



**MCWP 5-1**

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# **Marine Corps Planning Process**

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**US Marine Corps**

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both men and women are included.**

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
Headquarters United States Marine Corps  
Washington, D.C. 20308-1775

24 August 2010

FOREWORD

Marine Corps Warfighting Publication (MCWP) 5-1, *Marine Corps Planning Process*, was first published in January 2000. Since that time, the planning process has been used by Marine Corps forces at all echelons of command to conduct a range of military operations. The planning associated with these diverse operations has demonstrated the fundamental soundness of the process. Practical application has also revealed that portions of the planning process and MCWP 5-1 require clarification or elaboration to enhance comprehension and utility. Among these, *design* has emerged as a term requiring further emphasis.

A fundamental responsibility of command, design is present not only in planning, but also throughout the planning-execution-assessment continuum. This publication emphasizes the importance of understanding the problem, the environment, the enemy, and the purpose of an operation. This awareness is fundamental to the first step in planning—formerly named *mission analysis*—and has, accordingly, been renamed *problem framing* to better convey its purpose and importance. Moreover, the publication includes a discussion of battlespace, centers of gravity, commander's intent, and commander's critical information requirements as part of design, versus its former heading of commander's battlespace area evaluation.

*Marine Corps Planning Process* also clarifies the distinction between intent and guidance. Intent describes the purpose of the action being directed and an idea of its end state. The intent promotes subordinate initiative that is consistent with the higher commander's aims when the task assigned is no longer appropriate for the situation. Constructs, such as "method," are forms of guidance that may be transitory.

This publication supersedes, MCWP 5-1 w/chg 1, *Marine Corps Planning Process*, dated 5 Jan 2000.

MCWP 5-1 implements North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Standardization Agreement (STANAG) 2014, *NATO Formats for Orders and Designation of Timing, Locations, and Boundaries*.

Reviewed and approved this date.

BY DIRECTION OF THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George J. Flynn", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

GEORGE J. FLYNN  
Lieutenant General, U.S. Marine Corps  
Deputy Commandant for Combat Development and Integration

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# MARINE CORPS PLANNING PROCESS

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# CHAPTER 1

## PLANNING OVERVIEW

*Planning is the art and science of envisioning a desired future and laying out effective ways of bringing it about.*

—Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication (MCDP) 5, *Planning*

The Marine Corps doctrinal philosophy of maneuver warfare describes planning as an essential part of the broader field of command and control. The aim of command and control is to enhance the commander's ability to make sound and timely decisions. Effective decisionmaking requires both the situational understanding to recognize the essence of a given problem and the creative ability to devise a practical solution. Hence, an essential function of planning is to promote understanding of the problem—the difference between existing and desired conditions—and to devise ways to solve it. Planning involves elements of both art and science, combining analysis and calculation with intuition, inspiration, and creativity. The Marine Corps employs several planning processes:

- Troopleading steps, used principally as an introduction to planning by small unit leaders

without staffs, comprise six steps—BAMCIS [begin planning, arrange for a reconnaissance, make the reconnaissance, complete the plan, issue the order, and supervise].

- For units with staffs, the Marine Corps planning process (MCP), described in this publication, is most appropriate. It is also a six-step process (see fig. 1-1), comprising problem framing, course of action (COA) development, COA wargaming, COA comparison and decision, orders development, and transition. The Marine Corps often operates in a joint environment, where the MCP is the vehicle through which commanders and their staffs in the operating forces provide input to the joint planning process (see app. A).
- If time does not allow use of the full, six-step MCP, the commander and the planners may use the rapid response planning process (R2P2),

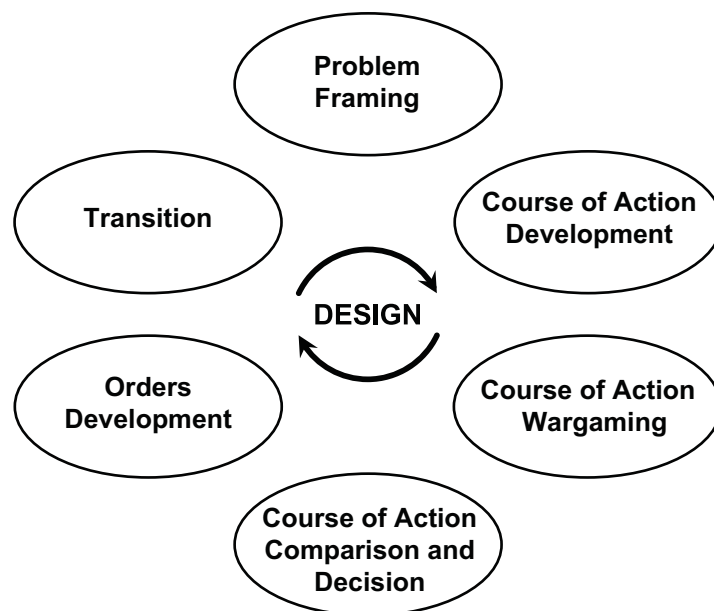


Figure 1-1. Overview of the Marine Corps Planning Process.

which is a time-constrained version of the MCPP. The R2P2 enables the Marine expeditionary unit (MEU) to plan and begin execution of certain tasks within six hours and is highly dependent on the use of standing operating procedures (SOPs).

Because planning must support the commander's decisionmaking—especially in a time competitive and evolving situation—the MCPP codifies the central role of the commander in planning. The process is applicable across the range of military operations and at any echelon of command. It can be as detailed or abbreviated as time, staff resources, experience, and the situation permit or require.

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## Doctrinal Underpinnings

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Planning should never be viewed as an isolated activity or process; rather, as a part of the planning-execution-assessment continuum. Because situations change continuously, decisions are made in the face of relative uncertainty. While it is natural to seek additional information to lessen that uncertainty, it usually comes at the expense of time. Success in such a fluid environment demands that Marines think critically, examine the nature of the problem as well as the purpose of the operation, and learn and adapt during the entire planning-execution-assessment continuum. Environmental factors; enemy action; other stakeholders' involvement; updated intelligence; changing resources; revised guidance from higher headquarters (HHQ); and input provided as a result of operations and concurrent planning by subordinate, adjacent, and supporting units all contribute to making planning endeavors highly complex and nonlinear. The problem will evolve even while trying to solve it.

While this publication presents the six steps of the MCPP sequentially, planning seldom occurs

in a straightforward manner. For example, information gained during COA development or war-gaming will often require planners to return to the problem framing step of the planning process. Knowledge of the planning hierarchy is essential to the effective application of the MCPP.

As described in MCDP 5, at the highest level of the planning hierarchy is conceptual planning. It establishes aims, objectives, and intentions and involves developing broad concepts for action. In general, conceptual planning is a process of creative synthesis supported by analysis. It generally corresponds to the *art* of war. Developing tactical, operational, or strategic concepts for the overall conduct of military actions is conceptual planning.

At the lowest level of the hierarchy is detailed planning, which is concerned with translating the broad concept into a complete and realistic plan. Detailed planning generally corresponds to the *science* of war and encompasses the specifics of implementation. It generally is an analytical process of decomposing the concept into executable tasks, although it likely involves some elements of synthesis as well. Detailed planning works out the scheduling, coordination, or technical issues involved with moving, sustaining, administering, and directing military forces. Examples of detailed planning include load plans and air tasking orders. Unlike conceptual planning, detailed planning does not involve the establishment of objectives. Detailed planning works out actions to accomplish objectives assigned.

Between the highest and lowest levels of the hierarchy is functional planning, which involves elements of both conceptual and detailed planning. Functional planning is concerned with developing supporting plans for discrete functional activities, such as maneuver, fires, logistics, intelligence, and force protection.

Normally, due to the importance of conceptual planning, the commander directs the formulation of plans at this level. While the commander is



also engaged in both functional and detailed planning, the specific aspects of these are often left to the staff.

Conceptual planning provides the basis for all subsequent planning and should progress from the general to the specific. For example, the overall intent and concept of operations (CONOPS) lead to subordinate intents and CONOPS as well as to supporting functional concepts; these intents and concepts lead to the specifics of execution.

The planning dynamic does not operate in only one direction. Conceptual planning must be responsive to functional constraints. For example, the realities of deployment schedules (a functional concern) can dictate employment schemes (a conceptual concern). Functional planning in turn must be responsive to more detailed requirements of execution. In this way, the levels of planning mutually influence one another. Conceptual, functional, and detailed planning are seldom conducted sequentially because the situation and available information are continually evolving. While conceptual, functional, and detailed planning are described in sequence, in practice they are conducted in a more interactive manner due to uncertainty and time.

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## Introduction to Design

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Design is the conception and articulation of a framework for solving a problem. It is appropriate to problem solving at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war. As commanders conceptualize their operation, their periodic guidance is in the form of visualization, description, and direction and guides the staff throughout planning. Design provides a means to learn and adapt and requires intellectually versatile leaders with high-order thinking skills who actively engage in continuous dialogue and collaboration to enhance decisionmaking at all levels.

The purpose of design is to achieve a greater understanding of the environment and the nature

of the problem in order to identify an appropriate conceptual solution. While not prescriptive or a checklist, design is based on—

- Critical thinking.
- Conceptual planning.
- Visualization.
- Emergence of a hypothesis.
- Continuous activity.

Critical thinking is purposeful and reflective judgment about what to believe or what to do in response to observations, experience, verbal or written expressions, or arguments. Critical thinking involves the high-order cognitive skills of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Analysis allows planners to see the parts and to recognize and explain patterns and meanings. Synthesis allows planners to predict and draw conclusions, create new ideas, and discuss “what if” situations. Evaluation allows planners to critique ideas, make recommendations, assess value, and make choices. All three high-order thinking skills are required in design.

Conceptual planning allows commanders, members of their staffs, and others to develop an understanding of the environment and problem as well as develop a broad approach to solve the problem. As the conceptual element of the planning hierarchy, design shapes the functional and detailed planning that follows. As the examples on page 1-4 show, at the campaign level, design may take the form of a campaign concept.

In both instances, the commander had a deep appreciation for the wholeness of the problem, including the adversary and environment. His resulting visualization concisely expressed how he intended to achieve success. The same is true at the tactical level where design may take the form of a commanders vision of actions. See app. J for another example of design.

Visualization is the commander’s “mental snapshot in time” that represents his current understanding of the environment, the problem, or how

During the Korean War, General MacArthur succinctly restated his campaign concept in his *Far East Message to the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, “Operation planned mid-September is amphibious landing of a two-division corps in rear of enemy lines for purpose of enveloping and destroying enemy forces in conjunction with attack from south by Eighth Army.” Guided by this design, his staff planned multiple COAs. This planning revealed that the most strategically advantageous COA—an amphibious assault at Inchon—also involved the greatest operational risks. General MacArthur accepted the risks of landing at Inchon and subsequent staff actions focused on the functional and detailed planning necessary to both flesh out the COA and minimize the attendant risks. The latter included using a discarded COA, a landing at Kunsan, as the basis for a deception effort.

In 1864 and 1865, General Grant’s strategic concept called for coordinated military actions in Virginia, Georgia, and Tennessee. These actions were complemented by a naval blockade and put overwhelming, simultaneous pressure on all the Confederate armies, thereby removing their ability to shift resources to reinforce any one army.

he sees solving the problem. Human beings constantly form and reform mental images as their environments change or new information becomes known. Early in the planning process the commander shares his mental image with his staff, using his visualization to focus and guide their efforts. As planning progresses, the commander continues to update and provide a refined visualization through his guidance.

Understanding the environment and the nature of the problem will eventually lead to the emergence of a hypothesis on how the problem might be solved. The commander may visualize the hypothesis by describing how to move from an existing set of conditions to a desired set of conditions. This visualization requires the commander to understand the current situation, broadly define the future situation, and determine the necessary actions to bring about the desired future state. It is expressed using operational terms of reference and concepts that shape the language governing the conduct (planning, execution, and assessment) of operations. It addresses questions, such as—

- Will planning, execution, and assessment activities use traditional constructs, such as center of gravity (COG), decisive points, and warfighting functions?

- Are other constructs, such as leverage points, fault lines, lines of operations (LOOs), or critical variables, more appropriate to the situation? (More information on warfighting functions and LOOs can be found in app. B.)

Design is a continuous activity and must never be viewed as an isolated event occurring only during problem framing. It occurs throughout the planning-execution-assessment continuum. Design is a way of organizing conceptual work within an organization to assist commanders in understanding, visualizing, and describing the operational environment and to develop approaches to solving problems. Because the environment is dynamic, problems also evolve. As a result, design must occur throughout planning, execution, and assessment.

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### Synopsis of the Marine Corps Planning Process

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A commander may begin planning on his own initiative, based on indications and warnings, or in response to specific guidance and direction from HHQ. The planning process is designed to promote understanding among the commander, his staff, and subordinate commanders regarding

the nature of a given problem and the options for solving it. The plans which result may be considered hypotheses that will be tested and refined as a result of execution and assessment. The six steps of the planning process are—

- **Problem Framing.** Problem framing enhances understanding of the environment and the nature of the problem. It identifies what the command must accomplish, when and where it must be done and, most importantly, why—the purpose of the operation. The purpose is articulated in the mission statement (task and purpose). The purpose of the operation, which is enduring, is restated and amplified as desired in the commander’s intent. Since no amount of subsequent planning can solve a problem insufficiently understood, problem framing is the most important step in planning. This understanding allows the commander to visualize and describe how the operation may unfold, which he articulates as his commander’s concept—his overall picture of the operation. The commander’s concept is also known as the CONOPS, operational concept, or method. As planning continues, the commander’s concept becomes more detailed, providing additional clarity and operational context. Design does not end with problem framing, because the situation constantly evolves and requires the commander to continually review and possibly modify his design.
- **COA Development.** The COA development step produces options for accomplishing the mission in accordance with commander’s intent. It provides options for the commander; refines the design; and promotes understanding of the environment, problem, and the approach to solving the problem.
- **COA Wargaming.** The COA war game examines and refines the option(s) in light of adversary capabilities and potential actions/reactions as well as the characteristics peculiar to the

operating environment, such as weather, terrain, culture, and non-Department of Defense (DOD) entities or stakeholders. This detailed examination of the operational environment and possible adversary reactions should forge a greater understanding of the environment, the problem, and possible solutions.

- **COA Comparison and Decision.** During COA comparison and decision, the commander reviews the pros and cons of the option(s) and decides how he will accomplish the mission, either by approving a COA as formulated or by assimilating what has been learned into a new COA that may need to be further developed and wargamed.
- **Orders Development.** The orders development step translates the commander’s decision into oral/written/graphic direction sufficient to guide implementation and initiative by subordinates.
- **Transition.** The transition step may involve a wide range of briefs, drills, or rehearsals necessary to ensure a successful shift from planning to execution. A number of factors can influence how the transition step is conducted, such as echelon of command, mission complexity, and, most importantly, available time.

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## Tenets of the Marine Corps Planning Process

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The tenets of the MCPP—top-down planning, single-battle concept, and integrated planning—derive from the doctrine of maneuver warfare. These tenets guide the commander’s use of his staff to plan and execute military operations.

- **Top-Down Planning.** Planning is a fundamental responsibility of command. The commander must not merely participate in planning, he must drive the process. His personal involvement and guidance are keys to planning. The

commander uses planning to increase understanding of the environment and the problem to support his decisionmaking.

- **Single-Battle Concept.** Operations or events in one part of the battlespace often have profound and consequent effects on other areas and events; therefore, a commander must always view the battlespace as an indivisible entity. Commanders prepare for a single battle effort during planning primarily through their intent, which provides the larger context for subordinate units so they can exercise judgment and initiative when the unforeseen occurs while remaining consistent with larger aims.
- **Integrated Planning.** Integrated planning is conducted to coordinate action toward a common purpose by all elements of the force. Integrated planning is facilitated by the assignment of personnel with an appropriate level of knowledge of their respective organization or activity to the operational planning team (OPT). The key to integrated planning is to involve the right personnel from the right organizations in the

planning process as early as possible to consider all relevant factors, reduce omissions, and share information as broadly as possible. (See app. C for information on organization for planning.)

Planning is a complex process of interacting activities with feedback loops. The six steps of the MCPP aid in understanding and generally follow a sequence; however, it is important to remember that planning is not a simple sequence of steps. Any one step of the process may involve multiple phases (see app. D for planning process diagrams). Any step in the process may feed back into a previous one. For example, conceptualizing a COA generally follows establishing goals and objectives, but it is difficult to establish meaningful goals and objectives without some idea of how to accomplish them. Likewise, new information received during orders development may reveal a weakness in the CONOPS, which would require the development of new COAs or a branch plan.

# CHAPTER 2

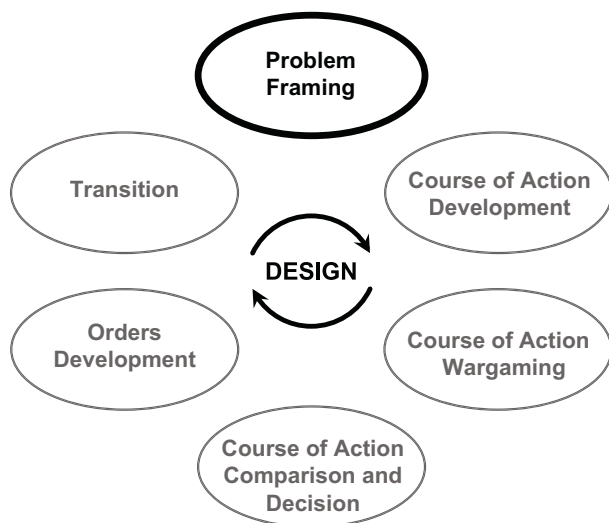
## PROBLEM FRAMING

*To comprehend and cope with our environment we develop mental patterns or concepts of meaning . . . we cannot avoid this kind of activity if we intend to survive on our own terms.*

—John R. Boyd, *Destruction and Creation*

*First, we didn't know ourselves. We thought we were going into another Korean War, but this was a different country. Secondly, we didn't understand our Vietnamese allies. We never understood them, and that was another surprise. And we knew even less about North Vietnam. Who was Ho Chi Minh? Nobody really knew. So, until we know the enemy and know our allies and know ourselves, we'd better keep out of this dirty kind of business. It is very dangerous.*

—General Maxwell Taylor, *Vietnam: A History*



**Figure 2-1. Problem Framing.**

Problem framing is the first step in the MCPP (see fig. 2-1). It may begin informally in response to indications and warnings or more formally when an order or directive—including the HHQ mission and tasks to subordinate commands—is received. The purpose of problem framing is to gain an enhanced understanding of the environment and the nature of the problem. This greater understanding allows a commander to visualize the operation and describe his conceptual approach, providing context for the examination

of what the command must accomplish, when and where it must be done, and most importantly, why—the purpose of the operation.

This higher level of understanding is especially useful in debunking invalid assumptions, inaccurate stereotypes, and erroneous capability assessments. Since no amount of subsequent planning can solve a problem insufficiently understood, framing the problem is critical. To achieve this understanding, problem framing requires both the judgment of synthesis and the systematic study of analysis. Accordingly, problem framing consists of a commander-driven design effort supported by staff actions.

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### Design

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The goal of design is to achieve understanding gained largely through critical thinking and dialogue—the basic mechanism of design. The ability to address complex problems lies in the power of organizational learning through design. Group dialogue, when conducted within the proper command climate, can foster a collective level of understanding not attainable by any individual within the group.

To conceive and articulate a framework for solving a problem, commanders must understand the environment and nature in which the problem exists; the understanding of a problem points directly to possible solutions. Design begins during problem framing, but once underway it is continuous—informing and being informed by the results of the other planning steps, execution, and assessment.

### Commander's Orientation

The commander's orientation is the first of many venues where the commander, his staff, and subordinate commanders collaborate through the exchange of information and the sharing of ideas and perspectives. Accordingly, the commander's orientation is the initial step in the design effort to begin to frame the problem as a basis for developing possible solutions.

The specific content of the commander's orientation will vary by the uniqueness and maturity of the situation and the experience of the commander. For example, Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm did little to prepare I Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) for Joint Task Force Los Angeles [LA riots] and Joint Task Force Somalia [Operation Restore Hope], which represented entirely different paradigms. Other than terse planning directives to prepare for possible operations, there was little initial information other than what could be gleaned from media outlets. In contrast, multiple Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF)/Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) tours could enable commanders to provide a wealth of information to initiate their planning efforts.

Most importantly, the commander's orientation demonstrates the commander's personal involvement in the planning process and allows him to set the tone for a dialogue. Once the commander provides his orientation, the commander, the staff, and others (as designated) participate in subsequent discussions, or "design dialogue," to collectively gain an enhanced understanding of the environment and the nature of the problem.

### Understanding the Environment

Understanding the environment is an important aspect of design. The essential activities in understanding the environment include critical thinking and open discussion by all participants, including the commander, to help expose a broad range of ideas to be considered in the identification of the problem. Useful items to consider include the following:

- Design results from HHQ, including intent, orders, directives, estimate of the situation, and commander's guidance.
- Available intelligence products, including intelligence preparation of the battlespace (IPB).

*Note: The IPB enables the commander to gain an understanding of the adversary within the context of the broader operational environment. The nature of the intelligence products required to support the commander's systemic examination of the operational environment emphasizes the importance of this activity.*

- Information environment, which includes the physical, informational, and cognitive domains.
- Culture.
- Language.
- Demographics.
- Religion.
- Geography.
- Local economics.
- Key actors.
- Tendencies.
- Relationships.
- Potential.
- Security.
- Climate.
- Time.

Understanding the environment provides background information, facts, status, connections, relevant actors, habitat, local beliefs, and a broad

range of other factors that serve as context for the commander and his staff to better understand the problem. These factors also help the commander gain an appreciation for the situation as it exists. Coupled with any assigned or anticipated tasks, participants engaged in design can determine a desired future state. The difference between the current and desired states enables the participants to narrow their focus on the environment to determine the nature of the problem.

### Understanding the Problem

Armed with an appreciation of the environment, the design effort shifts to understanding the problem. The essential activities in understanding the problem continue to be critical thinking and an open, frank dialogue to help reveal the underlying nature of the problem. Understanding the problem points to possible solutions. Useful items to consider include the following:

- Existing design results from HHQ in the form of mission and intent, orders, directives, estimate of the situation, and commander's guidance.
- Adversary.
- Friendly force update.
- Information environment.
- Terrain and weather.
- Troops and support available.
- Civil considerations (to include indigenous/local population).
- Difference between existing and desired conditions.
- Limitations.
- Assumptions.
- Specified tasks.
- Initial staff estimates.
- Input from other commanders.
- Experience and judgment.
- Range of potential actions.
- Tempo.

With the larger environment as context, additional elements of the problem may emerge that require resolution during subsequent planning.

For example, planners not only identify relevant actors, but also begin to understand their relationships, tensions, and trends. All of these dynamics suggest ways to interact not only with adversaries, but also with the population and other elements within the battlespace. In this manner, commanders use their understanding of the problem to formulate their intent and guidance.

### Commander's Initial Intent and Guidance

Having engaged in a design dialogue with his planners and staff in order to gain insight into the problem, the commander provides his initial intent and guidance in order to direct continued actions in the planning process.

Commander's intent is the commander's personal expression of the purpose of the operation. It must be clear, concise, and easily understood. It may also include end state or conditions, that, when satisfied, accomplish the purpose. Commander's intent helps subordinates understand the larger context of their actions and guides them in the absence of orders. It allows subordinates to exercise judgment and initiative—when the task assigned is no longer appropriate given the current situation—in a way that is consistent with the higher commander's aims. This freedom of action, within the framework of the commander's intent, creates tempo during planning and execution. Higher and subordinate commanders' intents must align. The purpose of the operation derives from the "in order to..." portion of the mission statement or the execution paragraph of the higher commander's operation plan (OPLAN) or operation order (OPORD).

As with visualization, the commander may develop his intent early in the planning process, but he will review and revise it as required. As the commander proceeds through the planning process, he gains additional levels of understanding about the environment, which allows him to formulate and refine his intent as well as his vision of actions.

The commander's initial guidance can be as detailed or as broad as the commander desires.

His initial guidance should address his understanding of the environment and the nature of the problem. This is the kind of information you would expect to read in Paragraph 1 (Situation) of a five-paragraph order. This guidance may also include his thoughts on friendly and enemy COGs as well as information requirements.

There is no prescriptive format for the commander's initial guidance. In some instances, the commander may quickly understand the environment, the problem, and how the problem may be solved. In other instances, the commander may need the staff to provide him with additional information and will not be ready to describe how the problem will be solved until later in the problem framing step.

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## Staff Actions

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Design does not occur in isolation; much of the information available to the commander comes from staff actions, primarily in the form of analysis. Accordingly, staff actions should be viewed as concurrent and complementary—versus sequential—activities. For example, understanding the nature of the problem, to include the purpose of the operation, provides the context to drive task analysis. Conversely, the learning gained through task analysis deepens the understanding of the problem and contributes to design.

These complementary activities are of little value unless they interact. The planning process provides venues for interactions between the commander and the staff, the OPT, and/or subordinate units. When the staff or OPT briefs the commander, they are providing, in part, the results of their actions. When the commander provides guidance, his direction represents a synthesis of the staff's input, along with other sources of information, which manifest in the form of a decision about how to proceed. All of the following actions enhance understanding and increase planning effectiveness.

## Analyze Tasks

Commands normally receive tasks that planners analyze as a basis for determining the unit's mission. The principal source for tasks is the HHQ plan or order, but there may be other sources, such as verbal guidance, from which to derive tasks. Additionally, as the problem and purpose are understood as a result of the design effort, the command develops implied tasks based on this understanding. Using the commander's initial intent and guidance and HHQ orders, the staff identifies specified and implied tasks; of these, tasks that define mission success and may be applicable to the force as a whole become essential tasks:

- Specified tasks derive primarily from the execution paragraphs of the HHQ OPORD, but they may be found elsewhere, such as in the mission statement, coordinating instructions, or annexes. Any specified task that pertains to any element of the unit should be identified and recorded.
- Implied tasks are not specifically stated in the HHQ order, but they are necessary to accomplish specified tasks. Implied tasks emerge from analysis of the HHQ order, the impending threat, and the understanding of the problem. Routine, inherent, enduring, or SOP activities are not implied tasks.
- Essential tasks are specified or implied tasks that define mission success and apply to the force as a whole. If a task must be successfully completed for the commander to accomplish his purpose, it is an essential task. Planners develop the mission statement from the essential tasks.

## Analyze Centers of Gravity

The staff conducts a COG analysis based on the understanding gained through design and task analysis to identify or refine adversary and friendly COGs and to determine which friendly and adversary weaknesses may become critical vulnerabilities. A critical vulnerability is some



aspect of the COG that is, or can be made, vulnerable to attack. Critical vulnerabilities provide aiming points for the application of friendly strengths against adversary weaknesses. Conversely, planners identify friendly critical vulnerabilities to protect against the application of adversary strengths against friendly weaknesses.

The staff identifies and directs the force's strengths against the enemy's critical vulnerabilities in order to hamper his ability to defend, attack, sustain, or command his forces. Critical vulnerabilities, once identified, assist the commander in choosing where, when, and what will constitute decisive action. The staff also identifies friendly COGs and critical vulnerabilities in order to leverage strengths while protecting weaknesses.

This COG analysis is a means to focus the commander and staff on what is most important among all the variables and factors that can influence the conduct of operations. Determining COGs is an art. At a minimum, commands should think in terms of strengths and weaknesses.

Relative combat power assessment provides planners with an understanding of friendly and adversary force strengths and weaknesses relative to each other. While force ratios may be important, the numerical comparison of personnel and major end items is just one factor to balance with other factors, such as leadership, morale, equipment maintenance, training levels, weather, demographics, and cultural environment.

### Develop Assumptions

Assumptions are suppositions about the current situation or about future events assumed to be true in the absence of facts in order to continue planning and allow the commander to make a decision concerning a COA. They apply to both friendly and adversary situations as well as the environment. A valid assumption should answer all of the following questions:

- Is it logical?
- Is it realistic?

- Is it essential for planning to continue?
- Does it avoid assuming away an adversary capability?

As planning continues, additional assumptions may be needed and previous assumptions may be deleted. A record is kept of assumptions in order to track and validate them as they are confirmed or disapproved. Assumptions are contained in OPLANs, but are not included in OPORDs. If the OPLAN contains assumptions that are not validated before execution, the assumptions become part of the inherent risks of the operation.

If possible, assumptions are forwarded to HHQ for validation. This ensures the HHQ commander understands the potential risks that a subordinate command is accepting. It may prompt the HHQ to pursue facts that support the assumption or to request additional information.

### Determine Limitations

Restraints (what cannot be done) and constraints (the options to which one is limited) that do not qualify as specified tasks need to be identified and carried forward into COA development and subsequent planning as they can affect the conduct of operations.

### Develop the Mission Statement

The purpose of the operation and the essential tasks are the foundation for the mission. A properly constructed mission statement answers the following questions:

- Who (the forces that will conduct the operation)?
- What (the type of operation)?
- When (the time or event that determines when an operation will start and end)?
- Where (the location of the area of operations)?
- Why (the purpose/intent of the operation)?

The essential tasks determine who, what, when, and where. The purpose of the operation determines the why.

The commander approves the proposed mission statement or modifies or develops a new mission statement as a prelude to COA development. The approved mission statement becomes a key part of an OPLAN or OPORD. The mission statement also connects friendly forces with the other elements of the operational environment, such as adversaries, local population, the infrastructure, and other friendly forces and non-DOD entities.

### Perform Ongoing Activities

Staff actions include a number of ongoing activities that begin during problem framing and continue through the other steps of the planning effort. Conducting staff estimates, for example, involve functional and detailed planning conducted at the same time as, and in support of, the overall planning effort. Other examples include the continued refinement of IPB products to keep pace with the changing situation; subordinate units providing detailed planning data, such as resupply requirements or sortie generation rates; and the maintenance of feedback loops that address information gaps, the validation of assumptions, or the introduction of new information that can change the understanding of the situation. Examples of ongoing activities include—

- **IPB Product Refinement.** The staff reviews and refines IPB products, to include enemy COAs, to support COG analysis. The IPB products must mature as planning progresses. For example, as the OPT works through problem framing, COA development, and COA war game, it may conduct pattern analysis of enemy actions—as well as the activities of local inhabitants—to better understand the operational environment. This pattern analysis feeds the development of various templates. Eventually, these contribute to a decision support template complete with named areas of interest (NAIs), target areas of interest (TAIs), and decision points.
- **Red Cell Activities.** The purpose of a red cell is to assist the commander in assessing COAs

against a thinking enemy. Depending on the size of the organization, a red cell can range in size from an intelligence officer to a task-organized group of subject matter experts (SMEs). While a red cell's principal duties center on COA development and the COA war game, it participates in the analysis of COGs and also supports the commander's understanding of the problem during the initial stages of design.

- **Green Cell Activities.** The purpose of a green cell is to consider the population in order to promote a better understanding of the environment and the problem. At a minimum, the green cell provides for the independent will of the population. The green cell may also provide considerations for non-DOD entities, such as intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) or nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Green cell membership can range from an individual to a task-organized group of SMEs that may include liaisons from the local populace and non-DOD agencies.
- **Refinement of Staff Estimates and Estimates of Supportability.** The staff and subordinate units gather and refine information in support of staff estimates or estimates of supportability. These estimates provide a timely examination of factors that support decisionmaking and can affect mission accomplishment. Depending on the level of command and the time available, the estimates could be a formal, detailed written document or an informal verbal briefing.
- **Battlespace Refinement.** Battlespace includes the area of interest, area of influence, and operational areas. Operational areas for Marine air-ground task forces (MAGTFs) are usually an area of operations. The staff may recommend battlespace refinements based on the analysis of the terrain and tasks as well as friendly and adversary COGs, capabilities, and limitations. The size of the area of interest may change based on the commander's understanding of the situation. The extent of the area of influence may change if forces are added or deleted, equipment capability and availability change,

or rules of engagement change. The commander's area of operations may need to change based on the scope of the mission, the results of operations, operational reach, or to ensure sufficient battlespace to maneuver and protect his force.

- **Resource Shortfalls Identification.** Based on the tasks and available resources, the commander and staff identify critical resource shortfalls in order to determine additional support requirements. Shortfalls can include a need for SMEs.
- **Commander's Critical Information Requirement Review/Update.** Only the commander decides what information is critical, but the staff may propose commander's critical information requirements (CCIRs) to the commander. The CCIRs are continually reviewed and updated or deleted as required and are divided into two subcategories—friendly force information requirements and priority intelligence requirements. Initially, CCIRs may identify intelligence or information requirements to assist with the planning and decision-making process. When answered, CCIRs may often serve to inform the ongoing design and provide information proving or disproving the hypothesis. As the planning moves forward and execution is imminent, the CCIRs will reflect key information/intelligence requirements tied to decision points needed for execution.
- **Requests for Information.** Planners identify requirements for information necessary to remove assumptions, support future plans, or conduct current operations. Based on the initial IPB and information requirements (including CCIRs), the commander and staff identify gaps in information and intelligence. Planners forward requests for information (RFIs) to the appropriate staff section or to HHQ for answers. Over time, the number of RFIs can make the tracking effort very difficult. A software-based RFI management tool and an individual tasked to track RFI submission and response can help accomplish this task.

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## Present a Problem Framing Brief

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The staff presents a problem framing brief to the commander to review the completed products and to ensure a shared understanding within the staff. When approved by the commander, these products inform COA development. The brief may include the following:

- Situation update (battlespace organization, status of friendly forces, stakeholders and existing command relations, area of operations, area of interest, area of influence).
- Intelligence estimate and IPB products (terrain analysis, weather analysis, human environment estimate/cultural analysis, adversary integration [possible COAs]).
- HHQ missions.
- HHQ commanders' intents (two levels up).
- A review of the commander's initial intent and guidance.
- Task analysis (specified, implied, and essential tasks).
- Assumptions.
- Limitations—restraints/constraints.
- Resource shortfalls.
- COG analyses (friendly, enemy).
- RFIs.
- Recommended CCIRs.
- Proposed mission statement (approved by the commander).
- Other updated products from ongoing activities.

Both the brief and the work generating the products can influence the commander's understanding of the environment and the problem itself. Accordingly, the commander may use this opportunity to refine his initial intent and guidance or modify the mission statement.

The commander may conclude the brief by approving the mission statement and providing his COA development guidance. The commander may also want to further consider the

problem framing products, as well as any additional information that emerged during the brief, before approving the products or providing additional guidance.

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### Commander's Course of Action Guidance

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The commander should articulate his commander's concept, a clear and concise expression of what he intends to accomplish and how it will be done using available resources. As planning continues, this concept enables the planners to develop and refine COAs. This visualization reflects the commander's understanding of the situation and his hypothesis for achieving the overall purpose. Based on a variety of considerations, such as available time or understanding of the problem and its complexity, the commander's guidance may be narrow and directive or it may be broad and inquisitive. The former may include development of a single COA, while the latter may direct exploration of several COAs. Specific guidance can be in terms of warfighting functions, line of or types of operations, or forms of maneuver, but should include the commander's vision of decisive, shaping, and sustaining actions (which assists the staff in determining the main effort); parts of the operation; location of critical events; and other aspects the commander deems pertinent to COA development:

- **Decisive Actions.** The purpose of any military operation is mission success. Decisive actions are those the commander deems fundamental to achieving mission success. They cause a favorable change in the situation or cause the adversary to change or cease planned/current activities. For an action to be decisive, it must lead directly to a larger success. Decisive actions create an environment in which the adversary has lost either the means or the will to resist. In counterinsurgency (COIN) operations, this situation usually occurs when the majority of the population supports the legitimate government. The unit envisioned to be conducting the decisive action is normally identified as the main effort.

- **Shaping Actions.** Shaping sets conditions for decisive actions. Shaping actions are interactions with selected elements within the battlespace to influence an enemy's capabilities or force, or the enemy commander's decision-making process. The commander shapes the battlespace by protecting friendly critical vulnerabilities and attacking enemy critical vulnerabilities. Shaping can incorporate a wide array of functions and capabilities and is more than just fires and targeting. It may include direct attack, information operations, engineer activities, and civil-military operations. Shaping makes the enemy vulnerable to attack, impedes or diverts his attempts to maneuver, aids friendly maneuver, and influences the decisionmaking of key actors to achieve information superiority. Shaping dictates the time and place for decisive actions. It forces the enemy to adopt COAs favorable to the commander's plans. The commander attempts to shape events in a way that allows him several options for achieving the decisive action.
- **Sustaining Actions.** Sustaining actions are shaping actions directed at friendly forces. Planning is a sustaining action. It prepares friendly forces for military operations by improving their understanding, which minimizes shock or surprise and promotes intuitive decisionmaking to enhance tempo. Other examples of sustaining actions include preventive medical services and logistic operations, such as stockpiling critical ammunition, fuel, and supplies to facilitate future operations.

Additionally, COA development guidance may include—

- Adversary vulnerabilities.
- Risk.
- Any further restraints/constraints.
- Selection and employment of the main effort.
- Types of operations.
- Forms of maneuver.
- Communication strategy.
- Command relationships.
- Task organization.

- Arrangement of the operation (phasing).
- Timing of the operation.
- Reserve.
- Evaluation of the battlespace.
- Mobility and countermobility.
- Minimum number of COAs to be developed.

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### Issue the Warning Order

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Upon completion of problem framing, the commander should direct the release of a warning order (WARNORD), which allows subordinate commands to begin concurrent planning as the higher command begins COA development. The WARNORD should contain all available information to facilitate concurrent planning. Consistency with formats used for subsequent orders products will help speed the information flow because subordinates will know where to look for critical information. When operating with coalition and partner nation forces, WARNORDs should reflect language and cultural considerations.

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### Considerations

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The human nature present in a problem leads to complexity. No amount of critical thinking will ensure complete understanding or 100 percent

accuracy. Accordingly, design does not end with problem framing. The commander must continually return to his understanding of the problem; refine his guidance; and provide an update or even a new vision/description of who, what, when, where, and why as his planners and staff work through the planning process.

The lists of considerations on the preceding pages provide a broad framework for an open-ended dialogue with no predetermined conclusion during the command's efforts to gain an understanding of the environment and the problem. The problem framing brief or any other planning-related brief has an intrinsic value far beyond the information presented. Whenever the commander and his staff and, when possible, subordinate commanders and their staffs share a common venue where dialogue takes place, the amount of learning is enhanced. Group dialogue, when conducted within the proper command climate, can foster a collective level of understanding not attainable by any individual within the group regardless of experience or seniority. Short of direct interaction with object systems, such as the adversary or populations, group interactions involving frank and candid input are the best way to replicate the nonlinear nature of conflicts and the parties involved.

# CHAPTER 3

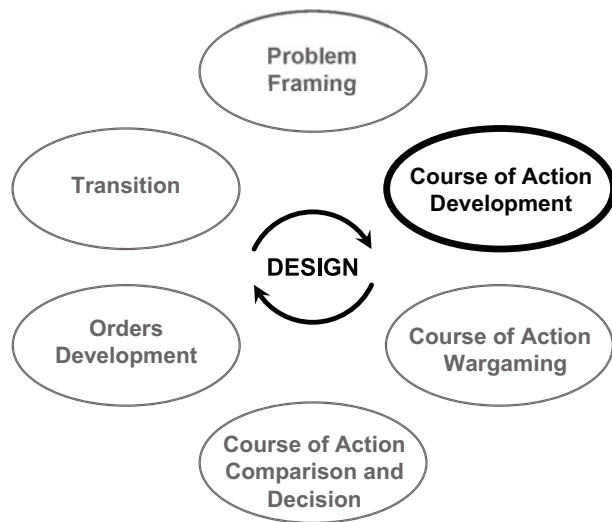
## COURSE OF ACTION DEVELOPMENT

*Decisionmaking requires both the situational awareness to recognize the essence of a given problem and the creative ability to devise a practical solution.*

—MCDP 1, *Warfighting*

*... make plans to fit circumstances, but do not try to create circumstances to fit plans.*

—George S. Patton, Jr., Gen, *War As I Knew It*



**Figure 3-1. Course of Action Development.**

Course of action development (see fig. 3-1) leads to one or more options for *how* the mission and commander's intent might be accomplished in accordance with the commander's understanding as a result of the design effort that began during problem framing. Design helps to inform the commander's intent and guidance and provides options for the commander while continuing to refine the understanding of the environment and problem. To be distinguishable, each COA must employ different means or methods that address the essential tasks and incorporate the commander's intent and guidance.

During COA development, planners use the products carried forward from problem framing to generate options or COAs that satisfy the mission

in accordance with the commander's intent and guidance. Developed COAs should be—

- **Suitable:** Does the COA accomplish the purpose and tasks? Does it comply with the commander's guidance?
- **Feasible:** Does the COA accomplish the mission within the available time, space, and resources?
- **Acceptable:** Is the COA proportional and worth the cost in personnel, equipment, materiel, time involved, or position? Is it consistent with the law of war and is it militarily and politically supportable?
- **Distinguishable:** Does the COA differ significantly from other COAs?
- **Complete:** Does the COA include all tasks to be accomplished? Does it address the entire mission (main and supporting efforts, reserve, and associated risks)?

The staff develops COAs for follow-on wargaming and comparison. Accordingly, the commander may limit the number of COAs the staff develops or direct a single COA if he is comfortable doing so based on his intuition and experience or if operating under severe time constraints. Planning tools useful in COA development include—

- Design products, such as commander's intent and guidance.
- Updated IPB products.
- Task analysis (specified, implied, and essential).

- Restraints/constraints.
- Assumptions.
- Resource shortfalls.
- COG analysis (friendly and enemy).
- CCIRs.
- RFIs.
- Initial staff estimates and estimates of support-ability.

Planners develop broad COAs considering a number of factors, including mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops and support available-time available (METT-T); adversary versus friendly capabilities assessment; civilian and cultural considerations; and possible employment options. Planners consider two fundamental questions:

- What needs to be accomplished?
- How should it be done?

Answering the second question is the essence of COA development. The following staff actions assist COA development:

- **Update IPB Products.** The IPB enables planners to view the battlespace in terms of the adversary and the environment. It helps planners determine how the adversary will react to proposed friendly COAs, the purpose of adversary actions, the most likely and most dangerous adversary COAs, and the type of friendly operations that the terrain and infrastructure will allow. It is critical that planners continue to update and refine IPB to deepen their understanding of the situation and to answer the two fundamental questions posed in COA development.
- **Display Friendly Forces.** The graphic display of friendly forces in relation to the terrain allows planners to see the current and projected locations of friendly forces and can help reveal possible options.
- **Refine COG Analysis.** The COG analysis began during problem framing. The commander and staff refine COG analysis based on updated intelligence and IPB products, initial staff estimates, and input from the red and green cells. The refined COGs and critical vulnerabilities are used in the development of the COAs. If COGs and critical vulnerabilities are not known yet, the focus should be on both friendly and adversary strengths and weaknesses.
- **Continue Red and Green Cell Planning.** In problem framing, the red cell performed an analysis from the adversary's perspective while the green cell provided insights regarding civilian considerations. There could be multiple adversaries to consider as well as varying civilian groups, such as tribes, families, ethnicities, and agencies. Red and green cells should be prepared to "play" them all. During COA development, the red cell continues to analyze and refine adversary COAs. The red cell should have COAs completed in sufficient detail for wargaming by the completion of COA development. The green cell continues to develop consequent reactions by civilian groups within the context of friendly and adversary actions.
- **Update Staff Estimates.** Staff estimates assist planners during COA development by providing essential information on areas of concern, identifying requirements and capabilities, determining shortfalls, and identifying potential solutions to those shortfalls.

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## Develop Courses of Action

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Guided primarily by the commander's COA development guidance, along with the aforementioned planning tools, planners begin developing possible ways to accomplish the mission. This development requires critical thinking skills and unbiased, open-minded participants. The number of COAs and level of detail depend on the commander's guidance and the time available for planning. Planners should not judge or eliminate initial or "rough-cut" COAs; all possibilities are recorded for consideration in order to provide the commander with a variety of options.

