadcasting our own story in both word and action with accuracy, credibility, and speed to the correct audience to be successful. We refer to this contest in which competing entities attempt to inform and / or influence audiences as the "Race of the Narratives."

Inform and Influence Activities as an Integral Part of Mission success

The purpose of military action is, in every case, to affect the behavior of various groups of human beings in the mission environment toward some greater purpose. They also know that mission successes depend, among other things, on successfully "Informing" the decisions of those who are supporters (or potential supporters) of the aims of the command's military operations, and on "Influencing" the decisions of those who are, or could be, implacable foes and irreconcilable adversaries.

The Art of "Campaigning" to Inform and Influence
by Brigadier General Huba Wass de Czege
Small Wars Journal, September 5, 2010

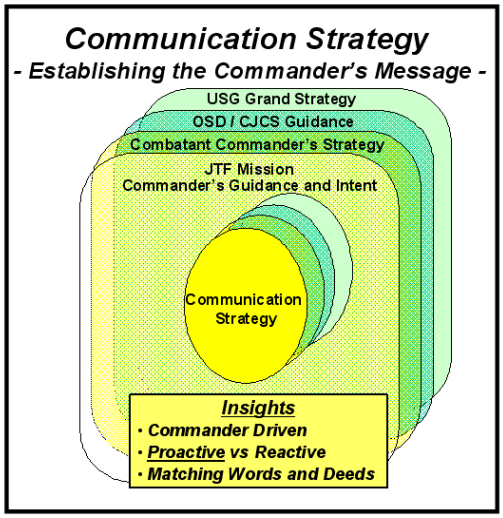
As noted by the unofficial, developed definitions in the figure, the purposes of inform and influence activities differ and necessitate a tailored strategy to ensure our words and actions are properly aligned. Within the AOR or JOA, and even within the global environment, informing and influencing the many foreign audiences' beliefs, attitudes and actions is a critical element to successful operations. We also have a large domestic audience that is watching and listening to our every move; we must have the capability to effectively inform them as well. These audiences, foreign and domestic, will be in play regardless where we operate.

Inform and Influence

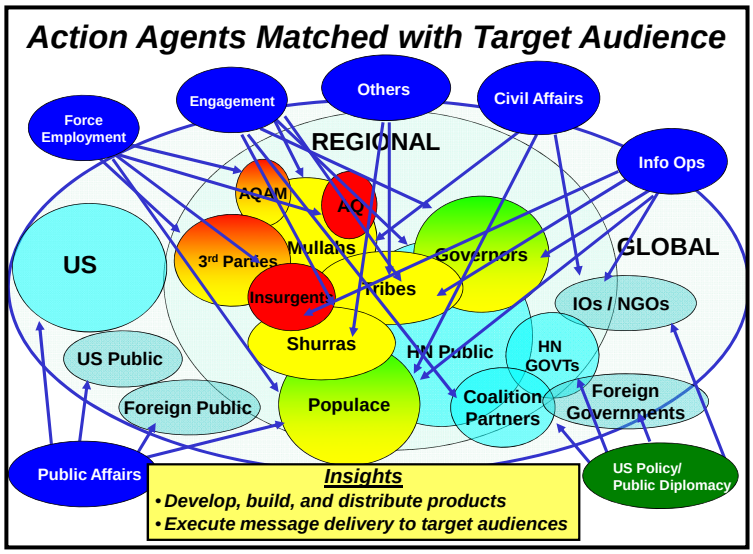
Inform: Provide information to domestic and foreign audiences to accurately describe operations.
Influence: Effectively change attitudes, beliefs, and ultimately behavior of foreign friendly, neutral, adversary, and enemy audiences to support operations.

Insights:

- It is essential to have an integrated process bringing together all means of communication and information delivery. This communication strategy must support the commander's overall strategy, and inform, and be informed by, the broader USG strategic communication efforts. This strategy:
  - Is commander driven
  - Is proactive vice reactive in design
  - Matches "words and deeds."
- An effective communication strategy aligns inform and influence activities with the overall mission objectives, strategy, and intent. It guides the actions of subordinates by articulating the desired effects, overarching themes, and responsibilities



- The two functions, <u>influencing</u> the decisions of adversaries and <u>informing</u> the decisions of supporters, are distinctly different -- with different objectives, different defining rationales and different operating rules and processes.[27] A communication strategy leverages all means to inform and influence the numerous audiences by laying out the "ends" (i.e., those themes that support the overall strategy), the "ways" by which the commander desires to inform and influence the diverse target audiences, and the specific "means" to get the message out (including both empowerment and in some cases, restrictions on subordinates). The incorporation of well-conceived themes as part of the strategy directly supports mission-type orders by providing the framework for empowered (and distributed) messaging by subordinates to dominate the information domain.



- Themes are those overarching main ideas that support the overall strategy. These themes are relatively enduring and provide the necessary direction for subordinates to agilely operate and communicate within the information environment without detailed, continuous direction. Messages are specific words or actions targeted at specific audiences in support of the broader themes. These messages are continually assessed and recast, and must be tailored to each audience – to either simply inform in some cases (e.g., the domestic audience) or to influence a specific perception, belief, and behavior in others.
- Traditionally, we have relied on Public Affairs and Information Operations (principally Military Information Support to Operations (MISO) assets) to send tailored messages to the various target audiences. However, our operational commanders realize that everyone who has contact with the target population sends a message. We have seen the value in using every possible means (what we term "action agents") to get out the messages in both word and actions.
- We all recognize that on occasion, "actions speak louder than words." This linkage to actions must be resident within the communication strategy planning and execution structure.
- There are cases where the higher headquarters will restrict messaging to either a designated audience or on a specific theme due to the sensitivity of the message or

[27] Good discussion in The Art of "Campaigning" to Inform and Influence by Brigadier General Huba Wass de Czege, Small Wars Journal, September 5, 2010

the need to prevent any form of information fratricide (i.e., different messages being passed). We find that this is normally the exception but still possible.

- Engagement has been recognized as a key supporting capability for conducting the commander's communication strategy (CCS). Engagement in this sense is not lethal combat between opposing forces. It is sometimes also referred to as Key Leader Engagement (KLE) and generally means an arrangement to meet between a member of the joint force and a person or organization that is influential within the Operating Area. Engagements can include: senior leader engagements, soldier engagements, mass engagements, civil-military operations, and any of the many activities of subordinate commands which interact with target audiences. With multiple action agents engaging Target Audiences (TAs), it is important to ensure the alignment of engagement efforts. Higher headquarters (HHQ) serves as an appropriate coordinator for TAs and ensures proper frequency of engagement and that specific objectives are aligned vertically and horizontally with subordinate commands' actions. Simplified "sphere of influence" matrices allow a reference mechanism for leaders to determine alignment and general synchronization of engagement efforts across the operational environment. Engagement cells ensure all aspects of an engagement are planned to include biographical information of the TA, the results of past engagements (from post-engagement debriefings or summaries), recent activities of concern to the TA, current observations, activities, and intelligence reporting on the TA. Finally, a post-engagement debrief is conducted to ensure results are recorded for the next iteration.

> Engagement: Activities to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence their emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups and individuals, in order to collect intelligence, develop relationships in support of commander's intent, and obtain mutually satisfying outcomes within constraints existing in partnered nation's cultural belief system.

- Assessment is key to an effective communication strategy. The broader staff assessment of progress towards the campaign objectives informs not only how operations are conducted, but also how the staff messages to target audiences. Changes in messaging in turn feed the assessment process as the staff attempts to discern how its actions are being perceived by the various audiences. While some assessment measures in the lethal realm are quite straightforward, we find that assessment in the cognitive realm can be slow and often inconclusive, as the ability to assess thoughts and feelings can be quite difficult.

Best Practices:

- Headquarters are including key staff members (J3, J5 and J9 with PAO, StratCom and IO / J39) in a permanent communication strategy development organization, guided by the commander, and inclusive with subordinates and other stakeholders. This team maintains continuous situational awareness of the information environment, and is able to quickly adjust the communication strategy as needed

based on proximity to the commander. We have observed the Chief of Staff to be the most appropriate and effective proponent of this team due to the participation level of the staff principals. We have seen numerous names for this body, but Communication Strategy Cell (CSC) seems appropriate.

- We have seen several commands establish separate cells to coordinate their inform and influence activities. For example, one cell focuses on inform functions with Congressional Delegation (CODEL) visits and International organizations and media, while another cell focuses on engagement internal to the JOA to inform and influence foreign audiences.
- The staff role in facilitating the communication strategy: The efficient use of Boards, Bureaus, Centers, Cells and Working Groups within the established battle rhythm ensures effective crosstalk and coordination with Operational Planning Teams. B2C2WG / OPT processes are a powerful means to develop, promulgate and integrate communication actions within the planning and execution process. We've seen most of the joint headquarters utilizing a "communication strategy" working group (CSWG) process to integrate and guide the functional-level working groups (e.g., IO working groups, public affairs (PA) staff meetings, Civil-Military Operations (CMO) groups). This CSWG is informed by subordinate units and the interagency stakeholders, and supports planning across the current operations, future operations, and future plans event horizons. It enables better coordination of messaging to all audiences within the information environment - friendly, neutral, adversarial and enemy. The resulting strategy both supports and is supported by lower echelons of the command.
- Depending on the mission, a "Communication" LOE may be appropriate. In relatively non-lethal environments or in a COIN setting when non-lethal influence campaigns are required, this LOE can serve as the overarching umbrella that supports and is supported by the other LOEs as necessary (e.g., Governance, Security, Development LOEs.)
- Pre-mission communication awareness training: Small units going on tactical assignments benefit from communication awareness training conducted at pre-mission briefings. We have seen some commands develop tactical messages based on feedback from the field and then incorporate these updates into their latest tactical briefings. The CSC briefs and trains project teams on tactical message delivery with inputs from multiple staff sections and interagency partners.

