MCWP 5-10

Marine Corps Planning Process

U.S. Marine Corps

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FOREWORD

Marine Corps Warfighting Publication (MCWP) 5-10, *Marine Corps Planning Process*, was first published in January 2000 as MCWP 5-1. Since that time, Marine Corps forces at all echelons of command have used the Marine Corps Planning Process (MCPP) to conduct the range of military operations. The use of design over the last decade suggests that design is more than conceptual planning which establishes aims, objectives, and intentions.

A more critical role of design is to promote understanding of the current situation as a basis for broad solutions. While design establishes the nature of the problem, the inclusion of a design methodology in this revision aids commanders, staffs, and planners in determining the problem set and a framework for solving them. The publication's design methodology reflects a belief that sufficient complexity can exist at all levels of warfare and across the conflict continuum to include tactical situations that will require an understanding of the set of problems that hinder movement from the current state to the desired state of an operational environment.

Among all critical factors bearing on military operations, time is *defining*. The MCPP helps Marines win the time fight through a promotion of intuitive understanding, commander's intent, and the use of task and purpose when operating inside an established paradigm. Another time aid is the center of gravity techniques used to determine which of the actions that address a problem set will be decisive. These visions of decisiveness inform the convergence of combat power through main and supporting efforts and resource priorities.

The publication focuses primarily on commanders with staffs; however, any Marine required to plan operations should know the planning process well enough to determine the problem, envision a desired state, and develop options for achieving that state.

This publication supersedes MCWP 5-10, *Marine Corps Planning Process*, dated 24 August 2010.

MCWP 5-10 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.

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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*

MCDP 5, *Planning*, describes planning as an essential part of the broader field of command and control. Command and control enhances the commander's ability to make sound and timely decisions. Effective decision-making 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:

- **Troop Leading Steps.** There are six steps that align with the acronym BAMCIS—begin planning, arrange for reconnaissance, make reconnaissance, complete the plan, issue the order, and supervise. While these steps have wide applicability, they are generally used by small unit leaders who lack a staff.
- **Marine Corps Planning Process.** For Marine units with staffs, the Marine Corps Planning Process (MCPP), as described in this publication, is a proven, intellectually rigorous approach to planning. It is a six-step process comprised of problem framing, course of action (COA) development, COA war game, COA comparison and decision, orders development, and transition. See figure 1-1.
- **Joint Planning Process.** Marine Corps forces also operate in a joint environment. Joint force commanders and their staffs use joint planning process, as described by Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *Joint Planning*, for strategic plans and operational-level campaigns. Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF) command elements, which may serve as or interact with a joint force headquarters, must be capable of operating effectively within a joint planning process framework.
- **Rapid Response Planning Process.** Used primarily by Marine expeditionary units (MEUs), the rapid response planning process (R2P2) is a time-leveraged planning process that enables a MEU to begin execution of an assigned task within 6 hours. To do so, MEUs conduct the deliberate planning—within the context of the intended area of responsibility—as well as the rehearsal of potential missions, such as humanitarian assistance/disaster relief or noncombatant evacuation operations, during pre-deployment training. Accordingly, the R2P2, when coupled with the extensive use of standing operating procedures (SOPs), enables a MEU to focus its execution planning on those aspects of a problem unique to the current situation.

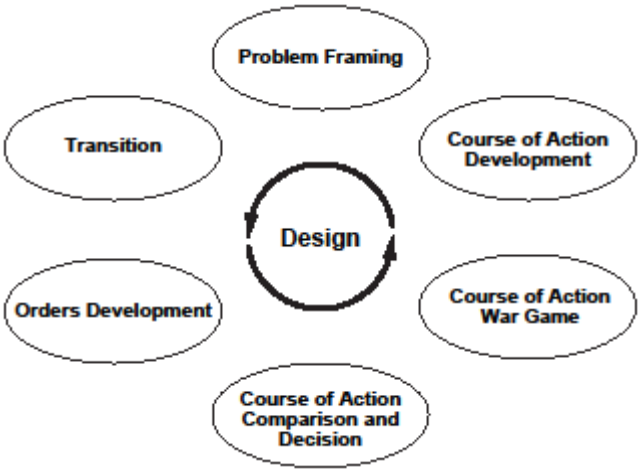

Figure 1-1. Overview of the Marine Corps Planning Process.