There are numerous techniques for developing COAs. Some Marines envision a sequence of actions given goals and objectives; others consider key factors, such as METT-T, a useful starting point; and others consider ways to counter the adversary's most dangerous and most likely COAs. Regardless of the specific COA development technique used, the following factors should be considered:

- **Establish Battlespace Framework.** The framework allows the commander to relate his forces to one another in time, space, and purpose.
- **Array Forces.** Friendly, adversary, and, when relevant, populations should be arrayed in the same venue while developing COAs.
- **Assign Purpose and Then Tasks.** Ensure each task associated with envisioned actions has a purpose to accomplish the mission. Begin with the main effort and follow with the supporting effort(s) and reserve (if assigned).
- **Task Organize.** Proper task organization ensures each unit is constructed, sized, and resourced for success.
- **Integrate.** The OPT depicts the integration of actions across time and space in the COA graphic and narrative.
- **Determine Control Measures.** Control measures should expedite actions and ensure forces have sufficient battlespace and flexibility to accomplish their mission while protecting their forces.
- **Consider the Adversary.** Consideration of the adversary's most dangerous/most likely COAs must be addressed by every friendly COA.

The commander reviews the initial COAs to see if they meet his intent. Normally an informal review, it is referred to as a rough-cut COA brief, is conducted as soon as possible once the initial COAs are complete, and saves time by avoiding refinements to COAs that will not be approved. The review also helps the commander further refine his understanding as he begins to see tangible results of his intent. The commander may direct modifications to the initial COAs or may direct the development of additional COAs.

Using the commander's guidance and a review of the initial COAs, the staff further develops, expands, and refines the COAs to be taken forward into COA wargaming. A complete COA normally consists of a COA graphic and narrative, task organization, synchronization matrix, and supporting concepts. Additionally, the staff may recommend to the commander how a COA should be wargamed. This recommendation may include the war game method and which adversary COA to use.

### Course of Action Graphic and Narrative

The COA graphic and narrative portray how the organization will accomplish the mission. Together, the graphic and narrative identify who (notional task organization), when, what (tasks), where, how, and why (intent). The COA graphic and narrative are essential and inseparable. Together, they help the commander, subordinate commanders, and the staffs understand the method by which the organization will accomplish its mission. During conventional operations, the graphic portrays the activities of the main and supporting efforts and critical maneuver control measures (such as objectives, boundaries, and phase lines) and fire support coordination measures. The narrative provides the purpose and tasks of the main and supporting efforts, the reserve, and the sequencing of the operation.

In other types of operations, such as stability operations, the graphic may display civil-military activities, locations of relief organizations and dislocated civilians, demographic variations (tribal, ethnic, religious patterns) of the population, key infrastructure, and culturally or historically significant areas. The COA graphic and narrative, when approved by the commander, form the basis for the CONOPS and operations overlay in the basic plan or order.

### Task Organization

The task organization captures how the commander intends to structure the force's resources to accomplish the mission. It can also establish



command and support relationships. Proper task organization ensures each unit is properly constructed, sized, and equipped to support the commander's CONOPS.

### Synchronization Matrix

The synchronization matrix is a working document showing the activities of the command and subordinate elements over time. It can display how units and tasks interrelate, providing additional details that complement and amplify the COA graphic and narrative. The synchronization matrix should not be used as a "script" or "playbook" for execution, rather as a way to provide structure for the war game.

### Supporting Concepts

The staff prepares supporting functional concepts for each COA to ensure actions are integrated and coordinated. Once the commander selects a COA, the supporting concepts provide the basis for such concepts as intelligence, fires, or logistics in the order or plan.

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### Conduct a Course of Action Brief

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Planners brief each COA separately. Standardized briefing formats help keep the brief focused and prevent omission of essential information. The COA brief includes the COA graphic and narrative. It may also include refined facts, assumptions, or risks carried forward from problem framing, such as possible adversary COAs, the response of the local population to each COA, the rationale for each COA, and recommendations for wargaming.

The COA brief may include initial running estimates from subordinate commands and the staff. These estimates should identify significant aspects of the situation which can influence the COA. The key to running estimates is to identify "show stoppers" as early as possible in the planning effort.

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### Commander's Wargaming Guidance and Evaluation Criteria

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Following the COA development brief, the commander will select or modify the COAs and/or suggest additional COAs for wargaming. He also provides wargaming guidance and evaluation criteria.

The commander's wargaming guidance may include a list of friendly COAs to be wargamed against specific adversary COAs. For example, COA 1 is wargamed against the adversary's most likely, most dangerous, or most advantageous COA. It may also include a timeline for the phase or stage of the operation and a list of critical events, such as shifting the main effort.

Before the staff can begin the COA war game, the commander must choose the evaluation criteria he will use to select the COA that will become his CONOPS. The commander establishes evaluation criteria based on METT-T, judgment, personal experience, and his overall understanding of the situation. Commanders may choose evaluation criteria related to the principles of war, such as mass or surprise. These evaluation criteria help focus the wargaming effort and provide the framework for data collection by the staff. The commander will use the data collected during the next planning step, COA comparison and decision. Other criteria may include—

- Limitation on casualties.
- Exploitation of enemy weaknesses/friendly strengths.
- Defeat of the adversary's COG(s).
- Degree of asymmetrical operations.
- Information operations.
- Opportunity for maneuver.
- Concentration of combat power.
- Speed.
- Balance between mass and dispersion.
- Success despite terrain or weather restrictions.
- Risk.
- Phasing.
- Weighting the main effort.

- Logistical supportability.
- Political considerations.
- Considerations within the information environment.
- Force protection.
- Time available and timing of the operation.
- Impact on local population/issues.

The commander should also provide guidance to a green cell, if formed, relating the wargame to the actions of and the effects upon the civilian population.

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### Considerations

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A COA must contain sufficient detail to facilitate COA wargaming. The war game, if done

properly, will usually reveal an incomplete COA. Planners often have to return to COA development during wargaming, not because their COAs are infeasible, but because they are incomplete and require additional detail to continue the war game (see appendices E through I for information and examples regarding planning processes, tools, and other coordination).

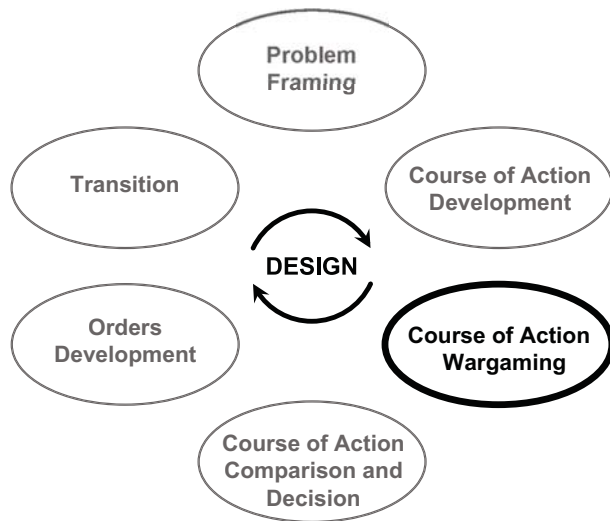
The COA development process continues to inform the commander and his staff and leads to products that drive subsequent steps in the MCPP. The updated commander's visualization resulting from COA development can include a possible reframing of the problem and purpose. The COA development brief provides another venue for further discussion to deepen understanding of the problem.

# CHAPTER 4

## COURSE OF ACTION WAR GAME

*Know the enemy and know yourself; in a hundred battles you will never be in peril. When you are ignorant of the enemy but know yourself, your chances of winning or losing are equal. If ignorant both of your enemy and of yourself, you are certain in every battle to be in peril.*

—Sun Tzu, *Warriors' Words: A Quotation Book*



**Figure 4-1. Course of Action Wargaming.**

The purpose of COA wargaming (see fig. 4-1) is to improve the plan. It examines and refines the option(s) in light of adversary capabilities and potential actions/reactions as well as other factors peculiar to the operational environment, such as the local population and how it may respond to friendly and adversary interactions. Planners wargame friendly COAs against selected adversary COAs through an iterative action-reaction-counteraction process. On larger staffs, a free-thinking red cell builds and “fights” adversary COAs, while a green cell develops probable responses and actions of the population. This form of interaction coupled with feedback loops accounts for the nonlinear nature of military operations.

Whether conducted formally as a disciplined, interactive process or informally through a simple

“what if” conversation between the commander and staff, wargaming relies heavily on the operational judgment and experience of the participants. Computer-aided modeling and simulation applications provide another method for wargaming.

A continuation of design, the process of COA wargaming contributes to a better understanding of the environment and the problem, the identification of potential branches and sequels, and required modifications to each COA.

Wargaming enables the commander and his staff to determine the advantages and disadvantages of each COA and forms the basis for the commander’s COA comparison and decision. It involves a detailed assessment of each COA, to include support estimates, as that COA relates to the enemy and the other elements of the battlespace.

The COA war game requires the commander’s designated friendly COAs for wargaming, adversary COAs against which to war game (most likely, most dangerous, and most advantageous to friendly forces), wargaming guidance with specific techniques (such as an avenue of approach, a belt, key event, or sequence of essential tasks), and evaluation criteria. Other inputs useful in COA wargaming may include—

- Planning support tools including the COA graphic and narrative and synchronization matrix. The purpose of a synchronization matrix is to relate forces and their actions to one another in time, space, and purpose and converge combat power to achieve a decision.

A synchronization matrix should not be used to overly script the actions of subordinate units with expectations of specific outcomes. If a plan is too tightly coupled, it is easily damaged, difficult to repair, and lacks the flexibility to address the inherent friction and uncertainty resident in military conflicts.

- Estimates of supportability and additional requirements from subordinate commanders.
- Staff estimates and additional requirements from staff/warfighting representatives, including an updated intelligence estimate with an event template and adversary COAs.
- Updated facts and assumptions.

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### War Game Courses of Action

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The war game evolves around one or more “turns.” Each turn includes discussion of the friendly action, anticipated reaction of adversaries and the local population, and friendly counteraction.

- **Action.** Armed with the appropriate guidance, criteria, and support estimates, the staff begins the war game with the friendly force’s representative(s), briefing friendly actions across the warfighting functions (or LOOs in COIN) while moving icons on a map or electronic overlay if physical positioning is applicable.
- **Reaction.** The red cell, or adversary representative, will react to friendly actions by briefing the adversary’s (or the element that represents a threat to friendly success) actions according to its plan.
- **Counteraction.** The counteraction will require some degree of synthesis in order to respond to the adversary’s initial actions. The war game facilitator determines the outcome, whether failure, success, losses, or casualties, as a basis for the next cycle. The war game continues until the entire avenue of approach, belt(s), key event, or sequence of essential tasks has been thoroughly wargamed.

During wargaming—

- Evaluate each COA independently. Do not compare one COA with another during the war game.
- Remain unbiased and avoid premature conclusions.
- Continually determine if each COA is suitable, feasible, acceptable, distinguishable, and complete.
- Use the green cell (if formed) to discuss anticipated civilian population responses to friendly and adversary actions, reactions, and counteractions.
- Record the advantages and disadvantages of each COA.
- Record issues and mitigations for risk, assumptions, and limitations.
- Record data based on commander’s evaluation criteria for each COA.
- Keep to the established timeline of the war game.
- Identify possible branches and sequels for further planning.

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### Refine Staff Estimates, Estimates of Supportability, and Support Concepts

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The staff and subordinate commands continue to develop their estimates and supporting concepts. These estimates and supporting concepts are critical to the COA comparison and decision step and eventually become a part of the plan or order. Criteria used in the development of estimates may include—

- Risk assessment.
- Casualty projections and limitations.
- Personnel replacement requirements.
- Projected enemy losses.
- Enemy prisoner of war procedures.
- Intelligence collection requirements and limitations.
- Rules of engagement.

- High-value targets (HVTs).
- High-payoff targets (HPTs).
- Support (fires, information operations, logistics, aviation) strengths and limitations.
- Projected assets and resource requirements.
- Projected effects on the information environment.
- Operational reach.
- Projected allocation of mobility assets, lift, and sorties versus availability.
- Requirement for prepositioning equipment and supplies.
- Projected location of units and supplies for future operations.
- Projected location of the combat operations center and command post echelons.
- Command and control system's requirements.

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### Prepare Course of Action War Game Brief

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The COA war game brief includes the advantages and disadvantages of each COA and suggested modifications. It may also include—

- Enemy COA situation templates:
  - ◆ Updated intelligence estimate regarding terrain, weather, adversaries, or local population.
  - ◆ Wargamed adversary COA.
  - ◆ Wargamed responses of the population
- Problem framing and COA development products:
  - ◆ Higher, supporting, supported, and adjacent commanders' mission statements (two levels up).
  - ◆ Tasks and intent provided by HHQ.
  - ◆ Commander's intent for subordinate units.
  - ◆ Overview of COAs.
  - ◆ Wargame technique used.
- COA war game products and results—
  - ◆ COA war game worksheet.
  - ◆ Identification of any additional tasks.
  - ◆ Revised COA graphic and narrative.
  - ◆ Decision support template and matrix.
  - ◆ Synchronization matrix.

- ◆ Branches and potential sequels.
- ◆ Resource shortfalls.
- ◆ New RFIs.
- ◆ Estimated time required for the operation.
- ◆ Risk assessment.

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### Commander's Comparison and Decision Guidance

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The COA war game brief concludes with the commander's approval of any recommended changes to the COAs before they are compared. He also can take this time to provide guidance for the comparison of the COAs.

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### Considerations

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Initial, informal war games will likely take place during problem framing when the commander and staff consider and wargame possible solutions as a basis for understanding and the subsequent generation of a commander's concept that informs the COA development guidance.

When formally conducted, a well run COA war game can often be a time-consuming and onerous process, but it is worth every minute of the effort. The iterative nature of the action-reaction-counteraction process leads to the emergence or discovery of critical aspects of the operation, such as an adversary unit, dominant terrain, or a key leader engagement. The intuitive level of understanding gained reduces decisionmaking time in execution.

A successful war game fosters a better understanding of the situation, which will lead to modified COAs that better reflect the problem planners are attempting to solve.

Wargaming two levels down has been a generally accepted practice in order to adequately examine key events to determine support and coordination requirements.

The more turns examined in a war game, the further forward in time the staff must project events. This projection will result in less detail and a greater number of assumptions—factors that commanders and staffs must recognize when considering their results.

There are two main reasons planners may have to stop the war game and return to COA development:

- A COA is beyond repair.
- A COA lacks sufficient information upon which to base the war game.

# CHAPTER 5

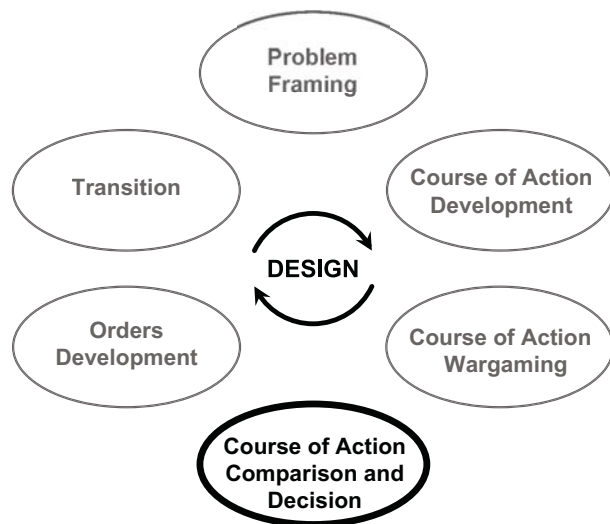
## COURSE OF ACTION COMPARISON AND DECISION

*The first principle of a [commander] is to calculate what he must do, to see if he has all the means to surmount the obstacles with which the enemy can oppose him and, when he has made his decision, to do everything to overcome them.*

—Napoleon Bonaparte, *Warriors' Words: A Quotation Book*

*When all is said and done the greatest quality required in commanders is 'decision'. . .*

—Viscount Montgomery of Alamein, *Memoirs*



**Figure 5-1. Course of Action Comparison and Decision.**

During COA comparison and decision (see fig. 5-1), the commander evaluates each friendly COA against established criteria, compares them with each other, and selects the COA he believes will best accomplish the mission. The COA comparison and decision inputs require graphics and narratives for each wargamed COA and the commander's evaluation criteria. Other inputs useful in COA comparison and decision may include—

- Updated IPB products.
- Planning support tools:
  - ◆ COA war game worksheet.
  - ◆ Synchronization matrix.

- War game results:
  - ◆ Initial task organization.
  - ◆ Resources and any shortfalls.
  - ◆ Updated CCIRs.
  - ◆ List of critical events and decision points.
- Staff estimates.
- Subordinate commander's estimates of supportability.
- Branches and sequels identified for further planning.

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### Evaluate Courses of Action

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Using his evaluation criteria, the commander or his representative (deputy commander, chief of staff, or operations officer) leads a discussion about the relative merits of each COA. The staff records the advantages and disadvantages for each. To the extent that operations allow, subordinate commanders, staffs, and planners should participate and provide input based on their estimates of supportability.

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### Compare Courses of Action

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The COA comparison provides the commander with an understanding of the relative merit of each COA and aids in his decisionmaking. The commander compares the COAs against one another

using the results of the COA evaluation. The commander may use a comparison and decision matrix to help him compare one COA with another.

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### Commander's Decision

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The commander selects a COA. In making his decision, the commander may—

- Select a COA without modification.
- Modify a COA.
- Develop a new COA by combining favorable elements of multiple COAs.
- Discard all COAs and resume problem framing or COA development, as required.

Once the commander has made a decision, he should review the approved COA with subordinate commanders. With a decision, detailed planning can accelerate now that the entire command's focus is on a single COA. To facilitate detailed planning, the staff uses the approved COA as the basis for the CONOPS.

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### Refine the Concept of Operations

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Based on the approved COA, the staff refines the CONOPS, which is the basis for or may include supporting concepts, such as the concepts of fires, logistics, and force protection. Within the context of military operations, concepts are a vision of actions. Accordingly, a CONOPS is a general description of actions to be taken in pursuit of mission accomplishment. Armed with the CONOPS and supporting concepts, planners can proceed with the functional and detailed planning essential for the development of the plan or order and implementation of the plan during execution.

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### Update the Warning Order

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With the preparation of the CONOPS, the commander will update his WARNORD or issue a planning order to inform subordinate commanders' concurrent planning.

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### Considerations

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The results of COA comparison and decision provide the basis for orders development and consist of the CONOPS. Additional results may include—

- Updated IPB products.
- Planning support tools.
- Updated CCIRs.
- Staff estimates.
- Commander's identification of branches for further planning.

This step requires the involvement of the commander, subordinate commanders, and their staffs from start to finish. Ideally, all participants would attend one meeting. The dialogue during the comparison and decision step represents a continuation of the design effort because it offers multiple perspectives that deepen the group's understanding of the environment and the problem.

During this discussion, participants should be able to view each COA through electronic presentations, maps with icons, or a terrain board.

In the event of a single COA, the time saved could be allocated to additional wargaming or developing branches and sequels.

In the event the commander approves a modified COA, planners should fully develop the COA then war game it against selected adversary's COAs.

Since military operations are nonlinear by nature and the smallest input can have a disproportional effect, the numerical weighting of factors offers little insight into the merits of one COA over another.

The COA comparison and decision process at lower levels of command may simply be an informal exchange of information between the commander and selected staff members concerning the results of the war game. At higher levels of command, the process is normally a formal sequence of activities centered on a commander-led discussion.

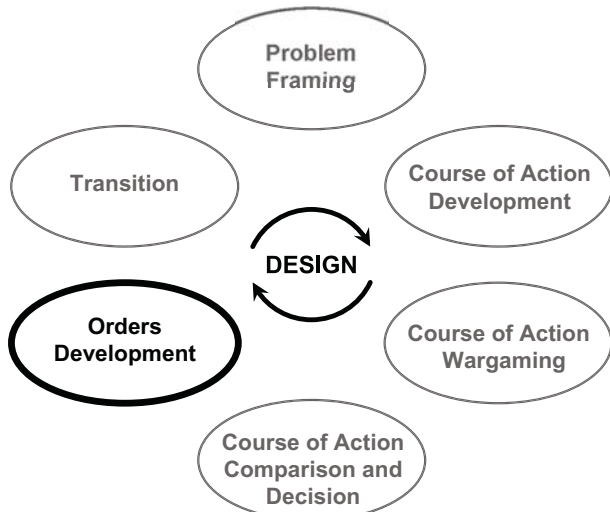


# CHAPTER 6

## ORDERS DEVELOPMENT

*As a rule, plans should contain only as much detail as required to provide subordinates the necessary guidance while allowing as much freedom of action as possible.*

—MCDP 5, *Planning*



**Figure 6-1. Orders Development.**

The purpose of orders development (see fig. 6-1) is to translate the commander's decision into oral, written, and/or graphic communication sufficient to guide implementation and promote initiative by subordinates. A form of detailed planning, the plan or order, once completed, becomes the principal means by which the commander expresses his decision, intent, and guidance.

The orders development step in the MCPP communicates the commander's decision in a clear, useful form that can be understood by those executing the order. An order is a written or oral communication that directs actions and focuses a subordinate's tasks and activities toward accomplishing the mission. Various portions of the order, such as the mission statement and the CONOPS, have been prepared during previous steps of the MCPP. The development of the order begins during problem framing and continues throughout the process.

The order contains only critical or new information and not routine matters normally found in SOPs. A good order is judged on its usefulness—not its size.

The initial task organization, mission statement, commander's intent, CONOPS, and specified and implied tasks are the required inputs to orders development. Other inputs may include—

- Updated intelligence and IPB products.
- Planning support tools.
- Updated CCIRs.
- Staff estimates.
- Commander's identification of branches for further planning.
- WARNORD/planning order.
- Existing plans and orders.
- The chief of staff's or executive officer's orders development guidance.

The chief of staff or the executive officer, as appropriate, directs orders development by dictating the format for the order, setting and enforcing the time limits and development sequence, and assigning annexes to specific staff sections.

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### Prepare the Order or Plan

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Orders appear in a variety of forms, ranging from detailed, written documents with numerous annexes to simple verbal commands. Their form depends on the time available, complexity of the operation, and level of command involved. Staff estimates, subordinate commanders' estimates of supportability, and other planning documents

inform a plan or order's annexes and appendices (see app. K for order/plan formats).

The order in narrative form with graphics and a range of supporting documents serves to focus the command during transition. The order is the vehicle by which the commander expresses his intent and assigns tasks to subordinates. The order ensures common understanding and serves to put every staff section and subordinate unit on the same azimuth pointed at the same objective.

If a basic order has been published, a fragmentary order (FRAGO) may be issued to subordinate commanders. Whatever the format, orders and plans must be clear, concise, timely, and useful. Orders development also includes two essential quality control techniques—orders reconciliation and orders crosswalk.

### Orders Reconciliation

Orders reconciliation is an internal process during which the staff conducts a detailed review of the entire order. The purpose of reconciliation is to ensure the basic order and all the annexes, appendices, and other attachments are complete and in agreement. It identifies discrepancies or gaps in the planning that will require corrective action. Specifically, the staff compares the commander's intent, the mission, and the CCIRs against the CONOPS and the supporting concepts, such as maneuver, fires, or support. The priority intelligence requirements and the intelligence collection plan must support the CCIRs.

### Orders Crosswalk

Orders crosswalk is an external process in which the staff compares its order with the orders of higher, adjacent, and subordinate commanders to achieve unity of effort and ensure the superior commander's intent is met. Similarly, confirmation briefs and rehearsal of concept (ROC) drills (discussed in chap. 7) can help a commander ensure his subordinate units nest within his plan or order. For additional information, see MAGTF Staff Training Program Pamphlet 5-0.2, *Operational Planning Team Leaders Guide*.

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## Approve the Order or Plan

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The final action in orders development is the approval of the order or plan by the commander. While the commander does not have to sign every annex or appendix, it is important he review and sign the basic order or plan.

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## Considerations

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When writing plans or orders, words matter. Writers must remain consistent in their use of approved terminology, particularly tactical tasks. For example, there is a significant difference between "defeat" and "destroy." Inappropriate terminology can lead to unintended consequences, including mission creep, gaps, or redundancies. For more information on tactical tasks, see MCDP 1-0, *Marine Corps Operations*.

Updated SOPs are critical to producing a concise plan or order. For example, Annex U (Information Management) of the order should only address information management topics specific or unique to an operation or location. Meanwhile, the command can train to baseline information management procedures contained in the SOP to promote tactics, techniques, and procedures excellence so critical to tempo. The SOPs need to be current, widely disseminated, and used if the plan or order references them.

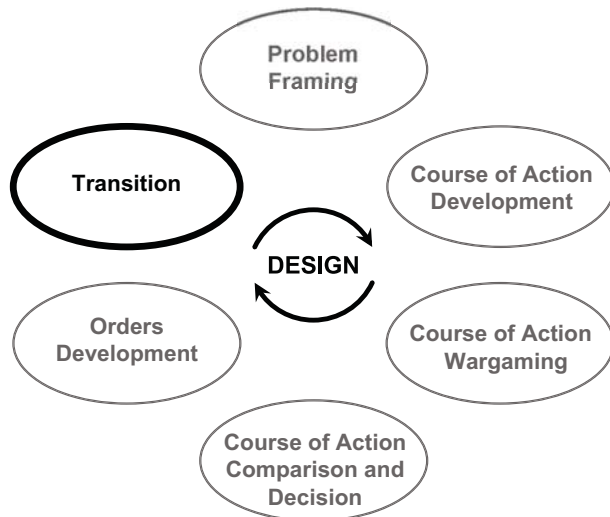
The entire staff develops the order/plan. Planners develop and refine functional concepts throughout the process, such as the concept of logistics or concept of fires. The staff principals and their respective sections are responsible for completing the annexes. The staff should ensure all tasks are either in the basic order or no lower than an appendix. Tasks that appear in tabs, exhibits, or attachments often lose visibility by the subordinate units and may not be accounted for and accomplished.

# CHAPTER 7

## TRANSITION

*. . . plans and orders exist for those who receive and execute them rather than those who write them.*

—MCDP 5, *Planning*



**Figure 7-1. Transition.**

Transition may involve a wide range of briefs, drills, or rehearsals necessary to ensure a successful shift from planning to execution and be subject to the variables of echelon of command, mission complexity, and, most importantly, time. At a minimum, this step includes a CONOPS brief along with the handover and explanation of any execution tools developed during planning, such as a decision support matrix or an execution checklist. If time and resources allow, the transition step may include ROC drills and confirmation briefs by subordinate units. Successful transition enhances the situational understanding of those who will execute the order, maintains the intent of the CONOPS, promotes unity of effort, and generates tempo.

Transition is a continuous process that requires a free flow of information between commanders and staffs by all available means. At higher echelons where the planners may not be executors, the

commander may designate a representative as a proponent for the order or plan. After orders development, the proponent takes the approved order or plan forward to the staff charged with supervising execution. As a full participant in the development of the plan, the proponent is able to answer questions, aid in the use of the planning support tools, and assist during execution in determining necessary adjustments to the order or plan.

Transition occurs at all levels of command. A formal transition normally occurs on staffs with separate planning and execution teams. For transition to occur, an approved order or plan must exist. The approved order or plan and the products of continuing staff actions form the input for transition. These inputs may include—

- Refined intelligence and IPB products.
- Planning support tools.
- Outlined FRAGOs for branches.
- Information on possible future missions (sequels).
- Any outstanding issues.

Regardless of the level of command, a successful transition ensures those who execute the order understand the commander's intent, the CONOPS, and any planning tools. Transition may be internal or external and in the form of briefs, drills, or the relocation of a planner to the current operations for execution. Internally, transition occurs either between future plans and the future operations center or future operations and current operations centers. Externally, transition occurs between the commander and his subordinate commanders.

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## Transition Brief

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At the higher levels of command, transition may include a formal transition brief to subordinate or adjacent commanders and to the staff supervising execution of the order. At lower levels, it might be less formal. The transition brief provides an overview of the mission, commander's intent, task organization, and adversary and friendly situation. The commander, deputy commander, or chief of staff provides transition brief guidance, which may prescribe who will give the brief, the briefing content, the briefing sequence, and who is required to attend. Time available may dictate the level of detail in the transition brief. Orders and supporting materials should be transmitted as early as possible before the transition brief. The brief may include items from the order or plan, such as—

- HHQ mission (tasks and intent).
- Situation (friendly, adversary, and civilian population).
- Mission.
- Commander's intent.
- CCIRs.
- Task organization.
- CONOPS.
- Assumptions (for plans).
- Execution (including branches and potential sequels).
- Planning support tools.

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## Transition Drills

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Drills are important techniques during transition to ensure the greatest possible understanding of the plan or order by those who must execute it. Drills improve the ability of the commander and staff to command and control operations. A transition drill is a series of briefings, guided discussions, walk-throughs, or rehearsals used to facilitate understanding of the plan throughout all

levels of the command. Transition drills are conducted by the commander and his subordinate commanders or the commander and the staff tasked with execution of the plan or order. Typically, a transition drill is the only drill used at lower levels of command, where the staff both develops and executes the plan. Transition drills also allow the commander to express his thoughts on design, thereby increasing the situational understanding of the subordinate commanders and the staff. Sand tables, map exercises, and ROC drills are examples of transition drills.

The ROC drills are a technique to review an order or selected aspects of an order. They can be conducted in a number of ways and can focus on the overall CONOPS or specific functional concepts, such as fires, aviation, collection, or logistics. A large scale, MEF-level ROC drill can involve a terrain board the size of a football field with designated representatives walking through specific unit actions. A productive ROC drill is characterized by the willingness of participants to recognize and address disconnects that may arise. The ROC drills can also serve as a venue for confirmation briefs.

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## Confirmation Brief

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Subordinate commanders conduct a confirmation brief with their higher commander to confirm their understanding of commander's intent, their specific task and purpose, and the relationship between their unit's mission and that of the other units in the operation. The confirmation brief allows the higher commander to identify gaps in his plan, identify discrepancies between his and the subordinate commanders' plans, and learn how subordinate commanders intend to accomplish their missions. Successful transition products are commanders and staffs who are ready to execute the order and possible branches and prepared to plan sequels.

# APPENDIX A

## MARINE CORPS PLANNING IN JOINT OPERATIONS

Given that the Marine Corps will, more than likely, continue to operate in a joint environment. The MCPP is the vehicle through which commanders and their staffs in the operating forces provide input to the joint planning process. See Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning*.

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### Joint Planning

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Joint planning is a coordinated process used by joint force commanders to determine the best way to accomplish the mission. Joint planning is conducted in accordance with the policies and procedures established for the Joint Operation Planning and Execution System (JOPES) and its supporting systems. The JOPES is the foundation for joint planning and is the principal system for translating policy decisions into operation plans, concept plans, and operation orders.

Joint planning integrates military actions with those of multinational partners and other instruments of national power to achieve a specified end state. The military contribution to national strategic planning consists of joint strategic planning and its three subsets—security cooperation planning, force planning, and joint operation planning. Joint operation planning consists of contingency planning and crisis action planning (CAP) (see fig. A-1).

Contingency planning and CAP share common planning activities and are interrelated. Contingency planning occurs in noncrisis situations. The process is highly structured to support iterative, concurrent, and parallel planning to produce comprehensive, detailed plans. In-progress reviews provide commanders opportunities to interact with their staffs, giving them further guidance to

ensure the planning effort meets their vision. Contingency planning facilitates the transition to CAP. A combatant commander can use CAP to adjust previously prepared contingency plans for rapid execution. The process is shortened in CAP to support the dynamic requirements of changing events (see fig. A-2 on page A-2).

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### The Marine Corps Planning Process and Joint Planning

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The MCPP aligns with and complements JOPES, especially during the plan development phase. Supporting plans are developed once the combatant commander's concept has been approved; Marine Corps supporting plans address the tasks identified for Marine Corps operational forces and outline the actions of assigned and augmenting forces. The MCPP provides an approach for the Marine Corps component commanders and staffs to prepare Marine Corps supporting plans.

Marine Corps Order P3000.18, *Marine Corps Planner's Manual*, establishes Marine Corps policies, procedures, and standards for developing and

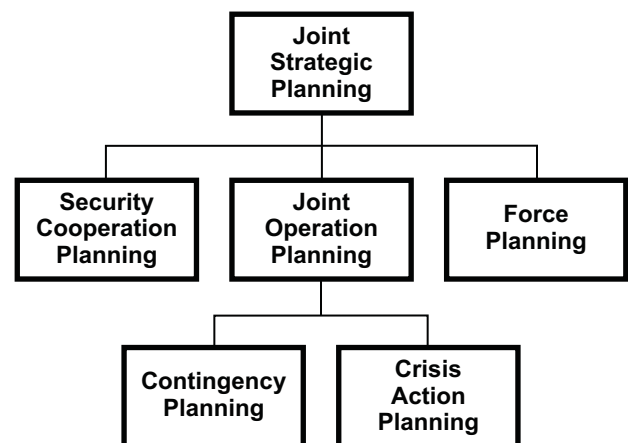


Figure A-1. Joint Strategic Planning.

executing plans for the deployment and redeployment of Marine Corps forces. The Marine Corps deployment planning and execution process describes Marine Corps Service responsibilities within JOPES. It provides specific procedures for Headquarters, Marine Corps planners and for the commanders and staffs in the Marine Corps operating forces for contingency planning and CAP.

This order addresses the combatant commander’s requirements for standing plans, which include sourcing the types and numbers of units, sustainment for units, and replacement manpower.

The MCPP aligns with CAP beginning with situation development and continuing throughout the process as Marine Corps planners develop new plans or expand or modify existing plans.

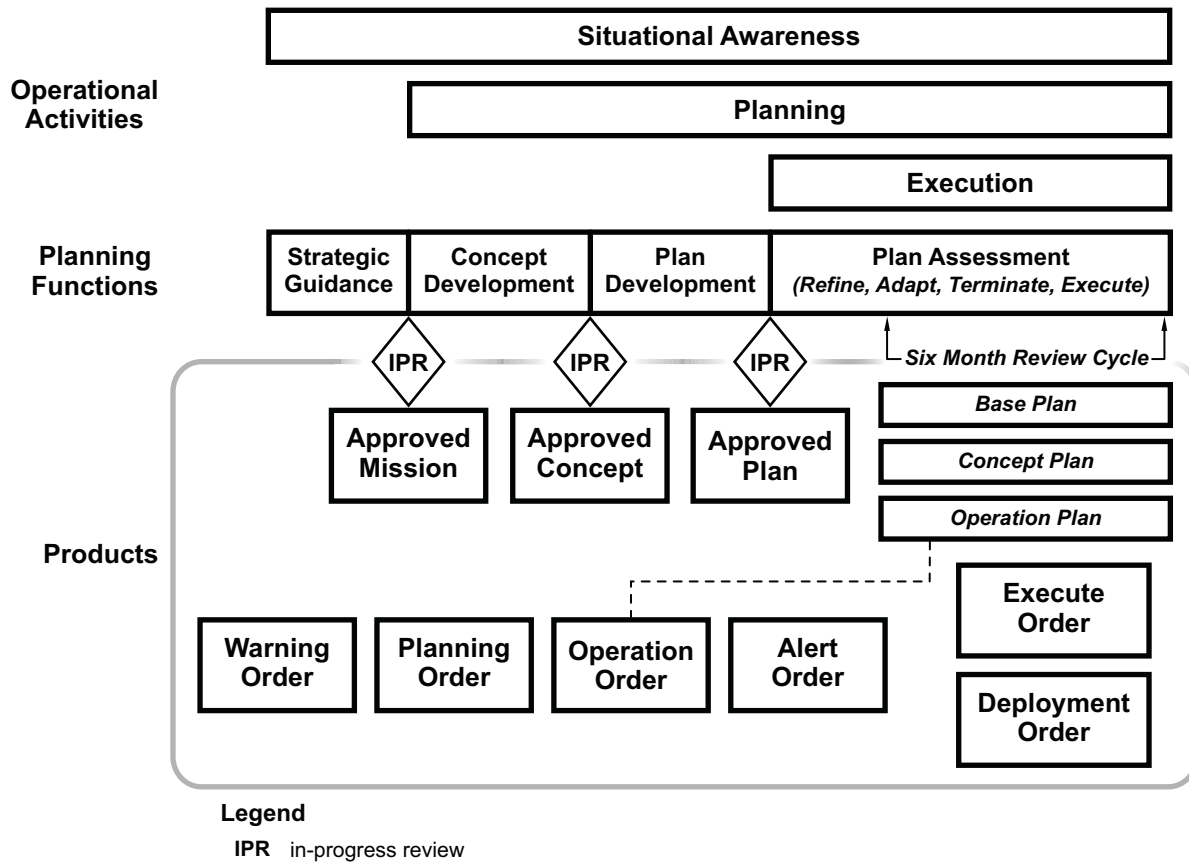


Figure A-2. Contingency and Crisis Action Planning Activities, Functions, and Products.

# APPENDIX B

## WARFIGHTING FUNCTIONS AND LINES OF OPERATIONS

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### Warfighting Functions

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Marine Corps warfighting functions encompass all military activities in the battlespace. Planners consider and integrate the warfighting functions when determining how to accomplish the mission. Integrating the warfighting functions ensures an integrated plan and helps achieve unity of effort and focus.

As stated in MCDP 1-2, *Campaigning*, Marine forces obtain maximum impact by harmonizing the warfighting functions to accomplish the desired objective within the shortest time possible and with minimum casualties. The six warfighting functions are command and control, maneuver, fires, intelligence, logistics, and force protection. They apply equally across the range of military operations and are the building blocks for all types of operations, including prolonged, amphibious, distributed, information, and COIN.

#### Command and Control

Command and control is the exercise of authority and direction over assigned or attached forces in the accomplishment of a mission. It is how the commander transmits his intent and decisions to the force and receives feedback. Command and control involves arranging personnel, equipment, and facilities to allow the commander to extend his influence over the force during the planning and conduct of military operations. Good planning facilitates command and control.

#### Maneuver

In JP 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, the DOD defines maneuver as the employment of forces in the operational area through movement in combination with fires to achieve a position of advantage

in respect to the enemy in order to accomplish the mission. Maneuver allows for the distribution or concentration of capabilities in support of a commander's CONOPS. The Marine Corps maneuver warfare philosophy expands the concept of maneuver to include taking action in any dimension, whether temporal, psychological, or technological, to gain an advantage. In COIN operations, for example, forces may achieve advantages through key leader engagements, provision of security, governance, economics, and the rule of law.

#### Fires

In JP 1-02, the DOD defines fires as the use of weapon systems to create a specific lethal or non-lethal effect on a target. Fires harass, suppress, neutralize, or destroy in order to accomplish the targeting objective, which may be to disrupt, delay, limit, persuade, or influence. Fires include the collective and coordinated use of target acquisition systems, direct and indirect fire weapons, armed aircraft of all types, and other lethal and nonlethal means. Fires are normally used in concert with maneuver, which helps shape the battlespace, setting conditions for decisive action.

#### Intelligence

Intelligence provides the commander with an understanding of the adversary and the operational environment and it identifies the adversary's COGs and critical vulnerabilities. It assists the commander in understanding the situation, alerts him to new opportunities, and helps him assess the effects of actions within the battlespace. This warfighting function supports and is integrated with the overall operational effort and must be focused on the commander's intelligence requirements.

## Logistics

Logistics encompasses all activities required to move and sustain military forces. At the tactical level, logistics is combat service support (CSS) that deals with feeding, fueling, arming, and maintaining troops and equipment. Tactical logistics involves the actual performance of the logistic functions of supply, maintenance, transportation, health services, general engineering, and other services.

## Force Protection

Force protection is the measures taken to preserve the force's potential so that it can be applied at the appropriate time and place. It includes those measures the force takes to remain viable by protecting itself from the effects of adversary activities and natural occurrences. Force protection safeguards friendly COGs and protects, conceals, reduces, or eliminates friendly critical vulnerabilities.

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## Lines of Operations

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The DOD defines a line of operation (LOO) as either a logical line that connects actions on nodes/decisive points related in time and purpose with an objective(s) or a physical line that defines the interior or exterior orientation of the force in relation to the adversary or that connects actions on nodes and/or decisive points related in time and space to an objective(s).

The logical definition specifically addresses irregular warfare in which positional reference to the adversary may have little relevance, hence the link to the purpose versus a physical objective. As a result of OIF and OEF, LOOs have become the primary framework for relating force activities to one another and promoting unity of effort toward a common purpose. The LOO examples in COIN include governance, economics, essential services, security, training host nation forces, and combat. The relative priority of a given LOO in a designated area may change as the situation evolves.



# APPENDIX C

## ORGANIZATION FOR PLANNING

The commander organizes his staff to gather, manage, and process information essential to decisionmaking. Organization for planning not only involves personnel and structure, but it is also affected by planning modes.

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### Planning Modes and Levels

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The MCPP facilitates planning at all levels and satisfies three modes of planning—orientation, contingency, and commitment—as described in MCDP 5. Orientation planning is used when the degree of uncertainty is so high that it is not worthwhile to commit to a specific plan. Planners focus on assessing the situation and designing flexible preliminary plans that can be adapted to a broad variety of situations. Contingency planning applies to situations when there is less uncertainty, but not enough is known to allow for the adoption of a specific plan. Normally, planners prepare for several contingencies, allowing the commander to respond quickly when the situation requires action. During commitment planning, the commander selects a plan and commits resources to executing the plan. See MCDP 5 for further discussion on planning modes. Commanders and planners consider these modes when organizing their planning efforts to ensure they use a mode and planning sequence appropriate to the situation.

These modes span the planning horizon based on degrees of uncertainty. Additionally, planning may also be viewed as a hierarchical continuum with conceptual, functional, and detailed levels of planning. As discussed in chapter 1, conceptual planning is the highest level, establishing aims, objectives, and broad concepts for action. Detailed planning is the lowest level of planning, translating the broad concept into a complete and

practicable plan. In between these two levels is functional planning, which involves elements of both conceptual and detailed planning and is concerned with designing supporting concepts for warfighting functions, such as maneuver or force protection. Planning modes and levels are interrelated. For instance, commitment planning normally includes considerable detailed planning that facilitates execution, while orientation planning most often remains at the conceptual planning level.

To gain and maintain tempo, commanders and their staffs must be involved in all modes and levels of planning by ensuring a constant flow of information vertically within the chain of command and laterally among staff sections. At the small-unit level, this information exchange can be simple and direct—commander to commander or operations officer to operations officer. In larger-sized units, such as the component or MEF, a more formal arrangement that uses liaison officers and distinct planning organizations is necessary due to the scope and detail involved as well as the requirement to align with HHQ planning organizations and to properly address the entire planning continuum.

Planning is an event-dominated process; therefore, commanders should organize planning organizations to enhance planning for significant events, such as changes in mission. Conversely, time-driven processes are a necessary, yet subordinate, aspect of planning. Planners must address both time- and event-driven processes, while maintaining the proper perspective between the two. For example, the air tasking order is critical to the planning and execution of operations and it is produced in a cycle that requires timely input from subordinates. Nevertheless, the air tasking order is produced in support of the plan—it is not the plan.

## Planning Organizations

The MCPP is scalable from the component level down to the battalion and squadron level. Lower command levels, such as battalions and squadrons, adapt and consolidate certain planning responsibilities and functions within their limited structures. Normally at these command levels, most MCPP procedures are performed by the commander and his primary staff officers and selected special staff officers. Figure C-1 shows the planning organization and relationships found at lower levels of command, such as a battalion.

Only the higher levels of command (MEF, division, wing, or logistic group) form specialized planning staff elements and organizations. Figure C-2 illustrates planning organizations at the Marine Corps component and MEF and their link to HHQ.

### Planning Organizations

Three planning organizations—future plans, future operations, and current operations—at the

component and MEF levels are primarily responsible for the conduct of the planning process. They must coordinate their efforts to ensure a smooth transition from long-term planning to execution.

#### *Future Plans Division*

The future plans division is normally under the staff cognizance of the G-5. Among its many responsibilities, the G-5 normally forms a liaison element to the HHQ staff; integrates the HHQ plan into the MEF’s planning process; plans the next mission, phase, or operation; and oversees the force deployment planning and execution process for the command. Upon receipt of tasks from HHQ, this division initiates the MEF’s planning process by assisting the commander with the initial design and developing an outline plan. Depending on the situation, it may focus on a phase of a campaign, develop reconstitution requirements, or plan deployment. This division’s responsibility is to conduct the initial design effort as a basis for subsequent planning.