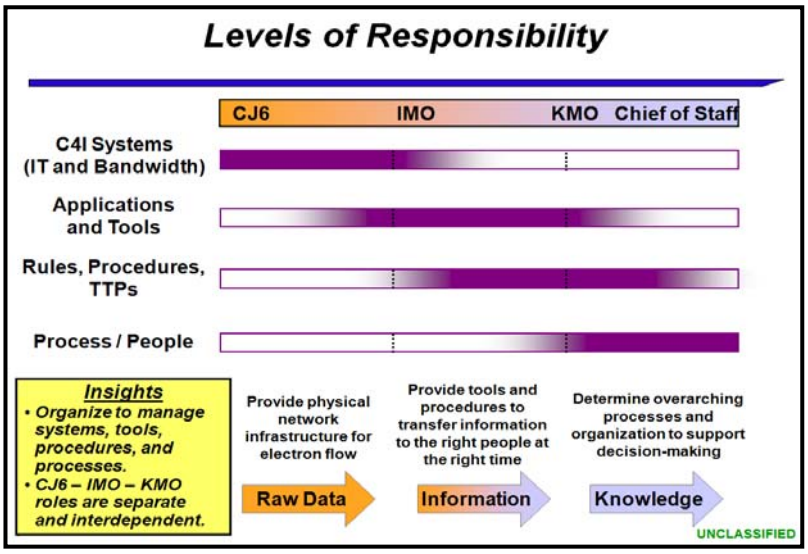
5.2 Information Management in the Force.

Information / Knowledge Management (IM / KM) continues to be one of the greatest challenges for our joint forces. We see IM / KM involving people, processes, and technology. Suggest you think through the aspects of IM / KM focusing on inclusion and information sharing as you develop how to support commander decision-making and the execution of the mission.

> Information Management: The function of managing an organization's information resources by the handling of knowledge acquired by one or many different individuals and organizations in a way that optimizes access by all who have a share in that knowledge or a right to that knowledge. (JP 1-02. Source: JP 3-0)
>
> Knowledge Management extends the value of IM with a process for managing a team learning environment that provides knowledge- based information products to decision makers to create or increase shared understanding. (Draft JP 3-0)

Insights and best practices:

- Commander's guidance and CCIRs focus the staff and resources to provide fused information to support decision-making. CCIRs serve as control measures for KM by establishing collecting, processing, analysis, and disseminating priorities. Use CCIRs to prioritize flow of information.
- Take charge of Knowledge Management. It is Commander and Operator's business supported by technology and is too important to be left to an individual J-code staff.
- Delineate authority and responsibility for the different aspects of knowledge management, information management, and the associated tools and C4I systems. See "Levels of Responsibility" graph on the right.



- Task the COS with the responsibility for KM and designate an operationally-focused (JOC experienced) Knowledge Management Officer (KMO) to work for the COS as his surrogate to oversee and manage the KM processes. We've seen the ACOS supervising the KMO in many commands with a focus on oversight on disciplining B2C2WGs and battle rhythm.
- Clearly define the headquarters' decision-making processes before determining the information management "means and tools" (See section on decision cycle). Consider both physical and virtual collaboration means to conduct battle rhythm events – these can run the gamut from physical meetings and phone calls to virtual means such as Secure Video Teleconferencing (SVTC), chat rooms, and other collaborative tool suites. Retain the tried and proven use of a scribe to record key information and decisions. Post these summaries on the portal.

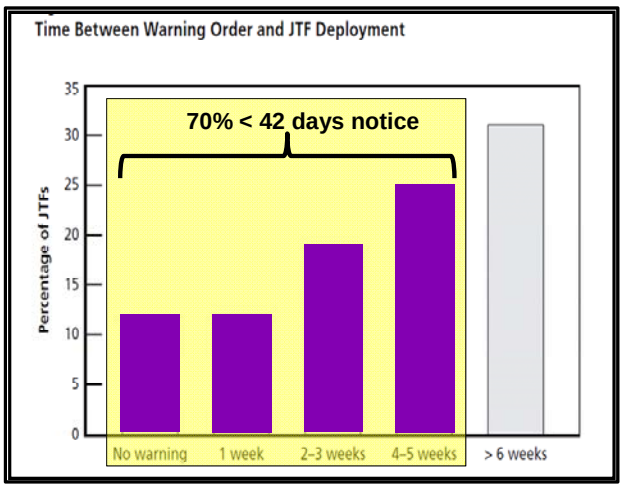
- Use an operator-friendly Web page / portal as the primary digital means to share information. Combine it with simple “push and pull” information protocols remembering that simply posting information does not guarantee reception of that information. Ensure information can be easily inserted, found, and retrieved on the web page / portal. Think through how to collaborate with others to enhance assessment, planning, and execution.
- Identify up front the required communications networks based on information sharing requirements (e.g., CENTRIXS, SIPR or Unclassified as primary network). Develop processes to share information with interagency and coalition partners not on your communication network.
- Develop an environment that fosters a “responsibility to share” versus a “need to know” mentality with non-traditional partners (e.g., interagency and host-nation partners) to better support decision-making while accounting for the risks associated with the potential of compromise on the various networks.
- Develop procedures for RFI management and foreign disclosure within the command. Develop sufficient capacity to enable foreign disclosure and information sharing with your partners. This includes ensuring that you have foreign disclosure officers and training foreign disclosure representatives on the staff. Ensure that key information sharing procedures are understood throughout the staff.
- Carefully select tools that are user friendly. Recognize the impact of personnel turnover and training requirements. An adequate Information Technology (IT) tool well understood and used by your staff is much more effective than a perfect, continually changing IT tool that is too complex to intuitively understand and use.
- Develop and refine KM processes and procedures through an integrated KM working group (KMWG) led by the KMO and comprised of J-code KM representatives that report to a KM Decision Board chaired by the COS. Task the KMWG to maintain currency and relevance of the commander’s and staff’s knowledge assets.
- Disseminate approved KM processes through an authoritative Knowledge Management Plan (KMP). The KMP should define the responsibilities of the KM organization, and provide guidance on how to gain and maintain situational awareness, share information, and collaborate with higher, lower, and adjacent organizations throughout the decision cycle. Periodically revise the KMP to reflect improvements to the command’s processes as they are developed over time. Be prepared for change; do not allow your KM plan to become stagnant and not stay up with your decision-making processes.

6. Forming the Headquarters

6.1 JTF Headquarters Forming, Manning and Training Challenges.

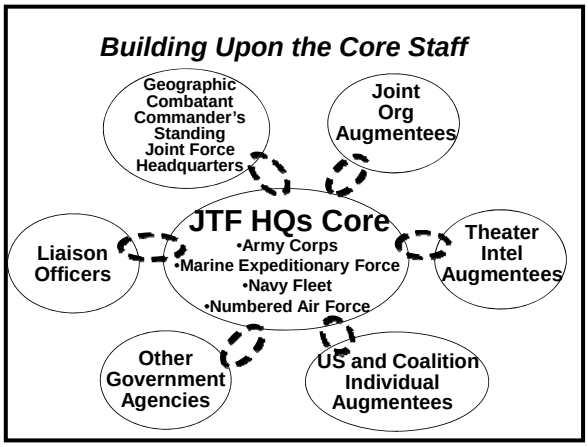
Joint Task Forces are formed to fill the needs of either an emergent crisis (e.g., HA / DR), or an enduring, standing or rotational requirement (e.g., JTF-N, OIF, OEF). In either case they all have many of the same common challenges. This section addresses insights on some of the common challenges of forming a JTF HQ and maintaining readiness.

The preferred option for organizing a JTF HQ is to form it around a combatant command's Service component HQ or the Service component's existing subordinate HQ (such as a numbered Fleet, numbered Air Force, Marine Expeditionary Force, or Army corps) that includes an established command structure. In some cases, the CCDR may designate the standing joint force headquarters (core element) as the core HQ element and augment it with additional Service functional experts.[28]



Newly forming JTF HQ: It is common knowledge that we are in a time of high OPTEMPO. We're seeing the common practice by GCC commanders to stand up JTFs to conduct required operations as they arise. These JTFs have often had to adapt their organization and training for missions that they had not fully anticipated. The figure on the right shows that 70 percent of JTFs were required to deploy with about 42 days of notice or less.[29] They also had significant shortfalls in many of the key specialties needed to accomplish those missions. Gaining the personnel needed to augment the deployed headquarters often proved to be more of an issue than was the ability to move an existing headquarters to a contingency.

Insights:



- Not all JTFs are the same. They all have different missions. Their operational mission requirements should drive the JTF headquarters' organization and manning.
- Inclusion. The tendency for newly formed JTF HQ is to simply survive the almost overwhelming challenges of forming, deploying, planning, and providing direction to subordinates. That said, we've seen a best practice of early reach-out to partners (particularly our interagency and multinational partners) and the various supporting

[28] JP 3-33, Joint Task Force HQ, Feb 2007.
[29] Rand Study. ISBN/EAN: 9780833043993 dated 2010

DOD agencies and commands during the initial formation of these headquarters – both through commander interaction and exchange of liaison elements – all with the intent of inclusion. A positive command climate, logical organizational design, and solid internal staff procedures are all necessary to achieve unified action.

- JTF headquarters personnel will work in the interagency and multinational arena. This has implications for training, required expertise, and organizational considerations addressed further below. However, when building upon the core staff it is not uncommon for staff sections to already have relationships built with various external agencies in the course of normal duties. Leveraging these existing relationships will speed inclusion with other stakeholders when forming a new JTF.
- Manning will be a challenge. The joint manning document development, validation, and fill process is tedious and slow. The designated Service or Theater SOC HQ will normally provide the core of the joint headquarters and be augmented in accordance with mission requirements. However, the commander is critical in shaping this based on mission requirements and duration. This augmentation will come in the form of both joint plug enablers and individual augmentees from within theater and CONUS. The core headquarters must be prepared to "go it alone" initially with key support by the GCC's Standing Joint Force Headquarters (SJFHQ) and individual augmentation from within theater (both GCC HQ and component HQ personnel). Reduced manning is a reality for all HQ based on the increased number of JTFs formed over the last nine years with a limited number of personnel to fill all of the requirements. Combining functions, periodic validation of JMDs and seeking non-standard sourcing solutions are mitigating measures we have seen work with some success.
- Additional manning challenges. Some JTF HQ will work with, or for, coalition partners such as under the NATO construct as part of a Crisis Establishment (CE) manning document. Individual augmentees will join the staff from various NATO countries. Although there is a training requirement prior to arrival, standardized content and enforcement of that training can be a challenge. Additionally, the length of each Individual Augment tour, based on standards established and national caveats, will ensure this process is managed very closely to prevent a gap in capability. Understanding these potential gaps or overlaps in training can help to streamline the entire process.
- Key billets. Upfront, the commander will need to pursue getting some key billets filled with the right people. Some of these are: Deputy Commander, Chief of Staff, Political Advisor (POLAD),[30] Command Senior Enlisted Leader, principal staff officers, cultural advisors (a new best practice seen in current JTFs), Knowledge Management Officer (KMO), and key Coalition embedded staff officers. By-name requests from the commander are not uncommon when considering key individual billets and responsibilities. Existing personal relationships and building trust and confidence quickly can be a factor when developing emergent JTFs. When working with interagency and multi-nationals such as NATO partners, consider how to

[30] Political Advisors (POLADs) are experienced State Department officers (several of whom are flag-rank equivalent) detailed as personal advisors to leading U.S. military leaders / commanders to provide policy support regarding the diplomatic and political aspects of the commanders' military responsibilities.

