



Department of Defense – Department of State

AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY



Every 2 years, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is required by law to review the missions, responsibilities, and geographical boundaries of each geographic combatant command in the U.S. military and recommend to the President, through the Secretary of Defense, any changes that may be necessary. The review process includes combatant commanders, Service chiefs, and Department of Defense (DOD) leadership.

DOD Unified Command Plan (UCP) 2011 is a key strategic document that established the missions, responsibilities, and geographic areas of responsibility (AORs) for commanders of combatant commands. DOD geographic commands' areas are encompassed within designated borders. President Barack Obama signed the document April 6, 2011.

Adjustments in the 2011 UCP make U.S. Northern Command responsible for advocating for Arctic capabilities; U.S. Africa Command's maritime boundary will include the Cape Verde zone; and U.S. Southern Command will include the maritime boundary of the South Sandwich Islands.

Functional Command Revisions

U.S. Strategic Command's responsibility for combating weapons of mass destruction and developing a Global Missile Defense Concept of Operations is expanded. U.S. Transportation Command is assigned responsibility for synchronizing planning of global distribution operations.

The mission of the State Department Regional Bureaus is to implement U.S. foreign policy, conduct diplomatic relations, and manage and promote U.S. interests in their respective regions. State Department Regional Bureau areas of responsibility include land areas within DOD AORs and overlap multiple DOD AORs (see color key).

Geographic and Functional Combatant Commands

There are six geographic combatant commands: U.S. Africa Command, U.S. Central Command, U.S. European Command, U.S. Southern Command, U.S. Pacific Command, and U.S. Northern Command. There are four functional combatant commands: U.S. Transportation Command, U.S. Strategic Command, U.S. Special Operations Command, and U.S. Joint Forces Command (to be disestablished by August 30, 2011).

Department of Defense Geographic Commands

-  U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM)
-  U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM)
-  U.S. European Command (USEUCOM)
-  U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM)
-  U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM)
-  U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM)

Department of State Regional Bureaus

-  Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs
-  Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs
-  Bureau of African Affairs
-  Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs
-  Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs
-  Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs



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