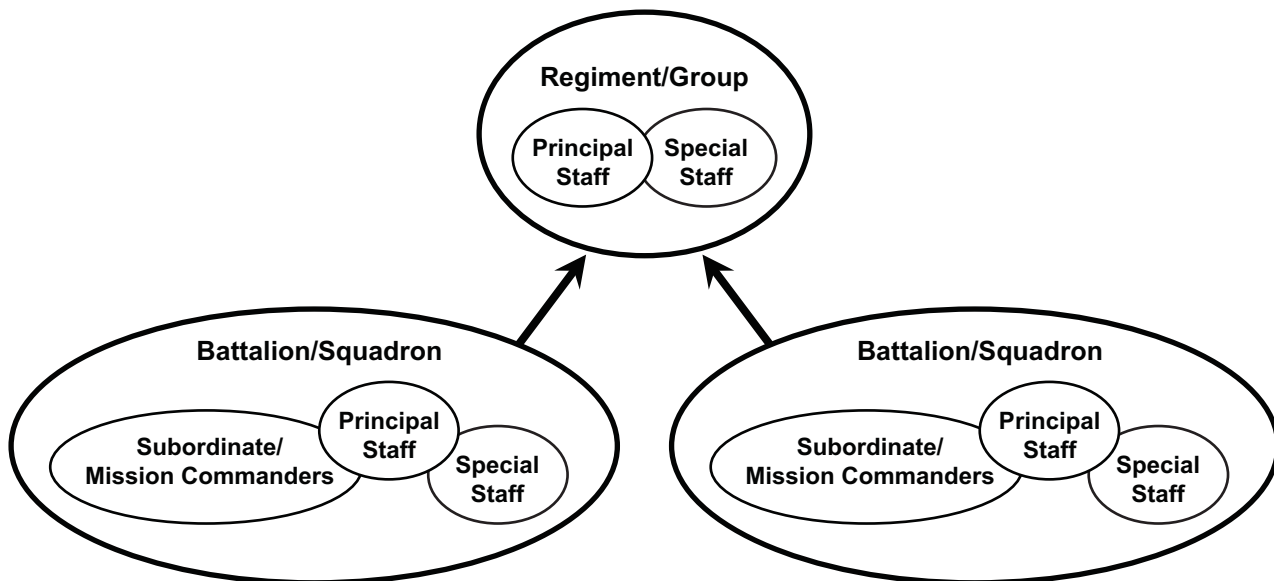


Figure C-1. Lower Level Organizations and Planning Relationships.

The future plans division may also develop sequels, support relationships for the next phase, and develop plans to ensure the force does not reach a culminating point. Future plans will transition an outline plan to the future operations center. The outline plan provides the salient features of a mission and precedes detailed planning.

*Future Operations Center*

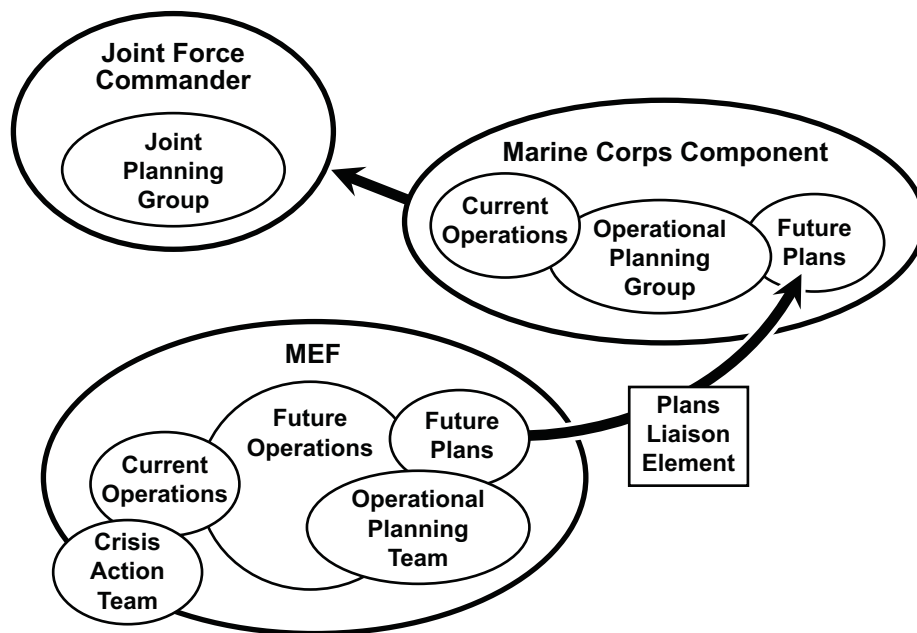
The future operations section is under the staff cognizance of the G-3 and is the focal point of the planning process. It usually forms the nucleus of an OPT and coordinates with both the future plans and current operations centers to integrate planning. The future operations center will either inherit outline plans from the future plans division or receive planning requirements from the current operations center that exceed its planning horizon. The future operations center fully integrates the other staff centers' plans officers, warfighting function representatives, and subordinate unit representatives into the planning process. It takes the outline plan from the future plans division and uses it as the basis for further planning.

The future operations center focuses on changes to subordinate missions and develops branch plans and sequels. This center interacts with intelligence collection and the targeting process to shape the next battle. The current operations center may provide a representative to the future operations center to facilitate an efficient transition process. This representative returns to the current operations center during transition. The future operations center's efforts generate tempo internal to the force.

*Current Operations Center*

The current operations center is under the staff cognizance of the G-3. During operations, it receives the OPORD from the OPT at the transition brief. The current operations center—

- Coordinates and executes the OPORD.
- Prepares and transmits FRAGOs.
- Monitors operations of the force.
- Tracks CCIRs and reports relevant information to the commander.
- Analyzes and synthesizes battlespace information.



**Figure C-2. Component and Marine Expeditionary Force Organizations and Planning Relationships.**

When unforeseen events develop, the current operations center refines or develops branch plans. To support the commander, the current operations center may develop new COAs, allocate resources, and prepare FRAGOs to modify the current OPORD. This center assesses change in the battlespace and progress toward the mission and purpose; monitors the status of forces and materiel; monitors rear area operations; coordinates terrain management; maintains a common operational picture and information; and provides the future operations center with situational awareness.

## Teams

### *Operational Planning Team*

The OPT is a dynamic, ad hoc organization formed by either the future plans division or future operations center to conduct integrated planning. The OPT helps frame problems, develops and wargames COAs, and assists the staff in the preparation and transition of the order. Normally, the OPT is built around a core group of planners from either the future plans division or the future operations center and may include the future plans or future operations officer, assistant plans or assistant future operations officer, future plans or future operations chief, and a clerk/plotter. It integrates additional staff representatives, such as the G-1, G-2, G-3, G-4, G-5, G-6, staff judge advocate, provost marshal, health services, or public affairs, as appropriate to the mission. The OPT may also include the warfighting function or LOO representatives, liaison officers, and SMEs needed to support planning. While all staff sections conduct planning in their respective areas of expertise and mini-OPTs can be formed to address specific problems, the commander's integrated, single battle effort resides in his OPT, whether formed by future plans or future operations. Commanders of smaller organizations that lack separate staff sections may also form OPTs because the term often applies to working groups and integrated planning teams formed to address any issue of importance to the commander.

### *Crisis Action Team*

The crisis action team (CAT) falls under the staff cognizance of the G-3. The CAT is usually formed in the initial stages of a crisis and has the requirement to rapidly collect and manage information. It can be task-organized to reflect the unique nature of a crisis. Often, at the initial stage of a crisis, the commander's primary concern is force readiness status and deployment planning. The CAT may initiate the planning process, develop situational awareness, and access previously prepared and emerging planning products from JOPES. To facilitate a common situational awareness, potential members of the CAT are identified in advance and recalled for initial CAP. For extended operations, the CAT's planning and execution functions transition to the normal planning organizations, whether current operations, future operations, or future plans, and their staffing and functions are redefined.

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## Warfighting Function Representatives

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The MEF or a major subordinate command is not restricted in their planning or conduct of operations. For example, the ground combat element (GCE) does not only consider maneuver and the aviation combat element (ACE) does not only consider fires. Planners at all echelons of command must consider and integrate activities within and among all the warfighting functions.

For Marines, maneuver is much more than movement in concert with fires to gain a positional advantage. Maneuver is taking action in any dimension to gain an advantage. Other dimensions include governance, economics, rule of law, and security; it can also include temporal, psychological, and technological issues.

Warfighting function or LOO representatives should be selected because of their experience and training. They should also be trained and experienced in the MCPP and consideration regarding the rank of the representative, which may be necessary at higher command levels. A

warfighting function or LOO representative may be on the commander's staff, a member of a subordinate unit staff, a commander of a supporting unit or organization from another Service or nation, or any Marine qualified to address the issues of a particular functional area or LOO. Designation as a representative may be an additional responsibility; for example, a Marine could serve simultaneously as a warfighting function/ LOO representative, a staff member, and a staff representative to the OPT.

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## Use of Liaisons

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Liaison is the point of contact through which intercommunication is maintained between elements of military forces to ensure shared understanding and unity of purpose and action. A liaison helps to reduce the fog of war through direct communications. He ensures senior commanders remain aware of the tactical situation by providing them with exceptional, critical, or routine information; verification of information; and clarification of operational questions. Overall, the liaison is another tool to help commanders overcome friction and accomplish the mission.

### Command Liaison

Commanders of all organizations routinely initiate contact with commanders of other units in their locale even though there may be no official command or support relationship between them. This contact opens the channels of communications to facilitate mutual security and support.

### Staff Liaison

Staff officers of all organizations routinely initiate contact with their counterparts at higher, lower, adjacent, supporting, and supported commands. This contact opens channels of communication that are essential for the proper planning and execution of military operations. Staff liaisons may also include the temporary assignment of liaisons to other commands.

## Liaison Officers

The most commonly used way to maintain close, continuous contact with another command is through the liaison officer. He is the commander's personal representative and has the special trust and confidence of the commander to make appropriate recommendations and estimates in the absence of communications. As necessary, the commander uses a liaison officer to transmit or receive critical information directly with key persons in the receiving headquarters. The liaison officer must possess the requisite rank and experience to properly represent his command. The ability to communicate effectively is essential, as is the liaison officer's sound judgment and immediate access to his commander.

### Liaison Team

A liaison team, usually headed by an officer, is assigned when the workload or need for better communications is greater than the capabilities of a single liaison officer. The liaison team will normally consist of an officer, a liaison chief, clerical personnel, drivers, and communications personnel with equipment. Members of the liaison team may function as couriers when necessary. The grade of the senior member of the liaison team depends on the unit's size and personnel available. Liaison teams are generally required for continuous operations.

### Couriers

Although infrequently used because of the capabilities of electronic communications, the courier remains a valuable liaison element. The courier is more than a messenger. He is expected to provide more information than is contained in the message he is delivering. For this reason, the courier should possess sufficient experience and maturity to respond to questions and provide more than superficial insight into the situation or issues of concern. Individuals selected as couriers are often junior officers or staff noncommissioned

officers. If such personnel are available, dedicated couriers may be used to augment the liaison officer or liaison team.

### **Operational Planning Team Representatives**

The subordinate command's OPT representatives are key contributors to the planning process

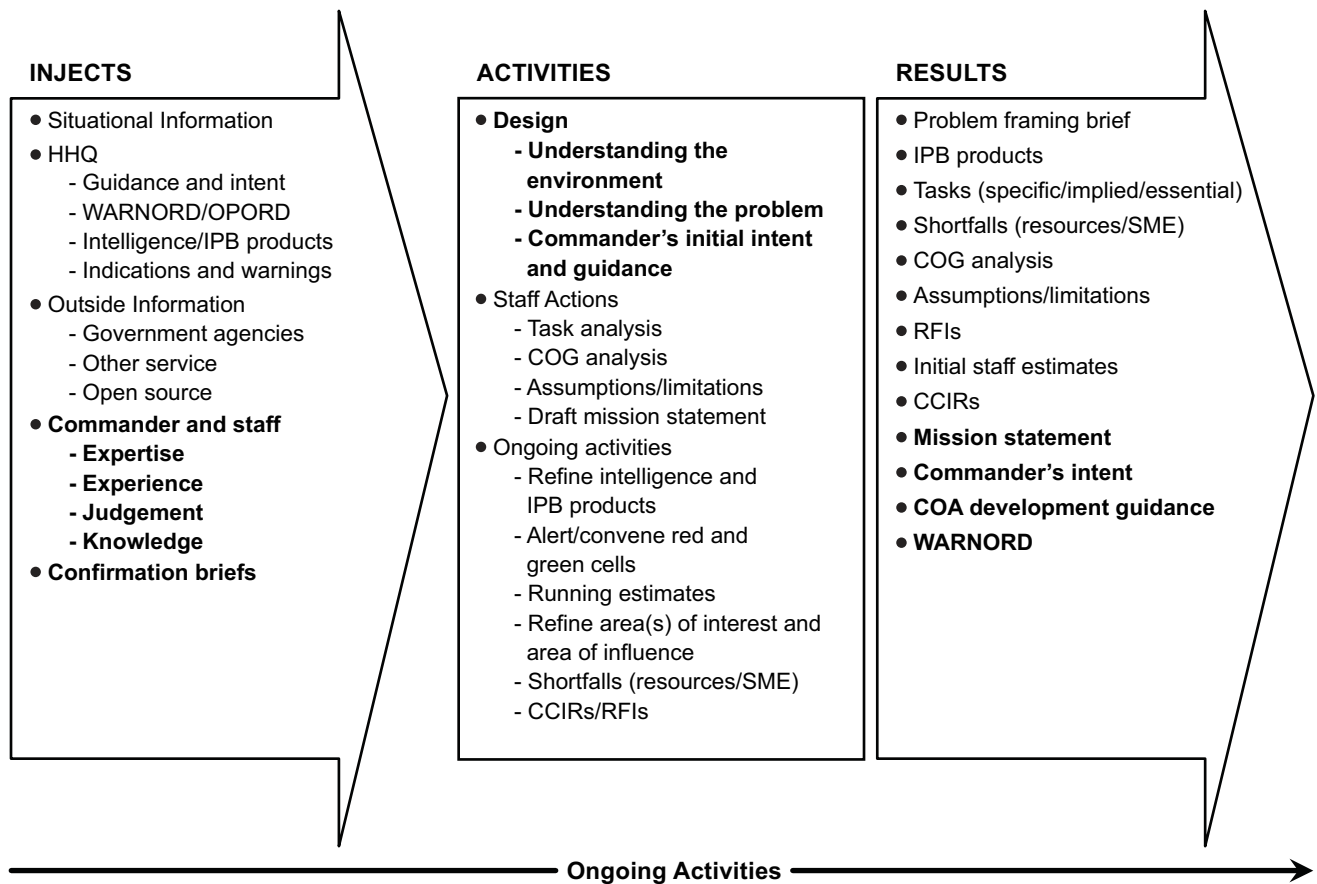
and the future operations plan. These individuals provide timely and accurate movement of information between the OPT and their commands. Normally, this individual's primary responsibility is to the planning effort. He may only be able to provide part-time support to other activities, such as logistic coordination or targeting.

# APPENDIX D

## MARINE CORPS PLANNING PROCESS DIAGRAMS

Figures D-1 through D-6 are graphic depictions of the injects, activities, and results for each step of the planning process. The results of each step provide the injects for the following step, keeping in mind the process as a whole is as much iterative as it is sequential. The diagrams are not intended to be used as a checklist, but as a ready reference to help promote clarity of understanding for the

entire process. The information shown in bold is meant to highlight the personal involvement of the commander for this part of each step. In addition to the injects, activities, and results, each diagram also displays the ongoing activities described in chapter 2, such as refinement of IPB products, red cell actions, and RFIs.



**Figure D-1. Injects, Activities, and Results Diagram for Problem Framing.**

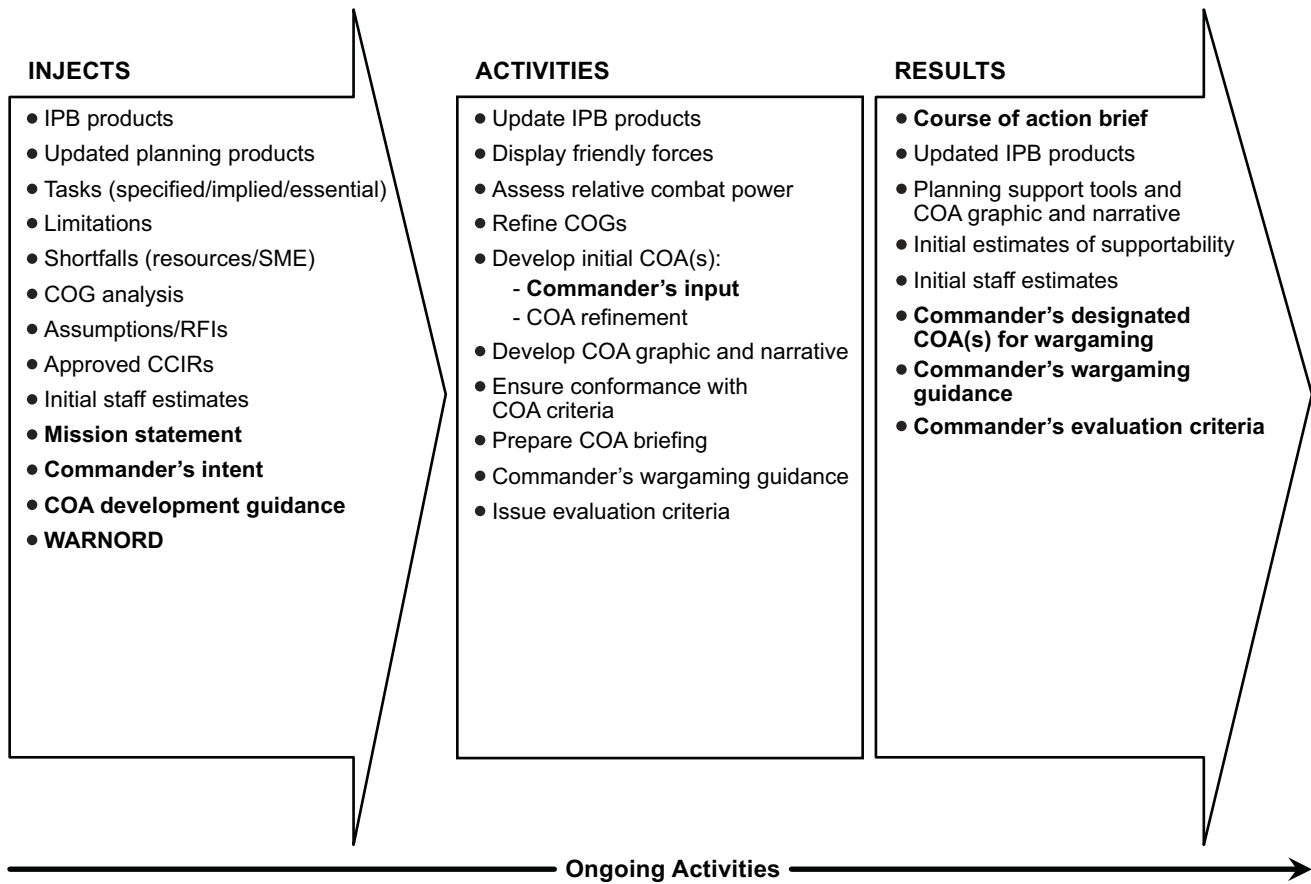


Figure D-2. Injects, Activities, and Results Diagram for Course of Action Development.



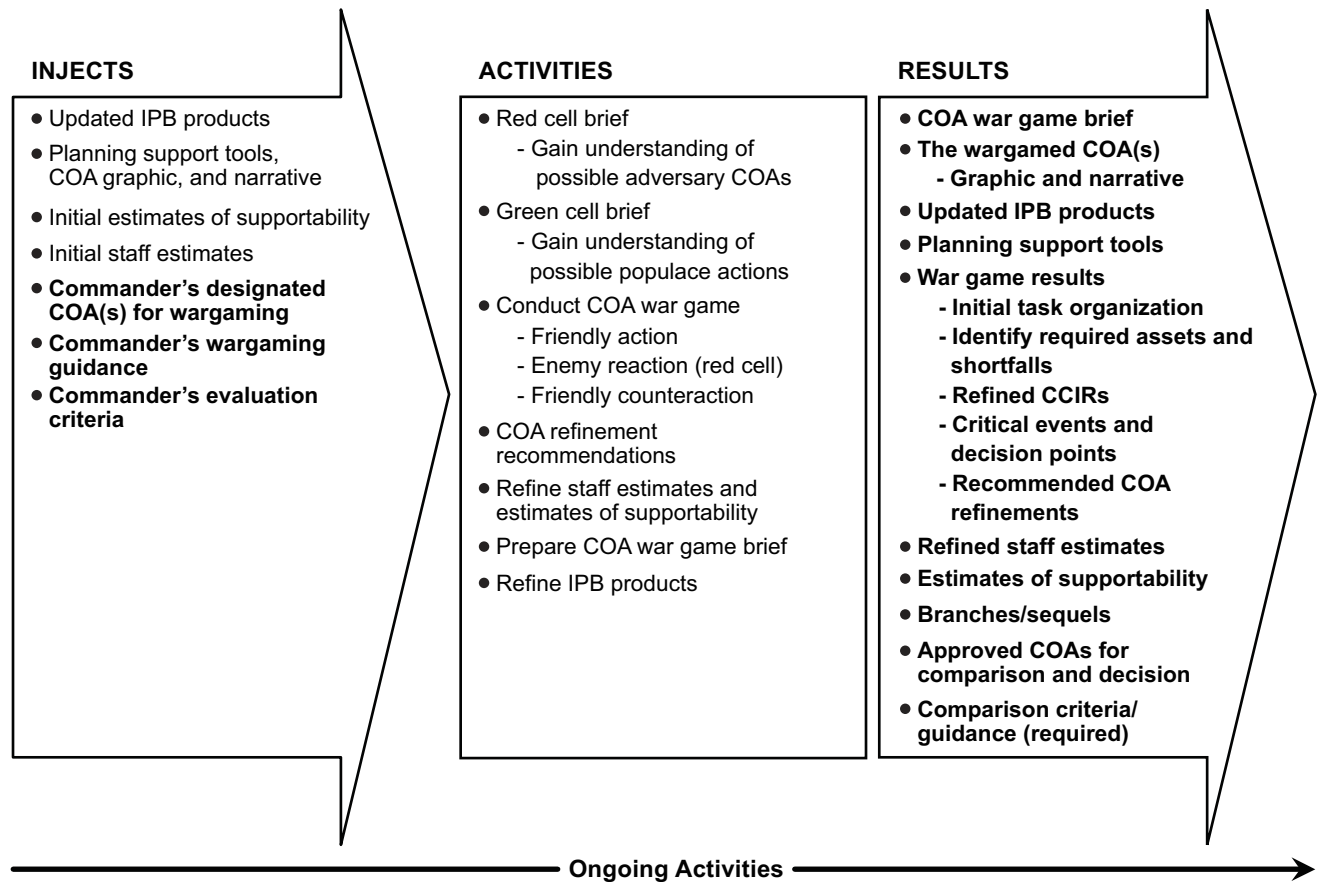
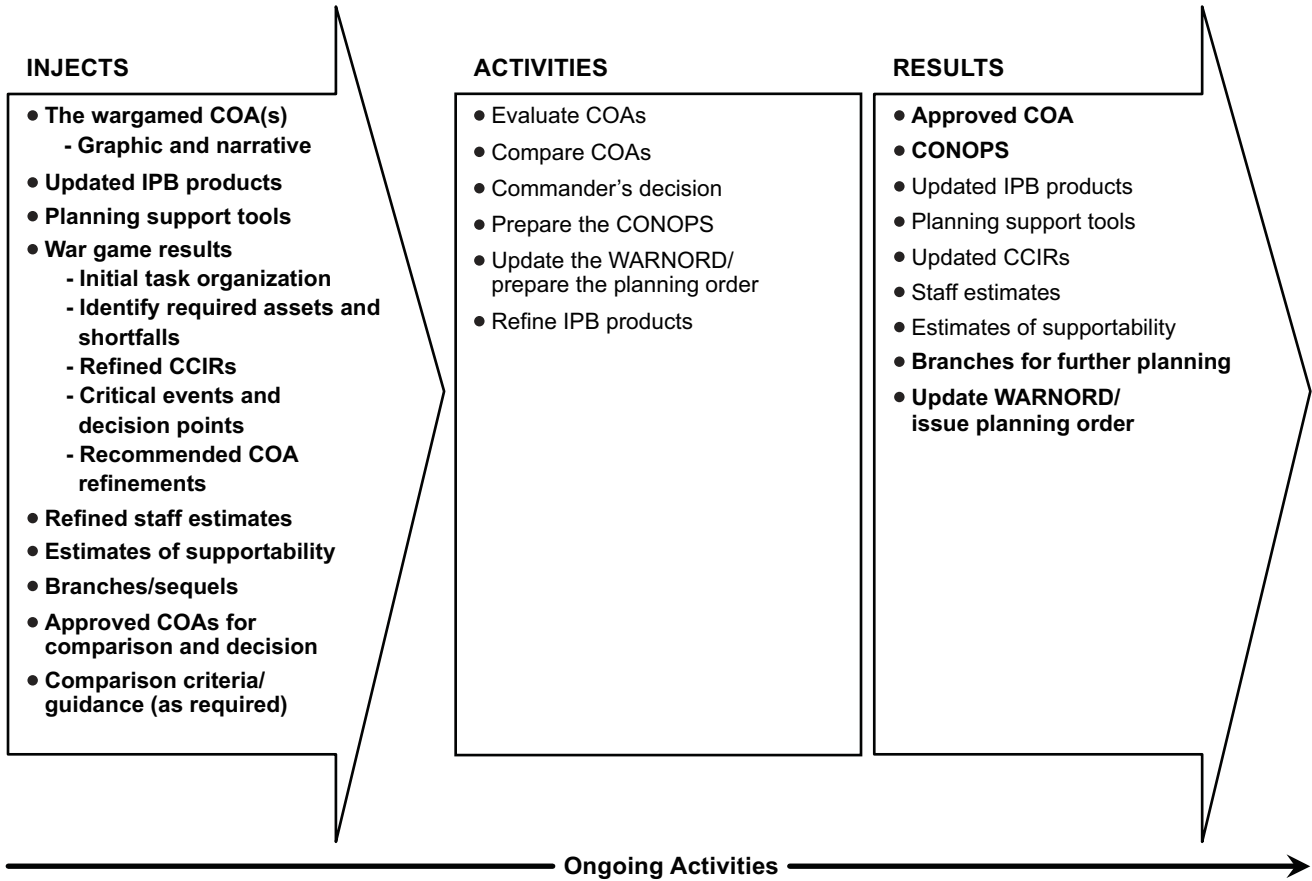


Figure D-3. Injects, Activities, and Results Diagram for Course of Action Wargaming.



**Figure D-4. Injects, Activities, and Results Diagram for Course of Action Comparison and Decision.**

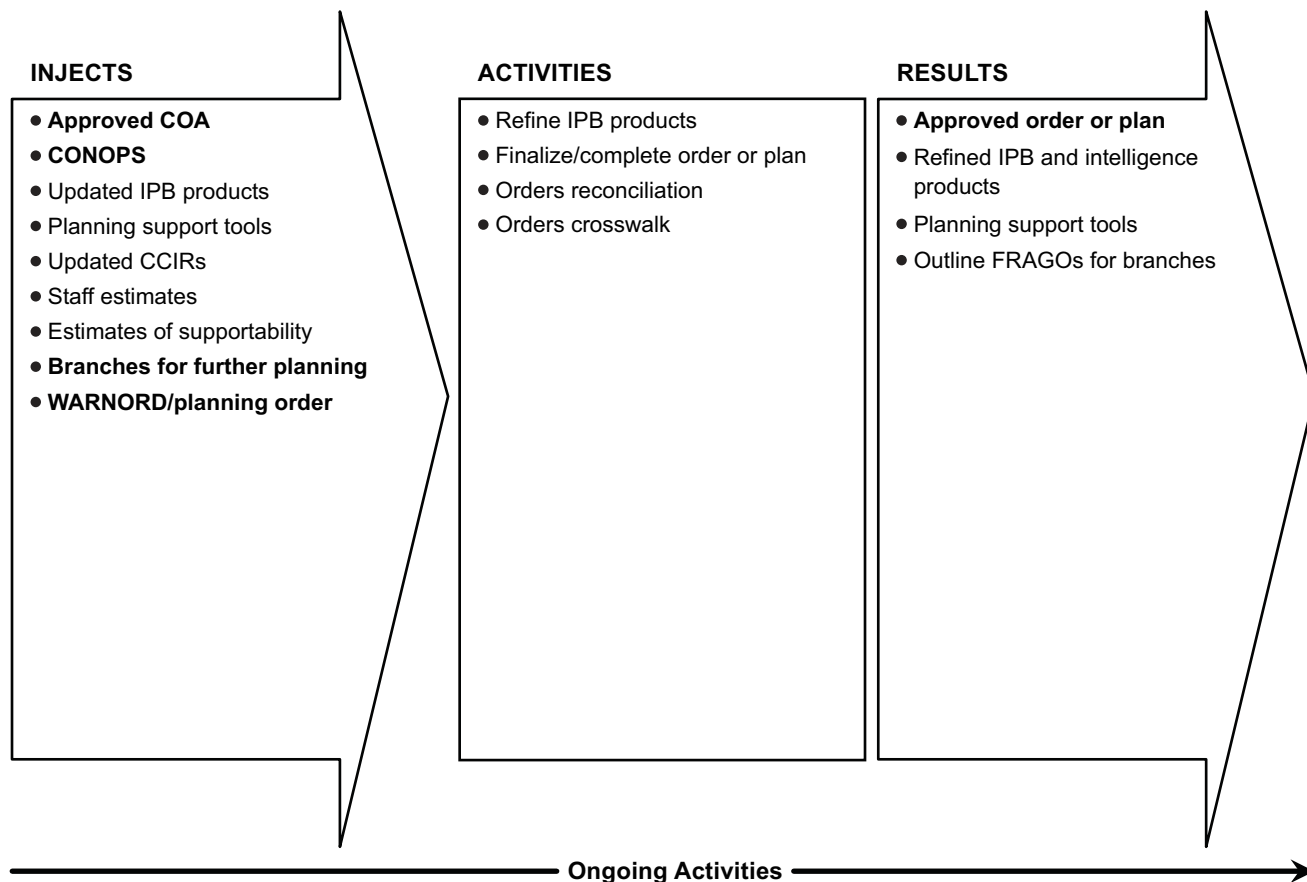


Figure D-5. Injects, Activities, and Results Diagram for Orders Development.

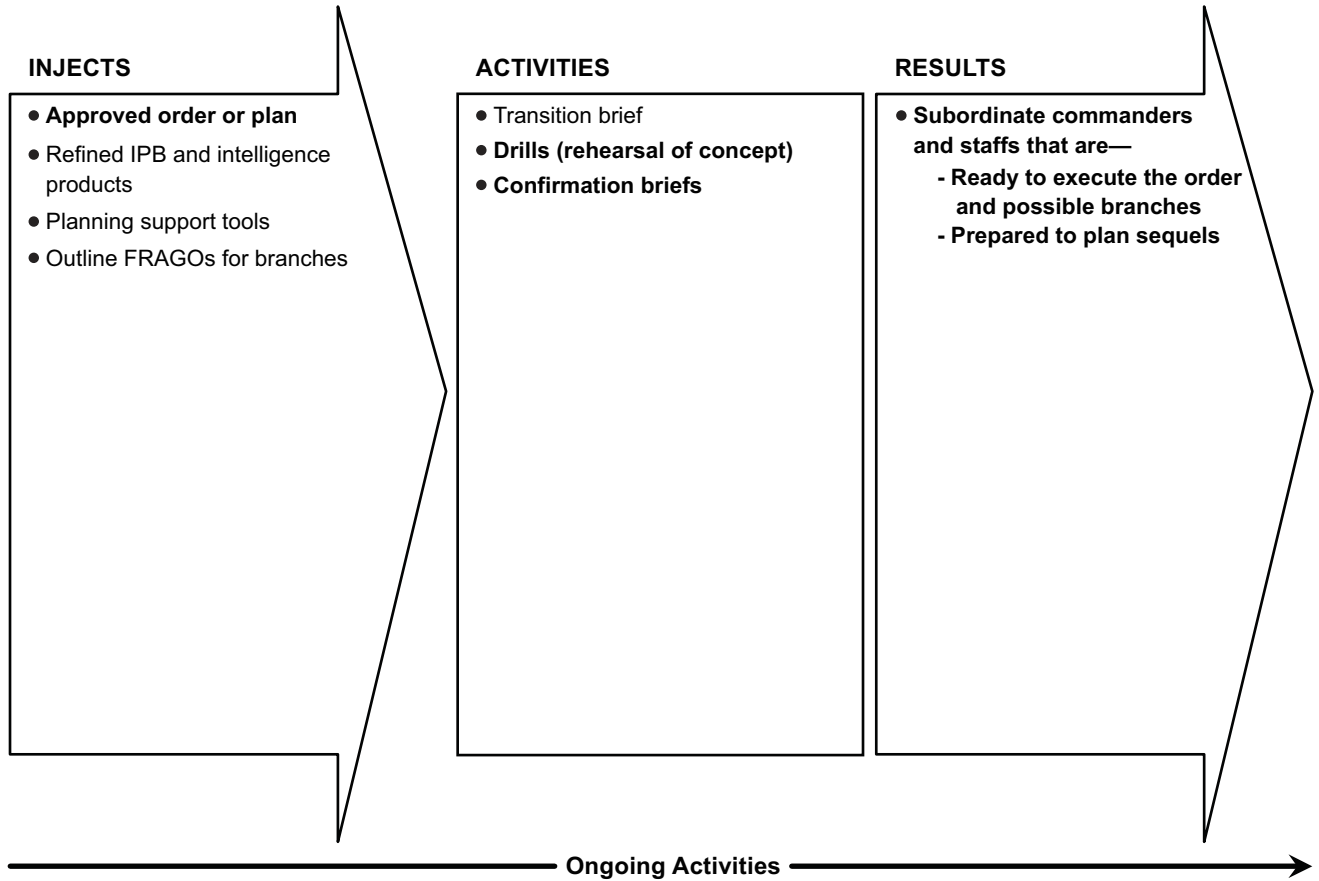


Figure D-6. Injects, Activities, and Results Diagram for Transition.

# APPENDIX E

## MARINE CORPS PLANNING PROCESS TOOLS

The commander and his staff use MCPP tools to record, track, and analyze critical planning information. These tools help the commander and the staff to better understand the environment, facilitate the commander's decisionmaking, assist in the preparation of plans and orders, and increase tempo. The MCPP tools must serve the needs of the commander and the requirements of the situation. Commanders and staffs can tailor these tools

to meet their needs and use other tools available that are appropriate for their particular situation.

Table E-1 identifies commonly used templates, worksheets, and matrices and notes how each tool supports the MCPP. The examples in this appendix are at the MEF level, but these tools may be employed at any level of command. The formats and uses of these tools may be modified as required.

**Table E-1. Marine Corps Planning Process Tools.**

Overlays, Templates, Matrices, Worksheets, and Graphics and Narratives	Problem Framing	COA Development	COA War Game	Comparison and Decision	Orders Development	Transition
Modified combined obstacle overlay (see fig. E-1)	X	X	X			
Adversary template (see fig. E-2)	X	X	X			
Situation template (see fig. E-3)	X	X	X			
Event template (see fig. E-4)	X	X	X			
Event matrix (see table E-3)	X	X	X			
Decision support template (see fig. E-5)		X	X	X	X	X
Decision support matrix (see table E-4)		X	X	X	X	X
COA graphic and narrative (see fig. E-6)		X	X	X	X	
Synchronization matrix (see table E-5)		X	X	X	X	X
COA war game worksheet (see table E-6)			X	X	X	
Comparison and decision matrix with comments (see table E-7)				X		

## Intelligence Preparation of the Battlespace Products

The IPB is a systematic process of analyzing and visualizing the portions of the mission variables of the adversary, terrain, weather, and civil considerations in a specific area of interest and for a specific mission. By applying IPB, commanders gain the information necessary to selectively apply and maximize operational effectiveness at critical points in time and space. A continuous planning activity undertaken by the entire staff, IPB builds an extensive database for each potential area in which a unit may be required to operate.

The IPB describes the environment in which the command is operating and the effects of that environment on the command's operations. Battlespace and weather evaluations assist in

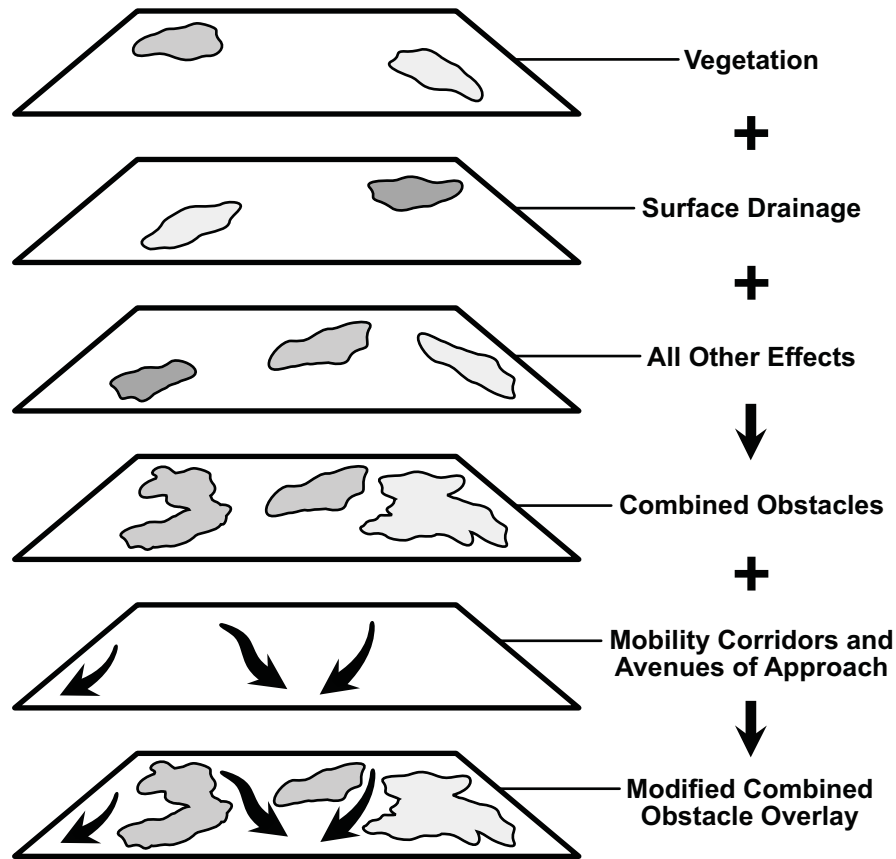
identifying obstacles, mobility corridors, and avenues of approach; predicting weather effects for numerous mobility options; and estimating sea conditions. The IPB process consists of the following steps:

- Define the operational environment.
- Describe the effects on operations.
- Evaluate the adversary.
- Determine the adversary's COAs.

In conventional military operations, determining adversary COAs will normally include templating with an adversary assessment. Templating continues from planning to execution, both to assess current operations and to support planning for future operations. In irregular warfare, adversary templating will focus on pattern analysis, which involves tracking, analyzing, and identifying specific trends, such as improvised explosive devices or population support, over time.

**Table E-2. Intelligence Preparation of the Battlespace Integration Throughout the Marine Corps Planning Process.**

	Problem Framing	COA Development	COA War Game	Comparison and Decision	Orders Development	Transition
Modified combined obstacle overlay	G-2/S-2 →					
Adversary template	G-2/S-2 →					Continuous <sup>1</sup>
Situation template	G-2/S-2 →					Continuous <sup>1</sup>
Pertinent adversary COAs	G-2/S-2 →					Continuous <sup>1</sup>
Refined and prioritized adversary COAs and event templates and matrices	G-2/S-2 →					Continuous <sup>1</sup>
Initial decision support template		G-3/S-3/OPT →				Continuous <sup>1</sup>
Decision support template matrix		G-3/S-3/OPT →				Continuous <sup>1</sup>
Note <sup>1</sup> Templates are updated throughout the operation.						



**Figure E-1. Modified Combined Obstacle Overlay.**

The IPB products graphically display the results of the IPB process. Table E-2 identifies the major IPB products and shows their integration with the planning process. Note that both the G-2/S-2 and the G-3/S-3 are responsible for specific products. While IPB starts as an intelligence effort, it expands to an operational process and has logistic and communications applications that are not shown in the table. The following sections provide a short description of each product.

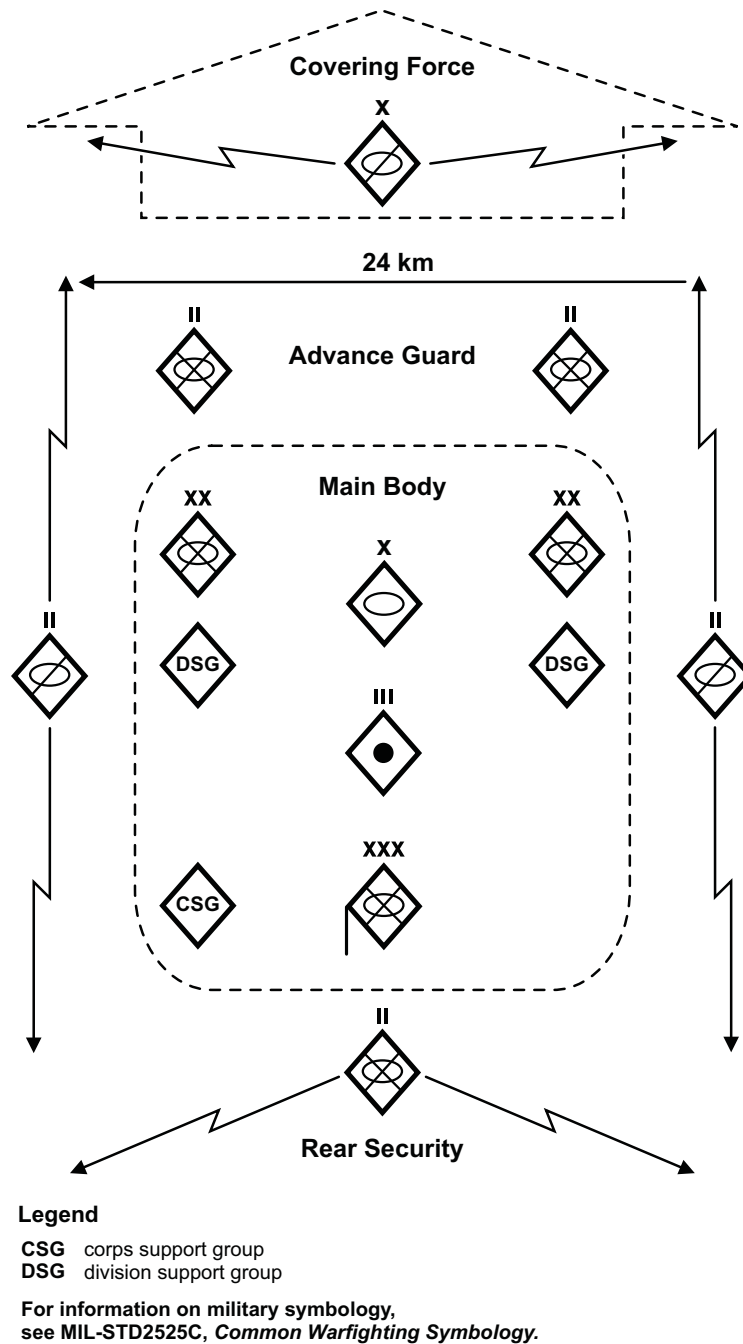
**Modified Combined Obstacle Overlay**

The modified combined obstacle overlay (MCOO) (see fig. E-1) is a graphic of the battlespace’s effects on military operations. It is normally based on a product depicting all obstacles to mobility and it is modified as necessary. Modifications can include cross country mobility classifications, objectives, avenues of approach and mobility corridors, likely obstacles, defensible battlespace,

likely engagement areas, key terrain, cultural factors, built-up areas, and civil infrastructure

**Adversary Template**

Adversary templates (see fig. E-2 on page E-4) are models based on postulated adversary doctrine. They illustrate the disposition and activity of adversary forces conducting a particular operation arrayed on ideal terrain. Adversary templates depict the adversary’s nominal organization, frontages, depths, boundaries, and control measures for combat. They are usually scaled for use with a map background and they are one part of an adversary model. In irregular warfare, adversary templating will focus on pattern analysis, which involves tracking, analyzing, and identifying specific trends, such as improvised explosive devices or population support, over time.