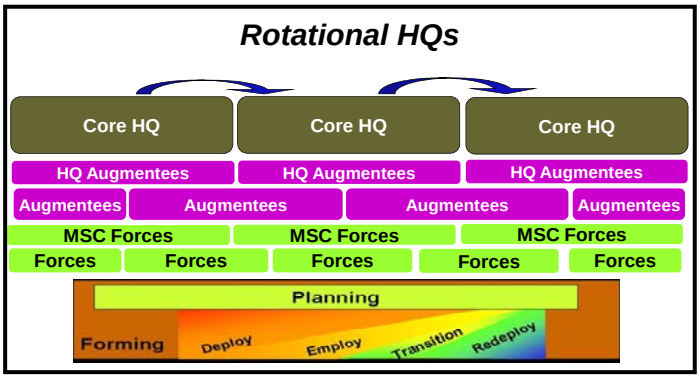
influence the personnel selection process, maintain a current and accurate NATO billet description, and ensure personnel meet the job description qualifications.

- Different Service cultures. We've continually observed what many would call common knowledge, that our Military Services have different cultures. The various Service augmentees will come to the JTF HQ with their Service viewpoints and understanding as it relates to expectations of their staff duties and responsibilities. We find that the Services also have unique skill sets in terms of being more suited for filling the different staff principal positions.
- There are numerous enablers from the Services, USSOCOM, USSTRATCOM, USTRANSCOM, and USJFCOM available to assist a joint HQ. These enablers may not always be pushed to the JTF HQ; the JTF leadership may need to request their support.
- USJFCOM currently has several joint enabling capabilities that are mission tailorable, trained and ready for rapid deployment to support the warfighter, and easily accessible through the USJFCOM Joint Enabling Capabilities Command (JECC). Those designated and authorized for rapid deployment by the USJFCOM Commander include: Joint Communications Support Element (JCSE), Joint Public Affairs Support Element (JPASE), intelligence and targeting Quick Reaction Teams (from Joint Intelligence Operations Center (JIOC)) and functional staff subject matter experts. USJFCOM can also support operational requirements with the: Joint Warfare Analysis Center (JWAC), Joint Personal Recovery Agency (JPRA), Joint Center for Operational Analysis (JCOA), and the Joint Fires Integration and Interoperability Team (JFIIT). Additionally, trainers from both JWFC and the Special Operations Command for USJFCOM (SOCJFCOM) can provide tailored training assistance.
- Training responsibility. Establishing, manning and maintaining a training section within the JTF staff is essential. Develop an SOP and ensure nesting of training requirements and responsibilities of not only U.S. forces, but multi-national (e.g., NATO), Interagency, and other external stakeholders as required. Typically the pre-deployment training is well understood and socialized, however, reception and sustainment training can be more of a challenge.
- Reachback has both benefits and limitations. The JTF HQ needs to balance a forward deployed concept and its challenges in terms of footprint, size, fidelity, and feasibility of support, with that of potential reachback and its limitations in terms of situational understanding and responsiveness.

<u>Enduring (standing and rotational) JTFs:</u>

Standing (semi-permanent) JTFs provide Combatant Commanders an operational level capability to further long-term objectives. One example is USNORTHCOM's JTF North, which has existed for over ten years and supports U.S. law enforcement agencies in counter drug and counter narcoterrorism operations. These kinds of JTFs provide a long term, operational means to further theater security cooperation and other USG goals. These standing JTFs implement persistent manning, equipping, and training programs that provide continuity and stability to contribute to the GCC theater objectives.

Rotational JTF HQs such as those in Afghanistan and earlier in Iraq also provide significant capability. However, they have unique challenges. The continuing rotation of personnel, combined with unit rotations, can impact overall HQ proficiency. We normally see a period of decreased proficiency both immediately following "core" HQ rotations and after periods of high individual augmentee turnovers.



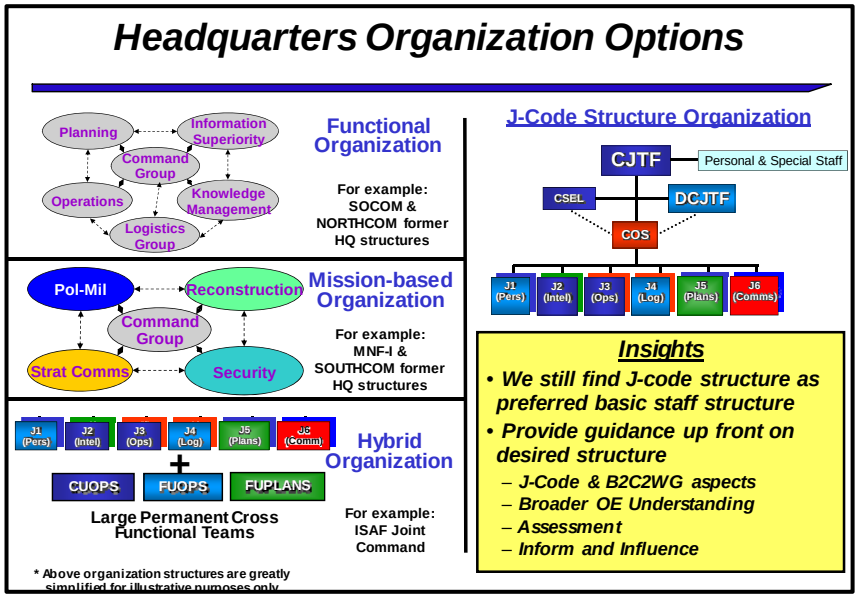
Insights:

- Without exception, one of the best means of minimizing a decrease in proficiency of an incoming rotational core headquarters is through the proactive involvement of the in-place organization. We're finding that the in-place headquarters are fully sharing and passing on their insights, experiences, and lessons learned to their follow-on headquarters. They are supporting both preparatory academic training and exercises, while also fully supporting pre-deployment site surveys and visits.
- Individual training is still relatively weak. A small percentage of individual augmentees, and even members of the core staff, can take advantage of the many resources available for increasing their proficiency prior to deployment. Although many individual augmentees have multiple deployments and extensive experience, understanding that the operational environment is in a constant state of change lends itself to some level of training to bridge the gap between deployments. Joint Knowledge Online (JKO) is a good resource for individual and minimal collective training[31].
- The Joint Task Force HQ training guide is a great starting point for basic information. Specific technical training or more general training is also available. JTF leadership can identify these kinds of programs as prerequisites to their GCC headquarters for subsequent dissemination to force providers for necessary preparation of augmentees prior to deployment. The operational headquarters have also instituted an on-site reception and training program for augmentees.
- Predeployment training of core staff. We've observed that the ongoing USJFCOM Joint Warfighting Center mission rehearsal exercise (MRX) series and Service programs successfully support the unit commander's training program in getting the unit to a "high walk – low run" level of readiness prior to deployment. Two shortfalls that we see prior to deployment. One is the timing of the regular rotation of staff personnel in key positions occurring after the MRX, and a second is a lack of identification and participation in the training of individual augmentees who will subsequently deploy and be part of the JTF staff. This prevents the JTF staff from fully training as a team prior to deployment. We see a best practice in commanders and key staffs continuing to work to ensure augmentees are identified and participate in predeployment training, and key personnel moves are made prior to the MRX.

[31] http://jko.jfcom.mil

6.2 Headquarters Staff Organization, Staff Integration, and Battle Rhythm.

This section addresses insights in headquarters staff organization, integration, and battle rhythm. One comment up front: We have seen over time a tendency toward building very large headquarters staffs. However, there is value in keeping the headquarters "right sized." Large headquarters require more internal coordination. The requirements of this internal coordination may slow the movement of the decision cycle and overshadow external coordination and output, reducing effectiveness. Balance the penchant for increasing headquarters size with recognition of the challenges of a large staff.

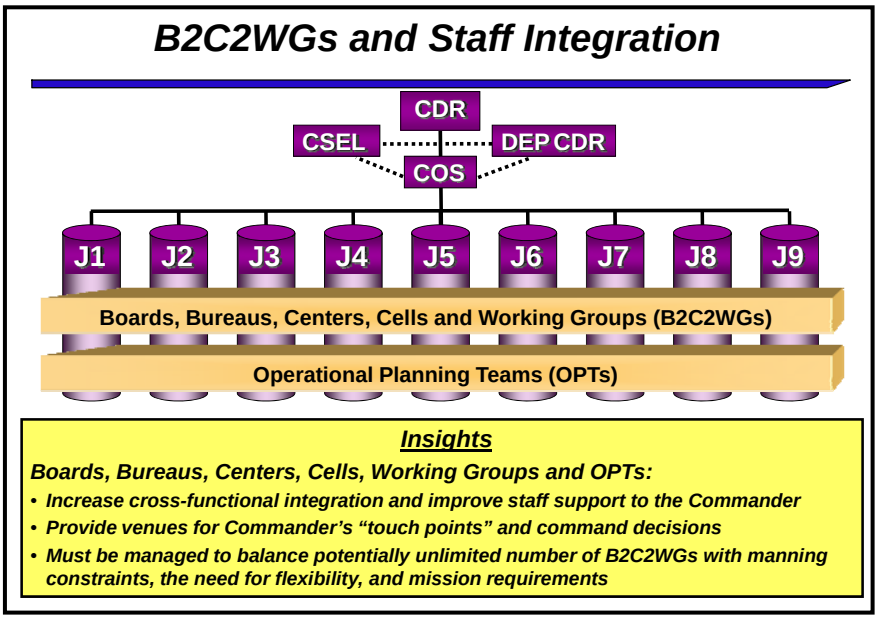


Staff Organization:

- J-Code Structure: We find J-Code organization as the preferred basic staff structure for a joint headquarters. We find that a J-Code structure allows for organization around a well-understood organizational methodology that gives the ability to speak a common language, quickly facilitate the infusion of staff augments, employ OPTs efficiently, (and) communicate better internally and with external stakeholders. As a basic organizing structure, the J-Code model provides a common reference point for broad functional expertise, staff oversight and accountability (e.g., logistics, intelligence). Staffs organized around other basic models, for example functionally, by mission set, cross-functionally or event horizons, tend to struggle with the administrative, control and accountability responsibilities that the "vertical" J-Code structure provides. Perhaps most important, the J-Code structure provides staff members an "address" that is readily-recognizable across the Services and, increasingly, by our coalition and interagency partners, and thus enhances our commonality and reduces barriers to cooperation and collaboration.