DOCTRINAL UNDERPINNINGS

Planning should never be viewed as an isolated activity or process. Not only is planning a critical element of command and control, but planning along with execution and assessment comprise the operation's process. Planning is the basis for execution while assessment determines how and why the environment has changed as a result of execution, which then informs subsequent planning and assessment. While that description suggests a sequence to the relationship, these three essential military activities are cyclical in nature. Individually and together, they interact and evolve over time through countless, interrelated events.

Because situations change continuously, Marines make decisions 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 a fluid environment demands Marines to think critically, examine the nature of the problem, as well as the purpose of the operation, and learn and adapt throughout the entire operation's process.

Many factors within the operational environment, some of which cannot be controlled, contribute to making planning endeavors complex and nonlinear. These factors include: enemy actions; the actions of other actors and stakeholders; other friendly, neutral, and threat networks; updated intelligence; changing resources; revised guidance from higher headquarters (HHQ); input provided as a result of operations; and concurrent planning by subordinate, adjacent, and supporting units. Planners and commanders should expect problems to evolve even while they try to solve them.

While this publication presents the six steps of the MCPP sequentially, planning seldom occurs in a straightforward, linear manner. For example, understanding gained during COA development and COA war game steps will often require planners to revisit the problem framing step of the

planning process. To better appreciate the lack of a rigid, fixed planning sequence, planners need to understand the planning hierarchy that is essential to the effective application of the MCPP.

As described in MCDP 5, *conceptual* planning is the highest level of planning. It establishes aims, objectives, and intentions and involves the development of 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 flows from conceptual planning and generally corresponds to the *science* of war and encompasses the specifics of implementation. Detailed planning generally is an analytical process of decomposing concepts 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 the objectives.

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 and integrating the supporting plans for discrete functional activities that include at a minimum maneuver, fires, logistics, intelligence, information, 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 usually developed by the planners and staff.

Conceptual planning provides the basis for all subsequent planning and should progress from the general to the specific. For example, the commander's operational approach leads to the unit's concept of operations (CONOPS) as well as to supporting functional concepts. These concepts then 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 influence each other. 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.

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 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 pressure on all of the Confederate armies, thereby removing their ability to shift resources to reinforce any one army.

SYNOPSIS OF THE MARINE CORPS PLANNING PROCESS

A commander may begin planning on his/her 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, planners, staff, and subordinate commanders regarding the nature of a given problem and the options for solving it. The plans that result may be considered hypotheses that will be tested and refined as a result of execution and assessment. The six steps of the MCPP are—

- **Problem Framing.** Problem framing uses a design methodology supported by staff actions to enhance the understanding of the operational environment and the subsequent problem set. Problem framing identifies what the command must accomplish, when and where it must be done and, most importantly, why—the purpose of the operation. The mission statement articulates the "in order to," the ultimate purpose of the operation. The commander's intent restates and amplifies the purpose of the operation, which is enduring. No amount of subsequent planning can solve a problem that is misidentified and/or insufficiently understood. It is imperative that commanders identify and solve the correct problem. Therefore, problem framing is the most important step in planning. The understanding that results from problem framing allows the commander to visualize and describe how the operation may unfold, which is articulated in the commander's operational approach, a broad framework for solving the problems identified. As planning continues, the commander's guidance becomes more detailed, providing additional clarity and operational context.
- **COA Development.** The COA development step produces options for accomplishing the mission in accordance with commander's operational approach. It provides options for the

commander and promotes further understanding of the environment, problem set, and the approach to solving the problem.

- **COA War Game.** This step seeks to improve the COA by testing and stressing it against an enemy and/or adversary, or other forms of friction in operations such as humanitarian assistance, in the operational environment. Planners identify and record flaws for correction in the refined COA. Done well, COA wargaming improves COAs while enhancing a better understanding of the environment, the problem set, and the forces (both friendly and adversarial) involved. Planners evaluate refined COAs using the commander's chosen criteria.
- **COA Comparison and Decision.** During COA comparison and decision, the commander reviews the advantages and disadvantages of the options. The commander decides how to accomplish the mission, either by approving a COA as formulated or by assimilating what has been learned into a new COA that may need further refinement and wargaming.
- **Orders Development.** The orders development step translates the commander's decision into oral, written, and graphic direction sufficient to guide subordinate planning, execution, and initiative.
- **Transition.** The transition step may involve a wide range of briefs, drills, or rehearsals necessary to ensure a successful shift of situational awareness from planning to execution. Transition addresses the human element. The written order is initially well-understood only by the small group that wrote it. Transition enables the far larger group of executors (current operations staff, subordinate unit commanders and staff, combat operations center members, etc.) to comprehensively understand the plan. A number of factors can influence the transition step, such as echelon of command, mission complexity, and most importantly, time available.