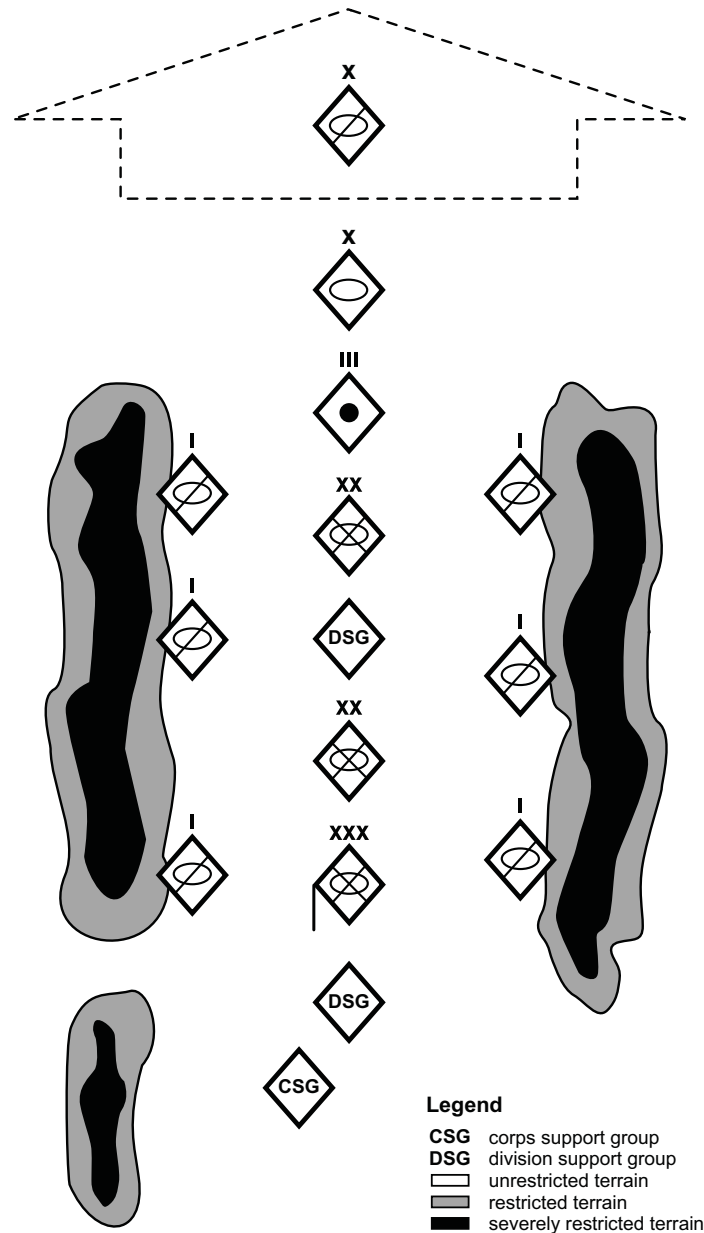
**Figure E-2. Adversary Template.**

**Situation Template**

A situation template (see fig. E-3) is an adversary template that has been modified to depict adversary dispositions based on the effects of the battlespace and the pursuit of a particular COA. This template accounts for the adversary's cur-

rent situation with respect to the terrain, training and experience levels, logistic status, losses, and dispositions. Normally, the situation template depicts adversary units two levels down and critical points in the COA. Situation templates are one part of an adversary COA model. Models may contain more than one situation template to depict locations and formations at various times.





For information on military symbology, see MIL-STD2525C, *Common Warfighting Symbology*.

**Figure E-3. Situation Template.**

**Event Template and Matrix**

The event template is derived from the situation template and depicts the NAIs, areas where activity—or lack of activity—will indicate which COA the adversary has adopted. The NAIs are described in MCRP 2-3A, *Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield/Battlespace*. Event templates contain time phase lines that depict movement of forces and the expected

flow of the operation. Movement rates depend on the terrain (MCOO) and the adversary COA (DRAW-D [defend, reinforce, attack, withdraw, delay]). The event template is the IPB starting point for COA wargaming. The event matrix depicts types of activity expected in each NAI, when the NAI is expected to be active, and any additional information to aid in collection planning. See figure E-4 and table E-3 on page E-6.

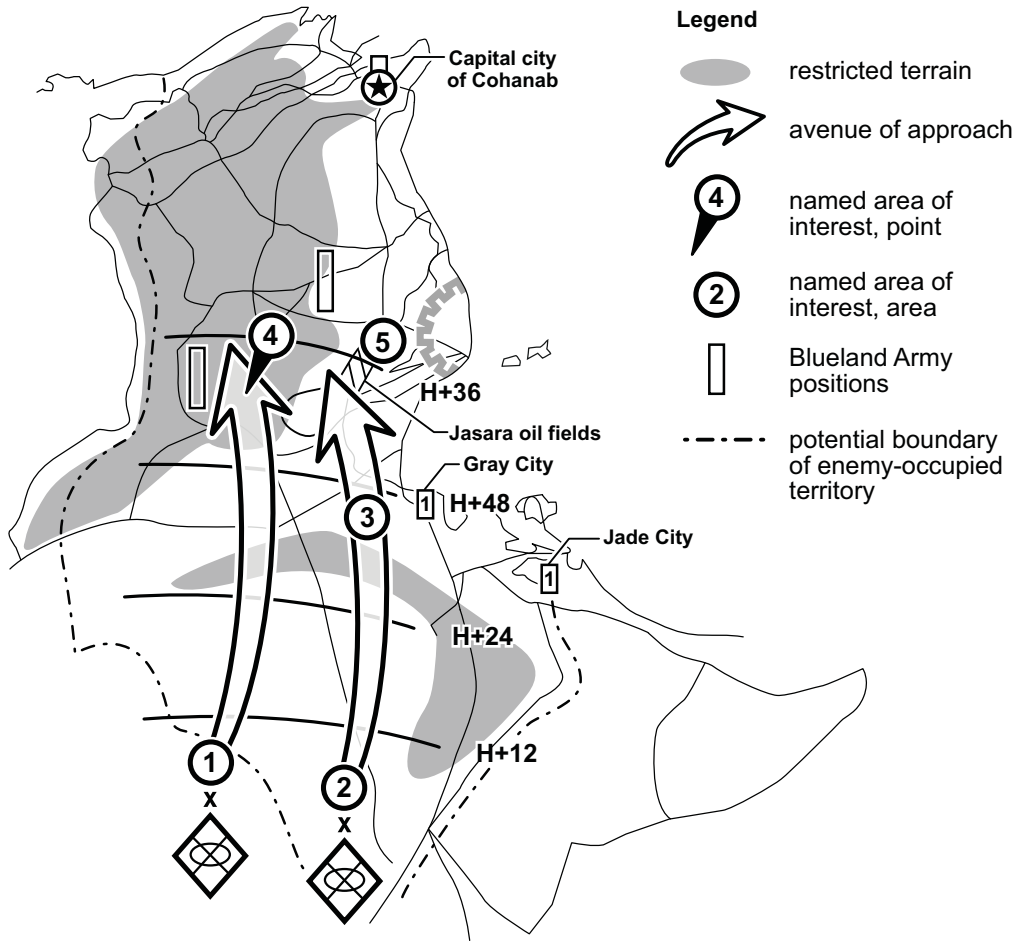


Figure E-4. Event Template.

Table E-3. Event Matrix.

Named Area of Interest	No Earlier Than	No Later Than	Event/Indicator
1	H+6	H+12	Brigade-sized forces moving north.
2	H+6	H+12	Brigade-sized forces moving north.
3	H+12	H+24	Orangeland forces enter Blueland. Northern operational group driving on Jesara oil fields.
4	H+14	H+24	Orangeland forces seize junction of highways 7 and 8. Northern operational group turns northwest toward Jesara.
5	H+18	H+24	Orangeland forces enter Tealton. Northern operational group driving on Jesara.

### Decision Support Template and Matrix

The decision support template is normally developed during COA wargaming. It is derived from adversary, situational, and event templates. The decision support template depicts decision points, time phase lines associated with movement of adversary and friendly forces, the flow of the operation, and other information required to execute a specific friendly COA. The decision support template is a key planning tool for use during

transition and execution. The decision support matrix provides a recap of expected events, decision points, and planned friendly actions in a narrative form. It shows where and when a decision must be made if a specific action is to take place. It ties decision points to NAIs, TAIs, CCIRs, collection assets, and potential friendly response options. The decision support template and matrix may be refined as planning progresses after the war game. See figure E-5 and table E-4.

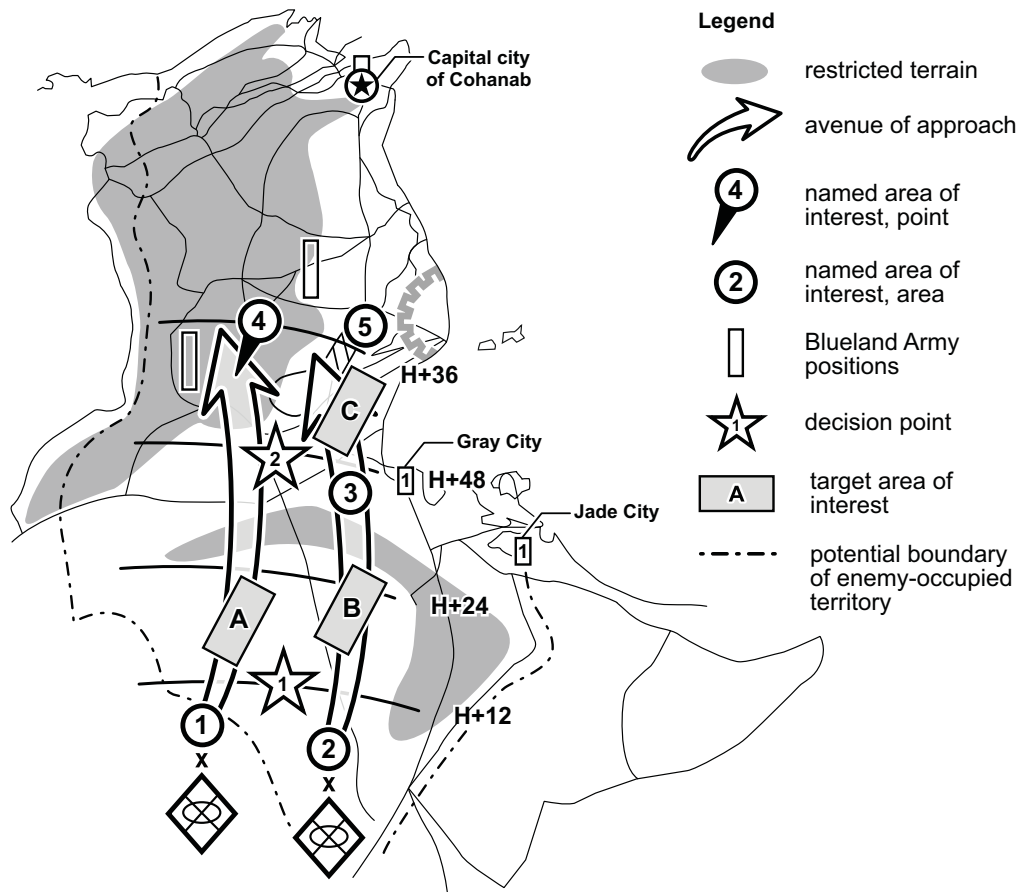


Figure E-5. Decision Support Template.

Table E-4. Decision Support Matrix.

Event Number	Event	No Earlier Than/ No Later Than	Named Area of Interest	Target Area of Interest	Friendly Action
1	Orangeland forces enter Blue-land. Northern operational group division driving on Tealton.	H+14/H+24	1, 2	A, B	Covering force withdraws; Marine aircraft wing conducts interdiction west of phase line TEAL.
2	Orangeland forces seize junction of Highways 7 and 8. Northern operational group turns northwest on Jesara.	H+18/H+24	3, 4	C	1 <sup>st</sup> and 3 <sup>d</sup> Marine divisions execute branch plan HAWK.

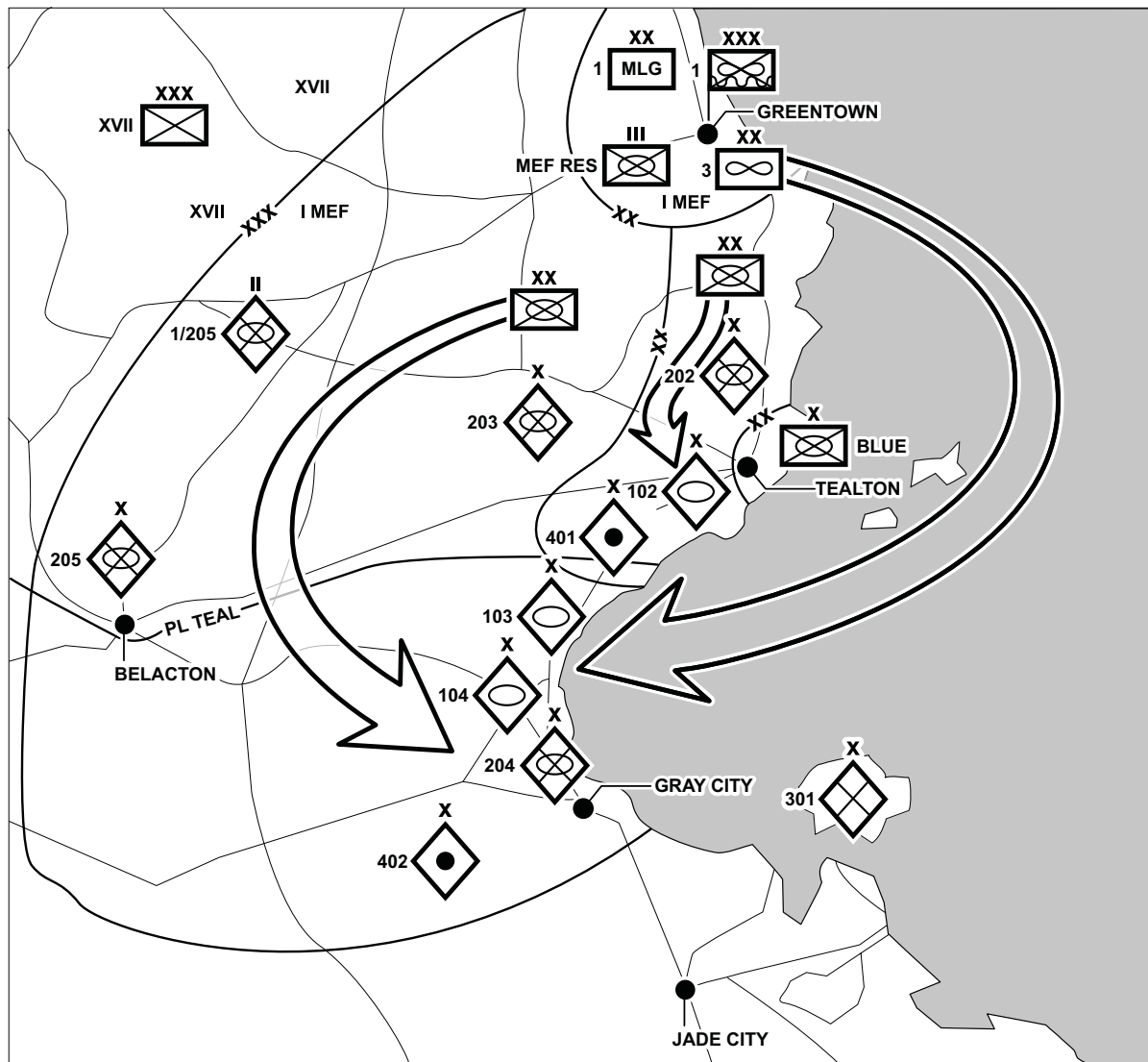
## Planning Support Tools

Planning support tools support the commander's and staff's planning effort by recording and displaying critical planning information on the COAs and the commander's decisions and guidance. They aid the commander in decisionmaking by displaying critical information in a useful

format. Planning support tools include the COA graphic and narrative, synchronization matrix, COA war game worksheets, and the comparison and decision matrix.

### Course of Action Graphic and Narrative

Figure E-6, the COA graphic and narrative, is a visual depiction and written description of a COA.



A MARDIV, as the main effort, conducts an envelopment to defeat adversary forces north of Gray City. A MARDIV (-) (rein), as a supporting effort, attacks in zone to fix and defeat adversary forces west of Tealton and conducts a link up with Blue land forces in Tealton. The Marine aircraft wing (MAW), as a supporting effort, isolates the MEF battlespace from enemy reinforcements from the south, while focusing efforts against the 102<sup>d</sup> and 103<sup>d</sup> Armored Brigades and the 401<sup>st</sup> and 402<sup>d</sup> Artillery Regiments. The supporting MARDIV (-) (rein) designates one infantry regiment as the MEF reserve and one battalion as the MEF tactical combat force. This phase concludes with enemy forces defeated north of Gray City.

**Figure E-6. Course of Action Graphic and Narrative.**

They clearly portray how the organization will accomplish the mission, identifying the who (notional task organization), what (tasks), when, where, how, and why (intent). It should include the tasks and purpose of the main effort, supporting efforts, and reserve. It also includes maneuver control measures, such as boundaries. The COA narrative and graphic, when approved by the commander, forms the basis for the CONOPS and operations overlay in the OPLAN or OPORD.

### Synchronization Matrix

A synchronization matrix (see table E-5 on page E-10) is a planning support tool designed to integrate the efforts of the force. It can be organized across the warfighting functions, LOOs, or other activities based on the situation. It can also record the results of the COA war game. It depicts, over time, the diverse actions of the entire force necessary to execute the COA. When completed, it provides the basis for an execution matrix or Annex X (Execution Checklist) to the OPLAN or OPORD.

### Course of Action War Game Worksheet

The COA war game worksheet (see table E-6 on page E-11) is used during the war game to record friendly action, adversary reaction, and friendly counteraction involved in each COA. It is also used to capture critical information that may be identified during the war game, such as potential CCIRs, decision points, and NAIs.

### Course of Action Comparison and Decision Matrix

The COA comparison and decision matrix is a planning support tool designed to assist the commander and staff in recording the advantages and disadvantages of each COA as it is compared against the commander's evaluation criteria. It also provides a venue for further discussion. It may reflect various techniques for weighing the COA against the commander's evaluation criteria, as shown in table E-7 on page E-11. The commander may use the COA comparison and decision matrix to aid his decision-making process during the selection of a COA for execution.

Commanders and staffs should guard against relying on numerical "rankings" or other simplistic methods that can fail to underscore the complexity involved in the decision-making process.

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## Planning Support Tools for Stability Operations

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The following planning support tools have emerged and evolved as a result of OIF and OEF lessons learned.

### Civil Considerations

Civil considerations are a factor in all types of military operations, but they are of particular significance in stability operations. If the mission is to support civil authorities, civil considerations define the mission.

Civil considerations generally focus on the immediate impact of civilians on operations in progress; however, they also include larger, long-term diplomatic, informational, and economic issues at higher levels. At the tactical level, they directly relate to key civil considerations within the area of operations. The world's increasing urbanization means that the attitudes and activities of the civilian population in the area of operations often influence the outcome of military operations. Civil considerations can either help or hinder friendly or adversary forces and will influence the selection of a COA.

An appreciation of civil considerations—the ability to analyze their impact on operations—enhances several aspects of operations, such as the selection of objectives; location, movement, and control of forces; use of weapons; and protection measures. Civil considerations comprise six characteristics—areas, structures, capabilities, organizations, people, and events—expressed in the acronym ASCOPE (see fig. E-7 on page E-12).

### Areas

Areas are key localities or aspects of the terrain within a commander's operational environment

Table E-5. Synchronization Matrix.

Time/Event		Pre D-day	D-day – D+2	D+3 – D+4	D+5 – D+6
Adversary Action					
Decision Points				1	2
Intelligence		MEF conducts reconnaissance in zone			
	NAI		1, 2	3, 4	5
Force Protection	Survivability	Establish combat air patrol over MEF area of operations			
	Chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear		Priority of support to ACE		
Maneuver	Deep		MAW attacks northern operational group armor and artillery, command and control, and CSS facilities	MAW attacks 102, 103, 401, and 402	
	Security		Covering forces conduct security operations		
	Close		1 <sup>st</sup> and 3 <sup>d</sup> MARDIVs complete rupture of adversary defenses	1 <sup>st</sup> MARDIV attacks adversary forces south of phase line TEAL The 3 <sup>d</sup> MARDIV conducts link up with Blueland forces	1 <sup>st</sup> MARDIV and MAW defeat adversary forces south of phase line TEAL The 3 <sup>d</sup> MARDIV conducts a link up with SPMAGTF-B
	Reserve	3 <sup>d</sup> MARDIV—one regiment to MEF reserve			
	Rear	3 <sup>d</sup> MARDIV—one battalion to tactical combat force			
	Mobility	Priority of main supply route development in main effort zone			
	Countermobility			Complete execution of barrier plan south	
Fires	Lethal				Execute long duration family of scatterable mines in TAIs B
	Nonlethal			Fire expendable jammer to disrupt northern operational group attack	
	TAIs			A	B
Logistics	Sustainment	Logistic throughput plan			
	Transport	Movement control plan			
C2				MEF assumes tactical control of Blueland forces in the vicinity of Tealton	
	Electronic warfare	Build adversary electronic order of battle nodal analysis	Attack northern operational group C2 nodes		
Legend C2—command and control MAW—Marine aircraft wing SPMAGTF-B—special purpose Marine air-ground task force-B					

that are not normally thought of as militarily significant. Failure to consider key civil areas, however, can seriously affect the success of any military mission.

Civil-military operations planners analyze key civil areas from two perspectives: how do these

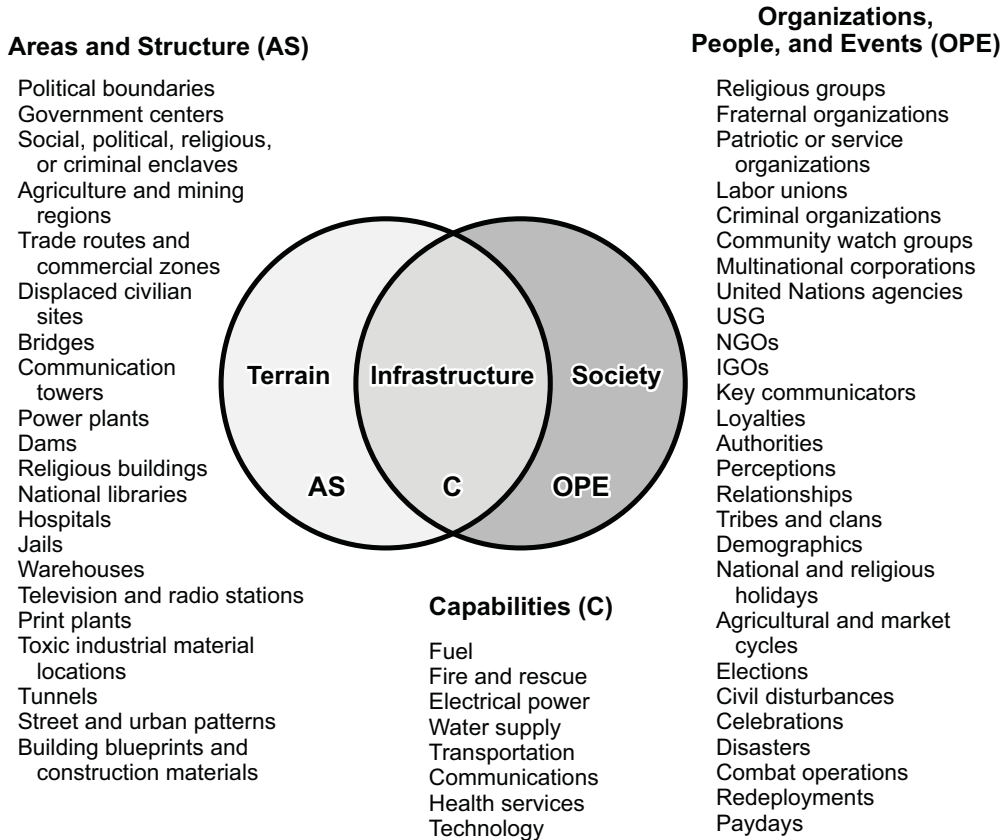
areas affect the military mission and how do military operations impact civilian activities in these areas? At times, the answers to these questions may dramatically influence major portions of the COAs being considered.

**Table E-6. Course of Action War Game Worksheet.**

COA 1, STAGE A; BOX: MOST LIKELY							
Action	Reaction	Counteraction	Assets	Approximate Time	DP	CCIR	Remarks
MARDIV envelops Orangeland forces north of Gray City	102 <sup>d</sup> and 103 <sup>d</sup> Armored Brigades counterattack	MAW interdicts moving adversary forces MARDIV engages and destroys adversary armor at long range	Surge MAW attack assets to interdict adversary armor	D+3	DP 3	Will 102 <sup>d</sup> and 103 <sup>d</sup> Armored Brigades move west to counterattack	MARDIV has priority of close air support
Legend DP—decision point MAW—Marine aircraft wing							

**Table E-7. Comparison and Decision Matrix with Comments.**

Commander's Evaluation Criteria	COA 1	COA 2	COA 3
Force protection	Moderate casualties	High casualties Increased chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear threat	Light casualties
Tempo, surprise		Achieving surprise unlikely	High chance of achieving surprise
Shapes the battlespace	ACE interdiction of adversary lines of communications limits adversary's ability to reinforce		Deception likely to be effective
Asymmetrical operations	ACE operates against second echelon armor forces GCE mechanized forces attack adversary dismounted infantry	MEF mechanized forces against adversary mechanized forces	
Maneuver	Frontal attack followed by penetration	Frontal attack	Turning movement
Decisive actions	ACE disrupts deployment of second echelon forces through interdiction		Isolate first echelon forces Disrupt lines of communications, logistic facilities, and assembly areas
Simplicity		Simplest	Demanding command and coordination requirements.



**Figure E-7. Sample Civil Considerations (ASCOPE).**

### *Structures*

Structures are architectural objects, such as bridges, communications towers, power plants, and dams, and are often identified as traditional HPTs. Other structures, such as churches, mosques, national libraries and hospitals, are cultural sites generally protected by international law or other agreements. Still other structures are facilities with practical applications, such as jails, warehouses, schools, television stations, radio stations, and printing plants, which may be useful for military purposes.

Structures analysis involves determining their location, functions, capabilities, and application in support of military operations. It also involves weighing the military, political, economic, religious, social, and informational consequences of removing them from civilian use; the reaction of the populace; and replacement costs.

### *Capabilities*

Civil capabilities can be viewed from several perspectives. The term capabilities may refer to—

- Existing capabilities of the populace to sustain itself, such as through public administration, public safety, emergency services, and food and agriculture systems.
- Capabilities with which the populace needs assistance, such as public works and utilities, public health, public transportation, economics, and commerce.
- Resources and services that can be contracted to support the military mission, such as interpreters, laundry services, construction materials, and equipment. Local vendors, the host nation, or other nations may provide these resources and services. In hostile territory, civil capabilities include resources that may be taken and used by military forces consistent with international law.



Analysis of the existing capabilities of the area of operations is normally conducted based on civil affairs functional specialties. The analysis also identifies the capabilities of partner countries and organizations involved in the operation. In doing so, civil-military operations planners consider how to address shortfalls, as well as how to capitalize on capability strengths.

### *Organizations*

Civil organizations are groups that may or may not affiliate with government agencies. They can be church groups, fraternal organizations, patriotic or service organizations, or community watch groups. They might be IGOs or NGOs. Organizations can assist the commander in keeping the populace informed of ongoing and future activities in an area of operations and influencing the actions of the populace. They can also form the nucleus of humanitarian assistance programs, interim governing bodies, civil defense efforts, and other activities.

### *People*

People, both individually and collectively, can have a positive, negative, or no impact on military operations. The “people” element of ASCOPE includes civilians or nonmilitary personnel encountered in an area of operations. The term may also extend to those outside the area of operations whose actions, opinions, or political influence can affect the military mission. In all military operations, US forces must be prepared to encounter and work closely with civilians of all types. When analyzing people, Marines should consider historical, cultural, ethnic, political, economic, and humanitarian factors. Working with the “people” assists Marines in identifying the key communicators as well as the formal and informal processes used to influence people.

Regardless of the nature of the operation, military forces will usually encounter civilians living and operating in and around the supported unit’s area of operations. Major categories of civilians likely to be encountered include—

- Local nationals, such as town and city dwellers, farmers, other rural dwellers, and nomads.

- Local civil authorities, such as elected and traditional leaders at all levels of government.
- Expatriates.
- Foreign employees of IGOs or NGOs.
- US Government (USG) and third-nation government agency representatives.
- Contractors, who may be US citizens, local nationals, or third-nation citizens providing contract services.
- DOD civilian employees.
- The media, including journalists from print, radio, and visual media.

### *Events*

As there are many different categories of civilians, there are many categories of civilian events that may affect the military mission. Some examples are planting and harvest seasons, elections, riots, and voluntary and involuntary evacuations. Likewise, there are military events that impact the lives of civilians in an area of operations. Some examples are combat operations, including indirect fires, deployments, and redeployments. Civil-military operations planners determine what events are occurring and analyze the events for their political, economic, psychological, environmental, and legal implications.

### **Tactical Conflict Assessment and Planning Framework**

To increase the effectiveness of stability operations, the US Agency for International Development created the tactical conflict assessment and planning framework (TCAPF). Use of TCAPF, which is further amplified in US Army Field Manual 3-07, *Stability Operations*, can help commanders and their staffs identify causes of instability, plan activities to diminish or mitigate them, and then to evaluate the effectiveness of those activities at the tactical level (provincial or local).

### *Conceptual Framework*

Tactical conflict assessment and planning framework is based on four premises—instability, assessment, the population, and measures of effectiveness.

*Instability.* Instability results when the factors fostering instability overwhelm the ability of the host nation to mitigate these factors (see fig. E-8 on page E-17). To understand why there is instability or determine the risk of instability, the following factors must be understood:

- Grievances.
- Key actors' motivations and means.
- Windows of vulnerability.

Grievances are factors that can foster instability. They are based on a group's perception that other groups or institutions are threatening its interests. Examples include ethnic or religious tensions, political repression, population pressures, and competition over natural resources. Greed can also foster instability. Some groups and individuals gain power and wealth from instability. Drug lords and insurgents fall in this category.

Key actors' motivations and means are ways they transform grievances into widespread instability. Although there can be many grievances, they do not foster instability unless key actors with both the motivation and the means to translate these grievances into widespread instability emerge. Transforming grievances into widespread violence requires a dedicated leadership, organizational capacity, money, and weapons. If a group lacks these resources, it will not be able to foster widespread instability. Means and motivations are the critical variables that determine whether grievances become causes of instability.

Windows of vulnerability are situations that can trigger widespread instability. Even when grievances and means are present, widespread instability is unlikely unless a window of vulnerability links grievances to means and motivations. Potential windows of vulnerability include an invasion, highly contested elections, natural disasters, the loss of a key leader, and economic shocks.

Even if grievances, means, and vulnerabilities exist, instability is not inevitable. For each of

these factors, there are the following parallel mitigating forces:

- Resiliencies.
- Key actors' motivations and means.
- Windows of opportunity.

Resiliencies are the processes, relationships, and institutions that can reduce the effects of grievances. Examples include community organizations and accessible, legitimate judicial structures.

Key actors' motivations and means are ways key actors leverage resiliencies to counter instability. Just as certain key actors have motivation and means to create instability, other actors have the motivation and the means to rally people around nonviolent procedures to address grievances. An example could be a local imam advocating peaceful coexistence among opposing tribes.

Windows of opportunity are situations or events that can strengthen resiliencies. For example, the tsunami that devastated the unstable Indonesian province of Aceh provided an opportunity for rebels and government forces to work together peacefully. This cooperation led to a peace agreement and increased stability.

While understanding these factors is crucial to understanding stability, they do not exist in a vacuum. Therefore, their presence or absence must be understood within the context of a given environment. Context refers to longstanding conditions that do not change easily or quickly. Examples include geography, demographics, natural resources, history, as well as regional and international factors. Contextual factors do not necessarily cause instability, but they can contribute to the grievances or provide the means that foster instability. For example, although poverty alone does not foster conflict, poverty linked to illegitimate government institutions, a growing gap between rich and poor, and access to a global arms market can combine to foster instability. Instability occurs when the causes of instability overwhelm a societal or governmental ability to mitigate it.

*Assessment.* Assessment is necessary for targeted and strategic engagement. Since most stability operations occur in less developed countries, there will always be a long list of needs and wants, such as schools, roads, and health care, within an operational area. Given a chronic shortage of USG personnel and resources, effective stability operations require an ability to identify and prioritize local sources of instability and stability. They also require the prioritization of interventions based on their importance in diminishing those sources of instability or building on sources of stability. For example, if village elders want more water, but water is not fostering instability because farmers and pastoralists fight over land, then digging a well will not stabilize the area. In some cases, wells have been dug based on the assumption that stability will result from fulfilling a local want; however, ensuring both farmers and pastoralists have access to water will help stabilize the area only if they were fighting over water. Understanding the causal relationship between needs, wants, and stability is crucial. In some cases, they are directly related; in others, they are not. Used correctly, the TCAPF and data obtained from other sources will help establish whether there is a causal relationship.

Understanding the difference between symptoms and causes is another key aspect of stability. Too often, interventions target the symptoms of instability rather than identifying and targeting the underlying causes. While there is always a strong temptation to achieve quick results, this often equates to satisfying a superficial request that does not reduce the underlying causes of instability and, in some cases, actually increases instability.

For example, an assessment identified a need to reopen a local school in Afghanistan. The prevailing logic held that addressing this need would increase support for the government while decreasing support for antigovernment forces. When international forces reopened the school, however, antigovernment forces coerced the school administrator to leave under threat of

death, forcing the school to close. A subsequent investigation revealed that the local populace harbored antigovernment sentiments because host nation police tasked with providing security for the school established a checkpoint nearby and demanded bribes for passage into the village. The local populace perceived the school, which drew the attention of corrupt host nation police, as the source of their troubles. Rather than improve government support by reopening the school, the act instead caused resentment since it exposed the local populace to abuse from the police. The result was increased support for antigovernment forces, which were perceived as protecting the interests of the local populace. While the assessment identified a need to reopen the school, the act did not address a cause of instability. At best, it addressed a possible symptom of instability and served only to bring the true cause of instability closer to the affected population.

*The Population.* The population is the best source for identifying the causes of instability. Since stability operations focus on the local populace, it is imperative to identify and prioritize what the population perceives as the causes of instability. To identify the causes of instability, the TCAPF asks the local populace to identify and prioritize the problems in the area.

*Measures of Effectiveness.* Measures of effectiveness are a means of gauging success. Often, the terms output and effect are used interchangeably among civilian agencies; however, the terms measure very different aspects of task performance. While “outputs” indicate task performance, “effects” measure how well the activities performed toward achieving a predetermined objective. Measures of effectiveness are crucial for determining the success or failure of stability tasks.

### *The TCAPF Process*

The TCAPF process focuses on the local populace. Organizations using the TCAPF follow a continuous cycle of see-understand-act-measure. The TCAPF includes four distinct, but

interrelated activities—collection, analysis, design, and evaluation.

*Collection.* The collection of information on the causes of instability within an operational area is a two-step process. The first step uses the following four questions to draw critical information from the local populace:

- *Has the population of the village changed in the last twelve months?* Understanding population movement is crucial to understanding the operational environment. Population movement often provides a good indicator of changes in relative stability. People usually move when deprived of security or social well-being. The sudden arrival of dislocated civilians can produce a destabilizing effect if the operational area lacks sufficient capacity to absorb them or if there is local opposition to their presence.
- *What are the greatest problems facing the village?* Providing the local populace with a means to express problems helps to prioritize and focus activities appropriately. The local populace is able to identify their own problem areas, avoiding mistaken assumptions by the intervening forces. This procedure does not solicit needs and wants, but empowers the people to take ownership of the overall process.
- *Who is trusted to resolve problems?* Identifying the individuals or institutions most trusted to resolve local issues is critical to understanding perceptions and loyalties. Responses may include the host nation government, a local warlord, international forces, a religious leader, or other authority figure. This question also provides an indication of the level of support for the host nation government, a key component of stability. This often serves as a measure of effectiveness for stability tasks. It also identifies key informants who may assist with vetting or help to develop messages to support information engagement activities.
- *What should be done first to help the village?* Encouraging the local populace to prioritize their problems helps them to affirm ownership.

Their responses form the basis for local projects and programs.

Central to the collection effort is the ability to determine the relationship between the symptoms and to understand why a symptom exists—both essential to addressing the cause. For example, an assessment completed in Afghanistan identified a lack of security as the main problem within a specific operational area. Analysis indicated this was due a shortage of host nation security forces in the local area, so an additional detachment of local police was assigned to the area. However, the assessment failed to identify the relationship between the symptom and cause of the problem. The implemented solution addressed the symptom, while the actual cause remained unaddressed. A subsequent assessment revealed that the local police were actually the cause of the insecurity: it was common practice for them to demand bribes from the local populace while discriminating against members of rival clans in the area. By addressing the symptom of the problem rather than the cause, the implemented solution actually exacerbated the problem instead of resolving it.

The second collection step involves targeted interviews with key local stakeholders, such as traditional leaders, government officials, business leaders, and other prominent citizens. These interviews serve two purposes. First, they serve as a control mechanism in the collection effort. If the responses from a key stakeholder match those from the local populace, it is likely the key stakeholder understands the causes of instability and may be relied upon to support the assessment effort; however, if the answers do not match, then the stakeholder may either be uninformed or possibly part of the problem. Second, targeted interviews provide more detail on the causes of instability while helping determine how best to address those causes and measure progress toward that end.

Information obtained during collection is assembled in a formatted TCAPF spreadsheet. This allows the information to be easily grouped and

quantified to identify and prioritize the most important concerns of the population.

*Analysis.* During analysis, the information gained through collection is compiled in a graphical display (see fig. E-8). This display helps identify the main concerns of the population and serves as a reference point for targeted questioning. The TCAPF data is combined with input from other staff sections and other sources of information, such as IGOs, NGOs, and private sector entities. All this input is used to create a prioritized list of the causes of instability and sources of resiliency that guide the conduct of stability operations.

*Design.* The design effort is informed through analysis, the results of which are used to create a tactical stability matrix (see table E-8, page E-18) for each of the causes of instability. After identifying the causes of instability and sources of resiliency, a program of activities is designed to address them. Three key factors guide program design, which ensures program activities—

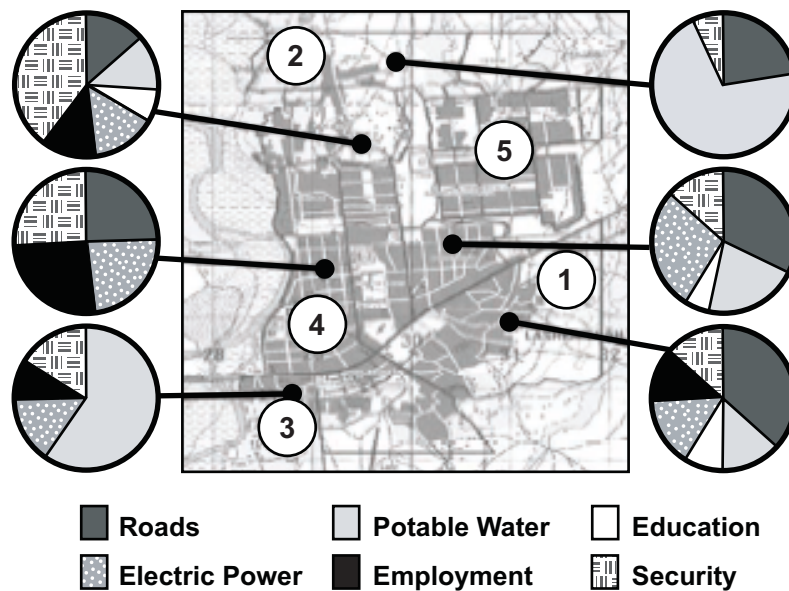
- Increase support for the host nation government.

- Decrease support for antigovernment forces.
- Build host nation capacity across each of the stability sectors.

The tactical stability matrix and program activities form the basis for planning within an operational area. The plan targets the least stable areas and ensures instability is contained. It is nested within the HHQ plan and details how specific stability tasks will be integrated and synchronized at the tactical level. The TCAPF data is collated at each echelon to develop or validate assessments performed by subordinate elements.

*Evaluation.* The TCAPF provides a comprehensive means of evaluating success in addressing the sources of instability. Through measures of effectiveness, analysts gauge progress toward improving stability while diminishing the sources of instability. Measures of effectiveness are vital to evaluating the success of program activities in changing the state of the operational environment envisioned during the design effort.

While evaluation is critical to measuring the effectiveness of activities in fostering stability, it



Note: Numbers denote areas within an urban area

Figure E-8. Analyzing Causes of Instability.

also helps to ensure the views of the population are tracked, compared, measured, and displayed over time. Since these results are objective, they cannot be altered by interviewer or analyst bias. This creates a continuous narrative that significantly increases situational awareness.

**Best Practices and Lessons Learned**

Capturing and implementing best practices and lessons learned is fundamental to adaptive organizations. This behavior is essential in stability operations, where the ability to learn and adapt is often the difference between success and failure. The TCAPF leverages this ability to overcome the dynamics of the human dimension, where uncertainty, chance, and friction are the norm. Examples of best practices and lessons learned gained through recent experience include the following:

- Activities and projects are products that foster a process to change behavior or perceptions.
- Indicators and measures of effectiveness identify whether change has occurred or is occurring.
- Perceptions of the local populace provide the best means to gauge the impact of program activities.
- Indicators provide insight into measures of effectiveness by revealing whether positive progress is being achieved by program activities.

- “Good deeds” cannot substitute for effectively targeted program activities; the best information engagement effort is successful programming that meets the needs of the local populace.
- Intervention activities should—
  - ◆ Respond to priority issues of the local populace.
  - ◆ Focus effort on critical crosscutting activities.
  - ◆ Establish anticorruption measures early in the stability operation.
  - ◆ Identify and support key actors early to set the conditions for subsequent collaboration.
- Intervention activities should not—
  - ◆ Mistake “good deeds” for effective action.
  - ◆ Initiate projects not designed as program activities.
  - ◆ Attempt to impose “western” standards.
  - ◆ Focus on quantity over quality.

The TCAPF has been successfully implemented in practice to identify, prioritize, and target the causes of instability in a measurable and immediately accessible manner. Since it maximizes the use of assets in the field and gauges the effectiveness of activities in time and space, it is an important tool for conducting successful stability operations.

**Table E-8. Tactical Stability Matrix.**

Grievance	Causes (perceptions)	Causes (system)	Objective	Impact Indicators	Monitoring Methods
Police abuse the locals	Police extort bribes and “protection” Police commit violent crimes Police use the law to help themselves Police are predators, not protectors Police are involved with drugs and prostitution	Police salaries consistently in arrears Police are not representative of the local populace Police are not disciplined or held accountable Police include many former members of a hostile militia	Increase effectiveness and popular support of the police	People cease to fear the police Police receiving more actionable intelligence Reduced crime; less insurgent presence Membership in the police becomes respectable	TCAPF or public surveys

# APPENDIX F

## WARGAMING

Wargaming pits friendly COAs against adversary COAs to identify strengths and weaknesses of the friendly COAs and opportunities that can be exploited in future operations. The staff wargames selected friendly COAs against selected adversary COAs—most likely, most advantageous, or most dangerous—to determine how best to attack adversary critical vulnerabilities while protecting friendly critical vulnerabilities. The results of wargaming, like all the other planning steps, improve the commander's understanding of the problem and influence his vision of actions. A better understanding inevitably leads to plan adjustments. Planners can conduct war games either manually or through computer-aided modeling and simulation applications. Time, resources, and priorities will influence which method the command will use.