- Functional organizations: Some staffs that we visit organize around "functional" structures other than the J-Code model as a basis. These structures were created to better focus on specific mission areas, such as Theater Security Cooperation, and to improve unity of effort with our partners. We observe, however, that functional organization presents significant interoperability drawbacks, both in steady-state interaction with higher, subordinate and lateral headquarters staffs, but especially during crisis operations. Our recommendation for a J-Code basis for staff organization is partly based on its ability to support both steady-state and crisis operations.

- Special Staff and Subject Matter Experts: Regardless of the baseline organization of the staff, the importance of special staff (and often, “one deep”) positions cannot be overstated. These critical positions (e.g., legal, POLAD, Chaplain) are often comprised of one person, but can provide invaluable input to the commander and the staff. Establishing a process to include (and where necessary supplement) these key positions into cross-functional venues is a key element of effectively integrating a staff HQ and providing the best support to commander’s decision-making.



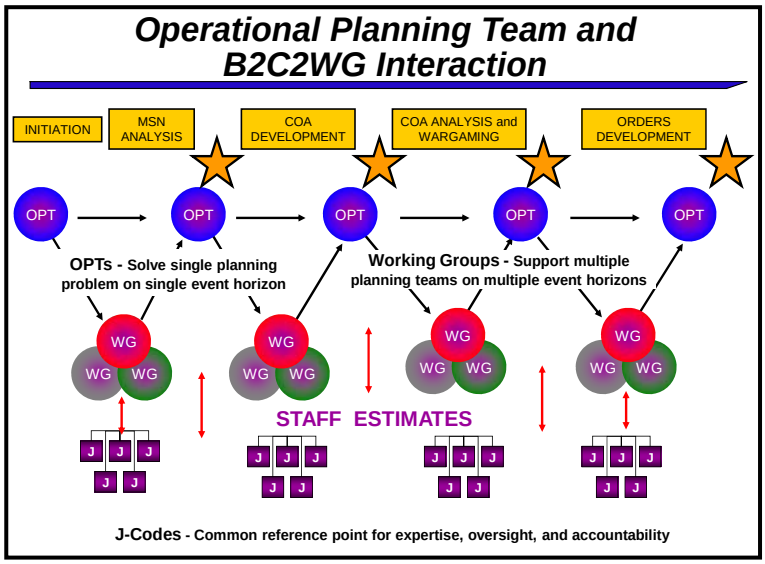
Staff Integration:

- Boards, Bureaus, Centers, Cells, Working Groups (B2C2WGs), and Planning Teams. We see the extensive but discriminate, tailored use of these integrating elements in every joint headquarters regardless of size or basic organizational structure. These integrating structures provide the forums for bringing together functional expertise from across the staff, and from external stakeholders, in supporting the elements of the commander’s decision cycle. They make staff coordination more routine, facilitate monitoring, assessment and planning, and allow for the management of current and future operations and future plans. We also see many headquarters leverage virtual collaboration tools to facilitate inclusiveness at these venues.

- Boards are created for the purpose of gaining a decision, or guidance; they facilitate the movement of the decision cycle. Boards play a central role in organizing staff activities toward an output that furthers the mission - a decision to continue, reprioritize, redirect, reassess, etc. We find the most effective staffs organize their monitoring, assessing, and planning efforts, and supporting B2C2WGs, around boards - facilitating commander-centric leadership.

- Most staffs use some form of center as a cross-functional integrating structure - the most frequent example is the Joint Operations Center, or JOC, responsible for monitoring, assessing, planning, directing and communicating within the current operations event horizon (typically from the present to between 72 and 96 hours). These centers are enduring, with dedicated manning and facilities, and typically contain liaison officers from subordinate and other external organizations. Despite classification challenges, many headquarters are able to include coalition and host nation representation in their JOCs to great advantage.

- We also see most staffs utilize <u>working groups</u>, with membership from multiple J-Codes, to provide analysis of a particular purpose or function to multiple users. These working groups are enduring or ad hoc, and often specific to the mission. Examples of working groups that many staffs have found effective in supporting their operations include the Strategic Communication and Knowledge Management Working Groups among others more oriented to their specific missions. Working groups also serve as excellent venues for collaboration with other "whole of government" stakeholders.



- All the staffs we visit use planning <u>teams</u> to solve specific problems relating to a specific event horizon. These teams progress through the steps of the Joint Operation Planning Process, or JOPP, receiving expertise and analysis from various working groups, interacting with the J-Codes, in producing decision briefings for the commander. Robust, and structured, interaction between the J-Codes, working groups, and planning teams is critical in producing supportable COAs, and thoroughly vetted staff estimates, to the commander. Staffs that struggle in producing quality decision material to the commander typically have a breakdown in the interaction between the J-Codes, working groups, planning teams, and decision boards - battle rhythm design remains a critical element of staff performance.

<u>Battle Rhythm:</u>

- Battle rhythm is a continuing focus area in every joint headquarters we visit. It provides the structure for managing our most important resource - the time of the commander and staff personnel. The headquarters battle rhythm must not only integrate the decision cycle across the three event horizons, but must also account for the battle rhythms of higher and adjacent headquarters and stakeholders, all while supporting subordinate headquarters with timely direction and guidance.

- Recognize that some "battle rhythm events" may be *directed* by higher headquarters. As discussed in the decision cycle section, every Geographic Combatant Commander may be conducting concurrent operations spanning the "deep global operations," to AOR-wide operations, to focused actions in an established JOA. Many of the challenges faced by the GCC and other higher headquarters have a direct impact on the JTF battle rhythm. Even seemingly mundane things like differences in time zones may significantly affect the battle rhythm when the commander is required to brief in an SVTC that starts at 1600 in Washington but is occurs at 2300 or 0500 local in the JOA.

- The first step in creating the battle rhythm is to determine the venues for providing guidance or decision-making "touch points" desired by the commander (see figure).

- We see many headquarters successfully use a morning "CUA / BUA" deconflicted with that of higher headquarters and monitored by the entire staff and components, to provide situational awareness and common context. The most effective BUAs also provide an opportunity for components and the staff to bring issues of importance before the commander, and to receive guidance. They present the "So What" of current events rather than a history brief, and begin to frame information in the context of assessment, usually providing a recommendation for the commander. This venue is often focused on the current operations event horizon.

Battle Rhythm "Anchoring" Examples

	Commander A		Commander B	
"Touch point" Examples	Req?	Freq?	Req?	Freq?
Campaign Assessment	Yes	once / month	No	delegated
Operational Environment Assessment	Yes	twice / month	No	delegated
Commander's Update Assessment	Yes	5 times / week	Yes	once / week
Small Group with Staff Directors	No	delegated	Yes	once / week
Plans Management (Prioritization and Resourcing of planning activities)	Yes	once / week	No	delegated
Planning Guidance / Meeting with planners	Yes	once / week	Yes	once / month
Decision Boards (for planning and execution)	Yes	3 times / week	Yes	twice / month
CCIR Reporting and Wake up Criteria	Yes	as required	Yes	as required
Higher HQ Requirements	Yes	6 times / week	Yes	once / week

Considerations

- *"Touch points" are Commander-centric*
- *Commander's preferences and decision making style underpin the battle rhythm*

6

- We also see the successful use of a decision venue, such as a Commander's Plans Meeting, focused on planning problems being worked by future operations and future plans. We find this regular interaction between staff planners and the commander to be essential in keeping the priority planning efforts on track toward decision and execution.

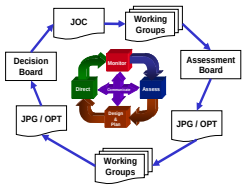
- Consider the constraints of subordinate and lateral headquarters when scheduling multiple "all players" VTCs daily. These headquarters also have battle rhythm, planning and mission requirements - we occasionally observe higher headquarters levy excessive meetings that consume components' time.

B2C2WG Arrangement in Support of Decision Making

1st

Decision Cycle

Determine Commander's "touch points" and logical arrangement of B2C2WGs



2nd

Battle Rhythm

B2C2WG arrangement within *Time Schedule*

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
Update Assessments						
VTCs		Decision Board		OPT	Cdr Circulation Time	
Cdr Circulation Time		JPG		"White Space"	Working Groups	

Simplified for example only

Insights

- *Think through decision cycle (Identify Commander's required "touch points" and logical linkages of B2C2WGs) prior to creating a battle rhythm*
- *Keep white space in battle rhythm for staff work, thinking, rest, exercise, circulation and flexibility to handle unplanned events*
- *Chief of Staff is critical in battle rhythm management*

- We observe the successful use by several joint headquarters of a daily Fragmentary Order (FRAGO)

to accomplish information sharing, guidance and intent goals. The FRAGO has benefits in reducing meeting time, enhancing coordination, and providing a record of headquarters guidance.