Throughout the planning process, commanders and planners must strive to increase their understanding of the problem set, the plan, and developments in the operational environment. Lead planners must seek a common understanding across the staff, to include those not assigned to the core planning team. Providing focused, preparatory readings for upcoming briefs to commanders and primary staff officers, with sufficient time for comprehension, will better prepare leaders and planners to engage in substantive discussions. Warning orders (WARNORDs) and other focused communications greatly facilitate concurrent and parallel planning, while driving a higher level of integration. Videos, graphics, and other modern media, used in all facets of planning, briefs, and orders, can greatly enhance knowledge and understanding.

TENETS OF THE MARINE CORPS PLANNING PROCESS

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 the staff to plan and execute military operations that include campaigns involving day-to-day operations such as security cooperation activities and exercises.

- **Top-Down Planning.** Planning is a fundamental responsibility of command. The commander uses planning to increase his/her understanding of the environment, the problem set, and the subsequent solution. The commander's personal involvement is critical to successful, centralized planning. The commander must not merely participate in planning, but must drive the process to the degree that the published plan is a clear manifestation of the commander's decision regarding how to best accomplish the mission. In keeping with our institutional warfighting philosophy, this commander-driven, centralized planning provides the necessary foundation for decentralized execution, an important way Marine Corps forces leverage the time-competitive nature of military operations to gain and maintain advantage relative to the enemy/adversary.
- **Single-Battle Concept.** In planning, to maximize opportunities for success, commanders and planners seek to purposely arrange forces in time, space, event, and purpose. Such arrangements, to include phasing, main and supporting efforts, and the relationship among decisive, shaping, and sustaining forces and activities, are well considered and never arbitrary. During execution, events, activities, or operations in one part of the battlespace often have profound and consequent effects in and on other areas and events. Commanders and planners must, therefore, always view the battlespace as an indivisible entity—a single battle. Commanders cultivate the single-battle mindset throughout planning, primarily through articulated understanding of their higher commander's purpose and their planning guidance and intent. Global integration is now the norm for conducting operations, so commanders and staffs must consider impacts beyond geographic boundaries that have traditionally bounded planning considerations.
- **Integrated Planning**. Leveraging top-down planning and a keen appreciation for the MAGTF single-battle concept, integrated planning seeks the coordination of actions by all elements of the force toward a common purpose. There are both hierarchical and lateral perspectives to planning integration. Hierarchically, the MAGTF command element integrates planning with each of its subordinate elements, as well as its HHQ. Laterally, the MAGTF's subordinate elements integrate their planning with each other to generate synergy and to leverage the full capacity and capability of the force. As Marine Corps forces fight as part of a larger force, lateral integration with adjacent and supporting joint and combined forces is equally important. Integrated planning results from the assignment of personnel to the operational planning team (OPT), to include joint and combined force planners, who are armed with an appropriate level of knowledge of their respective organization or functional activity. It will also likely include the provision of Marine Corps planners to other joint and combined units. The key to integrated planning is to involve the right personnel from the right organizations as early as possible to consider a broader range of factors, reduce omissions, and share information as widely as possible. See Appendix D for information on organizing for planning.

Overall, 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, planning is not a simple sequence of steps. Any step in the process may inform previous steps. 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. Another example, new information received during orders development may reveal a weakness in the CONOPS that would require the development of new COAs or a branch plan.

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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*

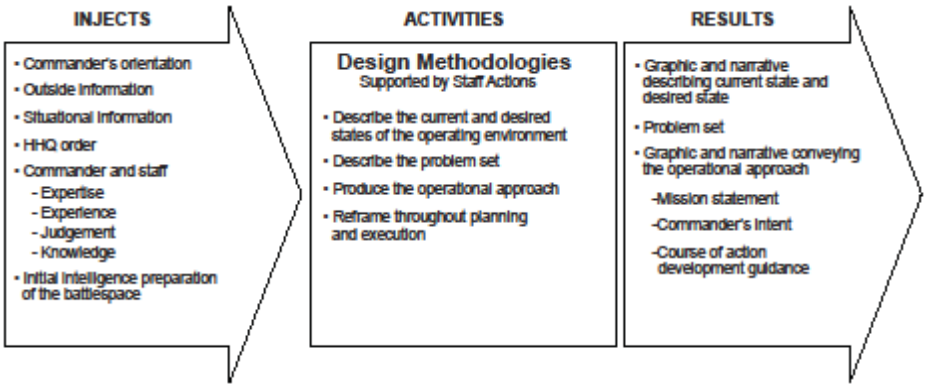

Figure 2-1. Problem Framing Process.