On larger staffs, a red cell plays the adversary during the wargame. The red cell is a task-organized element under the staff cognizance of the G-2/S-2. It presents a “thinking” adversary that combines his doctrine with the red cell's operational experience. The red cell ensures assessed adversary capabilities and vulnerabilities are realistically evaluated against each friendly COA. At the MEF or major subordinate command level, the red cell may include four to six persons; at the battalion or squadron level, the red cell function may be exercised by the S-2 or a representative designated by the commander. Similarly, a green cell ensures environment and civilian aspects are applied against the friendly COAs.

Generally, the COA war game step includes the commander's wargaming guidance and evaluation criteria, war game preparation, and the conduct of the war game. The results of the war game inform COA comparison and decision, but, more importantly, wargaming generates an intuitive level of understanding about the problem that will accelerate decisionmaking during execution.

Wargaming also generates the needed level of detail with which to populate the plan or order (appendices, tabs, exhibits, attachments) necessary for implementation. The following general guidelines may assist in conducting the COA war game step.

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### Commander's Wargaming Guidance and Evaluation Criteria

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The commander assesses the time available at the conclusion of the COA development brief before providing guidance for the war game. The degree to which a COA achieves the essential tasks allows the commander to determine which COA is most suitable, feasible, acceptable, distinguishable, and complete based on the available time, space, and resources. His evaluation criteria addresses specific issues/questions that he wants the staff to determine on each validated COA during the war game. At this point in the planning process, the commander has begun to think about various options and capabilities available to the adversary commander. He is also mindful of his own command's vulnerabilities. He will evaluate the major concerns, select the most important concerns, and incorporate them into his wargaming guidance.

### Wargaming Guidance

The commander's wargaming guidance may include the following items:

- Friendly COAs that will be wargamed against specific adversary COAs, such as the adversary's most likely, most dangerous, or most advantageous COA.
- Critical events that must be wargamed in specific detail, such as critical decision points identified during COA development.

- The level of war game detail. Is there a key event or major activity, such as a river crossing, that requires a detailed examination to determine coordination and support requirements?
- Validation of the main effort.
- Specification of the weather conditions to be assumed by the wargamers, such as rain, although the norm for the time of year is dry weather.
- Timeline for the phase or stage of the operation.

### Commander's Evaluation Criteria

To be adopted as the plan, a COA has to survive two sets of evaluation criteria. The first broad set, discussed in COA development in chapter 3, requires that a COA be suitable, feasible, acceptable, distinguishable, and complete. The second set is intended to identify which COA—among those that passed the first test—is the best. The commander's evaluation criteria may include the following items:

- Principles of war.
- Limitation on casualties.
- Exploitation of the adversary's weaknesses/friendly strengths.
- Defeat of the adversary's COGs.
- Population considerations.
- Asymmetrical operations.
- Opportunity for maneuver.
- Concentration of combat power.
- Speed.
- Mass versus dispersion.
- Risk.
- Phasing.
- Weighting the main effort.
- Logistical supportability.
- Political considerations.
- Force protection.
- Time available and timing of the operation.

### Staff Evaluation Criteria

The staff should also develop its own evaluation criteria to support its staff estimates during the

COA comparison and decision step. The staff criteria may include the following items:

- Risk assessment.
- Casualty projections/limitations.
- Personnel replacement requirements.
- Projected adversary losses.
- Adversary prisoner of war handling procedures.
- Intelligence collection requirements and limitations.
- HVT acquisition.
- HPT identification.
- Supporting arms limitations.
- Support limitations or opportunities.
- Projected assets and resource requirements.
- Operational reach.
- Sorties/capabilities required versus sorties/capabilities available.
- Prepositioning equipment and supplies.
- Projected location of units/supplies for future operations.
- Projected location of combat operations centers or command posts (rear, main, tactical).
- Command and control systems shortfalls and limitations.

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### War Game Preparations

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Before the war game, planners should post the following information or have it readily accessible:

- Approved mission statement.
- Commander's intent and guidance.
- Assumptions.
- Constraints and restraints.
- CCIRs.
- Maps covering the entire area of operations and area of interest.
- Friendly force list.
- COGs.
- Adversary order of battle.
- Population disposition, such as attitudes, beliefs, and cultural considerations.
- MCOO with terrain and weather analysis.



- Current and projected adversary situation overlay.
- Current and projected friendly situation overlay.
- Situation templates for each adversary COA.
- Adversary event template and matrix.
- Civil population event/situation template/matrix, if needed.

Planners should also have the following tools that were completed during the COA development:

- Assessment of relative combat power.
- Assessment of the civilian population.
- COAs as selected and amended by the commander, including the COA graphic and narrative.
- War game rules.
- Recording tools (synchronization and COA war game matrices).

### Review the Friendly Force List

The OPT reviews the friendly force list to consider all available units that can be committed to the battle, paying special attention to command relationships and task organization. They ensure the force list reflects all units that may be employed by the wargamers. Ideally, the wargamers employ units two levels down from their level of command. For instance, MEF wargamers will represent the wing and division commanders and include all aircraft groups and infantry regiments on their force list as well as all separate battalions, such as light armored reconnaissance battalion and tank battalion. Because commanders frequently task-organize forces, wargamers should also list the number of subordinate units in each element; for example, one regiment is currently operating with two battalions, another with three. Similarly, the wargamer employing the ACE would be expected to know the number of squadrons in each group (by type) and the number of aircraft in each squadron. Although task organizations may vary by COA, the friendly force list remains constant for all analyzed COAs.

### Validate Assumptions

The planners review previous assumptions to determine whether they are still valid. Assumptions can impact the war game. It is important the wargamers analyze each assumption as they proceed so they can accurately brief the commander regarding the consequences of the assumptions.

### List and Graphically Display Known Critical Events and Decision Points

Critical events influence mission accomplishment. They include—

- Events that accomplish essential tasks.
- Events that force a decision, creating a result larger than itself.

A decision point is an event or a location in the battlespace where a decision is required during execution. Decision points do not dictate the substance of the decision, only that a decision must be made because the event is expected to affect friendly COAs. Geographical decision points are almost always related to a specific type of adversary organization appearing at a specific location in the battlespace. Event-related decision points can relate to either the friendly force or the adversary. Examples of decision points include—

- The friendly commander specifies the main attack will not begin until the supporting attack has reached phase line red.
- The friendly force is in defensive positions waiting for follow-on forces. The commander determines that if the adversary does not begin an attack on the friendly vital area within 48 hours, he will conduct a limited objective attack to harass the adversary and disrupt his timeline.
- The friendly force has occupied a village harboring an insurgent leader assessed as an HVT. The capture of this HVT will allow the commander to shift his operations to a more distant area.

Decision points relate to critical events and are linked to NAIs and TAIs. A decision point may have an associated CCIR. When the commander receives the information he requires, it becomes the trigger to make a decision. Critical events and decision points come from several planning documents that, at this point in the planning process, have been completed by the G-2/S-2. The G-2/S-2 will already have completed situation templates for each adversary COA as well as a consolidated situation template, superimposing all adversary COAs onto one graphic. From that graphic, the G-2/S-2 develops an event template to identify NAIs and time-distance projections based on the adversary COA and the MCOO. The G-2/S-2 identifies the adversary's HVTs and the times these targets may move through the NAIs. The planners, in preparing the friendly COAs, will use the COA war game to determine which of the HVTs should be considered HPTs.

### Select the War Game Method

Four wargaming techniques—key event or sequence of critical tasks, avenue in depth, belt, and box—are available. Each technique is suited to a particular situation or type of command.

#### *Key Event or Sequence of Critical Tasks*

Wargaming a key event or critical tasks in sequence (if there is a sequence) allows the planners to determine timing, support requirements, and how the accomplishment of a key event or critical task predisposes success or accomplishment of subsequent tasks.

#### *Avenue in Depth*

Avenue in depth focuses on one avenue of approach at a time, beginning with the main effort. This technique is good for offensive COAs or for defensive situations when canalizing terrain inhibits mutual support.

#### *Belt*

Belts divide the terrain into segments that span the width of the sector (defense), zone (offense), or area of operation. This technique is most effective in cross-compartment terrain, phased

operations, or when the adversary is deployed in clearly defined echelons. A belt will normally include more than one event. When time is short, the commander may use a modified belt technique, noncontiguous belts selected on the basis of anticipated critical events, which may or may not occur at the same time. At a minimum, belts should include the area of—

- Initial contact along the forward line of own troops, the line of departure/line of contact, or in the covering force area.
- Initial penetration or initial contact along the forward edge of the battle area.
- Passage of the reserve or commitment of a counterattack.
- The objective (offense) or defeat of the adversary (defense), such as the limit of advance for the counterattack.

#### *Box*

The box technique is a detailed analysis of a critical area, such as a colored landing beach, an infiltration route, or a raid objective. It is most useful when time is limited. This technique applies to all types of units. The staff isolates the area and focuses on the critical events within that area.

### Select a Method to Record and Display Results

Recording the war game results gives the planners a record from which to—

- Confirm and refine event templates.
- Integrate all warfighting functions.
- Develop decision support templates.
- Evaluate the COA by using the evaluation criteria outlined earlier.
- Build the task organization.
- Prepare the order.

One method for recording the results of the war game is the synchronization matrix. Planners should avoid the “sync matrix trap” of attempting to script detailed actions of forces over any extended period of time. Such efforts are unrealistic and risk the expenditure of critical resources

in an effort to conform the battlespace to the planners' expectations. Instead, the synchronization matrix should accomplish two objectives: the integration and coordination of forces that do not overtask specific capabilities and the convergence of combat power or other capabilities to achieve a decision.

As shown in table E-5 on page E-10, the first entry is the time period or phase of the operation. The second entry is the adversary action as determined by the red cell. The third entry records friendly decision points identified for that time interval based on the adversary's actions. Recorded on the remainder of the matrix are the activities during the game turn that the friendly force wargamers decide need to be performed to support the COA, such as green cell input.

The result is that the planners have evaluated their COA for a specific period of time, they have recorded the activities necessary to support the COA, and they have prepared a comprehensive snapshot of what the entire command should be executing during that period. As wargamers work across the remaining time periods or phases, they gain an appreciation of what the command and its subordinate commands must do to accomplish the mission.

The completed matrix facilitates the writing of two portions of the order if this COA is selected as the basis for the plan. By working horizontally across the matrix for each warfighting function, planners are able to write a clear concept for each warfighting function. By working across the matrix for each subordinate command, planners are able to prepare the tasks to subordinate commands portion of the order or plan.

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## Conduct the War Game

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### General Rules

Time is a critical resource during wargaming and rules are key to accomplishing its objectives as

quickly as possible. Rules structure the discussions and keep the process objective and focused. The following rules can guide wargaming:

- Use approved adversary COAs as developed by the G-2/S-2 and civilian actions according to the green cell. The goal is to evaluate the friendly COA, not for the red cell to win the war game.
- Remain objective and unbiased.
- Continually assess feasibility. If a COA becomes infeasible during the war game, the commander rejects the COA.
- Analyze each COA independently.
- Avoid comparing one COA with another.
- Record advantages and disadvantages of each COA.
- Adhere to the established timeline.
- Avoid premature conclusions.
- Record counteractions.
- Use COA war game worksheets.

### Game Turns

A game turn covers all friendly, adversary, and civilian actions that are planned or envisioned to occur during a specified time interval and are focused on a specific task or event. Each game turn usually consists of three moves—two by the friendly force, one by the adversary force, and any civilian considerations as they may apply. The friendly force has two moves because the activity is intended to validate and refine the friendly force COA. If necessary, additional moves may be required to produce desired effects.

### War Game Preparations

The facilitator has already determined the H-hour for the war game's starting point. The red cell and the friendly force commander will have their situation overlays at H-hour on the war game map. The red cell apprises the facilitator of the starting locations of his key forces and their missions. The green cell provides civilian considerations as warranted. The facilitator will use the

event template and matrix provided by the G-2 to address friendly intelligence collection activities (reconnaissance and surveillance [R&S]).

### Game Turn Objective

The objective for each game turn is to answer any or all of the following questions:

- Does the friendly forces' planned action accomplish the task(s)?
- What additional actions (and resources) would be necessary to achieve the purpose if the original actions fall short?
- Has the adversary force executed any actions that were not anticipated and that would require the friendly force to change its COA or prepare a branch plan?
- How do civilian actions and reactions affect friendly and adversary plans?

### Sequence of Moves

Although direct contact between combatants normally will not occur at the starting point, the red cell has the first move by virtue of positioning its forces and apprising the facilitator of its activities at H-hour. From this point, each game turn proceeds as described in the following paragraphs.

#### *Friendly Force Action*

Friendly force commanders describe the operations of all forces involved during this event. They describe the force, its mission, and the desired outcome. They annotate the force list to account for all forces employed in the event.

#### *Adversary Reaction*

The red cell commander describes the operations his forces are currently executing. He includes the forces outside the immediate area of operations but within the area of interest he intends to employ during this event. Friendly wargamers can then validate the portion of their plan that addresses these additional adversary forces. The red cell commander and friendly commanders

determine where they would have had contact. The red cell commander describes the locations and activities of his assets identified as HVTs. He highlights points during the operation where these assets are important to the adversary's COA. If these points affect the friendly COA, friendly wargamers identify the HVTs as HPTs, making their engagement an integral part of the friendly COA. With this information, the OPT updates the situation and event templates to reflect tactical areas of interest that support the engagement of those HPTs.

#### *Civilian Reaction*

The green cell will provide likely civilian responses to friendly and adversary actions.

The OPT discusses the impact of the contact on friendly and adversary forces and the population. Recording tools capture the discussion. If the OPT members agree on the outcome, the game turn proceeds. If they do not agree, the facilitator determines the outcome and the war game proceeds. If one of the participants disagrees with the ruling, and if the matter will bear on the feasibility, suitability, or acceptability of the COA, the point is referred to an arbiter, such as the chief of staff, G-3, or G-5, for final resolution.

Each unanticipated event in the red cell or green cell reactions may become a decision point for the commander when executing the approved plan. Each time the friendly wargamers identify a decision point, the recorder makes appropriate entries in the recording tools, such as the decision support template, COA war game worksheet, and the synchronization matrix. The recorder should capture enough information to allow the staff to anticipate and plan for each decision. At a minimum, the recorder includes these elements—

- **Decision Points.** Estimated time—H + number of hours—and location if physical positioning is relevant.
- **Decision Criteria.** What activity, event, or information prompts a decision? This translates into potential CCIRs, information that

could trigger a decision to execute a planned action.

- **Friendly Action/Response.** What friendly action must be decided? Decisions can result in engagement of HPTs that may have a decisive impact on one or more of the adversary's critical vulnerabilities.
- **TAIs.** The planners ensure the physical distance between the decision point and the TAIs are computed on the basis of the time-distance requirements involved.
- **NAIs that Support the Decision Point.** The recorder must tie each decision point to its associated NAIs.

At this point, one of two outcomes will be evident: either the friendly force's planned action was sufficient to achieve its purpose or it was insufficient. If the action was sufficient and the COA is on track, then the players can proceed to

the next game turn. If the action was insufficient to produce the desired effect, then the friendly force considers its counteraction.

### *Friendly Counteraction*

The friendly force commander, in discussion with the red and green cells and the facilitator, determines the additional actions and resources necessary to achieve the original purpose. When modifying the COA, it is necessary to revalidate the location and composition of the main and supporting efforts, reserves, and control measures that affect its employment. Possible branches and sequels may emerge during friendly counteraction. If resources needed for the counteraction are available and can be reallocated from any intended use in a subsequent game turn, the friendly commander may add the additional forces to the COA.

# APPENDIX G

## STAFF ESTIMATES AND ESTIMATES OF SUPPORTABILITY

Keeping commanders informed to facilitate their decisionmaking is a critical requirement of planning. During planning, estimates are a primary means of informing the commander. The two basic types of estimates are the staff estimate provided by the staff and an estimate of supportability provided by subordinate units.

Staff estimates are generally functional in nature, such as for fires, logistics, or intelligence, and often require subordinate unit information, such as the ACE's sortie calculations. Once the commander approves a COA, staff estimates become the first drafts of their respective portion of the order or plan. Estimates of supportability from subordinate commanders provide a single battle approach to recommended COAs with a functional slant, whether air, ground, or logistics. Commanders of the ACE, GCE, and logistics combat element (LCE) discuss how each will support the MAGTF COA(s) through their respective CONOPS while addressing advantages and disadvantages of each COA.

Estimates may be text documents, graphic representations, or an oral presentation of the analysis and recommendations. These estimates provide commanders, staff, and planners feedback regarding possible solutions. Done properly, estimates contribute information to the annexes and appendices to orders or plans.

Commanders and staffs use estimates as they collect, process, and evaluate information. A subordinate unit or a staff section, upon discovering a "show stopper," should not wait to complete a document to raise concerns about a particular COA. The sooner the commander and his planners know of a problem, the sooner they can either discard the COA or modify it. The key

issue is time. Format or formality should never delay the timely delivery of important information to the commander. At a minimum, commanders and their staffs should update their estimates when their understanding of the environment or problem changes, assumptions become invalid, new tasks are received, or requirements or capabilities change.

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### Staff Estimates

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The staff and warfighting function representatives develop staff estimates. The staff summarizes significant aspects of the situation that influence the COA, analyzes the impact of the factors on the COA, and evaluates and determines how the means available can best support the COA. Staff sections may also require their functional representatives to develop functional estimates within their areas of expertise. A staff estimate is not a replacement for an order or for supporting concepts; however, a thorough staff estimate will shorten the time it takes to fully develop a COA and write the order or plan.

The generic staff estimate format (fig. G-1 on page G-2) standardizes the way staff members construct estimates. The G-2, with input assistance from all staff members, will still prepare and disseminate the IPB as separate and continuously updated products.

The staff develops estimates for all the warfighting functions (see fig. G-2 on page G-3) and uses these estimates to recommend a COA and to develop plans to support the selected COA. Incomplete estimates and erroneous projections can lead to the selection of an improper COA.

1. Mission. Mission statement results from problem framing.
2. Situation and Considerations
  - a. Characteristics of the Area of Operation
    - (1) Weather. How will different military aspects of weather affect specific staff areas of concern and resources?
    - (2) Terrain. How will aspects of terrain affect specific staff areas of concern and resources?
    - (3) Other Pertinent Facts. Analyze political, economic, sociological, and psychological factors and infrastructure as they relate to the area.
  - b. Adversary Forces. Adversary disposition, composition, strength, capabilities, and COA(s) as they affect specific staff areas of concern.
  - c. Friendly Forces
    - (1) Friendly COA(s).
    - (2) Current status of resources.
    - (3) Current status of other resources.
    - (4) Comparison of requirements versus capabilities and recommended solutions.
    - (5) Key considerations (evaluation criteria) for COA supportability.
  - d. Assumptions
3. Analysis. Analyze each COA using key considerations (evaluation criteria) to determine advantages and disadvantages.
4. Comparison. Compare COA(s) using key considerations (evaluation criteria). Rank order COA(s) for each key consideration. Visually support each comparison with a decision matrix.
5. Recommendations and Conclusions
  - a. Recommended COA based on the comparison (most supportable from specific staff perspective).
  - b. Issues, deficiencies, and risks with impact mitigations.

**Figure G-1. Staff Estimate Format Sample.**

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## Estimate of Supportability

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Estimates of supportability (see fig. G-3 on page G-4) are produced by subordinate commanders in order to assist the “higher” commander with

COA selection. Staff estimates support their commander’s estimate of supportability provided to the MAGTF commander. Estimates of supportability should indicate the subordinate unit’s ability to support each COA and identify the risks associated in supporting each COA.

1. Key Facts and Assumptions. Identify key facts and assumptions associated with the specific functional area.
2. Functional Units Available. List all units assigned to the MAGTF with the functional capability to include known host nation and contracted support.
3. Computations. Focus on a worst case scenario. Break out all requirements. The category could be expressed as classes of supply; field services; maintenance functions, such as maintenance support team support or recovery; transportation types, such a breakbulk, Class III, or water; or explosive ordnance disposal support.

Category	Total Requirements	Total Capabilities	Shortfall	Excess Capability	Potential Solutions

4. Analysis
  - a. Issues. Excess capacity or shortfall. Indicate all shortfall and excess capabilities.
  - b. Vulnerabilities/Risks. Indicate how any shortfalls can impact the outcome of the MAGTF mission. Be accurate, concise, and direct.
  - c. Recommendations. Indicate how you think the LCE can either reallocate internal CSS assets, find a way to reduce requirements, or increase capacity to counter shortfalls. Also, recommend how to best make use of idle CSS assets.

**Figure G-2. Functional Staff Estimate Format Sample.**



<p style="margin: 0;">CLASSIFICATION</p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 150px;">Copy No. <u>   </u> of <u>   </u> copies                  OFFICIAL DESIGNATION OF COMMAND                  PLACE OF ISSUE                  Date-time group                  Message reference number</p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 0;"><u>ESTIMATE OF SUPPORTABILITY (U)</u></p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 0;">(U) REFERENCES: (a) Maps: _____ 1:50,000 AMES Series, _____, Sheets _____, _____ and _____.</p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 0;">1. ( ) <u>Mission</u></p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 20px;">a. ( ) <u>Basic Mission</u>. List the issuing headquarters' mission. If this is a running estimate early in the planning process, the mission statement may not be completed. In this case, the issuing headquarters identifies what actions they need to take as part of the HHQ COA(s).</p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 20px;">b. ( ) <u>Previous Decisions</u></p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 40px;">(1) ( ) List in detail each essential/critical task already assigned to the issuing headquarters.</p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 40px;">(2) ( ) These essential/critical tasks should contribute to the current HHQ COA(s) under consideration that the supportability estimate will address.</p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 0;">2. ( ) <u>Situation and Considerations</u></p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 20px;">a. ( ) <u>Adversary</u></p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 40px;">(1) ( ) Present disposition of major elements. (See intelligence estimate.)</p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 40px;">(2) ( ) Capabilities. (See intelligence estimate)</p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 20px;">b. ( ) <u>Population</u>. Disposition of the population, such as attitudes toward the insurgents, host nation, and allied or coalition forces.</p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 20px;">c. ( ) <u>Own Forces</u></p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 40px;">(1) ( ) Present disposition of the issuing headquarters' major subelements.</p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 40px;">(2) ( ) Probable tactical developments.</p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 60px;">(a) ( ) Summarize intended actions required to support each COA.</p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 60px;">(b) ( ) Estimate timelines when assigned tasks (or envisioned actions) are expected to be achieved under each COA currently being considered, as in the example below:</p> <table style="margin: 10px auto 10px auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 30%;"></th> <th style="width: 35%; text-align: center;">OBJECTIVE A</th> <th style="width: 35%; text-align: center;">OBJECTIVE B</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">COA #1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">D-day</td> <td style="text-align: center;">D-day</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">COA #2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">D+2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">D+1</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 40px;">(3) ( ) Own COAs.</p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 60px;">(a) ( ) <u>COA #1</u>. Describe this COA in general terms (enough to give an overall picture and to distinguish it from the other COA[s]). If COAs are still in development, describe the distinguishing features. For example, "This COA will have an amphibious assault with additional deep fires."</p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 60px;">(b) ( ) <u>COA #2 (and subsequent COAs)</u>. Describe this COA in general terms (enough to give an overall picture and to distinguish it from the other COA[s]).</p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 60px;">(c) ( ) Describe the characteristics of the geographic area in which the operation is to be conducted. The issuing headquarters can also provide cultural considerations or other aspects of the area that may impact operations. Readers may be referred to the intelligence estimate.</p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 150px; text-align: center;">Page number</p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 0; text-align: center;">CLASSIFICATION</p>		OBJECTIVE A	OBJECTIVE B	COA #1	D-day	D-day	COA #2	D+2	D+1
	OBJECTIVE A	OBJECTIVE B							
COA #1	D-day	D-day							
COA #2	D+2	D+1							

**Figure G-3. Estimate of Supportability Format Sample.**

## CLASSIFICATION

d. Assumptions

(1) ( ) List all assumptions regarding the adversary, friendly, and population situation.

(2) ( ) List assumptions about adversary and friendly capabilities.

(3) ( ) List assumptions about adversary and population intentions.

e. ( ) Special Factors. List any special aspects of the issuing headquarters' situation that could affect resource allocation.

3. ( ) COA Analysis

a. ( ) The issuing headquarters rank orders the COA available to HHQ according to the ability of the issuing headquarters to support them.

b. ( ) Concept of Employment. The issuing headquarters describes its concept of employment under each of the HHQ COA(s).

c. ( ) Adversary Situation and Capabilities. The issuing headquarters describes how the enemy situation and enemy capabilities might affect its ability to support each or any of the HHQ COA(s).

d. ( ) Requirement for Support. The issuing headquarters explains how and to what degree it can support each of the HHQ COA(s). In order for the ACE or LCE to determine its ability to support MAGTF COAs, it must be aware of the requirements for all other elements of the MAGTF concurrently.

e. ( ) Topography. The issuing headquarters describes how the topography might affect its ability to support each or any of the HHQ COA(s).

f. ( ) Weather. The issuing headquarters describes how the weather might affect its ability to support each or any of the HHQ COA(s).

g. ( ) Observation and Surveillance. The issuing headquarters describes how the observation and surveillance issues might affect its ability to support each or any of the HHQ COA(s).

h. ( ) Communications Requirements. The issuing headquarters describes how the communications issues might affect its ability to support each or any of the HHQ COA(s).

i. ( ) Logistics. The issuing headquarters describes how the logistic issues might affect its ability to support each or any of the HHQ COA(s).

j. ( ) Hydrographic Conditions. The issuing headquarters describes how the hydrographic issues might affect its ability to support each or any of the HHQ COA(s) during amphibious operations.

4. ( ) Evaluationa. ( ) COA #1(1) ( ) Advantages

(a) ( ) List the advantages for this COA.

(b) ( ) These advantages are specific to the issuing headquarters, not necessarily to the force as a whole.

(2) ( ) Disadvantages

(a) ( ) List the disadvantages for this COA.

(b) ( ) These disadvantages are specific to the issuing headquarters, not necessarily to the force as a whole.

Page number

CLASSIFICATION

Figure G-3. Estimate of Supportability Format Sample. (Continued)

## CLASSIFICATION

- b. ( ) COA #2
  - (1) ( ) Advantages
  - (2) ( ) Disadvantages
- 5. ( ) Conclusions
  - a. ( ) The issuing headquarters identifies the preferred COA while summarizing the reasons for its choice.
  - b. ( ) The issuing headquarters rank orders any other COAs adding the rationale for their order.
  - c. ( ) The issuing headquarters may also recommend changes to one or more of the COA(s) in this and subsequent paragraphs, based on its ability to furnish support.

Page number

CLASSIFICATION

**Figure G-3. Estimate of Supportability Format Sample. (Continued)**

# APPENDIX H

## RAPID RESPONSE PLANNING PROCESS

The goal of the R2P2 is to spend less time planning in order to provide the executing forces with the maximum time allowable to prepare for the mission. When circumstances impose severe time constraints on the executing command, the commander and the staff must allocate enough time to develop a feasible COA, time to coordinate critical details, and time to prepare for execution. The commander and the staff must be thoroughly familiar with potential contingencies or missions and the individuals involved with planning must know their roles in the planning process. Successful rapid planning is predicated on—

- An understanding of the MCPP.
- Detailed preparation, training, and organization of the force and equipment.
- Intelligence and mission planning products developed previously.
- Current intelligence information.
- Refined, well-rehearsed SOPs.

If rapid planning is to be successful, both mission planning and preparation requirements are conducted concurrently. The speed with which a unit can plan an operation varies with the complexity of the mission, the experience of the commander and the staff, and METT-T factors. The R2P2 was developed to enable the MEU to plan and commence execution of certain tasks within six hours. The rapid planning techniques discussed in this appendix focus on the MEU and its six-hour timeline, but these techniques may be tailored and employed to meet any unit's needs. Rapid planning by non-MEU units is usually more effective when conducting routine missions or tasks for which the unit has been well trained and has established SOPs.

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### Actions Prior to Rapid Planning

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To best employ R2P2, a unit must develop capabilities in four areas—integrated planning cells, planning and operations SOPs, intelligence, and information management. If one of these areas is lacking, effective rapid planning may not be achieved.

#### Integrated Planning Cells

The amount of staff turnover in the planning cells, to include the commander, directly impacts the staff's ability to plan rapidly; therefore, the composition and membership of the various planning cells used in rapid planning should remain constant, especially during the predeployment training program and deployment of the MEU and amphibious ready group (ARG). The planning cells employed by the MEU and ARG usually include the CAT, the battlestaff, and the mission planning cells. These cells must participate in frequent planning exercises that involve real-world scenarios similar to those the unit might encounter. These exercises ensure the CAT, battlestaff, and mission planning cells are thoroughly trained in rapid planning; their members know their commanders and each other; and the planners possess situational awareness of likely contingency missions and areas of operations. Planning cells should understand where they are to meet, what they are to accomplish, and how much time they have to complete their planning efforts. The planning cells also must be capable of conducting concurrent (simultaneous at different echelons of the same command) and parallel (between equivalent echelons of different commands) planning.

## Planning and Operations Standing Operating Procedures

The SOPs are the cornerstone of rapid planning. The planning SOP should be second nature to all concerned. Operations SOPs are equally important because they allow planners to select proven and practiced tasks that provide solutions to tactical problems. The SOPs allow major subordinate elements (MSEs) to carry out familiar tasks effectively and efficiently with minimal or no higher-level guidance or communications. The SOP for each type of mission should include a predesignated task organization, equipment and ordnance lists, elements of a landing plan, mission execution procedures, and an execution checklist with code words.

The SOPs must be current, studied, rehearsed, executable on a moment's notice, and supported by timesaving factors. For example, standard ordnance packages for likely missions, such as tactical recovery of aircraft and personnel (TRAP) or a platoon-sized reinforcement, are prestaged in readily accessible locations in their magazines in order to reduce the time needed to break out and issue ammunition. In addition, mission smart packs are created for each mission profile. Smart packs contain specific planning information and SOPs based on the mission profile, such as for a light, medium, or heavy helicopter raid. Smart pack planning and coordination of information are also used as references during mission execution.

## Intelligence

The commander and the staff must anticipate possible contingencies based on continual analyses of open-source news and classified intelligence reports. For each situation, the staff should be equipped with the latest intelligence (a MEU usually prepares mission folders), possible targets, area studies, and other relevant information. Periodic reviews of potential contingencies permits situational awareness to be maintained and provides current information. When appropriate, a commander conducts contingency planning and

refocuses unit training based on likely scenarios. The intelligence staff must also be familiar with the *Generic Intelligence Requirements Handbook (GIRH)*, which is produced by Marine Corps Intelligence Activity. This handbook contains essential elements of information for various mission types.

## Information Management

Due to the time constraints inherent in rapid planning, there is less opportunity for the commander and the staff to analyze information requirements. Also, computer technology is increasing the speed and volume of information flow, so an overabundance of information may obscure vital facts. It is critical that each participant in the planning process realizes the importance of his mission area and takes positive steps to appropriately share knowledge. Commanders and staff officers must possess the ability to present clear and concise information. Simple, concise presentations best support rapid planning.

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## Composition of Marine Expeditionary Unit Planning Cells

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### Crisis Action Team

The central planning cell in the MEU and ARG is the CAT. Although the CAT's final composition depends on the commander and METT-T, its basic composition is established in the command SOP. Three factors to consider in determining membership in the CAT are the physical space available to accommodate the group, the benefits of additional input from a wider array of functional areas, and the drawbacks of too many participants. The CAT members may include the MEU and ARG commanders and their primary staffs, MSE commanders and their operations officers, and SMEs. Some MEUs interchangeably refer to the CAT or the landing force operations center watch team as the battlestaff.

## Battlestaff

Some MEU and ARG commanders employ a battlestaff. The battlestaff may consist of staff officers at the MEU, ARG, and MSE levels, plus representatives from attachments and functional areas not included in the CAT. Ideally, any potential member of a mission planning cell not part of the CAT should be on the battlestaff. The battlestaff convenes whenever the CAT is established, which provides leaders and planners an opportunity to gain identical situational awareness with the CAT and to prepare for participation in any mission planning cell. Because there are insufficient personnel in some functional areas to staff all mission planning cells simultaneously, the battlestaff may have members that support more than one mission planning cell.

## Mission Planning Cell

Early in the planning process, the MEU and ARG commanders designate a mission commander, usually one of the MSE commanders. The mission commander then establishes his own mission planning cell to plan the details of the operation. Consideration must be given to the feasibility of separate planning cells due to limited staff members; therefore, the mission commander may designate more than one planning cell in order to plan concurrent, contingency, or follow-on missions. Additionally, a separate R&S mission planning cell may be established to plan R&S operations.

Each mission planning cell should include appropriate representation from relevant experts. For example, a battalion landing team planning cell might include air and logistic SMEs and Navy representatives. Maintaining the same personnel in the planning cells throughout the work-up and deployment speeds and improves the planning process. For example, if the ACE is the primary mission commander for a TRAP, then the GCE should send the same representative to all TRAP planning meetings.

The planning cell's working spaces must be pre-designated so all cell members know where to report and to ensure no two cells are competing for the same space. Lower echelon units, such as companies and platoons, must be prepared to plan concurrently with the mission planning cells and have a designated planning space.

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## Marine Expeditionary Unit Rapid Response Planning Process

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The R2P2 is a time-constrained, six-step process that mirrors the MCPP. The six steps of the R2P2 are—

- Problem framing.
- COA development.
- COA war game.
- COA comparison and decision.
- Orders development.
- Transition.

## Problem Framing

Effective problem framing is achieved through prior familiarization with both the situation and the type of mission and reliance on intuitive decisionmaking, which emphasizes rapid recognition of patterns based on experience, training, and education. Planning times can be shortened if the MEU and ARG perform anticipatory planning for various contingencies.

Upon receipt/acknowledgement of a WARNORD or an OPORD, the commander or a designated individual establishes the CAT. The MEU and ARG commanders may retain or delegate the authority to establish a CAT to their operations officers and/or the MEU executive officer and the ARG chief of staff. The decision to establish the CAT is passed immediately to the other ships. If it is a standard mission covered by an SOP, the initiation of SOP-based cross-decking may occur.

Designated personnel in the landing force operations center watch section produce copies of the order for the CAT and battlestaff/mission planning cells and ensure planning spaces are prepared for use. The CAT and battlestaff/mission planning cells assemble in their respective spaces. These spaces should be selected or identified in the SOP to prevent conflicts; for example, the battlestaff is to assemble in the wardroom during meal hours. The CAT and battlestaff/mission planning cells should be in their spaces and have copies of the WARNORD as soon as possible.

Designated staff personnel begin obtaining updated personnel and equipment status reports. Ideally, these reports are collected in a manner that avoids distracting planners from the planning process, such as outside the planning cells or on status boards in the planning spaces.

The MEU operations officer serves as the facilitator of the CAT and calls the group to order. A designated recorder takes roll or members check in with the recorder upon their arrival. The CAT determines if there is a need for clarification during problem framing. If so, a designated staff member, who is not involved in the CAT, requests clarification from HHQ. The CAT confirms cross-deck requirements and considers the need for SMEs based on the nature of the mission. For example, if the mission involves a raid on a chemical weapons site, the CAT may include a chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear defense officer. If expertise in a critical area is lacking, the CAT may initiate the process of obtaining reachback expertise. The meteorology officer provides the latest weather information. The MEU S-2 and the ARG N-2 provide an intelligence update. The division of labor between these two officers should be clearly stated in the SOP to avoid overlap. The entire CAT then conducts problem framing in the same manner as the MCPP. Specifically—

- MEU and ARG commanders gain an understanding of the environment and the problem identified during problem framing. This understanding is essential to the development of a commander's concept.

- Time-constrained units should have their IPB products ready prior to starting the planning process. During problem framing, these products are updated if time permits. If IPB products are not available, the staff generates them.
- Rapid planning requires that SOPs are already understood. Units lacking well rehearsed SOPs require additional time in all of the planning steps, leading to a more deliberate, slower planning process.
- The lack of "orientation" time associated with rapid planning may require an initial staff orientation. A staff orientation informs the planners of previously unknown mission-related facts.

The beginning of this phase depends, however, on whether and how the MEU and ARG commanders use the battlestaff. The workings of the CAT may be viewed directly by the battlestaff or the mission planning cells through video teleconferencing or a channel on the ship's secure, closed-circuit television, affording them the same situational awareness as the CAT. If the battlestaff or mission planning cells do not have connectivity with the CAT, they can conduct their own version of problem framing simultaneously with the CAT; however, the results of the CAT's problem framing must be provided to the battlestaff or the mission planning cells to ensure all planners have the same situational awareness. Orientation of the staff occurs shortly after completion of problem framing in order to allow the battlestaff or the appropriate mission planning cells (identified during problem framing) to convene in their designated spaces.

The MEU and ARG commanders, beginning with the supporting commander, provide their planning guidance to the CAT and the battlestaff/mission planning cells at the conclusion of problem framing or any required staff orientation. A mission commander may be assigned at this point. The supported commander follows with his intent; an assessment of COGs and critical vulnerabilities; ongoing, standby, and follow-on mission priorities; COA considerations/restrictions; timing;

phasing; warfighting function considerations; and other significant information that addresses planning for R&S as well as the main mission(s).

The commander's guidance reflects the experience and proficiency of his staff. The supporting commander provides any additional guidance. The MEU S-3 provides the planning timeline and assigns definite times for completing each step. The locations for planning and any required augmentation for their planning cells are determined. Augmentees acknowledge their requirements and identify themselves to the mission commander. Participants adjourn to their respective mission planning cells once problem framing is complete and the mission is determined.

Based on the type of mission assigned, the mission commander may also direct commencement of specific preparations by his forces. For example, if the ACE has been assigned to conduct TRAP, the ACE can simultaneously prepare the standard package of aircraft while the predesignated ground force draws the standard list of ordnance and prepares mission-associated equipment.

### Course of Action Development

For simplicity purposes, this step of the R2P2 process assumes that the mission commander is developing COAs. The mission commander begins COA development by convening his mission planning cell and conducting roll call. He may quickly review significant material from the first step of the process if some cell members were not present for problem framing. This review may include an intelligence brief by the S-2 and a presentation by the S-3 on the mission and the CAT's problem framing.

The mission commander summarizes the MEU and ARG commanders' guidance and then presents his own. If information is required to support COA development, the commander directs specific members of his mission planning cell to gather the required information. The mission planning cell then begins to develop COAs.

Depending on the guidance received, the mission planning cell may initially concentrate on a specific COA. Effective COA development relies on intuitive decisionmaking and operational SOPs in order to meet the reduced timeline of R2P2. The planning cell develops each COA considering such factors as—

- R&S linkup procedures, if applicable.
- Movement from the ship to the objective.
- Movement from objective back to the ship.
- Fire support.
- Command and control.
- Information operations.
- Task organization.
- Special equipment.
- General timeline.

The mission planning cell prepares graphics and narratives for each COA. The COAs are typically broken into phases and evaluated to ensure they are suitable, feasible, acceptable, distinguishable, and complete. If surface reconnaissance is required, then the R&S mission commander convenes his own planning cell and simultaneously conducts R&S COA development.

To ensure the parallel planning efforts of the primary and R&S mission planning cells are coordinated, liaisons from each cell remain in constant contact. For example, an R&S coordinator moves from planning cell to planning cell while keeping in close contact with the MEU S-3. Since R&S elements are normally inserted prior to other forces, the R&S cell must develop its COAs in a shorter period of time, but the R&S effort must support the information needs of the primary mission commander.

The COA brief follows. The COA brief can be presented to the CAT, the entire battlestaff, or only to the MEU and ARG commanders, the MSE commanders, the primary mission commander, and a few key staff officers. The R&S planning cell normally briefs first, while the primary mission planning cell is still developing COAs. At the conclusion of the R&S COA brief, the R&S portion of the operation can immediately move on to COA wargaming.



At this point, the primary mission commander has completed COA development and his planning cell is preparing its own brief. The MEU and ARG commanders may approve the R&S COA before receiving the COA brief for the primary mission. Alternatively, the MEU and ARG commanders could delay COA wargaming and COA comparison and decision for the R&S mission until deciding on a COA for the primary mission, but this delay would drastically reduce time needed to prepare and launch R&S forces.

The COA brief for the primary mission is given to the CAT and the battlestaff. If the battlestaff concept is not employed, standby and follow-on mission planning cells and designated additional staff officers and attachment leaders may also attend the COA brief. The brief follows the unit planning SOP, but typically opens with the MEU S-3's review of any ongoing/projected missions and provision of updates/clarifications obtained from HHQ. The MEU S-2 and the ARG N-2 provide an updated intelligence picture, focusing on changes since their last brief and including any answers received to priority intelligence requirements, friendly force information requirements, or RFIs.

The mission commander summarizes the MEU and ARG mission, the envisioned end state, measures of effectiveness, and the COAs. He presents the sketch; describes expected events by phase; and provides the task organization, timeline, concept of fire support, other significant details, and a list of key advantages/disadvantages for each COA.

### Course of Action War Game

Once all the COAs have been briefed, staff officers, including appropriate attachment leaders and SMEs, develop their staff estimates according to unit SOPs. To assist in reaching quick conclusions and to avoid any oversights, each staff officer uses a prepared matrix that lists each consideration relevant to his area of concern. For example, the S-4

could address supply quantities and transportation means. Each staff member prepares an independent estimate that is based solely on his area of expertise and includes each friendly COA's strengths and weaknesses, associated risks, and asset shortfalls as they apply to a warfighting function, staff section, or attachment. These estimates assist commanders in reaching their decisions. The order of briefing the estimates is established in the SOP. This brief should—

- Identify which COAs are unsupportable, if all are equally supportable, or if one is superior to the others.
- Identify any salient facts requiring the attention of the MEU and ARG commanders.
- Address impact of a COA on SOPs.
- Address impact of COAs on future operations. For example, if “x” amount of helicopter and flight deck time is used today, then “x” amount will be available tomorrow.

An intelligence officer is also usually tasked to produce an estimate from the adversary commander's perspective. The adversary commander's viewpoint, as expressed by the S-2/N-2, and staff discussion of hypothetical situations serve as additional wargaming within the time constraints of the planning process. At a minimum, this estimate identifies the most dangerous and hardest to counter COA. The recorder enters the information on a clearly visible staff estimate worksheet. The MSE commanders who are not assigned as the mission commander also prepare/provide concise estimates of supportability. An execution matrix or synchronization matrix is started at this point in the planning process. The mission commander makes the final input to avoid influencing staff estimates. Rapid planning wargaming differs from the MCPP in that it may be conducted internally within each staff section rather than being conducted as one large war game where all MSEs and staff sections are represented. If time permits, the latter method is preferred.

## Course of Action Comparison and Decision

Based on personal experiences and information acquired from COA wargaming, the MEU and ARG commanders compare the COAs and rapidly reach a decision. Although the supported commander is the lead decisionmaker, he typically seeks concurrence from his counterpart, particularly when he relies on assets from the supporting command. The commanders may accept a single COA, modify a COA, or decide to execute something entirely different. Unless the situation is changing rapidly, both time constraints and continuous involvement of the MEU and ARG staff should preclude significant COA alterations. In announcing their decision, the commander's provide their refined commander's intent and any additional guidance needed to finalize the plan.

## Orders Development

During orders development, all echelons involved in the operation complete required detailed planning for the approved COA, which has become a CONOPS. This vertical and horizontal flow of information among the chain of command and all elements of the MEU and ARG is vital to concurrent planning and preparation. If the mission forces or supporting echelons encounter any difficulties or if the situation changes, the mission planning cell is alerted immediately and the MEU and ARG commanders are notified if any significant alterations to the COA arise. If changes in the situation threaten the suitability of the COA and if time permits, the commanders may direct the staff and the mission planning cell to return to an earlier step in the planning process.