- The second step in creating the battle rhythm is to arrange the activities of the major supporting B2C2WGs that facilitate commander decision-making around the decision cycle in a logical manner (see previous figure). The result of this step is increasingly referred to by many staffs as the "critical path," that is, the path by which information that supports decision-making is cross-leveled, prioritized, and vetted as it progresses through the staff from concept or task to be presented to the commander for decision or guidance.
- We then see arrangement of these events on a time schedule based on the frequency required, determining supporting working groups and other venues. The operational commanders and their staffs recognize several related facets of time management: time for staff preparation and coordination of analysis and recommendations, battlefield circulation, sleep, physical fitness and stress relief, and creative thought. They all guard the commander's and principals' time to give them time to circulate and think vice filling their schedule with meeting after meeting. "White space" on the battle rhythm is also important to allow flexibility when responding to crises or unforeseen taskings and requirements.
- We continue to observe the importance of the COS in managing and enforcing the battle rhythm.
- The battle rhythm is crucial to staff time management, and we observe staffs continue to struggle with balancing the potentially large number of B2C2WGs desired for full staff analysis against the limited number of personnel and competing scheduling requirements. We also observe staffs struggle with differentiating between a calendar and a battle rhythm.
- A best practice that we see to discipline the number of events on the battle rhythm is the "Seven Minute Drill." We find that this tool, typically vetted by the COS, has enabled many joint headquarters to ensure that every event on the battle rhythm has a purpose and, just as important, defined inputs and outputs that feed the commander's decision cycle. A proposed battle rhythm event that has no output, results in generic situational awareness, or an information brief outside the decision-making process, may not belong on the battle rhythm.

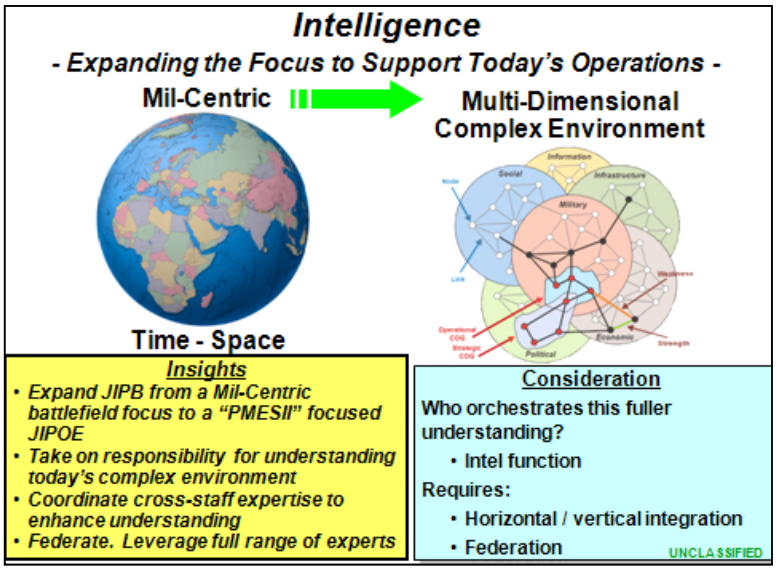
"Seven Minute Drill"

1. **Name of board, working group, etc:** *Descriptive and unique*
2. **Lead J code:** *Who receives, compiles, and delivers information*
3. **When / where does it meet in Battle Rhythm?:** *Allocation of resources (time and facilities); collaborative tool requirements*
4. **Purpose:** *Brief description of the requirement*
5. **Inputs required from:** *Staff sections and/or BCGTs required to provide products*
6. **When?** *Suspense DTG for inputs*
7. **Output / Process / Product:** *Products and links to other BCGTs*
8. **Time of delivery:** *When outputs are due*
9. **Membership codes:** *Who has to attend (task to staff to provide reps)*
10. **POC for this Seven Minute Drill:** *Name, phone, and email*

7. Intelligence Considerations

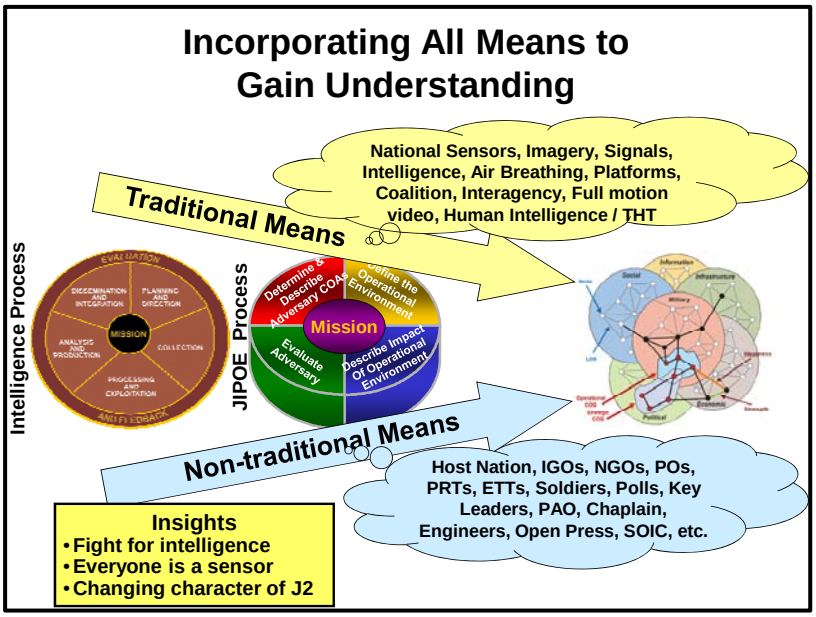
Intelligence is an additional area in which our commanders in the field have led the way in maturing and evolving our doctrine and TTPs. This section addresses the following intelligence considerations:

- Gaining a greater understanding of the complex environment beyond that of a military threat-only view.
- Value of "non-traditional" Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) to gain a better appreciation of the operational environment.
- Recognition of the continuing need to tailor intelligence support to the mission, whether it is traditional and irregular warfare, while realizing that much of the current focus is on supporting the irregular / counterinsurgency environment and must meet the agility and flexibility requirements of the tactical force.
- Commanders' role in prioritizing intelligence collection, processing, and exploitation.
- The need to balance three necessary capabilities for successful intelligence support to operations:
  - Collection assets
  - Processing, Exploitation and Dissemination (PED) assets / capabilities
  - Communications / infrastructure

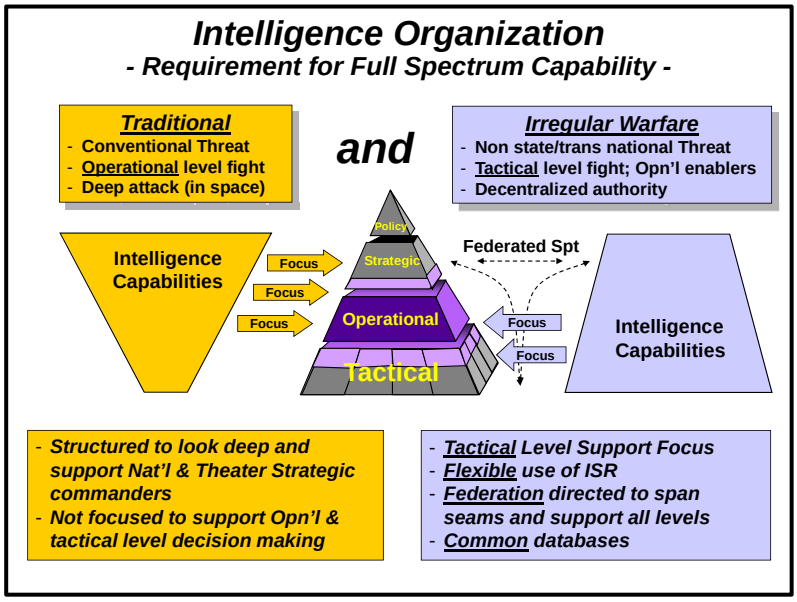


Understanding: Operational headquarters have had to expand their analysis beyond a military-centric view to gain the more holistic, greater understanding of the operational environment. We've seen staffs use some form of a PMESII construct to better understand and frame the environment to support the commander's decision-making requirements. The entire staff is involved in this broader analysis as it is beyond the ability of the J2 staff to fully comprehend. However, we find that the J2 is still best suited to orchestrate this broader analysis. Commanders in the field have tasked the J2 with the responsibility of being the focal point and coordinating the staff to bring together this broader understanding. They orchestrate the required cross-staff, cross-functional, interagency and multinational approach to gain the respective expertise of this collective group.

Non-traditional ISR: Our intelligence organizations are skilled in utilizing traditional ISR assets. In the past nine years they have also increasingly learned the value of non-traditional means as depicted in the following figure to gain a broader understanding of the environment. These means are well suited to provide much of the "HNIR" information discussed earlier in the CCIR section. We find that the J2 staffs must devote focused time and effort to identify, reach out to, and coordinate as appropriate these "non-traditional" collection (and analysis) means. We find that an active effort is required to gain the full value of these assets. The well-known "buzz words" of "fight for intelligence" and "everyone is a sensor" are very true and it takes a focused effort throughout the force to make these words reality.



Tailored intelligence support to the mission: Recent operations in Iraq and Afghanistan highlight the need for focused intelligence support to tactical formations. Operational commanders have decentralized many collection, processing, and exploitation assets to support this decentralized tactical fight. This decentralization has paid off by improving the agility and flexibility of the force to rapidly collect, process, and share critical information allowing for unprecedented speed of operations.[32] Our commanders and staffs have learned that the intelligence support required for these agile and flexible operations also had to significantly change.



However, as well articulated in the findings of the QDR, we will not be allowed to focus purely on irregular warfare.

[32] This need for agility and flexibility to get inside the adversary's decision cycle was discussed in the earlier section on command in terms of decentralized mission approval levels.

Traditional threats are still present and emerging so our challenge is to develop intelligence capabilities that can support both threats as depicted in the figure. We need intelligence capacity and structure to support those kinds of fights and support national and theater-strategic decision-makers.

Intelligence has evolved to support decentralized operations as depicted on the right side of the figure. The traditional model that focused on large conventional threats supporting strategic decisions didn't meet the operational and tactical level decision-making and execution requirements in irregular warfare. These irregular warfare operations against non-state actors and transnational threats range from combat (often at small unit level) to security, stability, and humanitarian support.

Our intelligence organizations in the field changed to support these operations by:

- Decentralizing select intelligence capabilities to better support the tactical level requirements.
- Defining and flattening vertical and horizontal linkages with other intelligence capabilities to take advantage of those collection, processing, analysis, and exploitation capabilities – what is called federation. Other organizations' capabilities are needed for collection and processing as well as both 2nd and 3rd order analysis and exploitation. And there has been a move toward use of much more multi-INT assets rather than only single (e.g., COMINT or IMINT).
- We have also seen a much greater use of forward liaisons capable of leveraging the Intelligence Processing, Exploitation, and Dissemination (PED) enterprise to support tactical requirements. We continue to see effective reachback to both CONUS and other worldwide locations in conjunction with these forward liaisons.
- Developing common databases to allow crosstalk. This is tough work, but an area in which we have made significant progress.

An early solution to rapid intelligence sharing and elimination of what many referred to as "blinks" when we lost situational awareness due to loss of collection or processing focus on a target was the creation of "fusion cells." These fusion cells were created to allow information to flow more freely and to facilitate the sharing of information. They enabled what we refer to above as flattening and federation, and forward liaison. Commanders opted to form fusion cells with the capability and manning to receive data and intelligence from a wide range of collection assets and processing centers. These tactical level fusion cells screened information for time sensitive information to pass directly to operators for action. We're finding that operators are fully integrated, and in some cases, even in charge of these fusion cells. The fusion cells keep an "unblinking eye" focused on the critical information, waiting for the right piece of information necessary to act. This has been a significant change from the more traditional centralized "top-down" model in which a higher headquarters' large intelligence center screens information, and then disseminates what they see as time sensitive information down to the tactical level – at times too late for successful execution. Conversely, we have found that procedures must also be in place to ensure data in these fusion cells is captured for dissemination to higher analytical headquarters for further analysis.

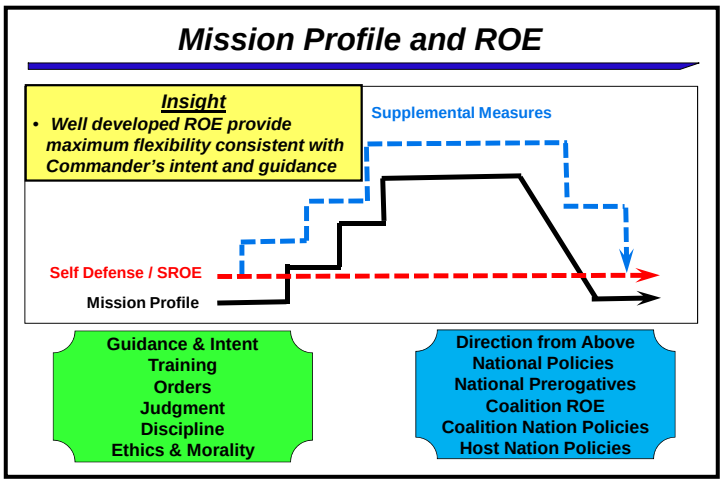
We see, in addition to these fusion cells, which are primarily focused on targeting, development of other centers focused on intelligence support to broader mission

applications. Again, leveraging what we've learned in flattening, federation, and forward liaison, these broader intelligence fusion enterprises support a better appreciation of the complex, population-centric environment. The Information Dominance Center (IDC), Stability Operations Information Centers (SOIC), and Regional Information Center (RIC) in Afghanistan are examples of these kind of organizations, all formed to better understand the complex operational environment in Afghanistan by focusing on seeing the local conditions and activities and how they impact the populace.

Prioritizing intelligence collection, processing, and exploitation: Prioritization of ISR continues to be one of the commander's major challenges. We find every commander of the operational units we visit spending significant time providing guidance on prioritization of their high demand ISR assets (such as Full Mission Video (FMV) and non-organic assets). We also observe that many of the commands do not simply delegate the collection management responsibilities to the J2 collection manager, but rather make this an operations – intelligence teamed effort. They additionally incorporate non-traditional means discussed earlier into their collection plan. CCIR remains an important driver of collection management; it is the primary tool commanders use to focus intelligence efforts and establish priorities for allocation of limited resources.

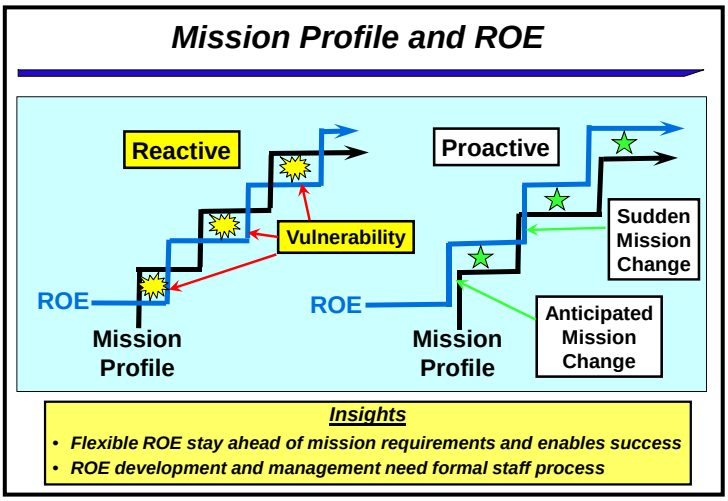
Need for Balance of Collection Assets, PED, and Communications / infrastructure: There has been a dramatic increase in ISR collection and an explosion in the amount of data collected. We continue to find that we often can collect more than we can process, exploit, and disseminate. We also recognize that the "PED" resource requirements in terms of the numbers of analysts at the tactical level may never be enough. Our institutions have significantly augmented tactical level units with additional PED support, but have also recognized the need for an enterprise solution leveraging a continually improving communication infrastructure. However, we must also note that in many cases, especially early in operations, effectiveness is the driver, and not efficiency. That said, everyone understands the need to balance collection, processing, exploitation, and dissemination, and the communication / infrastructure by which we will share information. Operational commanders must continue to stay involved in this balancing of collection, PED, and comms.

8. Legal Considerations



One of the key things a JTF commander can give component commanders in framing use of force measures are robust and flexible ROE that stay ahead of operational events, amplified by clearly stated commander's intent and guidance.[33] In setting conditions to develop effective ROE, the commanders' dialogue with policy makers is critical. This dialogue ensures the political, military, and legal influences result in ROE that support mission accomplishment.

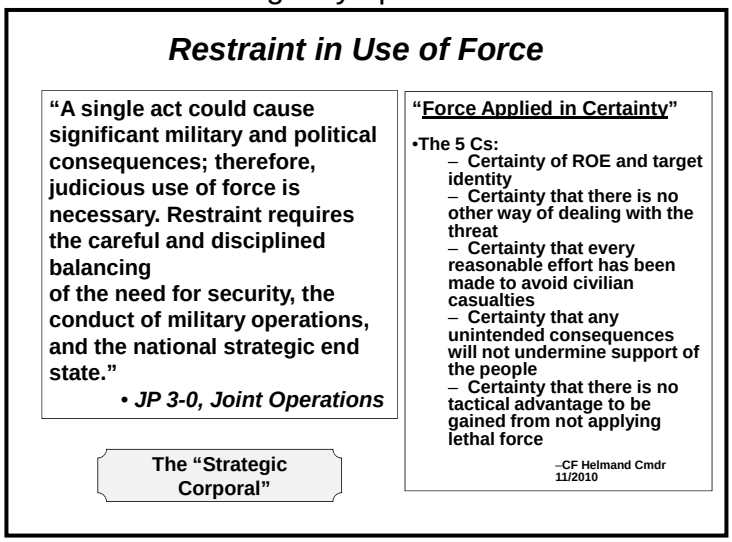
We see operational commanders proactively developing ROE as a "security umbrella" (noted by the upper dashed line in the above figure and influenced by those topics in the blue box) under which they <u>are authorized to</u> use force while crafting mission profiles (solid black line in figure and influenced by the topics in the green box) for the actual use of force. The commander and the operational planners, assisted by judge advocates, <u>proactively</u> develop ROE concurrent with planning mission profiles to minimize vulnerabilities noted in the adjacent figure that arise when "reactive" ROE development and approval lags behind mission planning.



The difficulties with development and management of robust ROE become exponentially more complex when operating within a coalition environment. Each coalition partner (sovereign country or international entity) will inject their interpretations of international laws and unique domestic laws into the planning process to ensure a common understanding of the overall ROE for all forces. Because of differing national priorities and policies, however, some partner nations will maintain exceptions to the final ROE. We find collecting these national caveats in a matrix provides clarity to the planners and the commander, fosters better inclusion and employment of coalition forces, and can increase likelihood of overall mission success.

[33] Defined in JP 1-02 as "Directives issued by competent military authority which delineate the circumstances and limitations under which United States forces *<u>will</u>* initiate and / or continue combat engagement with other forces encountered." We find that the word "*<u>will</u>*" in this definition does not clearly describe ROE. We use the word "*<u>may</u>*" as this more clearly depicts the commander's discretion in use of force in terms of the mission profile.

To ensure the approved use of force measures (ROE) are employed in a manner consistent with overall mission accomplishment, the commander may issue guidance through a Tactical Directive or FRAGO on how force is employed, as well as how non-lethal Escalation of Force (EOF) measures are employed to distinguish hostile intent and deter potential threats. In addition to the commander's guidance on the use of force for mission accomplishment, EOF measures may be established in order to identify hostile intent and deter potential threats at check points, entry control points, and in convoys. EOF measures remain distinct from other "use of force" guidance such as control measures for indirect fires in support of operations. EOF measures protect the force while minimizing the use of force against civilians. To ensure neither of these two concepts interfere with self-defense, forces must be trained to understand both the commander's guidance on how force should be employed to accomplish the mission and those EOF measures to protect the force, to the point they employ reactive vice reflective actions. The adjacent figure addresses restraint together with a concept of "Force Applied in Certainty" in which clear guidance is provided to instill confidence in the use of force. Ensuring all forces understand both of these concepts becomes even more difficult when operating within a joint operation due to some of our service cultures and is compounded further within a coalition and interagency operation due to culture and language barriers. The art of command becomes how the commander blends the two concepts of guidance on how force should be employed for mission accomplishment and the EOF measures employed to protect the force and distinguish potential threats to achieve the unity of effort necessary for mission success.