The mission commander immediately passes the results of COA comparison and decision to his forces to assist their planning and preparations. The mission commander and the mission planning cell continue to update and forward planning details as changes occur. Plans for supporting or contingency missions may also be developed. Such missions may be mass casualty, MEDEVAC [medical evacuation], platoon-size reinforcement, initial terminal guidance,

linkup, evasion, or recovery. Supporting echelons, such as ships or other MSEs, receive updated information from their liaison officers inside the mission planning cell. The mission planning cell produces a confirmation brief, which serves as the draft OPORD.

The MEU S-3 creates and delivers a written CONOPS in addition to other documents required by HHQ. To save time and ensure coordinated execution, the commander may not approve the completed final order until after the confirmation brief.

## Transition

The commander approves the mission for execution immediately following the confirmation brief; therefore, the confirmation brief is the primary tool used to transition from planning to execution. It is also the optimum means of final coordination within the time available and it can serve as a form of rehearsal. The brief's purpose is to ensure those involved in executing the plan completely understand it and achieve situational awareness.

The brief also ensures agreement among force elements, since all critical participants are present. Because the confirmation brief is primarily for those who have a role in executing the mission, all available members of the mission planning cell and the mission force should attend. Supporting elements, such as ship personnel, not represented in the mission planning cell should also attend. All standby and follow-on mission planning cells that might be affected by the primary mission should also observe the brief. The CAT and battlestaff members should attend to provide expertise and answer questions.

Using the format in the unit planning SOP, the confirmation brief is conducted by the mission commander. Each participant uses the SOP's format and media in his brief to avoid overlaps or omissions. The presentation media are collected by the scribe and assembled into a smart pack that may serve as the written order. An initial version of the smart pack may be assembled during orders

development, but it should not be issued until sanctioned by the commander at the confirmation brief. The original confirmation brief's contents, together with any resulting changes or decisions, must be provided to the R&S force, particularly if no representative attended, to ensure that the final, approved mission is understood.

The brief's major focus is on actions occurring in the objective area. The commander of the element executing these actions, such as the raid force commander, provides a detailed explanation of the intended actions and the specific tasks assigned to subordinate elements. During the brief, the commanders and their staffs identify any potential problems. Conflicts that arise from the brief are resolved or planned for prior to the completion of the brief. Additional planning must occur if anything is briefed that is not yet planned for or coordinated.

The primary mission confirmation brief is usually limited to an hour. The MEU and ARG commanders may schedule confirmation briefs for standby or follow-on missions following completion of the

primary mission brief. Upon completion of the primary mission brief, various elements of the force may conduct supporting briefs to the same audience. The commander then designates time for subordinate element leaders to accomplish any remaining preparations and rehearsals and a final inspection of troops and equipment is conducted to ensure mission readiness.

During the period before the launch of forces, the MEU and ARG command echelons supervise the final preparations and coordination of subordinate elements and prepare for their own role in the command and control of the operation. The SOPs establish command and control procedures for various types of operations except that preparation time is limited. Assumptions and preconditions are validated and branch and sequel planning should occur.

**Sample Planning Matrix**

Table H-1 is a sample planning matrix. Units normally develop their own timelines and SOPs.

**Table H-1. Sample Planning Matrix.**

Timelines	Who	Command and Staff Actions	Products	Concurrent and Parallel Actions
<b>Problem Framing</b>				
0:00-0:30	CAT	Receipt of mission Commander's orientation Break out IPB and intelligence folders Conduct problem framing	Mission statement Commander's intent Commander's planning guidance Updated IPB products Specified tasks Implied tasks Essential tasks Constraints (limitations) Restraints (must not do) Assumptions Resource/SME shortfalls COG analysis Approved CCIRs	Battlestaff forms Cross-deck requirements Command and staff supervision

**Table H-1. Sample Planning Matrix. (Continued)**

Timelines	Who	Command and Staff Actions	Products	Concurrent and Parallel Actions
0:30-0:50	Battlestaff	Initial staff orientation Determine information requirements Commander's planning guidance	WARNORDs Planning schedule RFIs Initial staff estimates	Acknowledge receipt Issue planning schedule R&S planning Command and staff supervision
<b>COA Development</b>				
0:50-1:10	Battlestaff	Convene planning cells (if not already done) Update IPB/intelligence Develop COA(s)	COAs written and graphics developed (time and distance identified)  Each potential response force commander prepares actions in objective area plan  Air support requirement to carrier battle group  Staff/subordinate command estimates  Commander's wargaming guidance and evaluation criteria	R&S planning/brief  Command and staff supervision
<b>COA War Game/COA Comparison and Decision</b>				
1:10-1:30	Battlestaff	Conduct COA war game Refine COAs/IPB COAs briefed Compare/evaluate COAs Commander makes decision	War game results WARNORDs CONOPS Execution matrix Refined staff estimates Identify branches/sequels Updated CCIRs	Response force/support element planning  Command and staff supervision
<b>Orders Development</b>				
1:30-3:00	Battlestaff	Refine IPB Prepare OPORD Order reconciliation Order crosswalk OPORD approval	Timeline Graphic and overlay Fire support plan Landing plan Communications plan Execution checklist WARNORDs Concept of operations message to HHQ Charts/maps Confirmation briefing slides	Develop timeline/plan R&S launch Command and staff supervision Cross-decker return Final planning conference

**Table H-1. Sample Planning Matrix. (Continued)**

Timelines	Who	Command and Staff Actions	Products	Concurrent and Parallel Actions
Transition				
3:00-4:00	Battlestaff	Confirmation brief/issue the order	Total understanding by all hands of the plan	Response from force commander Briefs/response from force/support elements
4:00-6:00	Amphibious Task Force	Drills	All hands ready to execute mission	Alternate/sequel plan(s) developed

# APPENDIX I

## INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

Interagency coordination occurs between USG agencies, including DOD, for the purpose of accomplishing an objective. Similarly, in the context of DOD involvement, IGO and NGO coordination refers to coordination between DOD elements and IGOs or NGOs to achieve an objective. Refer to JP 3-08, *Interagency, Intergovernmental Organization, and Nongovernmental Organization Coordination During Joint Operations (Volumes I and II)*, for additional information. Volume I includes information on the interagency, IGO, and NGO environment and provides fundamental principles and guidance to facilitate coordination between DOD and other USG agencies, IGOs, NGOs, and regional organizations. Volume II describes key USG departments and agencies, IGOs, and NGOs and includes their core competencies, basic organizational structures, and relationship or potential relationship with the Armed Forces of the United States.

Annex V of the OPORD or OPLAN reflects the commander's requests for and perception of potential interagency support to the plan. Information in the annex serves as a starting point for interagency coordination to ensure agreement with the commander's perception of interagency support. Continued coordination strengthens the whole of government efforts and improves the probability of mission success. In developing annex V consideration should be given to—

- **Key Interagency Strategies.** Marine planners must become familiar with interagency strategies, assessments, and plans at all levels (see table I-1 on page I-2). Requests for relevant interagency strategies, such as counternarcotics or counterterrorism, must be made through the appropriate interagency coordination center within each geographic combatant command or Marine Corps force. A basic understanding of these strategies, assessments, or plans is critical to enable interagency activities.
- **Assessment and Planning Frameworks.** Interagency partners in many cases have developed assessment tools and have conducted or are conducting assessments in the area of operations. Assessment tools, such as the Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework and TCAPF, should be the starting point for an interagency team to assess conflict systematically and collaboratively prepare for interagency planning. Comprehensive tools, such as *Measuring Peace in Conflict Environments* and the Interagency Management System, need to be learned and understood by Marines in order to successfully enable interagency activities. The United States Institute of Peace publication *Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction* must be understood and incorporated into stability and reconstruction operations. Interagency planning structures will not supersede Marine Corps planning structures.

**Table I-1. Interagency Documents.**

Document	Primary Office or Responsibility	Summary of Document
Guidance for Employment of the Force	DOD	Annual classified document that prioritizes theater strategic end states that include interagency cooperation and integration
Country Assistance Strategy	United States Agency for International Development (USAID)	5-year look at the needs of a country
Bureau Strategic Plan	Department of State bureaus, both regional and functional	Annual interagency objectives and performance result indicators
Mission Strategic Plan (MSP), commonly referred to as country plan	Chief of mission; to include all other USG agencies that reside on the country team	Annual interagency objectives by priority
Operational Plan	USAID mission in country	Annual plan that feeds into MSP

# APPENDIX J

## DESIGN: AN EXAMPLE

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### Iterative Design During Operation Iraqi Freedom II

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During OIF II, the 1st Marine Division (MARDIV) employed a design (see fig. J-1 on page J-2) similar to that used during the Philippine Insurrection. The commanding general, Major General James N. Mattis, began with an assessment of the people that the Marines, Soldiers, and Sailors would encounter within his division's area of operations, western Iraq's Al Anbar province. Al Anbar possessed a considerably different demographic than the imam-led Shia areas that dominated OIF I operations.

Major General Mattis grouped Anbar provincial constituents into three basic groups: the tribes, the former regime elements, and the foreign fighters. The tribes constituted the primary identity group in Al Anbar. They had various internal tribal affiliations and looked to a diverse array of sheiks and elders for leadership. The former regime elements were a minority that included individuals with personal, political, business, and professional ties to the Ba'ath Party. These included the civil servants and career military personnel with the skills to run government institutions. Initially, they saw little gain from a democratic Iraq. The foreign fighters were a small but dangerous minority of transnational Islamic jihadists. To be successful, US forces had to apply a different approach to each of these groups within the framework of an overarching plan. As in any society, some portion of each of these groups was composed of a criminal element, further complicating planning and interaction. Major General Mattis's "vision of resolution," as recounted in Marine Corps Warfighting Publication (MCWP) 3-33.5, *Counterinsurgency*, was composed of two major elements encompassed in an overarching "bodyguard" of information operations.

The first element, and the main effort, was reducing support for insurgency. Guided by the maxims of "first do no harm" and "no better friend, no worse enemy," the objective was to establish a secure local environment for the indigenous population so people could pursue their economic, social, cultural, and political well-being and achieve some degree of local normalcy. Establishing a secure environment involved both offensive and defensive operations, with a heavy emphasis on training and advising the security forces of the fledgling Iraqi government. It also included putting the population to work. Simply put, an Iraqi with a job was less likely to succumb to ideological or economic pressure to support the insurgency. Other tasks included the delivery of essential services, economic development, and the promotion of governance, all geared toward increasing employment opportunities and furthering the establishment of local normalcy. Essentially, diminishing support for insurgency was about gaining and maintaining the support of the tribes, as well as converting as many of the former regime members as possible. "Fence-sitters" were considered a winnable constituency and addressed as such.

The second element involved neutralizing the bad actors, a combination of irreconcilable former regime elements and foreign fighters. Offensive combat operations were conducted to defeat disobedient former regime members. The task was to make those who were not killed outright see the futility of resistance and give up the fight. With respect to the hard-core extremists, who would never give up, the task was more straightforward: their complete and utter destruction. Neutralizing the bad actors supported the main effort by improving the local security environment. Neutralization had to be accomplished discriminately, however, to avoid unintentionally increasing support for insurgency.



Both elements described above were wrapped in an overarching “bodyguard” of information operations. Information operations, both proactive and responsive, were aggressively employed to favorably influence the populace’s perception of all coalition actions while discrediting the insurgents. These tasks were difficult: corruption had historically been prevalent among Iraqi officials, generating cynicism toward government; and decades of Arab media mischaracterization of US actions had instilled mistrust of American motives. The magnitude of that cynicism and doubt highlighted the critical importance of using information operations to influence every situation.

In pursuing this “vision of resolution,” 1st MARDIV faced an adaptive adversary. Persistent American presence and interaction with the populace threatened the insurgents and caused the adversary to employ more open violence in selected areas of the Al Anbar province. This response resulted in learning and adaptation within 1st MARDIV. The design enabled 1st MARDIV to adjust the blend of “diminishing support for insurgents” and “neutralizing bad actors” to meet the local challenges. Throughout the operation, 1st MARDIV continued learning and adapting with the espoused vision providing a constant guide to direct and unify the effort.

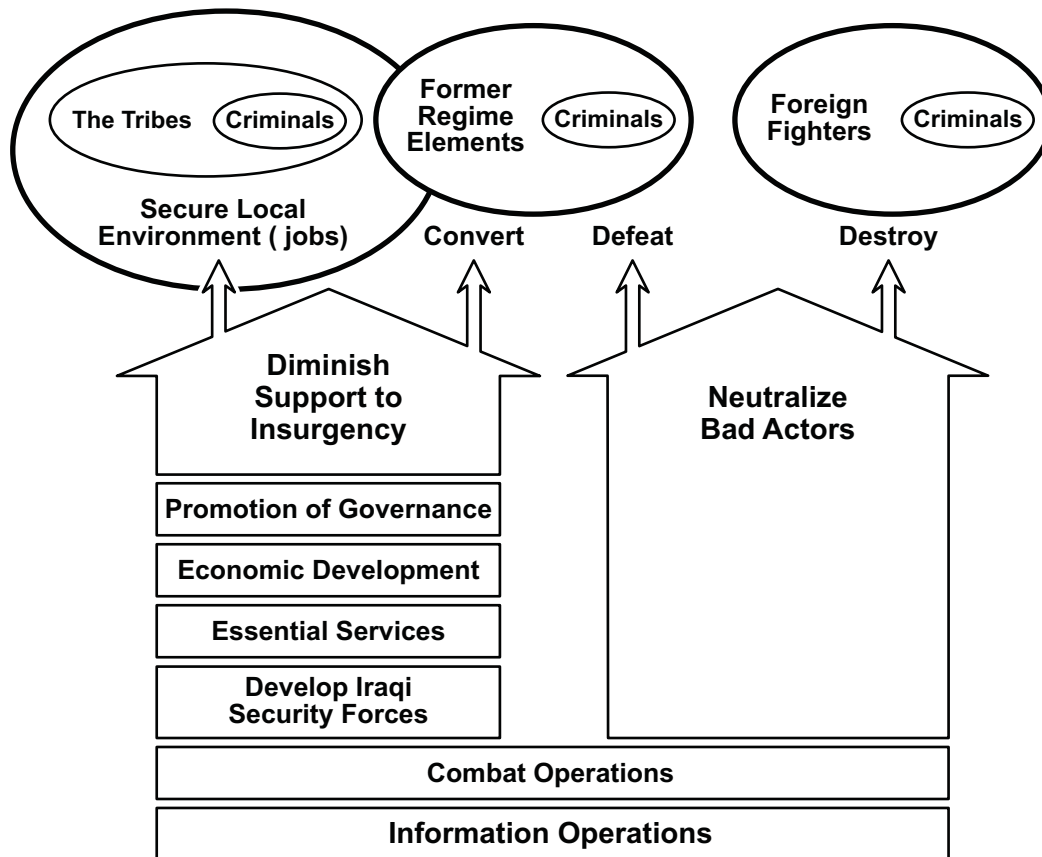


Figure J-1. I Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) Design for Operation Iraqi Freedom II.

# APPENDIX K

## BASIC OPERATION PLANS, OPERATION ORDERS, AND ATTACHMENTS

This appendix provides instructions and formats that govern the development of a basic operation plan and order, referred to as OPLAN and OPORD, respectively. The formats are based on the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Manual (CJCSM) 3122.03, *Joint Operation Planning and Execution System (JOPES) Volume II, (Planning Formats and Guidance)*, and should be used by all staffs, subordinate commands, and support agencies.

This appendix applies to commanders of Marine Corps forces at all levels. It contains two sections. Section I provides general administrative guidance for writing a basic operation order or plan. An operation plan/order foldout is included at the end of this publication for easy reference. Section II includes sample formats of a plan summary, operation plan or order, and other attachments. Sample formats are descriptive in nature and identify the information that needs to be placed in the appropriate paragraph. The formats provided in section II are followed except when, in the judgment of the commander, modifications are required. Only those annexes, appendices, and tabs applicable to the level of command are required within the operation order.

### SECTION I. GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDANCE

The arrangement of information in a basic operation order or plan will conform to the formats shown in this appendix. Paragraph and subparagraph headings indicated in the format will always appear in each plan. In OPORDs, if information or instructions are not required in a particular paragraph, then that paragraph is noted as “not applicable” to show that consideration has been given to that part of the order. Further subdivisions, if required, should conform to the basic system of paragraph titles and numbering discussed below. The sequencing for naming is as follows: annex, appendix, tab, exhibit.

The last page of the basic operation order or plan and each attachment will contain a list of any included documents. The basic operation order or plan should refer to each annex. Information provided in the basic operation order or plan is not normally repeated in the attachments.

#### Paragraphing, Titling, and Numbering

Paragraph titles are upper and lower case and underlined, as in Situation. All subparagraphs and subtitles are upper and lower case and underlined, as in Concept of Operations, except forces, commands, or agencies. Forces, commands, and agencies are capitalized and underlined only in titles, as in SPECIAL PURPOSE MAGTF.



## Formatting Instructions

The following list provides a line-by-line format for the OPLAN and OPORD:

### **Line 1—Classification.**

**Line 2—Changes from Oral Orders.** These changes are used when oral orders regarding this operation were previously issued and are enclosed in parentheses. Example: “(No change from oral orders except paragraphs 3b and 3f.)” This phrase is omitted in plans and in orders when no oral orders were issued.

**Lines 3–7—Heading Data.** The heading data is formatted as follows:

Copy no. \_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_ copies

OFFICIAL DESIGNATION OF COMMAND

PLACE OF ISSUE

Date-time group

Message reference number

- The first line of the heading is the copy number assigned by the issuing headquarters. A copy number is given to each copy. It is not shown on attached annexes. A log will be maintained of specific copies issued to addressees.
- The second line is the official designation of the command. It is always capitalized. Use a code name if required for security.
- The third line is the place of issue. It may be a code name, postal designator, or geographic location (including coordinates). The place of issue is always capitalized.
- The fourth line is the date or date-time group the plan or order is signed, issued, and becomes effective unless specified otherwise in coordinating instructions.
- The fifth line is the message reference number. It is assigned by the originator and contains letters, numbers, or a combination of the two. The message reference number has no connection with the message center numbering system. Annexes issued separately are assigned different message reference numbers. It allows acknowledgement in the clear.

**Line 8—Title.** Orders are numbered consecutively for a calendar year. Two or more orders issued on the same day are given consecutive numbers. A joint operation plan or order is so designated. The code name, if any, is shown.

### **Line 9—Type of Document.**

**Lines 10–13—References.** Documents, such as maps, charts, photo maps, or standing operating procedures, necessary for understanding must be available to recipients. This entry is always included. Use “References: None” when applicable. Map entries include series number, country, sheet names or numbers, edition, and scale.

**Line 14—Time Zone.** If the time zone is the same for the place of issue and execution and will be the same throughout execution, then this entry may be omitted. If the time zone is different in the area of execution, as frequently occurs in amphibious or air-transported operations, then state when the indicated time zone becomes effective.

**Line 15—Task Organization.** Task organization may be shown in the following ways:

- As an unnumbered entry before Paragraph 1 (Situation). Used when entire command of issuing headquarters is organized into task organizations for a particular operation and task organizations are too complicated to be shown using other methods.
- If there is no change to previous task organization, show as “No change.”

- Under the proper subparagraph of paragraph 3. This method is the simplest and preferred in a continuing ground combat situation. Show as “No change except paragraph 3b . . .”
- As an annex when lengthy, such as for a division or higher. It is used in amphibious operations, because it permits early dissemination and assists concurrent planning, and where planning precedes operation by a considerable period of time.

The organization of the issuing headquarters, including Service and administrative groupings that will perform normal functions, is the first entry. Following that, each task grouping that is to receive a tactical mission is shown in the sequence in which the missions are assigned in paragraph 3.

See fig. K-1 for an example of the aforementioned lines 1–15.

1	
2	CLASSIFICATION (No change from oral orders)
3	
4	Copy no. __ of __ copies
5	I MEF
6	GREENTOWN, BLUELAND
7	17 Apr 2010 ABD-1
8	<u>OPERATION ORDER 0002-10 (OPERATION SHARP SWORD) (U)</u>
9	BASIC ORDER (U)
10	(U) REFERENCES:
11	(a) Maps and Charts: Series ONC, sheet G-2 (ORANGELAND, BLUELAND), edition 12,
12	1:1,000,000
13	(b) USPACOM Planning Directive, 27 March 2001
14	(U) TIME ZONE: Zulu
15	(U) TASK ORGANIZATION. Annex A

**Figure K-1. Sample Operation Plan or Operation Order Format, Lines 1–15.**

**Lines 17–18—General.** For plans, describe the general politico-military environment that would establish the probable preconditions for execution of the plan. For orders, this can be the commander’s estimate of the situation. In both cases, the lines are informed by the ongoing design effort.

**Line 19—Battlespace.** Battlespace includes the higher commander’s area of operation and the command’s areas of interest, influence, and operations described by physical area and forces of concern.

**Line 20—Adversary Forces.** Adversary forces include information vital to the entire command or information likely to affect accomplishment of mission. It may refer to such attachments as the intelligence annex, operation overlay (if adversary information is shown), or intelligence summaries. It contains disposition, intent, objectives, vulnerabilities, centers of gravity, and courses of action.

**Line 21—Friendly Forces.** Friendly forces include information on own forces having a bearing on the operation (higher, adjacent, and supporting). Artillery is listed as the first supporting unit and then others are listed alphabetically. It may reference an annex or the operation overlay.

**Line 22—Attachments and Detachments.** Nonorganic units attached and/or organic units detached from the unit temporarily.

**Lines 23–25—Paragraph 2.** Paragraph 2 is the mission statement. There are no subparagraphs. The mission is always stated here even if shown on an operation overlay or map.

**Line 26—Paragraph 3.** Paragraph 3 addresses execution.

**Line 27—Commander’s Intent.** Commander’s intent is the commander’s personal expression of the purpose of the operation. It must be clear and concise. The purpose of providing intent is to allow subordinates to exercise judgment and initiative—to depart from the plan when the task assigned is no longer appropriate to the situation—in a way that is consistent with the higher commander’s aims.

**Line 28—Concept of Operations.** The concept of operations is a summary statement of how the operation will be accomplished. It amplifies paragraph 2 by providing the method, end state, and other considerations. It may be shown graphically or published as an appendix to annex C. Specific unit designations are not used.

**Lines 29–35—Tasks.** This subparagraph identifies tasks to subordinate elements. Each task assigned to a unit will include the purpose of the task, as in “in order to . . .” Each unit, organic or attached, or tactical grouping that is executing a tactical task is assigned a separate, numbered subparagraph. All tactical tasks must be listed in the body of the basic order. List tasks for major subordinate elements as follows:

- Offensive order—Ground combat units (infantry first followed by artillery and combat support units numerically or alphabetically), aviation combat units or elements (aircraft units, combat support, combat service support), and combat service support units or logistic elements.
- Defensive order—Units or elements closest to the adversary are listed first. Ground and aviation combat units in the forward defense area are then listed in numerical order followed by other units alphabetically.

Each tactical task assignment may show the assets (attached or in support) available to the unit or element for the operation first, then tasks are enumerated. Priority must be stated if missions are multiple and priority of accomplishment is desired. If all instructions to a unit are shown on the operations overlay, list the unit after the proper subparagraph number and reference the operation overlay appendix.

**Line 36—Reserve.** The reserve is tasked separately from the remainder of the units. It is usually designated the main effort when committed. If there is no reserve designated, then so state.

**Line 37—Commander’s Critical Information Requirements.** Commander’s critical information requirements identify information the commander has deemed critical to maintaining his situational awareness, planning future activities, and assisting in timely and informed decisionmaking.

**Line 38—Coordinating Instructions.** This paragraph is the final subparagraph in paragraph 3. It contains instructions common to two or more units, coordinating details and control measures applicable to the command as a whole, and time or conditions when the

plan is to be executed. It refers to annexes or references for coordinating details when appropriate. Communications instructions are shown in paragraph 5 only.

**Line 39—Paragraph 4.** Paragraph 4 contains logistic and personnel information and instructions for the operation. It usually refers to appropriate annexes.

**Line 40—Page number.**

**Line 41—Classification.**

See fig. K-2 for an example of the aforementioned lines 16–42.

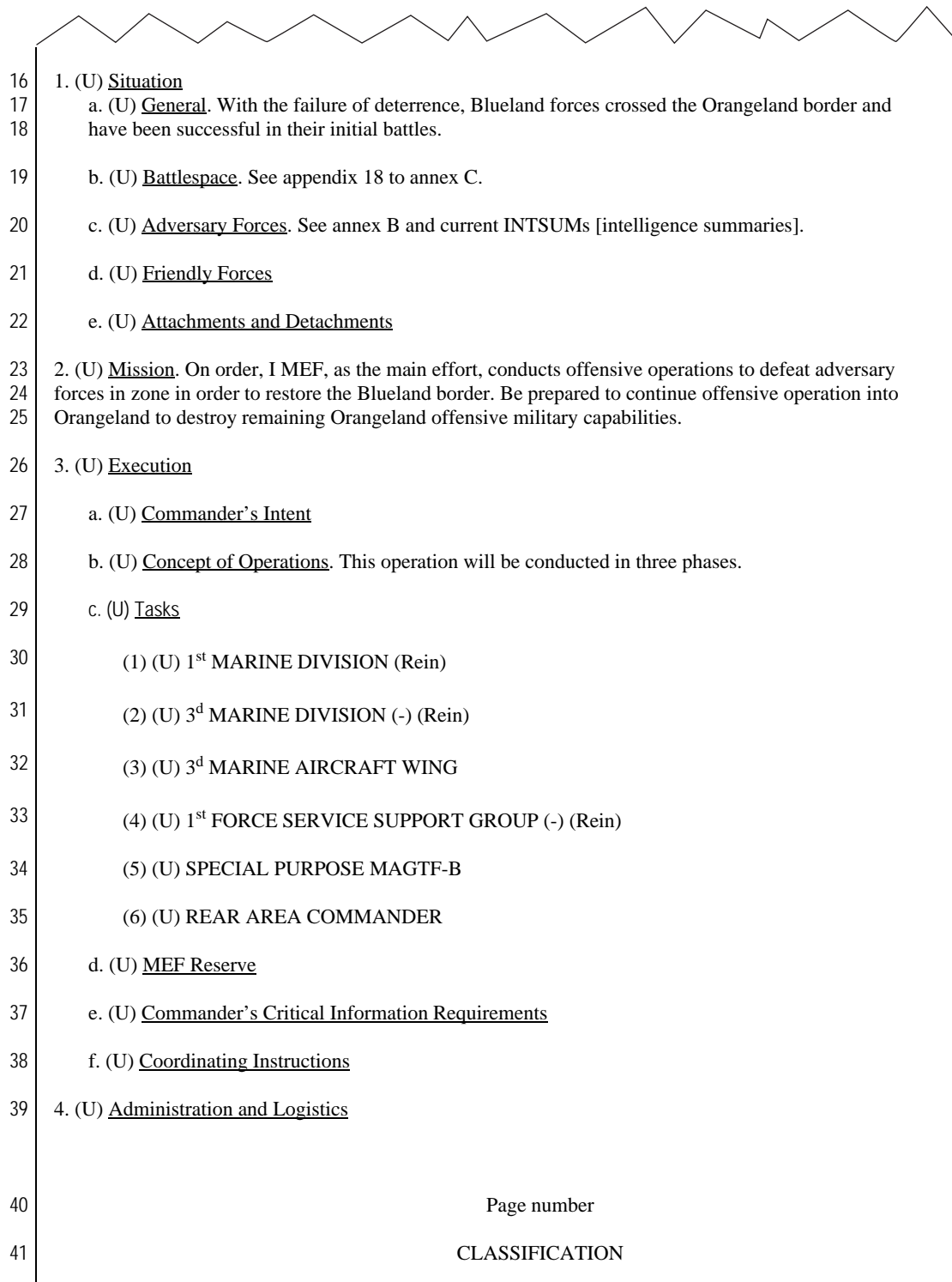


Figure K-2. Sample Operation Plan or Operation Order Format, Llines 16–42.



Page two of the OPLAN or OPORD provides the following information and is exemplified in fig. K-3 on page K-10:

**Line 1—Classification.**

**Lines 2–6—Paragraph 5.** Paragraph 5 contains instructions that establish and maintain command and signal procedures.

- Command Relationships. Used in a large operation or when relationships are unusual, otherwise omitted.
- Command Posts and Headquarters. May reference operations overlay for locations.
- Succession to Command. Designates the succession to command for the operation.
- Signal. Usually references annex K and other communication publications, such as standing operating procedures or communications-electronics operating instructions. Includes instructions or restrictions about communications-electronics, such as radio restrictions or pyrotechnic signals.

Use additional subparagraphs to show location and time of opening communications centers, recognition and identification instructions, code words and names, and liaisons.

**Line 7—Acknowledgement Instructions.** Acknowledgement instructions are included in every order and in separately issued portions. It ensures that recipients receive and understand the order.

**Lines 8–10—Signature and Authentication.** The basic operation order or plan and each annex within are signed or authenticated by the commanding officer. Full signature blocks are used. Appropriate officers may be given authority to sign portions of the order. The commander is the only person authorized to sign or approve any portion of the order unless by direction authority has been granted to another individual.

- Appendices, tabs, exhibits, and maps do not require signature or authentication except when distributed separately from the basic operation order or plan.
- Original is signed by commander, with name, rank and service, and title:  
Name  
Rank and Service  
Title

**Lines 11–31—Annexes.** Annexes form a portion of the completed plan or order. They pertain to a particular concept, subject, or coordination aspect that is too voluminous, of insufficient general interest, or in an irregular form, such as overlays, graphs, or tables, for the body of the plan or order. They contribute to the brevity and clarity of the basic operation plan or order. Sequence and lettering must not be changed, but annexes may be omitted when not required. Annexes are amplified where necessary by appendices to annexes, tabs to appendices, and exhibits to tabs.

Annex formats and designations shown in this appendix are mandatory unless otherwise indicated. The annex title is upper and lower case. Within the body of the basic operation order or plan, the annex title is also enclosed in parentheses. When any of these annexes are not required, the annex is noted as “not used” or “not applicable” in the table of contents. Elements that will be developed later may be noted as “to be issued.”

Annex format is preferred for other attachments, such as appendices or tabs, but it may be altered when information or instructions must be included for which no provision is made in the standard format.

Additional annexes may be added when necessary to permit distribution separate from the basic operation order or plan or when information must be included where no provision is made in standard annexes. When included, letter additional annexes consecutively, beginning with the letter “R” and “Y.” The letters “I” and “O” are not used as annex designations.

Usually annexes A through D, J, and K will be provided as part of the basic operation order or plan. Develop additional annexes and their associated appendices in an abbreviated format for those areas significantly affecting mission accomplishment.

**Lines 32–36—Authentication.** Authenticated by G-3/S-3 when commander’s or executive officer’s signature is on the original only; G-3/S-3 authentication appears on all other copies. The original is signed by chief of staff/executive officer:

OFFICIAL:

Name  
Rank and Service  
Title

**Line 37—Page number.**

**Line 38—Classification.**

1	CLASSIFICATION
2	5. (U) <u>Command and Signal</u>
3	a. (U) <u>Command Relationships</u> . See Annex J (Command Relationships).
4	b. (U) <u>Command Posts and Headquarters</u>
5	c. (U) <u>Succession to Command</u>
6	d. (U) <u>Signal</u> . See Annex K (Combat Information System).
7	ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT
8	
9	GERALD C. THOMAS
10	Lieutenant General, USMC
	Commanding
11	ANNEXES:
12	A—Task Organization
13	B—Intelligence
14	C—Operations
15	D—Logistics
16	E—Personnel
17	F—Public Affairs
18	G—Civil-Military Operations
19	H—Meteorological and Oceanographic Operations
20	J—Command Relationships
21	K—Combat Information Systems
22	L—Environmental Considerations
23	M—Geospatial Information and Services
24	N—Space Operations
25	P—Host Nation Support
26	Q—Medical Services
27	S—Special Technical Operations
	U—Information Management
28	V—Interagency Coordination
29	W—Aviation Operations
30	X—Execution Checklist
31	Z—Distribution
32	OFFICIAL
33	s/
34	M.B. TWINING
35	Colonel, USMC
36	AC/S G-3
37	Page number
38	CLASSIFICATION

**Figure K-3. Sample Operation Plan or Operation Order Format, Page 2.**

## SECTION II. SAMPLE FORMATS

Section II provides examples of a plan summary, basic operation plan or order, and some appendices and tabs. Sample formats are descriptive in nature and identify the information that needs to be placed in the appropriate paragraph. The following table of contents lists standing formats. Bold text indicates the format is provided in this section. Italic text indicates that a particular format is not used in Marine Corps plans or orders, but it is included in the list to conform to CJCSM 3122.03.

	Page
Plan Summary	K-16
Basic Order of Plan	K-19
<b>Annex A. Task Organization</b>	<b>K-26</b>
Appendix 1. Time-Phased Force and Deployment List	
Appendix 2. Shortfall Identification	
Appendix 3. Force Module Identification	
<i>Appendix 4. Deterrent Options</i>	
Appendix 5. Reserve Component Requirements Summary	
<b>Annex B. Intelligence</b>	<b>K-29</b>
Appendix 1. Priority Intelligence Requirements	
Appendix 2. Signals Intelligence	
Tab A. Communications Intelligence Collection Requirements	
Tab B. Operational Electronic Intelligence Collection Requirements	
Appendix 3. Counterintelligence	
Tab A. Counterintelligence Target List	
Tab B. Multidiscipline Counterintelligence Threat Report	
<i>Tab C. Designation of Theater Counterintelligence Executive Agency</i>	
Appendix 4. Targeting Intelligence	
Tab A. Target List (Conventional)	
Appendix 5. Human Resource Intelligence	
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## SAMPLE FORMAT OF A PLAN SUMMARY

A plan summary allows commanders, staffs, and other individuals and agencies to quickly review the envisioned activities of a command. They are particularly useful in creating situational awareness in newly assigned personnel and in higher,

supporting, and adjacent commands. A plan summary is normally only prepared at higher levels of command, such as the component (Marine Corps forces) and Marine expeditionary force, in support of a unified command plan.

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OPLAN (Number) (Operation CODE WORD) (U)

PLAN SUMMARY (U)

1. (U) Purpose

a. (U) Describe the purpose to be achieved by executing the plan and the desired end state. If this is a supporting plan, indicate what plan it supports.

b. (U) Include a statement similar to the following: “This summary provides military decisionmakers with the major aspects of this plan. It is based on planning factors and estimates available at the time of preparation and is subject to modification in the context of a specific contingency. The information contained herein must be updated before use in adopting courses of action in a particular situation.”

2. (U) Conditions for Implementation/Execution

a. (U) Politico-Military Situation. Summarize the politico-military situation in which execution of the plan should be considered.

b. (U) Legal Considerations. Summarize any legal considerations that may affect plan implementation (status of forces, rules of engagement, international agreements, Law of Armed Conflict).

3. (U) Operations to be Conducted

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- a. (U) Forces Assigned. Summarize the major forces (assigned, attached, or supporting) and augmentation required from other sources.
  - b. (U) Deployment. Summarize the movements of forces necessary to place combat forces in the operational area. When applicable, include operational security measures to be carried out before full execution of the plan.
  - c. (U) Employment. State the general nature of combat operations to be conducted, including amphibious operations, information operations, or electronic warfare, when applicable. These operations may be discussed in the phases of the operations. A mission statement, commander's intent, and concept of operations may be written for each phase. This discussion may contain a concise statement of the operation's end state and end state for each phase. It may include how unit dispositions at the end of each phase facilitate transition to the next phase. A discussion of the commander's estimate of the adversary's intent may also be included.
  - d. (U) Supporting Plans. List any requirements for supporting plans to be prepared by subordinate and supporting commands or agencies.
  - e. (U) Collateral Plans. List operation plans that could be implemented before, during, or after the subject plan.
4. (U) Key Assumptions. List assumptions deemed essential to the success of the plan, including the degree of mobilization and mobility (sea and airlift) assumed.
  5. (U) Operational Constraints. List major factors that may impede accomplishment of the mission.
  6. (U) Time to Commence Effective Operations. If appropriate, include a table showing the required time-phased buildup of combat forces in the objective area. Indicate which forces must be available in the operational area before effective operations can begin. Show the elapsed time, following an order to implement the plan, when each significant level of combat force required by the plan could begin effective operations in the objective area. Note that the lowest level of force reported will be the smallest force increment that could initiate effective operations. List successively higher force levels up to the maximum level called for in the basic plan. List any assumptions applied in preparing the table that are not specified in the plan. In determining the time to commence effective operations, consider forces to be deployed or employed to be at normal conditions of readiness; that is, no preparations except those required for force protection. Also consider the following additional factors, as appropriate.
    - a. (U) Time required to carry out electronic warfare as specified in the relevant plans.
    - b. (U) Time for preparation and transmission of necessary orders.

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- c. (U) Reaction time, including all necessary preparations for movement and, if necessary, staging.
  - d. (U) Availability and capability of strategic transportation resources and facilities.
  - e. (U) Time en route to the operational area, using available lift and considering possible restrictions on the use of deployment routes.
  - f. (U) Possible adversary action against forces in transit.
  - g. (U) Reception and throughput capabilities of overseas terminals, where appropriate.
  - h. (U) Time to marry up forces and equipment deployed by separate movement modes, including marry up with prepositioned equipment, when appropriate.
  - i. (U) Availability and capability of transport systems within the area of operations, where required.
  - j. (U) Time required in the operational area for final preparation of forces, including movement to the objective area before employment.
7. (U) Command Relationships. Summarize the command arrangements to be employed on execution.
8. (U) Logistic Appraisal. Provide an estimate of logistic feasibility for the plan.
9. (U) Personnel Appraisal. Provide an estimate of personnel feasibility for this plan.
10. (U) Consolidated Listing and Impact Assessment of Shortfalls and Limiting Factors. Provide a consolidated listing and impact assessment of force, movement, and support shortfalls and limiting factors that impact significantly on the conduct of operations. Identify shortfalls in joint and Service doctrine, interoperability, and training. Specify the tasks that cannot be accomplished in view of the shortfalls. Include specific documentation of each significant shortfall and limiting factor and the efforts to resolve it in the appropriate annex to the plan. Address additional forces, including combat support and combat service support, recommended by the supported commander to reduce risk but not allocated in the plan summary. Do not include such forces in appendix 2 to Annex A (Task Organization) of the plan.

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## SAMPLE FORMAT OF A BASIC ORDER OR PLAN

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OPERATION ORDER OR PLAN (Number) (Operation CODE WORD) (U)  
TITLE (U)

REFERENCES: List any maps, charts, standing operating procedures, or other documents essential to understanding the order or plan.

(U) TIME ZONE: Enter if area of operations is different than place of issue.

(U) TASK ORGANIZATION. Annex A.

1. (U) Situation

a. (U) General. (May be omitted.) Describe the general politico-military environment that would establish the probable preconditions for execution of the plan. If applicable, state US policy goals and the estimated goals of other parties and outline political decisions needed from other countries to achieve US policy goals and conduct effective US military operations to attain US military missions. Similarly, this paragraph can also contain the results of the commander's design, providing the larger context for the plan or order by explaining his understanding of the operational environment and the nature of the problem that the mission statement and concept of operations are meant to solve.

b. (U) Battlespace

(1) (U) Joint Operations Area/Higher Commander's Area of Operations. Describe the higher commander's area of operations. A map may also be included as an attachment.

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- (2) (U) Area of Interest. Describe the commander's area of interest covered by the basic operation order or plan. This description should address all air, ground, and sea areas that directly affect the operation. A map may also be included as an attachment.
- (3) (U) Area of Operations. Describe the specific area covered by the operation. A map may also be included as an attachment.
- c. (U) Adversary Forces. Identify the opposing forces expected on execution (location, disposition) and appraise their general capabilities and possible actions (defend, reinforce, attack, withdraw, delay). Limit this information to what is vital for the entire command or what is likely to affect mission accomplishment. See Annex B (Intelligence) for details. Address known or potential terrorist threats. When applicable, identify the adversary's operational and tactical center(s) of gravity.
- d. (U) Friendly Forces
- (1) (U) This paragraph provides information on nonorganic forces having a bearing on the operation. The information is presented in the following order:
- (a) (U) Higher. State the mission statement and commander's intent of the higher commander.
- (b) (U) Adjacent. State the mission statement or relevant tasks of adjacent commanders.
- (c) (U) Supporting. State the command relationship with the supporting commanders (operational control, tactical control, tactical missions, general support, direct support) or relevant tasks of supporting commanders.
- (2) (U) Identify applicable friendly centers of gravity that require support and protection for successful mission accomplishment.
- (3) (U) If applicable, list the tasks of government interagency and nongovernmental departments, agencies, and organizations associated with the operation, such as Department of State, Doctors Without Borders, or Red Cross.
- e. (U) Civilian Populace. List circumstances or factors regarding tribes, clans, religious, or ethnic groups that can impact operations.
- f. (U) Attachments and Detachments. List nonorganic units attached to or units detached from the issuing headquarters. If no units are attached or detached, state "None."

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- g. (U) Assumptions. (Omitted in orders.) List all assumptions on which the plan is based.
- h. (U) Legal Considerations. List those significant legal considerations on which the plan is based, such as status of forces agreements or law of land warfare.
2. (U) Mission. A concise statement of the tasks and purpose of the operation. State the who, what, when, where, why, and as much of the how as necessary to ensure command, control, and coordination. The who, what, when, and where are derived from the essential tasks. The why is derived from the purpose of the operation.
3. (U) Execution
- a. (U) Commander's Intent. Commander's intent is the commander's personal expression of the purpose of the operation. This paragraph contains the purpose from the mission statement as well as any additional information related to purpose that allows subordinate commanders to exercise proper initiative if the task they are assigned is no longer appropriate to the situation.
- b. (U) Concept of Operations. A verbal or graphic statement that clearly and concisely expresses what the commander intends to accomplish and how it will be done using available resources. The concept of operations provides a basis for supporting concepts, such as—
- (1) (U) Concept of Maneuver. See Annex C (Operations) and Annex W (Aviation Operations) for detailed description.
  - (2) (U) Concept of Fires. See Annex C (Operations) and Annex W (Aviation Operations) (if applicable) for detailed description.
  - (3) (U) Concept of Support. See Annex D (Logistics/Combat Service Support) for detailed description.
  - (4) (U) Other Concepts as Required. See appropriate annex for detailed description.
- c. (U) Tasks
- (1) (U) List the tasks assigned to each subordinate commander in separate, numbered subparagraphs. Tasks are listed in order of priority or accomplishment. Tasks may be listed by phase. Designation of main effort or supporting effort is noted in tasking.
  - (2) (U) Some actions are so critical that the commander may assign them as missions. These should be assigned as task and purpose (in order to . . .). Other actions

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are assigned simply as tasks because the purpose is understood. The commander assigns subordinate commanders tasks he deems necessary to fulfill his concept of operations.

(3) (U) Unit or element task assignments are listed in the following order:

(a) (U) Offensive operations: ground combat units or elements (infantry first followed by artillery and combat support units numerically or alphabetically), aviation combat units or elements (aircraft units, combat support, combat service support), combat service support units or logistic elements.

(b) (U) Defensive operations: units or elements closest to the adversary are listed first, ground and aviation combat units in the forward defense area are then listed in numerical order, other units are then listed alphabetically.

(4) (U) Each task assignment may begin with the assets (attached or in support) available to the unit or element.

d. (U) Reserve. List the tasks assigned to the reserve force. List all units or elements to be in reserve when the order is in effect. If the unit or element will be the reserve in the future, its current assigned tasks will be listed in paragraph 3c. If a unit or element in reserve is given a future mission or ordered to prepare plans for possible reserve missions, it is included in this subparagraph.

e. (U) Commander's Critical Information Requirements. Commander's critical information requirements identify information on friendly and adversary activities and the battlespace that the commander deems as critical to maintaining situational awareness, planning future activities, and assisting in timely and informed decisionmaking. They help the commander tailor the command and control organization and are central to effective information management, which directs the processing, flow, and use of information throughout the force.

f. (U) Coordinating Instructions. List the instructions applicable to the entire command or two or more elements of the command that are necessary for proper coordination of the operation but are not appropriate for inclusion in a particular annex. They should establish the conditions for execution and provide information about the timing of execution and deployments.