Other issues which can quickly gain the commander's attention involve fiscal authorities for funding military operations, as well as the management and conduct of contractors within the commander's AO. These two items gain exceptional focus in stability operations. The commander typically understands the fiscal authorities for traditional military operations, but those can differ from the authorities for stability operations, where the Department of State is typically the lead funding authority. There are numerous funding authorities available to the commander for stability operations. The nuances within each clearly demonstrate a need for expertise on the JTF staff. Additionally, the detailed terms of each of the contracts governing the support requirements to and responsibilities of each contractor within the commander's AO reinforce the need for resident legal expertise to handle these matters. The different types of contractors and the nuances within each contract associated with the management of the contractors by the commander are as varied as funding authorities. Adequate fiscal law and contract law support is crucial to the success of the stability operation and overall success of the mission. Failure to gain the requisite expertise on

the staff in forming the JTF or a lack of staff processes to properly employ such expertise can create larger legal issues for the commander, damage the public's perception of the mission, and hamper mission success.

Timely and thorough investigation into incidents is another key to winning the public trust and confidence. Properly conducted investigations, with timely updates and well written reports, can provide answers to the commander which get the truth out first before the enemy can craft a false strategic communication and provides a record long after those involved have redeployed out of theater. Experienced investigators are the key to thorough investigations. It is also important to remember good investigations are paramount not just for taking disciplinary action, but for protecting those members of the force caught in a public and volatile incident in which they played no culpable role.

Rule of Law (ROL) efforts to strengthen self-governance and justice systems in unstable nations has taken center stage in recent operations. Support for ROL not only provides stability, it demonstrates our commitment to the international community and is a cornerstone to our international legitimacy. Within the United States government construct ROL is a shared responsibility between elements of DOS and DOD, with DOS as lead agency. Within DOD, support to ROL is primarily a Civil Affairs function, with essential support coming from staff judge advocates, law enforcement, and governance experts. Coordination between agencies and with non-governmental organizations is of paramount importance.

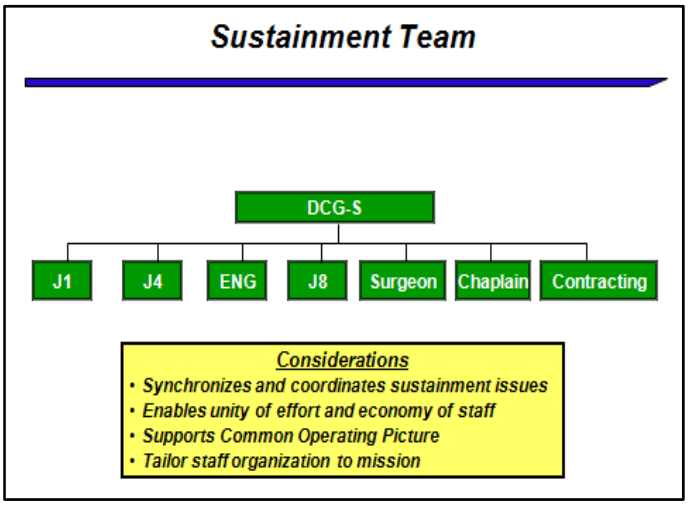
In summary, in all operations, but especially in population-centric stability operations, controlled and deliberate use of force measures, efficient use of fiscal resources to rebuild infrastructure, accountability of and for personnel in theater, and support for ROL help to achieve the unity of effort necessary for mission accomplishment.

Insights:

- ROE is operator business, with proactive ROE development led by planners, assisted by judge advocates. This also requires having a system in place to ensure timely dissemination, training, understanding, and implementation of ROE.
- Understanding coalition ROE is critical. Multinational forces will retain some or all of their own national ROE. This may place the commander and coalition personnel in unique ethical dilemmas for which the JTF SJA's advice should be sought.
- Escalation of Force (EOF) is about protecting the force and the civilian population.
- FRAGOs and Tactical Directives are methods to provide the commander's intent and guidance on how to employ approved ROE measures and EOF processes.
- The complexity of fiscal law issues and the management of contractors within the battlespace mandate the inclusion of the appropriate subject matter expertise on the JTF staff.
- Rule of Law (ROL) efforts require a mix of expertise and cooperation between agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGO).
- Timely and thorough investigations are critical to gain accurate information in resolving incidents. This can both protect subordinates from potentially biased propaganda and support good order and discipline, while also providing the basis for providing appropriate information to relevant stakeholders in the strategic communication environment.

9. Sustainment Considerations

Sustainment is the provision of logistics and personnel services necessary to maintain and prolong operations until successful mission completion (JP 4-0, vii). Sustainment encompasses all of the core logistics capabilities (supply, maintenance, deployment and distribution, health services support (HSS), engineering, logistics services, and operational contract support (OCS)), along with personnel, financial management, and religious support activities. Throughout our travels, we have frequently noted that some of the core logistics capabilities are not organized under the J4 (e.g., engineering, HSS, and / or contracting).



Simultaneously, we have seen a growing trend to organize the sustainment community as a team, as depicted in the figure, under the cognizance of a Deputy Commanding General – Support (DCG-S). Examples include the standing four-star Joint Force Commands (JFC) in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the Afghanistan regional commands.

This trend has also been observed at smaller JTFs established for short duration missions and exercises, under the cognizance of an 0-6 level J-code director, typically the J4. The benefits of organizing the sustainment community as a sustainment team include enhanced support to the commander's decision cycle as a result of collaborative sustainment planning, and maximizing information sharing / knowledge management across the sustainment team while minimizing functional stovepipes.

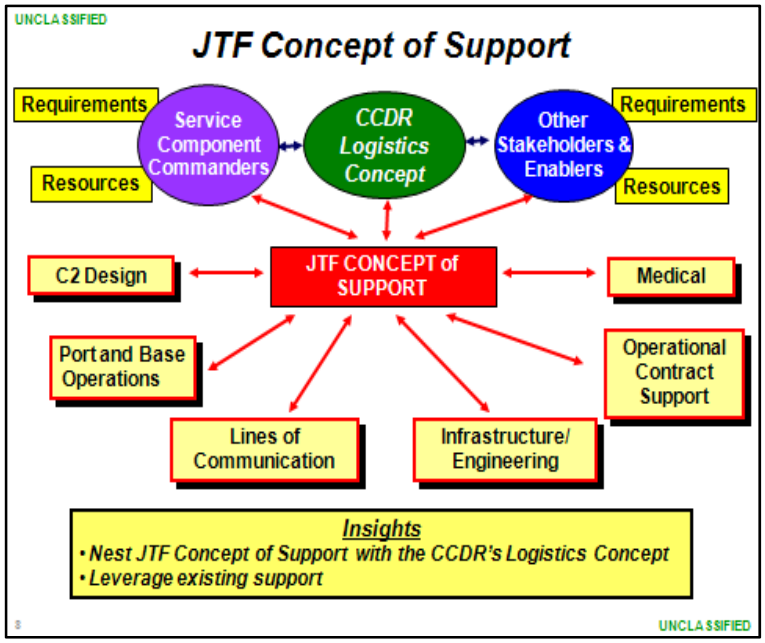
Personnel Support:

The development of the joint manning document (JMD) is a staff-wide effort, typically led by the COS and / or the J3. Post development, the J1 manages the document to oversee sourcing, which may include the core staff, individual augments, joint enablers, the civilian expeditionary workforce, and contractors. Once personnel have been assigned to spaces, accountability becomes a critical task. Personnel accountability information is essential for the commander to make informed decisions concerning force allocation and capabilities. Personnel accountability is also linked closely with casualty reporting. When casualties occur, knowing the number and location of personnel is critical. Having established casualty accountability procedures ensures timely reporting and notification.

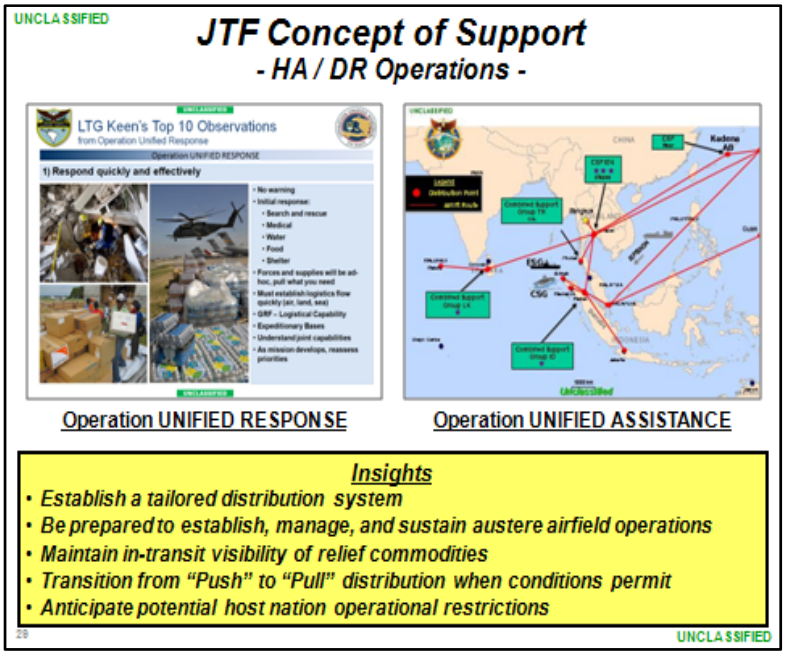
Operational Logistics:

The geographic combatant commander will have a logistics concept for the theater. The JTF concept of support should be nested under the theater concept, and to the maximum extent possible, capitalize on the resources and capabilities of the theater

service components, and the other stakeholders in the AOR, to include U.S. DOS agencies, multinational partners, the host-nation and supporting combatant commands, such as USTRANSCOM. The multinational partner element of the combatant command's logistic concept for the theater will include Acquisition and Cross Service Agreements (ACSA) for the exchange of goods and services between forces. Strive to gain efficiencies and minimize the JTF's organic footprint in the AOR by capitalizing on the existing ACSAs and employing concepts such as area support and Operational Contract Support (OCS), but not at the expense of effective support to the force or detriment to the long term objectives of the theater security cooperation plan.



JTFs are frequently activated to respond to humanitarian assistance and / or disaster relief requirements. These operations are logistics intensive missions, but they are still operations, requiring commander and J3 involvement in all aspects of HA / DR command and control in order to ensure mission accomplishment. Although activated, and typically the first to respond to the HA / DR situation, the military force is not typically the lead USG agency for response. Understanding the legal authorities and limitations associated with providing DOD assets in support of the operation, as well as the capabilities of, support required and disposition of supplies in the affected area by DOS and NGOs will significantly enhance the JTF's ability to successfully accomplish the mission. HA / DR logistics support may require creative solutions to overcome shortfalls and offset restricted access to the affected area.



Support to distributed operations, regardless of the operating environment, poses significant challenges. When providing support to distributed operations, some of the considerations and risks the commander must assume include but are not limited to, dispersing the force beyond mutually supporting range, complexity of the lines of communication, method of distribution, size of the force and special equipment requirements of the supported and supporting forces. Capitalizing on host-nation support, in conjunction with an area support based concept can minimize these challenges and risks.

Logistics support of theater forces is an individual Service, Title 10 responsibility, with the combatant command possessing the Directive Authority for Logistics (DAFL) for forces supporting OPLANS / CONPLANs in their geographic theaters. DAFL is retained at the combatant command level, unless specifically delegated in writing to the subordinate Joint Force Commander (JFC) for specific common support capabilities to accomplish the mission. Another trend we have observed recently in logistics operations involves the establishment of a Joint Logistics Command (JLC), or Joint Sustainment Command (JSC). Close examination of these commands reveals that in the majority of cases, they are "joint" in name only. Predominately sourced by the U.S. Army, they may or may not have plugs from the other Services present on their staffs and if present, these joint plugs may not possess the appropriate experience level or skill set, as identified in the JMD for sourcing.

The JLCs / JSCs provide common user logistics support, often on an area support basis, to joint forces operating in the AOR under established DOD Executive Agency (EA) requirements and / or Interservice Support Agreements (ISSA) negotiated at the theater service component command level. Careful consideration by the JFC before establishing a JLC / JSC should occur, as this often adds another layer of C2 that replicates existing functions and services provided to the elements of the joint force by their parent theater service component headquarters and / or the Army Theater Support Command (TSC). Additionally, we have found that ISSAs and EAs have matured greatly and work very well. We find that this advancement normally relegates the use of DAFL as a last resort.

Operational Contract Support:

In August 2009, the Joint Contingency Acquisition Support Office (JCASO) was established at the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) in order to provide strategic and operational level Operational Contract Support (OCS) program management across DOD and the “Whole of Government.” In addition to the creation of JCASO, the Joint Staff established and manned billets for Joint Operational Contract Support Planners (JOCSPs) on each combatant command staff. As the result of a USG Accountability Office (GAO) study conducted in March 2010, the JOCSPs at each combatant command have been realigned under JCASO in order to clarify roles, responsibilities and authorities. These Joint Operational Contract Support Planners (JOCSP) provide planning expertise on a combatant command staff to ensure contracting, and the planning for contracting personnel accountability, is fully incorporated into combatant command OPLANs / CONPLANs. If requested by the combatant commander, JCASO can provide an additional deployable OCS capability to effectively and efficiently coordinate OCS program activities. Incorporating the JOCSPs from the combatant

command staff or augments from JCASO on your JTF staff prior to execution can provide you with upfront planning efforts that can assist in identifying areas for contracting as a means of reducing uniformed personnel footprint and increasing the access and efficiency of support efforts to the JTF commander.

Operational Contract Support focuses primarily on contingency contracting in austere environments. Predominantly resourced by U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force contracting professionals, OCS also incorporates an increasing number of civilian OCS experts. Their skill in identifying, planning, negotiating, drafting, and auditing contingency contracts provides the JTF with a ready pool of experts who can not only prepare timely and accurate contracts, but also reduce the probability of audits becoming necessary to determine whether contingency funds were properly appropriated. Examples from past exercises and actual operations involved use of funds for quick result programs and service provided funding for construction projects that exceeded authorized thresholds for contingency contracts.

Another tool in the OCS arsenal is the Synchronized Pre-Deployment Operational Tracker (SPOT). SPOT is a database that all OCS personnel are required to be associated with prior to deployment into any operation. While not electronically linked to Personnel accountability databases, SPOT does provide the J4 and J1 with a ready source of identifying all known contractors in the operating environment.

Engineer Operations:

As a low density / high demand asset, engineers are almost always a scarce commodity on the battlefield. Unity of engineer effort is essential to making the most of this capability. Integration of the engineer functions of general engineering, combat engineering, and geospatial engineering, and directing the effort through a logical organizational structure and coherent C2 relationships, is key to achieving this unity.

When deciding where to place the JTF Engineer on the staff, there are three general options based on primary emphasis of the engineer to consider.

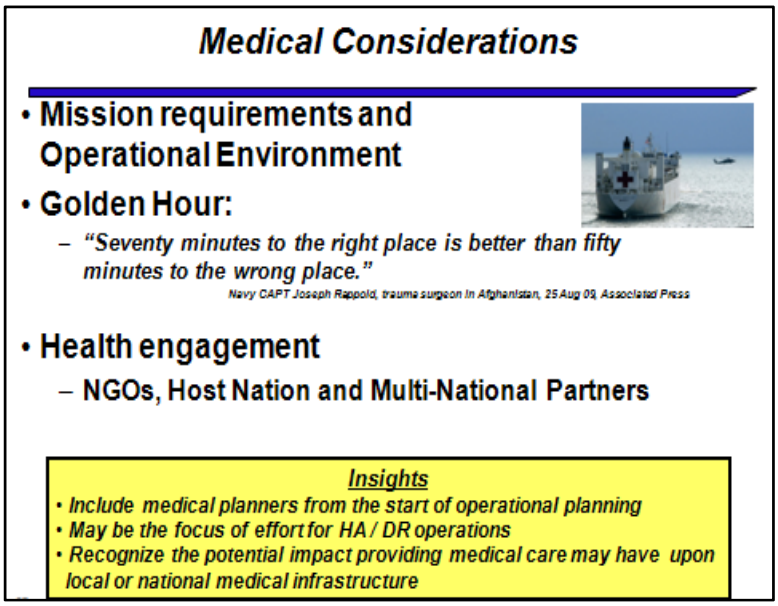
When engineer support will be predominantly focused on maneuver support or support to entities outside the JTF the engineers may be placed under the J3. This is what we are currently observing in CJTF-HOA, where engineer effort is weighting towards CMO activities. If engineer effort is primarily directed towards internally supporting the JTF through such tasks as facilities and basing, then the best choice may be to place them under the J4. This is what we currently see in most of the combatant command staffs. If the engineer effort will cut across several staff sections, then the best option may be to designate them as a separate staff section, normally the J7. This is what we have seen in Multi-National Command-Iraq, United States Forces-Iraq and the Multi-National Divisions in Iraq, and also are currently observing with the CJTFs and other headquarters elements in Afghanistan.

Engineering is also a critical component in CMO, and as such it must be coordinated and synchronized with the CMO effort. To ensure unity of effort between engineers, civil affairs, and the many other stakeholders in CMO, a Joint Civil Military Engineering Board, or similar forum, should be considered.

Infrastructure requirements must be considered in the early stages of campaign planning, to include the capabilities and capacities of key nodes in the deployment / redeployment process and the development / expansion of forward operating bases in the AOR. Infrastructure development can be extremely costly, particularly in the event where new construction or extensive renovations are required, with projects often costing in the tens of millions. Long lead times can also be a major factor, with smaller infrastructure projects often taking six months to a year, and major projects, particularly in the case of Military Construction (MILCON) projects which surpass the $750,000 threshold, taking 3-5 years from project initiation to completion.

Medical Considerations:

The commander, planners, and the HSS staff should have visibility of the JTF's entire medical footprint, to include medical capabilities, equipment, airlift / medevac support, personnel and specialties available in the operational environment, and availability of multinational and host-nation facilities and services. Possessing a clear picture of the medical footprint will enable operational planning efforts, enhance overall support to the commander's decision cycle, and ensure responsive HSS in the operational environment.



In the case of HA / DR operations, medical support operations may be the main effort of the JTF. In addition to the medical footprint associated with the JTF, numerous other governmental and non-governmental medical providers will be supporting the relief operations and may require support from the JTF, or compete with the JTF for access. While focusing the efforts of the JTF on the affected population and expanding the operational reach of all medical service providers in the AOR, remain cognizant of the effect the presence of the force is having on the local / host-nation medical infrastructure. Ideally, the departure of the JTF medical assets will not have a negative impact on the medical care expectations of the affected population. The JTF should consider incorporating the appropriate message themes in the commander's communication strategy during the initial phases of the operation in order to prepare the local population and other providers for the departure of the JTF.

Sustainment Insights:

- Consider mission requirements and the personnel assigned in order to develop and implement the most effective organizational construct for the sustainment community.
- Consider establishing a cross-functional JMD Working Group (JMDWG) to facilitate the sourcing of personnel shortfalls and to ensure personnel with unique skill sets are assigned to the proper staff section.
- Understand the Combatant Commander's Theater Logistics Concept as it relates to your JTF, including the resources and limitations of the Combatant Command, supporting agencies such as TRANSCOM, DLA, and the Service Component Commands. Request and use liaison officers from the Combatant Command, Service Components, and numerous support agencies to ensure efficient and effective support.
- Leverage use of ISSAs and EAs. Use DAFL only when necessary.
- Understand and maximize the capabilities provided by Multinational and Coalition partners, and non-governmental organizations, as means of reducing your JTF footprint and leveraging previously existing relationships they have with the host nation(s).
- Maximize the use of an 'area support' concept to share resources. Capture costs under ISSAs.
- Understand the legal and financial responsibilities associated with managing contingency contracts. Establish oversight procedures with assistance from Defense Contracting Management Agency or Joint / Service Contracting Commands.
- Capitalize on the knowledge and experience of Joint Operational Contract Support Planners (JOCSP) resident on the combatant command staff, JCASO and OCS planners at the Service and Joint Staff level.
- Determine if the mission requirements and forces available necessitate the establishing a JLC / JSC. If established, clearly define the roles, responsibilities and reporting chain authorities within the J4 staff and the JLC / JSC.
- Consider infrastructure requirements in the early stages of campaign development, particularly for new construction or extensive renovations.
- Integrate and synchronize engineering with the CMO efforts.
- Consider the mission and engineer requirements when selecting an engineer staff option.
- Identify medical capabilities, specialties and airlift / medevac support within the operational environment to enhance the planning efforts and ensure the appropriate level of medical care is identified, resourced and provided.