4. (U) Administration and Logistics

a. (U) Personnel. In preparing this paragraph, refer to Annex E (Personnel). Identify detailed planning requirements and subordinate taskings. Assign tasks for establishing and operating personnel facilities, managing accurate and timely personnel accountability and strength reporting, and making provisions for staffing. Discuss the

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administrative management of participating personnel, the reconstitution of forces, command replacement and rotation policies, and required individual augmentation to command headquarters and other operational requirements.

- b. (U) Logistics. In preparing a basic operation order or plan, refer to Annex D (Logistics/Combat Service Support). Logistic phases are normally concurrent with operational phases. This subparagraph should address sustainment priorities and resources, base development and other civil engineering requirements, host nation support, and inter-Service responsibilities. Identify the priority and movement of major logistic items for each option and phase of the concept. Identify strategic and theater ports for resupply. Outline transportation policies, guidance, and procedures for all options. Identify logistic and transportation assumptions and include them with other plan assumptions in subparagraph 1g (Assumptions). Identify detailed planning requirements and subordinate taskings.
- c. (U) Public Affairs. Include appropriate information in this subparagraph or refer to Annex F (Public Affairs).
- d. (U) Civil-Military Operations. Include appropriate information in this subparagraph or refer to Annex G (Civil-Military Operations).
- e. (U) Meteorological and Oceanographic Services. Include appropriate information in this subparagraph or refer to Annex H (Meteorological and Oceanographic Operations).
- f. (U) Geospatial Information and Services. Include appropriate information in this subparagraph or refer to Annex M (Geospatial Information and Services).
- g. (U) Medical Services. In preparing the basic operation order or plan, refer to Annex Q (Medical Services). Identify planning requirements and subordinate taskings for hospitalization and evacuation. Address critical medical supplies and resources. Refer to wartime host nation support agreements or provisions to support in Annex P (Host Nation Support).
5. (U) Command and Signal
- a. (U) Command Relationships. Include appropriate information in this subparagraph or refer to Annex J (Command Relationships). Indicate any changes to major commands and the time of the expected shift. Identify all existing memoranda of understanding and those that require development.
- b. (U) Command Posts and Headquarters. The command post is the headquarters echelon (forward, main, rear) where the commander is located. List the designations and locations of the issuing commander's headquarters echelons and appropriate senior,

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adjacent, and subordinate commanders' headquarters echelons. When headquarters are to be displaced, indicate the location and time of opening of the new headquarters and closing of the old headquarters.

c. (U) Succession to Command. Designate the succession of command for the operation.

d. (U) Signal. Include appropriate information in this subparagraph or refer to Annex K (Combat Information Systems). Provide instructions or restrictions about communications-electronics, such as radio restrictions, pyrotechnic signals, or lasers. Include a general statement concerning the scope of communications system and procedures required to support the operation. Highlight any communications system or procedures requiring special emphasis.

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### ANNEXES:

A–Task Organization  
B–Intelligence  
C–Operations  
D–Logistics/Combat Service Support  
E–Personnel  
F–Public Affairs  
G–Civil-Military Operations  
H–Meteorological and Oceanographic Operations  
J–Command Relationships  
K–Combat Information Systems  
L–Environmental Considerations  
M–Geospatial Information and Service  
N–Space Operations  
P–Host Nation Support  
Q–Medical Services  
S–Special Technical Operations  
U–Information Management  
V–Interagency Coordination  
W–Aviation Operations  
X–Execution Checklist  
Z–Distribution

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## SAMPLE FORMAT OF ANNEX A (TASK ORGANIZATION)

Organization for combat is a commander's plan for grouping organic and attached combat, combat support, and combat service support units to effectively employ his forces to support his scheme of maneuver. The organization for operations is determined after consideration of the unit's mission, missions assigned in subordinate units, terrain, and adversary strength in each subordinate unit area and the amount of combat power, including maneuver and fire support units, available to the unit commander. These groupings may be shown, if simple, in paragraph 3 of the basic OPORD or OPLAN. If these groupings are complex, the task organization will be shown in a separate appendix or just before paragraph 1 of the basic OPORD or OPLAN.

At a minimum, the task organization lists all major commands or task groupings directly subordinate to the commander issuing the basic OPORD or OPLAN. In addition, all organizations that directly support the operation are listed and designated as "support," although they are not under the command of the supported commander. Organizations to be established specifically to implement the basic OPORD or OPLAN should appear in the task organization. The level of detail in the task organization should only be that necessary to convey a clear understanding of the significant forces committed to the operation.

Underlining indicates that the unit or task grouping has an assigned mission. Successive subordinate echelons of units or task groupings

are shown by indentations beneath the underlined unit or task grouping. Units or task groupings with no assigned mission and not included in another unit or task grouping are indented and listed immediately after the issuing headquarters.

Subordinate units or task groupings that are assigned missions are underlined and listed in appropriate sequence. This sequence depends on two factors—the type of units or task groupings being assigned missions and the type of mission (offensive or defensive). This sequence should parallel the sequence of mission assignments in paragraph 3 of the basic OPORD or OPLAN. The sequence of listing major subordinate units or task groupings is—

- **Offensive Operations.** Ground combat units or elements (infantry units are listed first, followed by artillery and combat support units numerically or alphabetically), aviation combat units or elements (aircraft units, combat support, combat service support), and combat service support units or logistic elements.
- **Defensive Operations.** Units or elements closest to the adversary are listed first. Ground and aviation combat units in the forward defense area are then listed in numerical order followed by other units alphabetically.

When the commander, Marine Corps forces prepares a supporting plan, he must include Appendix 1 (Time-Phased Force and Deployment List).

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ANNEX A TO OPERATION ORDER OR PLAN (Number) (Operation CODE WORD) (U)  
 TASK ORGANIZATION (U)

(U) REFERENCES: List maps, charts, standing operating procedures, or other documents essential to understanding the order or plan.

**ORGANIZATION**

**Issuing Headquarters**

The first entry is the organization of the issuing headquarters

**Subordinate Unit or Task Grouping**

Units or task groupings with no assigned mission, and which are not assigned to any other grouping, are indented under issuing headquarters.

**Subordinate Unit or Task Grouping**

Subordinate units or task groupings with assigned missions, and which are not assigned to any other grouping, are indented under issuing headquarters.

**Subordinate Unit or Task Grouping**

Organic and attached units or task groupings are indented under the subordinate unit or task grouping.

Units or task groupings that are not attached but will provide support are listed under the supported unit or task grouping. The type of support, whether general support or direct support, is shown in parentheses.

**Reserve Unit or Task Grouping**

Units or task groupings in reserve are listed last. If a unit or task grouping will be in reserve in the future it is listed under reserve, as well as in its normal sequence.

**COMMANDER**

Indicate names of commanders of the parent organization and principal units.

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appendices:

- 1–Time-Phased Force and Deployment List
- 2–Shortfall Identification
- 3–Force Module Identification (Normally at the component or MAGTF level.)
- 4–Deterrent Options (Not used in Marine Corps plans or orders. Included to conform to CJCSM 3122.03.)
- 5–Reserve Component Requirements Summary

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### SAMPLE FORMAT OF ANNEX B (INTELLIGENCE)

The purpose of Annex B (Intelligence) is to provide detailed information/intelligence on the adversary and the battlespace and to provide guidance on intelligence and counterintelligence functions.

The G-2/S-2 prepares the intelligence annex, based on the previously completed intelligence estimate. This annex provides both encyclopedic data and current information on the adversary, including order of battle, location, biographical information on adversary commanders, capabilities, and intentions. One of the most important aspects covered in the adversary's intentions is the identification and discussion of his most likely and most dangerous COAs.

The battlespace also includes information regarding climate, topography, geography, terrain

analysis, physical infrastructure (roads, power grids, information grids), cultural considerations that affect the operation, political structure, and leadership. Much of this information may have been previously provided in intelligence estimates and in intelligence reports and summaries provided by national sources or HHQ. This information may be referenced in the intelligence annex to reduce the size of the basic OPOD or OPLAN.

The intelligence annex normally provides intelligence preparation of the battlespace products to help further planning and execution. They include such products as the situation template and modified combined obstacle overlay. These products are normally found in Appendix 11 (Intelligence Estimate) or in Appendix 12 (Intelligence Products).

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 Message reference number

ANNEX B TO OPERATION ORDER OR PLAN (Number) (Operation CODE WORD) (U)

INTELLIGENCE (U)

#### (U) REFERENCES:

- (a) Maps and charts required for an understanding of this annex. Reference Annex M (Geospatial Information and Services).
- (b) Documents providing intelligence required for planning. Including related annexes, such as Annex H (Meteorological and Oceanographic Operations).

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- (c) Appropriate publications on Marine Corps and joint intelligence doctrine.
- (d) Appropriate standing operating procedures and other documents providing guidance on intelligence operations.
- (e) The originator of the annex should ensure that the units receiving or executing the plan or order have the cited references.

1. (U) Situation

a. (U) Characteristics of the Area. Summarize the conditions of the battlespace as they may influence the operation. Describe, as appropriate, the physical, economic, political, medical, social, religious, and psychological aspects and conditions of the people and infrastructure in the battlespace. Do not repeat information included in the general situation paragraph of the basic operation order or plan or detailed information contained in the appendices. Include sufficient analysis of the battlespace to permit development of appropriate supporting plans. Include complete information or reference documents and reports containing required intelligence.

b. (U) Hydrographic, Amphibious, Topographic, and Weather

(1) (U) Summarize the hydrographic data and amphibious considerations needed to support amphibious and logistic over-the-shore operations. Refer to Annex H (Meteorological and Oceanographic Operations) and Annex M (Geospatial Information and Services).

(2) (U) Address topographic aspects, including trafficability, key terrain, obstacles, cover, concealment, and avenues of approach. Reference Annex M (Geospatial Information and Services).

(3) (U) Include, as appropriate, climate and weather aspects of the battlespace. Coordinate with the staff weather officer or oceanographer and refer to reference Annex H (Meteorological and Oceanographic Operations).

c. (U) Estimate of Adversary Capabilities. Summarize the adversary's situation, capabilities, and possible courses of action. Provide the adversary's order of battle, estimates of the adversary's strengths and weaknesses, and, at a minimum, the adversary's most likely and most dangerous courses of action. When summarizing the adversary situation, refer to the general situation paragraph of the basic operation order or plan or refer to documents containing the required intelligence. Outline the adversary's capability to collect, communicate to intelligence centers, process, and disseminate intelligence. Include specific intelligence cutoff dates and, when possible, identify finished intelligence products supporting these findings.

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2. (U) Mission and Concept of Intelligence Operations
  - a. (U) Mission. State the command's mission in the basic operation order or plan.
  - b. (U) Concept of Intelligence Operations. Outline the purpose of intelligence operations and summarize the means and agencies used in planning, directing, collecting, processing, exploiting, producing, disseminating, and evaluating the necessary intelligence. When available and appropriate, integrate the resources of other Services and allied nations.
  
3. (U) Intelligence Activities. Identify intelligence resources and the intelligence planning, direction, collection, processing, production, dissemination, and evaluating efforts required to support the basic operation order or plan. Identify the required intelligence by proceeding from the priority intelligence requirements, through intelligence operations and capabilities or resources planning, to tasking of intelligence elements, including the following specific areas:
  - a. (U) Planning and Direction. Provide guidance for determining intelligence requirements (including those of subordinate commanders), preparing a collection plan, issuing orders and requests to information collection agencies, and monitoring the performance of collection agencies. Specify all exceptions to standard procedures.
    - (1) (U) Priority Intelligence Requirements. List priority intelligence requirements. If Annex B (Intelligence) is not published, list the priority intelligence requirements and other requirements for intelligence in the coordinating instructions of the basic operation order or plan. When the priority intelligence requirements and other requirements for intelligence are lengthy and detailed, place them in Appendix 1 (Priority Intelligence Requirements) of this annex.
    - (2) (U) New Requirements. Provide specific guidance for new intelligence requirements during peace, crisis, and war, both before and during execution.
  - b. (U) Processing and Exploitation. Provide appropriate guidance for converting information into usable form, including required provisions for document translation; imagery, signals, and technical sensor processing and interpretation; and other pertinent processing activity.
  - c. (U) Production. Provide guidance on analyzing and reporting collected intelligence information by all collection sources used in support of the plan. Include guidance on multidiscipline reports that fuse information from multiple sources. Reference appropriate regulations, directives, and standing operating procedures specifying US-only and multinational reporting procedures. Identify the production effort, including any intelligence and counterintelligence products, required to support the plan.

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d. (U) Dissemination. Provide necessary guidance for conveying intelligence to appropriate units. Establish procedures and criteria to satisfy expanded requirements for vertical and lateral dissemination of finished intelligence and spot reports. Establish alternate means to ensure that the required intelligence will be provided to combat units as well as headquarters during crises and combat operations. Cover any of the following in this subparagraph:

- (1) (U) Intelligence reports required from units (periods covered, distribution, and time of distribution).
- (2) (U) Formats for intelligence reports (appendices, if required).
- (3) (U) Distribution of intelligence studies.
- (4) (U) Requirements for releasability to allied nations.
- (5) (U) Requirements for secondary imagery dissemination.

4. (U) Assignment of Intelligence Tasks

a. (U) Orders to Subordinate and Attached Units. Use separate, numbered subparagraphs to list detailed instructions for each unit performing intelligence functions, including the originating headquarters, separate intelligence support units, and allied or coalition forces.

b. (U) Requests to Higher, Adjacent, and Cooperating Units. Provide separate, numbered subparagraphs applicable to each unit not organic or attached and from which intelligence support is requested, including allied or coalition forces.

c. (U) Coordinating Instructions. Provide any instructions necessary for coordinating collection and processing and exploitation, producing, and disseminating activities. Include—

- (1) (U) Periodic or special conferences for intelligence officers.
- (2) (U) Intelligence liaison, when indicated, with adjacent commanders, foreign government agencies or military forces, and host countries.

5. (U) Communications System. Summarize the US and non-US communications system and procedures to be used to carry out the intelligence function or reference the appropriate paragraphs of Annex K (Combat Information Systems). Include comments on interoperability of these communications system.

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6. (U) Miscellaneous Instructions. List under separate subparagraphs required items or information not covered above or in standing operating procedures, or items that require action different from that provided in standing operating procedures. As appropriate, include items, such as operations security, deception, disclosure of intelligence, releasability to coalition forces and public affairs, use of specialized intelligence personnel and personnel augmentation requirements, psychological operations, and exploitation of captured foreign materiel and documents.

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appendices:

- 1–Priority Intelligence Requirements
- 2–Signals Intelligence
- 3–Counterintelligence
- 4–Targeting Intelligence
- 5–Human Resource Intelligence
- 6–Information Operations Intelligence Integration
- 7–Imagery Intelligence
- 8–Measurement and Signature Intelligence
- 9–Captured Adversary Equipment
- 10–National Intelligence Support Team
- 11–Intelligence Estimate
- 12–Intelligence Products
- 13–Intelligence Collection Plan
- 14–Reconnaissance and Surveillance Plan
- 15–Geographic Intelligence
- 16–Intelligence Operations
- 17–Support to Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape

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## SAMPLE FORMAT OF ANNEX C (OPERATIONS)

Annex C (Operations) provides substantive guidance for planning the conduct of operations. Plans for the employment of non-US forces should

include proposed command arrangements and, as necessary, consideration of requirements for furnishing essential combat and logistic support.

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ANNEX C TO OPERATION ORDER OR PLAN (Number) (Operation CODE WORD) (U)

OPERATIONS (U)

(U) REFERENCES: List other plans, standing operating procedures, and doctrinal guidance to be followed in the conduct of operations.

1. (U) General

a. (U) Purpose. This annex provides guidance for the conduct of operations.

b. (U) Mission. State the mission as described in the basic operation order or plan.

c. (U) Area of Operations. Define the area of operations encompassed by the basic order or plan to include land, sea, and air space. The annex should also define any areas where reconnaissance and surveillance operations are authorized.

d. (U) Situation. Refer to the basic operation order or plan.

2. (U) Concept of Operations. Normally, the concept of operations is included in the basic operation order or plan; however, when lengthy and detailed, place it here. The format and content are similar to the concept of operations in the basic operation order or plan. Refer to Appendix 18 (Operations Overlay).

3. (U) Conduct of Operations. Provide any guidance required for the conduct of specific operations.

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- a. (U) Aviation Operations. Refer to Annex W (Aviation Operations).
- b. (U) Maritime Prepositioning Force Operations. Provide the concept of maritime prepositioning force operations in the plan.
- c. (U) Information Operations. Refer to Appendix 3 (Information Operations).
- d. (U) Counterinsurgency. If applicable, refer to pertinent country internal defense plans.
- e. (U) Nuclear Operations. Not applicable.
- f. (U) Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Defense Operations. If applicable, refer to Appendix 2 (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Defense Operations).
- g. (U) Special Operations. If applicable, refer to Appendix 4 (Special Operations).
- h. (U) Tactical Recovery of Aircraft and Personnel. Refer to Appendix 5 (Evasion and Recovery Operations).
- i. (U) Rules of Engagement. Refer to Appendix 6 (Rules of Engagement).
- j. (U) Reconnaissance. Refer to Appendix 7 (Reconnaissance).
- k. (U) Air Base Operability. If applicable, refer to Appendix 8 (Air Base Operability).
- l. (U) Combat Camera. If applicable, refer to Appendix 9 (Combat Camera).
- m. (U) Noncombatant Evacuation Operations. If applicable, refer to Appendix 10 (Noncombatant Evacuation Operations).
- n. (U) Escape and Evasion Operations. Refer to Appendix 11 (Escape and Evasion Operations).
- o. (U) Counterattack. If applicable, refer to Appendix 12 (Counterattack).
- p. (U) Explosive Ordnance Disposal. Refer to Appendix 13 (Explosive Ordnance Disposal).
- q. (U) Amphibious Operations. If applicable, refer to Appendix 14 (Amphibious Operations).
- r. (U) Force Protection. Refer to Appendix 15 (Force Protection).
- s. (U) Rear Area Operations. Refer to Appendix 16 (Rear Area Operations).

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- t. (U) Communications Strategy. Refer to Appendix 17 (Communications Strategy)
  - u. (U) Fire Support. Refer to Appendix 19 (Fire Support).
  - v. (U) Countermechanized Plan. If applicable, refer to Appendix 20 (Countermechanized Plan).
  - w. (U) Breaching Plan. If applicable, refer to Appendix 21 (Breaching Plan).
  - x. (U) Obstacle Plan. If applicable, refer to Appendix 22 (Obstacle Plan).
  - y. (U) Counter-Improvised Explosive Device Plan. If applicable, refer to Appendix 23, (Counter-Improvised Explosive Device Plan)
4. (U) Operational Constraints. List any constraints to the conduct of combat operations not enumerated elsewhere, such as the impact of deployment or employment of forces and materiel on airfield ramp space including possible host nation support. Estimate the impact of these operational constraints and indicate how the concept of operations and tasks to subordinate commanders would be modified if these constraints were removed. State the effect of incremental removal of constraints.
5. (U) Command and Signal
- a. (U) Command. Refer to the basic operation order or plan.
  - b. (U) Signal. Refer to the basic operation order or plan or to Annex K (Combat Information Systems).

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## APPENDICES:

- 1–Nuclear Operations (Not used in Marine Corps plans or orders. Included to conform to CJCSM 3122.03.)
- 2–Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Defense Operations
- 3–Information Operations
- 4–Special Operations
- 5–Evasion and Recovery Operations
- 6–Rules of Engagement
- 7–Reconnaissance
- 8–Air Base Operability
- 9–Combat Camera
- 10–Noncombatant Evacuation Operations

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- 11–Escape and Evasion Operations
- 12–Counterattack
- 13–Explosive Ordnance Disposal
- 14–Amphibious Operations
- 15–Force Protection
- 16–Rear Area Operations
- 17–Communications Strategy (placeholder pending doctrinal development)
- 18–Operations Overlay
- 19–Fire Support
- 20–Countermechanized Plan
- 21–Breaching Plan
- 22–Obstacle Plan
- 23–Counterimprovised Explosive Device Plan

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### SAMPLE FORMAT OF APPENDIX 3 (INFORMATION OPERATIONS) TO ANNEX C

Appendix 3 (Information Operations) uses operations security, military deception, psychological operations, electronic warfare, computer network operations, and other capabilities to achieve information superiority at a specific time and place in support of the MAGTF mission. Information superiority is the operational advantage gained by the friendly commander through the effective execution of information operations. Information operations take place across the full range of military operations from humanitarian relief operations to COIN to high-intensity conventional operations. Information operations can disrupt adversary information flow by affecting command and control systems and deceive the adversary by presenting him with misleading information. These operations can enhance friendly information flow by protecting it from adversary attack or by influencing key target audiences to take actions that support the MAGTF mission. Information operations planning requires a whole staff approach and extensive coordination among commands to avoid conflicts and to ensure nested and reinforcing efforts. Intelligence support is critical to successful information operations.

Information operations planning requires information, such as—

- Identification of critical information systems or processes.
- Identification of key decisionmakers and the decisionmaking process used to arrive at and disseminate a decision.
- Detailed descriptions of specific communications systems and information networks.
- Location of information and infrastructure nodes.
- Determination of the potential values of possible targets.
- Adversary threat to friendly information systems and processes.
- Cultural, tribal, and historical information.

The information operations appendix should be a short document that clearly states the primary mission of each of the elements of information operations. It should provide enough guidance to ensure that the elements are all working toward the accomplishment of information operations as well as detailed execution instructions for each of the elements in the subsequent tabs.

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## INFORMATION OPERATIONS (U)

## (U) REFERENCES:

- (a) Any relevant plans or orders.
- (b) Required maps and charts.
- (c) Other relevant documents.

1. (U) Situation. Summarize the overall operational situation as it relates to information operations.

a. (U) Adversary. Summarize the adversary situation, force disposition, intelligence capabilities, and possible courses of action. If applicable, reference intelligence estimates or summaries. Address any specific information that bears directly on the planned information operations.

b. (U) Friendly. Summarize the situation of those friendly forces that may directly affect attainment of information operations objectives. Address any critical limitations and any other planned information operations.

c. (U) Assumptions. List any assumptions made of friendly, adversary, or third party capabilities, limitations, or courses of action. Describe the conditions that the commander believes will exist at the time the plan becomes an order. Omit in orders.

2. (U) Mission. Provide the command's mission from the base order.

3. (U) Execution

a. (U) Concept of Support. Summarize how the commander visualizes the execution of information operations from its beginning to its termination. Describe how information operations will support the command's mission. Summarize the concepts for supervision and termination of information operations.

(1) (U) The concept of support may be a single paragraph or divided into two or more paragraphs depending upon the complexity of the operation.

(2) (U) When an operation involves various phases, such as peace or prehostilities, crisis, war, or posthostilities, the concept of support should include subparagraphs describing the role of information operations in each phase.

b. (U) Information Operations Tasks. Identify the major tasks for each of the five elements of information operations. The five elements of information operations listed below are covered in tabs A through E.

(1) (U) Military deception.

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- (2) (U) Electronic warfare.
- (3) (U) Operations security.
- (4) (U) Psychological operations.
- (5) (U) Computer network operations.

c. (U) Coordinating Instructions. Address any mutual support issues relating to the elements of information operations.

4. (U) Administration and Logistics. Address any information operations administrative or logistic requirements.

5. (U) Command and Control. List any information operations command and control instructions. State the command structure for information operations. Identify any special information operations communications and reporting requirements.

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TABS:

- A–Military Deception
- B–Electronic Warfare
- C–Operations Security
- D–Psychological Operations
- E–Computer Network Operations

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**SAMPLE FORMAT FOR TAB A  
(MILITARY DECEPTION) TO APPENDIX 3 TO ANNEX C**

Tab A (Military Deception) provides background and guidance for the preparation of the military deception tab of joint plans and orders. The process for military deception planning conducted in support of joint operations is established in JP 3-13.4, *Military Deception*, which also describes how the deception planning process relates to the JOPES's contingency, crisis, and campaign planning processes. As a general policy, any material related to planned, ongoing, or completed military deception is accorded controlled access. Production guidelines are—

- “Need-to-know,” for the purposes of military deception, means limiting access to those individuals who are involved in planning, approving, or executing deceptions and who must have knowledge of the deception to perform their duties.
- The deception tab will normally be developed, published, distributed, and maintained separately from the rest of the OPLAN.

- Standard administrative procedures are not used to distribute or staff the deception tab. Only positive control means, such as hand-to-hand delivery or STU-III [secure telephone unit-III] fax, will be used to distribute deception-related material.
- Specific deception events, such as unit movements, may be included in the basic OPLAN and its annexes if not identified as being deception related.
- Deception-related documents will have cover sheets with the appropriate classification markings. They will be annotated in accordance with Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 3211.01, *Joint Policy for Military Deception*.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 3211.01 establishes the review criteria for deception concepts and plans. Deception planners must follow the specific administrative and security procedures established by that document to ensure that their plans are approved by the appropriate authority.

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TAB A TO APPENDIX 3 TO ANNEX C TO OPERATION ORDER OR  
PLAN (Number) (Operation CODE WORD) (U)  
MILITARY DECEPTION (U)

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(U) REFERENCES: Identify plans, documents, maps, and charts that are essential to the effective execution of military deception.

1. (U) Situation

a. (U) General. See basic operation order or plan.

b. (U) Adversary

(1) (U) General Capabilities. Identify adversary military capabilities directly relating to the planned deception.

(2) (U) Deception Targets. Describe the political, military, or economic decision-makers (or organizations) targeted by the deception plan. Include personalities, strengths, weaknesses, vulnerabilities, and people or factors known to influence decisions.

(3) (U) Target Biases and Predispositions. Provide information on known biases and predispositions of political, military, or economic decisionmakers (or organizations).

(4) (U) Probable Adversary Course of Action. Refer to Annex B (Intelligence).

c. (U) Friendly. Summarize the friendly situation, critical limitation, and concept of operations.

d. (U) Assumptions. List all assumptions on which the deception is based.

2. (U) Mission

a. (U) Operational Mission. Extract from paragraph 2 of the basic operation order or plan.

b. (U) Deception Mission

(1) (U) Deception Goal. Describe the desired effect or the end state a commander wishes to achieve (commander's concept for the deception operation). For example, "To cause the adversary to weight his defense in the eastern corridor, to mislead the adversary as to the time and place of forcible entry operations, to cause dissension within the adversary coalition such that..."

(2) (U) Deception Objective(s). List the desired action or inaction by the adversary at the critical time and location.

(3) (U) Desired Adversary Perceptions. Describe what the deception target must believe for it to make the decision that will achieve the deception objective.

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- (4) (U) Deception Story. Outline a scenario of friendly actions or capabilities that will be portrayed to cause the deception target to adopt the desired perception. This could be an alternate course of action to the one chosen for the basic operation order or plan itself.
3. (U) Execution
- a. (U) Concept of the Operation
- (1) (U) General. Describe the framework for the operation. Include a brief description of the phases of the deception operation.
- (2) (U) Other Information Operations Elements. Discuss the use of other information operation elements in support of the deception operation. Discuss all other information operation element plans and operations pertinent to the deception. Include coordination required to deconflict if necessary.
- (3) (U) Feedback and Monitoring. Provide a general statement of the type of feedback expected, if any, and how it will be collected (monitored). Include a brief statement on the impact of the absence of feedback on the plan.
- (4) (U) Means. Describe available deception assets.
- (5) (U) Tasks. Specify execution and feedback taskings to organizations participating in the execution and monitoring of the deception operation.
- (6) (U) Risks. Give a brief risk analysis in the categories given below. Rate risk as low, moderate, or high in each category. Refer to Exhibit 3 (Operations) to this tab for detailed risk analyses.
- (a) (U) Deception is successful. Include likely adversary response. Describe impact on friendly forces from adversary intelligence sharing.
- (b) (U) Deception fails. Describe the impact if the target ignores the deception or fails in some way to take the actions intended.
- (c) (U) Deception is compromised to allies or adversaries.
- b. (U) Coordinating Instructions. Identify any tasks or instructions pertaining to two or more of the units listed in the preceding subparagraphs. List the tentative D-day and H-hour, if applicable, and any other information required to ensure coordinated action between two or more elements of the command.
4. (U) Administration and Logistics. State instructions regarding administrative and logistic support procedures to be used in developing, coordinating, and implementing the

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deception plan. Do not include those administrative, logistic, and medical actions or ploys that are an actual part of the deception operation. Place detailed instructions in Exhibit 4 (Administration and Logistics).

a. (U) Administration

(1) (U) General. Outline general procedures to be employed during planning, coordination, and implementation of deception activities.

(2) (U) Specific. Detail any special administrative measures needed to execute the deception operation.

b. (U) Logistics. Detail logistic requirements for the execution of the deception operation, such as the transportation of special material, or provision of printing equipment and materials. Do not include executions conducted by logistic elements as part of the portrayal of observables. Place detailed instructions in Exhibit 4 (Administration and Logistics).

c. (U) Costs. As applicable.

5. (U) Communications System

a. (U) Command Relationships. Use Exhibit 5 (Command Relationships) to illustrate command relationships by phase, if required.

(1) (U) Approval. State approval authority for execution and termination.

(2) (U) Authority. Designate supported and supporting commanders, supporting agencies as applicable, and any caveats to Exhibit 1 (Task Organization) or Exhibit 5 (Command Relationships).

(3) (U) Oversight. Detail oversight responsibilities particularly for executions by nonorganic units or organizations outside the chain of command.

(4) (U) Coordination. Identify coordination responsibilities and requirements related to deception executions and execution feedback. Address in-theater and out-of-theater requirements.

b. (U) Communications. Detail communications means and procedures to be used by control personnel and participants in the deception operation. Include all reporting requirements.

6. (U) Security

a. (U) General. Outline general procedures to be employed during planning, coordination, and implementation of deception activities.

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b. (U) Specific. State access restrictions, handling instructions, and who has authority to grant access to the deception appendix or plan. Describe use of cover stories if applicable, code words, nicknames, and procedures for planning and execution documents. If required, place access rosters and other detailed security considerations in a separate document.

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EXHIBITS:

- 1-Task Organization
- 2-Intelligence
- 3-Operations
- 4-Administration and Logistics
- 5-Command Relationships
- 6-Execution Schedule
- 7-Distribution

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**SAMPLE FORMAT OF EXHIBIT 2  
(INTELLIGENCE) TO TAB A TO APPENDIX 3 TO ANNEX C**

Information and intelligence provided here must be focused and specific to the deception. Do not repeat information found in Annex B (Intelligence).

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EXHIBIT 2 TO TAB A TO APPENDIX 3 TO ANNEX C TO OPERATION ORDER OR PLAN (Number) (Operation CODE WORD) (U) INTELLIGENCE (U)

(U) REFERENCES: Identify plans, documents, maps, and charts that are essential to the execution of the deception.

1. (U) Deception CONOPS. Provide a concise statement of the deception operation. Identify the command executing the deception, the deception target, the deception objective(s), and the duration of the operation.

2. (U) Situation

a. (U) Adversary

(1) (U) Target Description. Describe the political, military, or economic decisionmakers (or organizations) targeted by the deception plan. Include personalities, strengths, weaknesses, vulnerabilities, and people or factors known to influence decisions.

(2) (U) Target Biases and Predispositions

(3) (U) Adversary Intelligence Organizations. Identify the targeted country's intelligence organizations, their missions, and their methods and capabilities for covert and clandestine operations. Include collection, processing, analysis, and dissemination. Specifically note those organizations most likely to provide intelligence to the targeted decisionmaker and those tasked with exposing deception.

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- (4) (U) Adversary Counterintelligence Organizations. Describe missions, capabilities, and operations.
  - (5) (U) Adversary Intelligence-Sharing with Other Countries. Identify other intelligence organizations available to the targeted country, the nature of intelligence exchange, and the potential for using that relationship for the deception.
  - (6) (U) Other Sources and Related Matters. Identify scientific, technical, diplomatic, or academic contacts that might act as information conduits.
  - (7) (U) Deception and Denial Activities. Provide an analysis of the targeted country's use of deception and denial in support of its political and military goals. Identify the target's deception and denial methods and current deception and denial activities.
  - (8) (U) Target Reaction. Provide an estimate of the target's reaction if the deception is successful. Also provide likely target reactions if the deception is not successful. Identify whether the adversary would use deception in response. This subparagraph provides in-depth information to document the risk assessments presented in Tab C-3-A (Military Deception) and Exhibit C-3-A-3 (Operations).
  - (9) (U) Third-Party Reaction. Provide an analysis of the impact of the deception on allies, neutrals, and potential adversaries and their responses. This subparagraph provides in depth information to document the risk assessments presented in Tab C-3-A (Military Deception) and Exhibit C-3-A-3 (Operations).
- b. (U) Friendly. Provide information on activities by unknowing US forces having an impact on the deception. Compare the time necessary to collect, process, report, and analyze intelligence (in support of deception) with the plan's operational timeline. Assess the impact here.
3. (U) Intelligence Requirements
- a. (U) Priority Intelligence Requirements. Priority information requirements associated with deception are listed in Attachment A (Priority Intelligence Requirements).
  - b. (U) Feedback. Assess the intelligence community's ability to identify and collect plan-specific feedback information.
  - c. (U) Assignment of Intelligence Tasks. Identify organizations to produce plan-specific collection requirements.
    - (1) (U) Service intelligence agencies and organizations.

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(2) (U) Commander's intelligence organizations and assets.

(3) (U) Others.

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ATTACHMENTS:

A-Priority Intelligence Requirements

B-Others as needed

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SAMPLE FORMAT OF ATTACHMENT A  
(PRIORITY INTELLIGENCE REQUIREMENTS) TO  
EXHIBIT 2 TO TAB A TO APPENDIX 3 TO ANNEX C

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ATTACHMENT A TO EXHIBIT 2 TO TAB A TO APPENDIX 3 TO  
ANNEX C TO OPERATION ORDER OR PLAN (Number)  
(Operation CODE WORD) (U)  
PRIORITY INTELLIGENCE REQUIREMENTS (U)

1. (U) General. Identify requirements, including those of subordinate commanders, for priority intelligence requirements for pre-execution and execution phases of the planned deception operation.
2. (U) Before Implementation of the Order or Plan. List questions for which answers are needed for further planning and as a basis for decision on plan implementation.
3. (U) Upon Implementation of the Order or Plan. List the additional priority intelligence requirements and other intelligence requirements that become relevant upon decision to implement the operation plan. (Use additional paragraphs if necessary to reflect differing requirements during planned phases of the operation.)

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SAMPLE FORMAT OF APPENDIX 18  
(OPERATIONS OVERLAY) TO ANNEX C

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APPENDIX 18 TO ANNEX C TO OPERATION ORDER OR PLAN (Number) (Operation CODE WORD) (U)  
 OPERATIONS OVERLAY (U)

Use appropriate register marks and graphics from MCRP 5-12A, *Operational Terms and Graphics*, to visually depict desired aspects of the operation. The basis of the operations overlay is the approved course of action graphics sketch. It may depict—

- Main effort.
- Supporting effort.
- Reserve.
- Boundaries.
- Fire support coordination measures.
- Assembly areas.
- Lines of departure.
- Other information as dictated by METT-T [mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops and support available-time available].

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## SAMPLE FORMAT OF ANNEX D (LOGISTICS/COMBAT SERVICE SUPPORT)

Logistics is the science of planning and carrying out the movement and maintenance of forces. It includes the provision of combat service support to forces at the tactical level of war as well as the movement and sustainment of Marine forces at the operational level of war. Logistics provides the commander with the means to conduct and win battles, campaigns, and, ultimately, the war. Annex D (Logistics/Combat Service Support) provides direction and guidance to the subordinate commanders and staffs on the provision of logistics and combat service support in support of operations described in the OPORD or OPLAN. The theory and philosophy of logistics as practiced by the Marine Corps is provided in MCDP 4, *Logistics*. Appendix Q of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Manual 3122.01, *Joint Operation Planning and Execution System (JOPES) Volume I, (Planning Policies and Procedures)*, lists pertinent logistic references. Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 4-11, *Tactical-Level Logistics*, provides detailed information on combat service support as well as amplifying instructions on the preparation of logistic planning documents.

The command and control of logistic and combat service support organizations, to include command relationships and command and control support requirements, should be addressed in annex D. It provides a general discussion of how the operation will be supported and is fully integrated with other critical concepts, such as maneuver, fires, and force protection. It requires only as much depth as is necessary to ensure understanding of envisioned Logistic combat service support operations by subordinate commanders and staffs. The G-4/S-4 is normally responsible for the preparation of annex D; however, the LCE should be involved in the planning process. Phasing and significant anticipated changes in mission or tasks should be reflected in the concept of support. Detailed or specialized information should be provided in other subparagraphs or in appendices of annex D. Discuss or refer to aviation-specific logistic functions, such as supply and maintenance, in Appendix 1 (Supply) or in the ACE OPORD or OPLAN.

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 LOGISTICS/COMBAT SERVICE SUPPORT (U)

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(U) REFERENCES: Cite references necessary for a complete understanding of this annex.

1. (U) Situation

a. (U) Adversary. Refer to Annex B (Intelligence). Provide available information on adversary actions or intent to conduct actions to disrupt or degrade envisioned friendly logistic and combat service support operations. Include information on adversary capabilities or assets that can augment friendly logistic and combat service support operations.

b. (U) Friendly. List supporting logistic or combat service support organizations not subordinate to the force and the specific missions and tasks assigned to each.

c. (U) Infrastructure. Refer to Annex B (Intelligence). Provide information on existing infrastructure, such as ports, factories, fuel and water sources, and lines of communications that can be used to support friendly logistic and combat service support operations.

d. (U) Attachments and Detachments. Refer to Annex A (Task Organization). List logistic and combat service support units from other Services/nations attached to the force. List all Marine Corps logistic and combat service support units detached to support other friendly forces.

e. (U) Assumptions. State realistic assumptions and consider the effect of current operations on logistic capabilities. Omitted in orders.

f. (U) Resource Availability. Identify significant competing demands for logistic resources where expected requirements may exceed resources. Include recommended solutions within resource levels available for planning, if any, and reasonably assured host nation support.

g. (U) Planning Factors. Refer to and use approved planning factors and formulas, except when experience or local conditions dictate otherwise. When deviating from planning factors, identify the factors and the reason.

2. (U) Mission. Provide the command's mission from the base order.3. (U) Execution

a. (U) Concept of Logistics and Combat Service Support. State the concept for logistics and combat service support operations necessary to implement the order or plan. Describe how the logistic and combat service support assets will be organized and positioned to execute the mission. The concept may include planned employment of other Service and nation logistic and combat service support forces, host nation support logistic capabilities, or operation of the lines of communications.

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b. (U) Tasks

- (1) (U) Assign logistic and combat service support responsibilities to subordinate logistic organizations.
- (2) (U) Identify and assign responsibility for logistics and combat service support required from other commands, Services, or nations.
- (3) (U) Identify and assign responsibility for logistics and combat service support required for forces assigned or attached from other commands, Services, or nations.
- (4) (U) Identify and assign responsibility for logistics and combat service support required for Marine Corps forces assigned or attached to other commands, Services, or nations.
- (5) (U) Assign responsibilities to support joint boards and committees, such as transportation and procurement, and other Services or nations providing services.

4. (U) Administration and Logisticsa. (U) Logistics and Combat Service Support

(1) (U) Supply. Refer to Appendix 7 (Supply). Summarize the following, in coordination with supporting commanders and Service component commanders, if different from standard planning factors. Place detailed discussions in the appendices and listings of supply depots, terminals, and lines of communications in tabs or the appropriate appendices.

(a) (U) Distribution and Allocation

- 1 (U) Purpose, location, and projected displacement of main and alternate supply depots or points and supporting terminals and ports to be used or considered.
- 2 (U) Prepositioned logistic resource allocation.
- 3 (U) Existing terminals and lines of communications and the known or estimated throughput capability. Indicate the time-phased expansion necessary to support the plan.

(b) (U) Level of Supply

- 1 (U) Indicate the time-phased operating and safety levels required to support the plan.
- 2 (U) Indicate the prepositioned war reserve materiel requirements to support the time-phased deployments pending resupply.

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- 3 (U) Specify significant special arrangements required for materiel support beyond normal supply procedures.
- 4 (U) Indicate anticipated shortfalls.
- 5 (U) Indicate common user logistic supply support responsibilities and arrangements.
- (c) (U) Salvage. Provide instructions for and identify the logistic impact of the collection, classification, and disposition of salvage.
- (d) (U) Captured Adversary Materiel. Provide instructions for the collection, classification, and disposition of adversary materiel. See Annex B (Intelligence) for further guidance. See Appendix 10 to Annex B (Intelligence) for specific instructions for the disposition of captured adversary cryptographic equipment.
- (e) (U) Local Acquisition of Supplies and Services. See Joint Publication 4-01, *Joint Doctrine for the Defense Transportation System*, and the current version of Department of Defense Instruction 1100.22, *Policy and Procedures for Determining Workforce Mix*.
- 1 (U) Identify acquisition of goods and services in the following categories:
- a (U) The general categories of materiel and services that are available and contemplated as a supplement to regular sources.
- b (U) Those that may be used as emergency acquisition sources.
- 2 (U) Make a statement concerning the dependability of the local acquisition or labor source in each of the aforementioned categories and the joint or Service element that will obtain or manage these resources.
- 3 (U) State that all essential contractor services, to include new and existing contracts, have been reviewed to determine which services will be essential to OPLAN execution. Make a statement concerning the existence of contingency plans to ensure the continuation of these essential services.
- (f) (U) Petroleum, Oils, and Lubricants. Refer to Appendix 1 (Petroleum, Oils, and Lubricants Supply).
- (2) (U) External Support. Refer to Appendix 11 (External Support). Provide the required planning information including type and quantity of support and

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instructions where inter-Service and cross-Service arrangements for common supply and service support are appropriate.

- (a) (U) Summarize major support arrangements that are presently in effect or that will be executed in support of the plan.
  - (b) (U) Include significant inter-Service and cross-Service support arrangements. Refer to appropriate annexes or appendices.
  - (c) (U) Include foreign and host nation support.
- (3) (U) Maintenance
- (a) (U) General. Refer to Appendix 12 (Maintenance).
  - (b) (U) Specific Guidance
    - 1 (U) Include sufficient detail to determine the requirements for maintenance facilities needed to support the plan.
    - 2 (U) Indicate the level of maintenance to be performed and where it is to occur, including host nation or contractor facilities, if applicable.
- (4) (U) Transportation
- (a) (U) General. Refer to Appendix 4 (Mobility and Transportation). Provide general planning or execution guidance to subordinate and supporting organizations to facilitate transportation of the force and its sustainment. This can include movement and use priorities.
  - (b) (U) Mobility Support Force and Movement Feasibility Analysis. Provide an estimate of the mobility support and movement feasibility of the plan. Include in the analysis any appropriate remarks affecting mobility and transportation tasks. Consider the availability of adequate lift resources for movements of personnel and equipment, airfield reception capabilities, seaport and aerial port terminal capabilities, and port throughput capabilities. Also, consider any features that will adversely affect movement operations, such as the effect of deployment or employment of forces and materiel on airfield ramp space (to include possible host nation support).
- (5) (U) General Engineering Support Plan. Refer to Appendix 13 (General Engineering). State the rationale if Appendix 5 (Civil Engineering Support Plan) is not prepared. Indicate the general engineering support activities applicable to the basic operation order or plan and the policies for providing these services.
- (6) (U) Health Services. Refer to Appendix 9 (Health Services).

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- (7) (U) Services. Refer to Appendix 8 (Services).
- (8) (U) Mortuary Affairs. Refer to Appendix 2 (Mortuary Affairs) or, if not used, indicate the mortuary affairs activities applicable to the operation order or plan and policy for providing these affairs.
- (9) (U) Ammunition. Refer to Appendix 6 (Nonnuclear Ammunition) or if not used, discuss any critical ammunition issues that may affect the ability of the force to accomplish the mission.
- (10) (U) Aviation Logistic Support. Refer to Appendix 10 (Aviation Logistic Support) or Annex D (Logistics/Combat Service Support) of the aviation combat element operation order or plan. Critical aviation logistic and combat service support issues may be discussed if they affect the ability of the force to accomplish the mission.
- (11) (U) Operational Security Planning Guidance for Logistics. Refer to Tab C (Operations Security) to Appendix 3 (Information Operations) to Annex C (Operations). Provide comprehensive operations security planning guidance for planning, preparing, and executing logistic and combat service support activities. At a minimum, address base, facility, installation, logistic stocks, physical, and line of communications security. Provide guidance to ensure that logistic and combat service support activities promote essential secrecy for operational intentions, capabilities that will be committed to specific missions, and current preparatory operational activities.
- b. (U) Administration. Include general administrative guidance to support logistic and combat service support operations for the basic operation order or plan. If reports are required, specify formats for preparation, time, methods, and classification of submission.
5. (U) Command and Signal
- a. (U) Command Relationships. Refer to Annex J (Command Relationships) for command relationships external to logistic units. Provide support relationships.
- b. (U) Communications System. Refer to Annex K (Combat Information Systems) for detailed communications and information systems requirements. Provide a general statement of the scope and type of communications required.

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appendices:

- 1–Petroleum, Oils, and Lubricants Supply
- 2–Mortuary Affairs
- 3–Sustainability Analysis
- 4–Mobility and Transportation
- 5–Civil Engineering Support Plan
- 6–Nonnuclear Ammunition
- 7–Supply
- 8–Services
- 9–Health Services
- 10–Aviation Logistic Support (Normally provided in the aviation combat element plan or order.)
- 11–External Support
- 12–Maintenance
- 13–General Engineering

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## SAMPLE FORMAT OF ANNEX J (COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS)

Command relationships are the interrelated responsibilities between commanders and the authority of commanders in the chain of command. Unity of effort is, in large part, achieved through the application of a flexible range of command relationships. The joint force commander exercises command during joint operations according to the provisions of JP 1, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*; JP 3-0, *Joint Operations*; MCDP 1-0; and MCWP 3-40.8, *Marine Corps Componentency*. These publications describe possible command relationships between the joint force commander, the Marine Corps component commander, the MAGTF commander, and subordinate commanders of assigned or attached Marine forces. This annex discusses—

- Requirements to coordinate support between forces in the same or adjacent areas according to JP 1 and the common HHQ OPORD or OPLAN.
- Planning for succession of command and change of command location (alternate command and control procedures). Refer to Paragraph 5 (Command and Signal) of the OPORD or OPLAN or Annex K (Combat Information Systems).
- DOD Directive 3025.14, *Protection and Evacuation of US Citizens and Designated Aliens in Danger Areas Abroad*, as amended by changes 1 and 2, delineates the responsibilities for protection of US citizens abroad. In support of this directive, give special attention to cooperation and coordination between US diplomatic and military activities during periods of tension and hostilities.
- Command relationships between the US Information Agency and the US Armed Forces in the conduct of psychological operations.

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COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS (U)

(U) REFERENCES: List documents that provide necessary guidance on the command relationships of forces concerned.

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1. (U) General

a. (U) Purpose. To establish the relationships between—

- (1) (U) Combatant commands.
- (2) (U) International commands and organizations.
- (3) (U) Commander, US forces country.
- (4) (U) Service and functional component commanders.
- (5) (U) Major subordinate commanders.
- (6) (U) Coordinating authorities.
- (7) (U) Other subordinate military activities.
- (8) (U) US diplomatic missions.
- (9) (U) Government departments or agencies that support the operations.
- (10) (U) Forces and agencies of other nations.

b. (U) Scope. Specify the scope and applicability of the command relationships established in this annex for specific military operations or functions within an assigned geographic area; or for specific military operations or functions not limited to a geographic area and the times or circumstances when the relationships become effective.

2. (U) Command Lines

a. (U) Service and Functional Components. Indicate the command lines to Service and functional components of the force and to subordinate elements, as appropriate.

b. (U) Other Subordinate Commands. Indicate the established command lines to subordinate commanders for conducting this operation and the conditions under which forces will be transferred to their operational control.

c. (U) Augmentation Forces. Indicate the purpose, time, and approximate duration of the attachment and the degree of authority over and responsibility for the augmentation forces.

d. (U) Alternate Procedures. Discuss procedures for succession of command and change of command location (alternate command and control procedures).

3. (U) Support and Coordination Relationships

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- a. (U) Supporting Military Forces. Indicate established relationships with military organizations operating in support of the originating command.
  - b. (U) Coordinating Authorities. As necessary, assign a commander or another person the responsibility for coordinating specific functions or activities.
  - c. (U) Supporting Agencies. Indicate the relationships between the elements of the force and any supporting agencies, such as United States Information Agency. (Refer to other annexes or appendices, as appropriate.)
  - d. (U) Inter-Service Support Arrangements. Refer to Annex D (Logistics/Combat Service Support), subparagraph 2b(7), Inter-Service Logistic Support.
  - e. (U) Coordination with Diplomatic Agencies. Indicate any requirement for coordination with chiefs of US diplomatic missions that is not included elsewhere in the plan and note who is responsible for such coordination.
4. (U) Relationships with International and Foreign Commands and Organizations. Indicate established command arrangements or relations with international commands and organizations, foreign military commands, or guerrilla organizations. Also indicate the conditions under which such relations would become effective.
5. (U) Planning Relationships. Specify established relationships between military commands for developing supporting plans. Include any requirements for coordination with other-nation commands and nonmilitary agencies.

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1-Command Relationships Diagram

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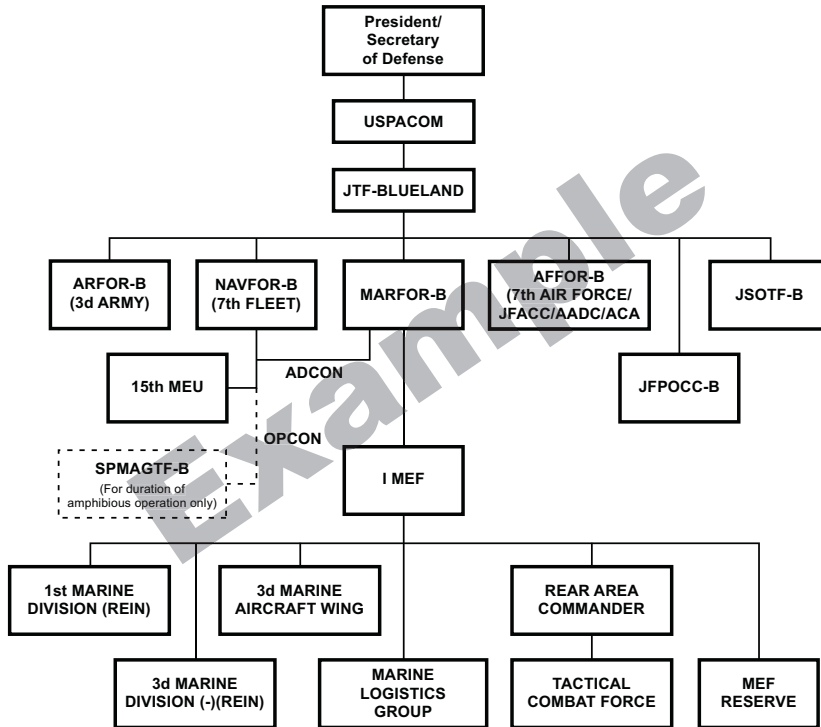
**SAMPLE FORMAT OF APPENDIX 1  
(COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS DIAGRAM) TO ANNEX J**

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 COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS DIAGRAM (U)

This appendix graphically portrays the command relationships. Show all specific relationships, such as operational control, tactical control, or administrative control.



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SAMPLE FORMAT OF  
ANNEX V (INTERAGENCY COORDINATION)

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ANNEX V TO OPERATION ORDER OR PLAN (Number) (Operation CODE WORD) (U)  
INTERAGENCY COORDINATION (U)

(U) REFERENCES: List documents that provide necessary guidance to this annex.

1. (U) Situation

a. (U) General

(1) (U) Statement. This annex provides military and interagency planners with a brief synopsis of the major elements of this plan and the necessary coordination and interaction between the command and the interagency while preparing for and during the plan's execution. It is based on planning factors and estimates available at the time of preparation and is subject to modification based on the actual conditions or situation existing at the time of execution.

(2) (U) Politico-Military Situation. Summarize the politico-military situation that would establish the preconditions under which this plan might be executed. At a minimum, identify the US national security objectives and interests served by this plan and the interagency capabilities needed to return to normalcy or to establish a new normalcy.

(3) (U) Policy Coordination. Identify what coordination and support requirements might be necessary to initiate interagency planning.

(4) (U) Planning and Execution Coordination. Describe the proposed concept for interagency coordination during both planning and execution

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to ensure unity of effort and appropriate deconfliction. Outline how the process supports the operation.

- b. (U) Assumptions. List key assumptions that might impact or influence interagency planning.
  - c. (U) Legal Considerations. List any legal considerations that may affect interagency participation.
2. (U) Mission. Provide the command's mission from the base order.
  3. (U) Execution.
    - a. (U) Concept of Operations. Outline the primary objectives and desired effects of each phase. Describe the concept for interagency coordination and how it supports the concept of military operations. Outline the commander's interagency coordination for each phase and what resources, capabilities, and liaison from other US Government agencies can support each of these objectives. Comment on the desirability and feasibility of intergovernmental organization/nongovernmental organization participation in the operation. Identify the resources or capabilities from the interagency that will support each of these objectives and comment on the desirability and level of nongovernmental participation in the operation.
      - (1) (U) Commander's Intent. Describe the commander's intent and optimal level of involvement by other US Government agencies for each phase. Be sure to identify the desired end state for each phase and list the anticipated desired actions of the major US Government agencies to support these end states.
      - (2) (U) Major Areas of US Government Interagency Response. Define the areas of requested action and responsibility from US Government agencies, intergovernmental organizations, and nongovernmental organizations based on the concept of operations.
      - (3) (U) Level of Integration. Describe the level of integration envisioned between the military, US Government agencies, and intergovernmental organizations/nongovernmental organizations as operations transition between phases.
    - b. (U) Tasks and Milestones. Identify the foreseen tasks and required milestones necessary before handing off responsibilities to civilian authorities.
    - c. (U) Coordinating Instructions. Include general instructions applicable to other US Government agencies and intergovernmental organizations/nongovernmental organizations.

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4. (U) Administration and Logistics. Provide concept for furnishing administrative and logistic support to US Government agencies and intergovernmental organizations/nongovernmental organizations participating in the operation. Include the following:

- a. (U) Personnel and personal property accounting.
- b. (U) Availability of security and force protection.
- c. (U) Availability of medical care.
- d. (U) Availability of transportation assets in theater and in the host nation.
- e. (U) Availability of all classes of supply.
- f. (U) Availability of maintenance support for vehicles, administrative, and support equipment.
- g. (U) Use of office administrative equipment and personnel.
- h. (U) Availability and use of communications assets.

5. (U) Command and Control. Identify any unique command relationships established for the purposes of interagency coordination, such as a joint interagency coordination group or interagency coordination directorate. Describe the proposed organizational relationship and chain of responsibility between the commander and other US Government agencies and intergovernmental organizations.

- a. (U) US Government. Identify the chain of authority for US Government agencies.
- b. (U) Intergovernmental Organizations. Identify the expected chain of authority for intergovernmental organizations should they become involved.

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As required. Could include detailed information on key interagency, intergovernmental organization and nongovernmental organization stakeholders, such as mission, current and planned programs, locations, point of contact information, or assessments.

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## SAMPLE FORMAT OF ANNEX X (EXECUTION CHECKLIST)

Annex X (Execution Checklist) provides a convenient and useful listing of key events and tasks that must be conducted by the force to accomplish the mission. The execution checklist allows subordinate commands and supporting and adjacent forces to coordinate their actions and

maintain situational awareness. Only critical events and tasks requiring participation by multiple organizations should be included in the execution checklist. Events and tasks should be listed in the order of envisioned execution.

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EXECUTION CHECKLIST (U)

(U) Emphasize, primarily for headquarters and agencies external to the originating command, the actions that each must take to ensure the coordinated initiation of the operation. Additional information could include communications nets, brevity codes, reporting requirements, maneuver control measures, decision points, named areas of interest, tactical areas of interest, and any fragmentary orders in support of a branch plan.

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Action	Headquarters or Agency	Timing	Conditions
Electronic warfare attack selected NOG C2 nodes.	3 <sup>d</sup> MAW	Phase I through phase II.	102 <sup>d</sup> and 103 <sup>d</sup> Armored Brigades and 401 <sup>st</sup> and 402 <sup>d</sup> Artillery Regiments unable to pass information to NOG COC.
Isolate MEF battlespace from reinforcement from the south.	3 <sup>d</sup> MAW	D-day – D + 2, phase II.	Units larger than battalion unable to move north.
Main attack.	1 <sup>st</sup> MARDIV	D + 2, phase II, stage A.	Orangeland reconnaissance screen destroyed, first echelon engaged.
Supporting attack.	3 <sup>d</sup> MARDIV	D + 2-hour, phase II.	Shaping operations completed, initial barriers breached, Phaseline Green reached.
Establishment of forward CSSA.	1 <sup>st</sup> MLG	D + 4, phase II, stage A.	4 DOS of required classes of supply on hand.
Link up with Blue-land forces in Tealton.	3 <sup>d</sup> MARDIV	Phase II, stage B.	Physical link up at battalion level.
Defeat of the 102 <sup>d</sup> and 103 <sup>d</sup> Armored Brigades.	1 <sup>st</sup> MAW	Phase II, stage B.	102 <sup>d</sup> and 103 <sup>d</sup> Armored Brigades unable to conduct operations at battalion or higher level.
Opening of SPOD/APOD at Gray City (FRAGO 3 for branch plan CONDOR applies).	1 <sup>st</sup> MLG	On order phase II, stage B.	SPOD/APOD able to handle throughput of 3 DOS per day.
Link up with SPMAGTF-B in vicinity of Gray City.	3 <sup>d</sup> MARDIV	On order phase II, stage B.	Physical link up at the battalion level.
Pursuit operations to destroy withdrawing enemy forces.	3 <sup>d</sup> MAW	Phase III.	NOG unable to conduct operations at battalion or higher level.
Restoration of the border.	1 <sup>st</sup> MARDIV; 3 <sup>d</sup> MARDIV	Phase III.	NOG units larger than platoon size unable to cross the border, reconnaissance screen in place, and border posts turned over to Blue-land authorities.

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# GLOSSARY

## SECTION I. ACRONYMS

ACE . . . . .	aviation combat element	LCE . . . . .	logistics combat element
ARG . . . . .	amphibious ready group	LOO . . . . .	line of operations
ASCOPE . . . . .	areas, structures, capabilities, organizations, people, and events	MAGTF . . . . .	Marine air-ground task force
CAP . . . . .	crisis action planning	MARDIV . . . . .	Marine division
CAT . . . . .	crisis action team	MCDP . . . . .	Marine Corps doctrinal publication
CCIR . . . . .	commander's critical information requirements	MCOO . . . . .	modified combined obstacle overlay
CJCSM . . . . .	Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Manual	MCPP . . . . .	Marine Corps planning process
COA . . . . .	course of action	MCWP . . . . .	Marine Corps warfighting publication
COG . . . . .	center of gravity	MEF . . . . .	Marine expeditionary force
COIN . . . . .	counterinsurgency	METT-T . . . . .	mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops and support available-time available
CONOPS . . . . .	concept of operations	MEU . . . . .	Marine expeditionary unit
CSS . . . . .	combat service support	MSE . . . . .	major subordinate element
DOD . . . . .	Department of Defense	N-2 . . . . .	Navy component intelligence staff officer
FRAGO . . . . .	fragmentary order	NAI . . . . .	named area of interest
G-1 . . . . .	assistant chief of staff, personnel	NGO . . . . .	nongovernmental organization
G-2 . . . . .	assistant chief of staff, intelligence	OEF . . . . .	Operation Enduring Freedom
G-3 . . . . .	assistant chief of staff, operations	OIF . . . . .	Operation Iraqi Freedom
G-4 . . . . .	assistant chief of staff, logistics	OPLAN . . . . .	operation plan
G-5 . . . . .	assistant chief of staff, plans	OPORD . . . . .	operation order
G-6 . . . . .	assistant chief of staff, communications system	OPT . . . . .	operational planning team
GCE . . . . .	ground combat element	R&S . . . . .	reconnaissance and surveillance
HHQ . . . . .	higher headquarters	R2P2 . . . . .	rapid response planning process
HPT . . . . .	high-payoff target	rein . . . . .	reinforced
HVT . . . . .	high-value target	RFI . . . . .	request for information
IGO . . . . .	intergovernmental organization	ROC . . . . .	rehearsal of concept
IPB . . . . .	intelligence preparation of the battlespace	S-2 . . . . .	intelligence officer
JOPES . . . . .	Joint Operation Planning and Execution System	S-3 . . . . .	operations officer
JP . . . . .	joint publication	S-4 . . . . .	logistics officer
		SME . . . . .	subject matter expert
		SOP . . . . .	standing operating procedure



TAI ..... target area of interest  
TCAPF ..... tactical conflict assessment  
                    and planning framework  
TRAP ..... tactical recovery of  
                    aircraft and personnel

US ..... United States  
USG ..... United States Government  
WARNORD ..... warning order

## SECTION II. DEFINITIONS

**acceptability**—The joint operation plan review criterion for assessing whether the contemplated course of action is proportional and worth the cost in personnel, equipment, materiel, time involved, or position; is consistent with the law of war; and is militarily and politically supportable. (JP 1-02)

**adversary**—A party acknowledged as potentially hostile to a friendly party and against which the use of force may be envisaged. (JP 1-02)

**adversary template**—A model based on an adversary's known or postulated preferred methods of operation illustrating the disposition and activity of adversary forces and assets conducting a particular operation unconstrained by the impact of the operational environment. (JP 1-02) A model that portrays the adversary's frontage depths, echelon spacing, and force composition as well as the disposition of adversary combat, combat support, and combat service support units for a given operation. It portrays how the adversary would like to fight if he was not constrained. (This term and its definition are proposed for inclusion in the next edition of MCRP 5-12C.)

**area of influence**—A geographical area wherein a commander is directly capable of influencing operations by maneuver or fire support systems normally under the commander's command or control. (JP 1-02)

**area of interest**—That area of concern to the commander, including the area of influence, areas adjacent thereto, and extending into enemy territory to the objectives of current or planned operations. This area also includes areas occupied by enemy forces who could jeopardize the accomplishment of the mission. (JP 1-02)

**area of operations**—An operational area defined by the joint force commander for land and maritime forces. Areas of operation do not typically encompass the entire operational area of the joint

force commander, but should be large enough for component commanders to accomplish their missions and protect their forces. (JP 1-02)

**assumption**—A supposition on the current situation or a presupposition on the future course of events, either or both assumed to be true in the absence of positive proof, necessary to enable the commander in the process of planning to complete an estimate of the situation and make a decision on the course of action. (JP 1-02)

**avenue of approach**—An air or ground route of an attacking force of a given size leading to its objective or to key terrain in its path. (JP 1-02)

**battlespace**—1. All aspects of air, surface, subsurface, land, space, and electromagnetic spectrum which encompass the area of influence and area of interest. (MCRP 5-12C part 1 of a 2-part definition)

**branch**—The contingency options built into the base plan. A branch is used for changing the mission, orientation, or direction of movement of a force to aid success of the operation based on anticipated events, opportunities, or disruptions caused by adversary actions and reactions. See **sequel**. (JP 1-02)

**campaign**—A series of related military operations aimed at achieving a strategic or operational objectives within a given time and space. (JP 1-02)

**center of gravity**—The source of power that provides moral or physical strength, freedom of action, or will to act. Also called **COG**. (JP 1-02)

**collection plan**—A plan for collecting information from all available sources to meet intelligence requirements and for transforming those requirements into orders and requests to appropriate agencies. (JP 1-02)

**commander's critical information requirement**—An information requirement identified by

the commander as being critical to facilitating timely decisionmaking. The two key elements are friendly force information requirements and priority intelligence requirements. (JP 1-02) Information regarding the adversary and friendly activities and the environment identified by the commander as critical to maintaining situational awareness, planning future activities, and facilitating timely decisionmaking. The three primary subcategories are: priority intelligence requirements, friendly force information requirements, and essential elements of friendly information. (MCRP 5-12C)

**commander's estimate of the situation**—A process of reasoning by which a commander considers all the circumstances affecting the military situation and arrives at a decision as to a course of action to be taken to accomplish the mission. A commander's estimate, which considers a military situation so far in the future as to require major assumptions, is called a commander's long-range estimate of the situation. (JP 1-02)

**commander's intent**—A concise expression of the purpose of the operation and the desired end state. It may also include the commander's assessment of the adversary commander's intent and an assessment of where and how much risk is acceptable during the operation. (JP 1-02) A commander's clear, concise articulation of the purpose(s) behind one or more tasks assigned to a subordinate. It is one of two parts of every mission statement which guides the exercise of initiative in the absence of instructions. (MCRP 5-12C)

**concept of operations**—A verbal or graphic statement that clearly and concisely expresses what the joint force commander intends to accomplish and how it will be done using available resources. The concept is designed to give an overall picture of the operation. Also called **CONOPS**. (JP 1-02)

**concept plan**—In the context of joint operation planning level 3 planning detail, an operation

plan in an abbreviated format that may require considerable expansion or alteration to convert it into a complete operation plan or operation order. (JP 1-02)

**contingency**—A situation requiring military operations in response to natural disasters, terrorists, subversives, or as otherwise directed by appropriate authority to protect US interests. (JP 1-02)

**contingency planning**—The Joint Operation Planning and Execution System planning activities that occur in noncrisis situations. The Joint Planning and Execution Community uses contingency planning to develop operation plans for a broad range of contingencies based on requirements identified in the Contingency Planning Guidance, Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan, or other planning directive. Contingency planning underpins and facilitates the transition to crisis action planning. (JP 5-0)

**crisis action planning**—One of the two types of joint operation planning. The Joint Operation Planning and Execution System process involving the time-sensitive development of joint operation plans and operation orders for the deployment, employment, and sustainment of assigned and allocated forces and resources in response to an imminent crisis. Crisis action planning is based on the actual circumstances that exist at the time planning occurs. (JP 1-02)

**critical thinking**—Purposeful and reflective judgment about what to believe or what to do in response to observations, experience, verbal or written expressions, or arguments. (This term and its definition are proposed for inclusion in the next edition of MCRP 5-12C.)

**critical vulnerability**—An aspect of a critical requirement which is deficient or vulnerable to direct or indirect attack that will create decisive or significant effects. (JP 1-02) An aspect of a center of gravity that, if exploited, will do the most significant damage to an adversary's ability

to resist. A vulnerability cannot be critical unless it undermines a key strength. (MCRP 5-12C)

**D-day**—The unnamed day on which a particular operation commences or is to commence. (JP 1-02, from **times**)

**decision point**—An event, area, or point in the battlespace where and when the friendly commander will make a critical decision. (MCRP 5-12C)

**decision support template**—A combined intelligence and operations graphic based on the results of wargaming. The decision support template depicts decision points, timelines associated with movement of forces and the flow of the operation, and other key items of information required to execute a specific friendly course of action. (JP 1-02) A staff product initially used in the wargaming process which graphically represents the decision points and projected situations and indicates when, where, and under what conditions a decision is most likely to be required to initiate a specific activity (such as a branch or sequel) or an event (such as lifting or shifting of fires). (MCRP 5-12C)

**design**—The conception and articulation of a framework for solving a problem. (This term and its definition are proposed for inclusion in the next edition of MCRP 5-12C.)

**end state**—The set of required conditions that defines achievement of the commander's objectives. (JP 1-02)

**event template**—A guide for collection planning. The event template depicts the named area of interest where activity, or its lack of activity, will indicate which course of action the adversary has adopted. (JP 1-02) A model against which adversary activity can be recorded and compared. It represents a sequential projection of events that relate to space and time on the battlefield and indicate the enemy's ability to adopt a

particular course of action. It is a guide for collection and reconnaissance and surveillance planning. (MCRP 5-12C)

**feasibility**—The joint operation plan review criterion for assessing whether the assigned mission can be accomplished by using available resources within the time contemplated by the plan. (JP 1-02)

**fragmentary order**—An abbreviated form of an operation order issued as needed after an operation order to change or modify that order or to execute a branch or sequel to that order. Also called **FRAGO**. (JP 1-02)

**friendly force information requirement**—Information the commander needs about friendly forces in order to develop plans and make effective decisions. Depending upon the circumstances, information on unit location, composition, readiness, personnel status, and logistics status could become a friendly force information requirement. (MCRP 5-12C)

**H-hour**—The specific hour on D-day at which a particular operation commences. (JP 1-02, from **times**)

**high-payoff target**—A target whose loss to the adversary will significantly contribute to the success of the friendly course of action. High-payoff targets are those high-value targets that must be acquired and successfully attacked for the success of the friendly commander's mission. Also called **HPT**. (JP 1-02)

**high-value target**—A target the adversary commander requires for the successful completion of the mission. The loss of high-value targets would be expected to seriously degrade important adversary functions throughout the friendly commander's area of interest. Also called **HVT**. (JP 1-02)

**intelligence preparation of the battlespace**—The analytical methodologies employed by the

Services or joint force component commands to reduce uncertainties concerning the enemy, environment, time, and terrain. Intelligence preparation of the battlespace supports the individual operations of the joint force component commands. (JP 1-02) The systematic, continuous process of analyzing the threat and environment in a specific geographic area. Also called **IPB**. (MCRP 5-12C)

**line of operations**—1. A logical line that connects actions on nodes and/or decisive points related in time and purpose with an objective(s). 2. A physical line that defines the interior or exterior orientation of the force in relation to the adversary or that connects actions on nodes and/or decisive points related in time and space to an objective(s). Also called **LOO**. (JP 1-02)

**main effort**—The designated subordinate unit whose mission at a given point in time is most critical to overall mission success. It is usually weighted with the preponderance of combat power and is directed against a center of gravity through a critical vulnerability. (MCRP 5-12C)

**Marine Corps Planning Process**—A six-step methodology which helps organize the thought processes of the commander and staff throughout the planning and execution of military operations. It focuses on the mission and the threat and is based on the Marine Corps philosophy of maneuver warfare. It capitalizes on the principle of unity of command and supports the establishment and maintenance of tempo. The six steps consist of problem framing, course of action development, course of action analysis, comparison/decision, orders development, and transition. Also called **MCPP**. **Note:** Tenets of the MCPP include top-down planning, single-battle concept, and integrated planning. (MCRP 5-12C)

**mission**—1. The task, together with the purpose, that clearly indicates the action to be taken and the reason therefore. 2. In common usage, especially when applied to lower military units, a duty assigned to an individual or unit; a task. 3. The

dispatching of one or more aircraft to accomplish one particular task. (JP 1-02)

**named area of interest**—A point or area along a particular avenue of approach through which enemy activity is expected to occur. Activity or lack of activity within a named area of interest will help to confirm or deny a particular adversary course of action. Also called **NAI**. (MCRP 5-12C)

**operational planning team**—A group built around the future operations section which integrates the staff representatives and resources. The operational planning team may have representatives or augmentation from each of the standard staff sections, the six warfighting functions, staff liaisons, and/or subject matter experts. Also called **OPT**. (MCRP 5-12C)

**operation order**—A directive issued by a commander to subordinate commanders for the purpose of effecting the coordinated execution of an operation. Also called **OPORD**. (JP 1-02)

**operation plan**—Any plan for the conduct of military operations prepared in response to actual and potential contingencies. 2. In the context of joint operation planning level planning detail, a complete and detailed joint plan containing a full description of the concept of operations, all annexes applicable to the plan, and a time-phased force and deployment data. It identifies the specific forces, functional support, and resources required to execute the plan and provide closure estimates for their flow into the theater. Also called **OPLAN**. (JP 1-02)

**outline plan**—A preliminary plan which outlines the salient features or principles of a course of action prior to the initiation of detailed planning. (JP 1-02)

**planning order**—A planning directive that provides essential planning guidance and directs the initiation of execution planning before the directing authority approves a military course of action. (JP 1-02)

**priority intelligence requirements**—An intelligence requirement, stated as a priority for intelligence support, that the commander and staff need to understand the adversary or the operational environment. (JP 1-02) An intelligence requirement associated with a decision that will critically affect the overall success of the command's mission. (MCRP 5-12C)

**rear area**—For any particular command, the area extending forward from its rear boundary to the rear of the area assigned to the next lower level of command. This area is provided primarily for the performance of support functions. (JP 1-02) An area provided primarily for the performance of combat service support functions. (MCRP 5-12C)

**risk**—1. Probability and severity of loss linked to hazards. (JP 1-02 part 1 of a 2 part definition)

**sequel**—In a campaign, a major operation that follows the current major operation. In a single major operation, a sequel is the next phase. Plans for a sequel are based on the possible outcomes (success, stalemate, or defeat) associated with the current operation. See **branch**. (JP 1-02)

**situational awareness**—Knowledge and understanding of the current situation which promotes timely, relevant, and accurate assessment of friendly, enemy, and other operations within the battlespace in order to facilitate decisionmaking. An informational perspective and skill that foster an ability to determine quickly the context and relevance of events that are unfolding. (MCRP 5-12C)

**situational understanding**—The product of applying analysis and judgment to relevant information to determine the relationship among the mission variables (mission, adversary, terrain, and weather, troops and support available-time available) to facilitate decisionmaking. (MCRP 5-12C)

**situation template**—A depiction of assumed adversary dispositions, based on that adversary's preferred method of operations and the

impact of the operational environment if the adversary should adopt a particular course of action. (JP 1-02) A series of projections that portray, based on adversary doctrine, the most probable disposition and location of enemy forces within constraints imposed by weather and terrain. (MCRP 5-12C)

**spot report**—A concise narrative report of essential information covering events or conditions that may have an immediate and significant effect on current planning and operations that is afforded the most expeditious means of transmission consistent with requisite security. **Note:** In reconnaissance and surveillance usage, spot report is not to be used. (JP 1-02)

**supporting effort**—Designated subordinate unit(s) whose mission is designed to directly contribute to the success of the main effort. (MCRP 5-12C)

**supporting plan**—An operation plan prepared by a supporting commander, a subordinate commander, or an agency to satisfy the requests or requirements of the supported commander's plan. (JP 1-02)

**synchronization matrix**—A format for the staff to record the results of wargaming and synchronize the course of action across time, space, and purpose in relation to an adversary course of action. (MCRP 5-12C)

**target**—1. An entity or object considered for possible engagement or other action. 2. In intelligence usage, a country, area, installation, agency, or person against which intelligence operations are directed. 3. An area designated and numbered for future firing. 4. In gunfire support usage, an impact burst that hits the target. (JP 1-02)

**target area of interest**—The geographical area where high-value targets can be acquired and engaged by friendly forces. Not all target areas of interest will form part of the friendly course of action; only target areas of interest associated with high priority targets are of interest to the

staff. These areas are identified during staff planning and wargaming. Target areas of interest differ from engagement areas in degree. Engagement areas plan for the use of all available weapons; target areas of interest might be engaged by a single weapon. Also called **TAI**. (JP 1-02)

**targeting**—The process of selecting and prioritizing targets and matching the appropriate response to them, considering operational requirements and capabilities. (JP 1-02)

**war game**—A simulation, by whatever means, of a military operation involving two or more opposing forces, using rules, data, and procedures designed to depict an actual or assumed real life situation. (JP 1-02)

**wargaming**—A step-by-step process of action, reaction, and counteraction for visualizing the

execution of each friendly course of action in relation to adversary courses of action and reactions. It explores the possible branches and sequels to the primary plan resulting in a final plan and decision points for critical actions. (The modification is proposed for inclusion in the next edition of MCRP 5-12C.)

**warning order**—1. A preliminary notice of an order or action that is to follow. 2. A planning directive that initiates the development and evaluation of military courses of action by a supported commander and requests that the supported commander submit a commander's estimate. 3. A planning directive that describes the situation, allocates forces and resources, establishes command relationships, provides other initial planning guidance, and initiates subordinate unit mission planning. Also called **WARNORD**. (JP 1-02)

# REFERENCES

## Department of Defense Issuances

### Department of Defense Directive (DODD)

3025.14 Protection and Evacuation of US Citizens and Designated Aliens in Danger Areas Abroad w/changes 1 and 2

### Department of Defense Instruction (DODI)

1100.22 Policy and Procedures for Determining Workforce Mix

### Military Standard (MIL-STD)

2525C Department of Defense Interface Standard: Common Warfighting Symbology

## Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction (CJCSI)

3211.01\_ Joint Policy for Military Deception

## Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Manual (CJCSM)

3122.01\_ Joint Operation Planning and Execution System (JOPES) Volume I, (Planning Policies and Procedures)

3122.03\_ Joint Operation Planning and Execution System (JOPES) Volume II, (Planning Formats and Guidance)

## Joint Publications (JPs)

- 1 Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States
- 1-02 Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms
- 3-0 Joint Operations
- 3-08 Interagency, Intergovernmental Organization, and Nongovernmental Organization Coordination during Joint Operations (Volumes I and II)
- 3-13.4 Military Deception
- 4-01 Joint Doctrine for the Defense Transportation System
- 5-0 Joint Operation Planning

## North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Standardization Agreement (STANAG)

2014 NATO Formats for Orders and Designation of Timing, Locations, and Boundaries

## Army Field Manual (FM)

3-07 Stability Operations



## Marine Corps Publications

### Marine Corps Doctrinal Publications (MCDPs)

- 1 Warfighting
- 1-0 Marine Corps Operations
- 1-2 Campaigning
- 4 Logistics
- 5 Planning

### Marine Corps Order (MCO)

P3000.18\_ Marine Corps Planner's Manual w/ ch 1

### Marine Corps Reference Publications (MCRPs)

- 5-12A Operational Terms and Graphics w/change 1
- 5-12C Marine Corps Supplement to the Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms
- 2-3A Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield/Battlespace

### Marine Corps Warfighting Publications (MCWPs)

- 3-40.8 Marine Corps Componentency
- 4-11 Tactical-Level Logistics
- 3-33.5 Counterinsurgency

### Miscellaneous Marine Corps Publications

MAGTF Staff Training Program (MSTP) Pamphlet 5-0.2, *Operational Planning Team Leaders Guide*

Marine Corps Intelligence Activity (MCIA)1540-002-95, *Generic Intelligence Requirements Handbook (GIRH)*

## Miscellaneous Publications

Boyd, John R., *Destruction and Creation*, an essay from *A Discourse on Winning and Losing*, 1976.

Commander in Chief, Far East Message to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 23 July 1950.

*Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction*. 2009. United States Institute of Peace. United States Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute. Washington, D.C.

Heinl, Robert Debs, Jr., Col., USMC, Retired, *Dictionary of Military and Naval Quotations* (Annapolis, MD: United States Naval Institute, 1966)

Karnow, Stanley. *Vietnam: A History*. (New York: The Viking Press, 1983)

Patton, George S., Jr., Gen, US Army. *War As I Knew It*. (New York, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1947)

Montgomery, Bernard (Viscount Montgomery of Alamein). *Memoirs*. (New York: The World Publishing Company, 1958)

Tsouras, Peter G., *Warriors' Words: A Quotation Book*, (London, England: Arms and Armour Press, 1992)

OPERATION PLAN/ORDER FORMAT

Classification. As appropriate, centered at the top and bottom of the page.

CLASSIFICATION  
(No change from oral orders)

HEADING

**Changes from Oral Orders.** Used when oral orders regarding this operation have been previously issued. Enclosed in parentheses. Example: "(No change from oral orders except paragraphs 3b and 3f.)" Omitted in plans. Omitted in orders when no oral orders have been issued.

**Title.** Numbered consecutively for a calendar year. Two or more issued on the same day are given consecutive numbers. Joint operation plan or order is so designated. Code name, if any, as shown.

**References.** Documents, such as maps, charts, photomaps, or SOPs, necessary for understanding must be available to recipients. Entry is always included (use "References: None" when applicable). Map entries include series number, country, sheet names or numbers, edition, and scale.

BODY

**Time Zone.** If same for the place of issue and execution and will be the same throughout execution, then entry may be omitted. If time zone is different in area of execution, which frequently occurs in amphibious or air-transported operations, then state when indicated time zone becomes effective.

**Task Organization.** May be shown in the following ways:

1. As an unnumbered entry before paragraph 1 (Situation). Used when the entire command of issuing headquarters is organized into task organizations for a particular operation and task organizations are too complicated to be shown using other methods.

2. If there is no change to previous task organization, show "No Change."

3. Under the proper subparagraph of paragraph 3; simplest and, therefore, preferred method in continuing the ground combat situation. Show "No Change" except paragraph 3b..."

4. As an annex when lengthy; e.g., division or higher. Used in amphibious operations. Permits early dissemination and assists concurrent planning. Also used where planning precedes operation by a considerable period of time.

In numbers 1 and 4 above, the organization of the issuing headquarters, including service and administrative groupings that will perform normal functions, is the first entry. Following that, each task grouping that is to receive a tactical mission is shown in the sequence in which the missions are assigned in paragraph 3.

**General.** For plans only: describe the general politico-military environment that would establish the probable preconditions for execution of the plan.

**Battlespace.** The higher commander's area of operations and the command's areas of interest, influence, and operations described by the physical area and forces of concern.

**Enemy Forces.** Show enemy information vital to the entire command or likely to affect the accomplishment of mission. May refer to intelligence annex, operation overlay (if enemy information is shown), or intelligence summaries. Contains disposition, intent, objectives, vulnerabilities, centers of gravity, and COAs.

**Friendly Forces.** Information on own forces having bearing on operation (higher, adjacent, and supporting). Artillery listed as first supporting unit and then others are listed alphabetically. May reference annex operation overlay.

**Paragraph 4.** Logistic and personnel information and instructions for the operation. Usually refers to appropriate annexes.

**Paragraph 5.** Instructions to establish and maintain command and signal procedures.

1. **Command Relationships.** Used when in a large operation or when relationships are unusual. Otherwise omitted.

2. **Command Posts and Headquarters.** May reference operations overlay for locations.

3. **Succession to Command.** Designates the succession of command for the operation.

4. **Signal.** Usually references annex K and other communication publications, such as SOP or communications-electronics operating instructions. Includes instructions or restrictions or pyrotechnic signals.

5. Use additional subparagraphs to show location and time of opening communication centers, recognition and identification instructions, code words and names, and liaison.

**Annexes.** Appended to and form a portion of the completed plan/order. They pertain to a particular concept, subject, or coordination aspect too voluminous, of insufficient general interest, or in irregular form, such as overlays, graphs, or tables, for the body of the plan/order. Contributes to the brevity and clarity of the parent document. The sequence and lettering must not change. Annexes may be omitted when not required. Annexes are designated by capital letter, amplified where necessary by appendices to annexes, tabs to appendices, and enclosures to tabs.

OPERATION ORDER 0002-10 (OPERATION SHARP SWORD) (U)  
BASIC ORDER (U)

(U) REFERENCES:

- (a) Maps and Charts: Series ONC, sheet G-2 (ORANGELAND, BLUELAND), edition 12
- (b) USCINCPAC Planning Directive, 27 March 2010

(U) TIME ZONE: Zulu

(U) TASK ORGANIZATION. Annex A.

1. (U) Situation

a. (U) General. With the failure of deterrence, Blue-land forces crossed the Orangeland border and have been successful in their initial battles.

b. (U) Battlespace. See appendix 18 to annex C.

c. (U) Enemy Forces. See appendix B and current intelligence summaries.

d. (U) Friendly Forces.

e. (U) Attachments and Detachments

2. (U) Mission. On order, I MEF, as the main effort, conducts offensive operations to defeat enemy forces in zone in order to restore the Blue-land border. Be prepared to continue offensive operations into Orangeland to destroy remaining Orangeland offensive military capabilities.

3. (U) Execution.

a. (U) Commander's Intent.

b. (U) Concept of Operations. This operation will be conducted in three phases.

c. (U) Tasks

- (1) (U) 1st MARINE DIVISION (REIN)
- (2) (U) 3d MARINE DIVISION (-) (REIN)
- (3) (U) 3d MARINE AIRCRAFT WING
- (4) (U) 1st FORCE SERVICE SUPPORT (-) (REIN)
- (5) (U) SPECIAL PURPOSE MAGTF-B
- (6) (U) REAR AREA COMMANDER

d. (U) MEF Reserve

e. (U) Commander's Critical Information Requirements

f. (U) Coordinating Instructions

4. (U) Administration and Logistics

5. (U) Command and Signal

a. (U) Command Relationships. See Annex J (Command Relationships).

b. (U) Command Posts and Headquarters

c. (U) Succession to Command

d. (U) Signal. See Annex K (Combat Information Systems).

ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT

GENERAL C. THOMAS  
Lieutenant General, USMC  
Commanding

Annexes:

- A-Task Organization
- B-Intelligence
- C-Operations
- D-Logistics
- E-Personnel
- F-Public Affairs
- G-Civil-Military Operations
- H-Meteorological and Oceanographic Operations
- J-Command Relationships
- K-Combat Information Systems
- L-Environmental Considerations
- M-Geospatial Information and Services
- N-Space Operations
- P-Host Nations Support
- Q-Medical Services
- S-Special Technical Operations
- U-Information Management
- V-Interagency Coordination
- W-Aviation Operations
- X-Execution Checklist
- Z-Distribution

OFFICIAL:

s/  
M.B. TWINING  
Colonel, USMC  
AC/S G-3

Page number

CLASSIFICATION

HEADING

Copy number. Assigned by issuing headquarters to each copy. Log maintained of specific copies issued to addressees.

Official Designation of Command. Use code name if required for security.

Place of Issue. May be code name, postal designator, or geographic location (including map coordinates). Always capitalized.

Date/Time. Day, month, and year order is signed, issued, and becomes effective, unless specified otherwise in paragraph 3f (Coordinating Instructions.)

Message Reference Number. Allows acknowledgment in the clear. Assigned by originator. Consists of letters, numbers, or a combination. It has no connection with the message center numbering system. Annexes issued separately are assigned different numbers.

BODY

Paragraph 2. Clear, concise statement of the tasks and purpose of the operation. State the who, what, when, where, why, and as much of the how as necessary. No subparagraphs. Always stated here even if shown on the operation overlay or map.

Commander's Intent. Commander's personal statement of the purpose of the operation.

Concept of Operations. A summary statement of how the operation will be accomplished. Amplifies paragraph 2. May be shown graphically or published as an appendix to annex C. Specific unit designations are not used.

Tasks to Subordinate Elements.

1. Each unit, organic or attached, or tactical grouping that is executing a tactical task is assigned a separate numbered subparagraph. All tactical tasks must be listed in the body of the basic orders.

2. List tasks for major subordinate elements as follows:

- Offensive Order: Ground combat units (infantry first followed by artillery and combat support units numerically or alphabetically), aviation combat units or elements (aircraft units, combat support, combat service support), combat service support units or elements.
- Defensive Order: Units or elements closest to the enemy are listed first. Ground and aviation combat units in the forward defense area are then listed in numerical order followed by other units alphabetically.

3. Each tactical task assignment may first show the assets (attached or in support) available to the unit or element for the operation. Then tasks are enumerated.

4. Priority must be stated if missions are multiple and priority of accomplishment is desired.

5. If all instructions to the unit are shown on the operations overlay, list the unit after the proper subparagraph number and reference operation overlay appendix.

Commander's Critical Information Requirements. Identify information the commander has deemed critical to maintaining his situational awareness, planning future activities, and assisting in timely and informed decisionmaking.

Coordinating Instructions. Final subparagraph in paragraph 3. Contains instructions common to two or more units, coordinating details and control measures applicable to the command as a whole, and time or conditions when plan is to be executed. Refers to annexes or references for coordinating details when appropriate. Communications instructions shown in paragraph 5 only.

ENDING

Acknowledgment Instructions. Included in every order and separately issued portions. Ensures that recipients receive and understand the order.

Signature. Original signed by the commander or chief of staff/executive officer.

1. Original signed by commander.

Name  
Rank, USMC  
Commander

2. Original signed by chief of staff/executive officer.

BY COMMAND OF COLONEL NAME

Name  
Rank, USMC  
Title

Authenticated by G/S-3 when commander's or executive officer's signature is on the original only; G/S-3 authentication appears on all other copies.

To satisfy JOPs format requirements, titles of paragraphs and subparagraphs must remain as shown in this example.