Problem framing is the first step in the MCPP and consists of a commander-driven design methodology supported by staff actions. It may begin informally in response to indications and warnings or more formally when the HHQ produces an order or directive—including the HHQ mission and tasks to subordinate commands. The purpose of problem framing is to gain an enhanced understanding of the operational environment and the nature of the problem set. In the information age, with the global and instantaneous reach of information capabilities, resources, and activities, the problem set will result from a consideration of all relevant actors, motives, capabilities, and actions that could impact the ability to accomplish assigned tasks. This greater understanding of the operational environment allows a commander to visualize the operation and describe his/her broad operational 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. Particulary important is to avoid mirror imaging, which is assuming other people or groups would react to a given situation in the same way as you would. Since no amount of subsequent planning can solve a problem insufficiently understood or misidentified, framing the problem is critical. To achieve this understanding, problem framing requires both the judgment of synthesis and the systematic study of analysis.

In problem framing, commanders and planners begin their appreciation of two enduring, critically important factors—time and risk. This appreciation continues throughout all steps of planning and every phase of execution.

Like people and equipment, time is a resource. Commanders and planners constantly deal with the impact of time throughout planning and execution, and those who fail to appreciate it endanger the integration and coordination within the force necessary for success. As its impact is pervasive, it is not an exaggeration to say that of all the critical factors in military operations, the aspect of time is *defining.* While clearly not a complete list, examples of the importance of time include—

- Allocating available time for planning, to include allocating time for subordinate units.
- Calculating the time required for the movement of forces to ensure forces are arrayed spatially to achieve the desired outcomes.
- Determining how long it takes to do something, to include how weather and other environmental conditions, day and night, impact that duration.
- How long staff review and approval processes take in advance of a commander's decision that directs tactical actions in a specific area.

While commanders and planners appreciate time, commanders own risk. As MCDP 1, *Warfighting*, states, "Risk is inherent in war and is involved in every mission….Risk may be related to gain; greater potential gain requires greater risk." An appreciation for risk, therefore, enables the commander to make more informed decisions regarding the employment of forces. Where risk management programs in garrison rightfully focus on mitigation and preservation of warfighting capabilities, risk in war and competitions short of armed conflict also include the need to leverage—even embrace—risk in order to gain and maintain advantage relative to an enemy and/or adversary.

DESIGN

A design methodology, as outlined in figure 2-1, is central to the problem framing effort. The goal of design is to achieve understanding gained largely through critical thinking and dialogue—the basic mechanisms 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. While design occurs throughout problem framing, design is an enduring activity not confined to the problem framing step.

INTRODUCTION TO MARINE CORPS DESIGN METHODOLOGY

The Marine Corps design methodology helps planners determine the correct set of problems, and a framework for solving them. In this manner, design not only occurs throughout problem framing but throughout all of planning and execution. The design methodology consists of four distinct actions—

1. Describe the current and desired states of the operational environment.
2. Define the problem set.
3. Produce the operational approach.
4. Reframe throughout planning and execution.

Within the Marine Corps, design can play a meaningful role in virtually every planning evolution, regardless of scope or complexity. Additionally, the Marine Corps views design beginning during problem framing that further emphasizes the need for design in every instance where planning occurs, even though the amount of design effort will be different for each situation.

The Marine Corps design methodology reflects a belief that sufficient complexity can exist at all levels of warfare and across the conflict continuum to include tactical situations that will require an understanding of the set of problems that hinder movement from the current state to the desired state of an operational environment. These problems may be simpler to identify than a more complex joint operation, but the requirement still exists. The Marine Corps design methodology is flexible enough to add value in all of these instances. Figure 2-1 summarizes this methodology and appendix E provides an example of design.

Commander's Orientation

The commander's orientation is the initial action by the commander in the design effort to begin to frame the problem as a basis for developing possible solutions. It demonstrates the commander's personal involvement and leadership in the planning process, and allows the commander to set the tone for subsequent planning. The commander's orientation is the first of many venues where the commander, planners, staff, and subordinate commanders collaborate through discourse, the exchange of information, and the sharing of ideas and perspectives.

The commander's orientation could be as simple as the commander's initial thoughts or it may be as complex as the commander's experience and detailed analysis allow. For example, Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm did little to prepare I Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) for Joint Task Force Los Angeles (Los Angeles Riots) and Joint Task Force Somalia (Operation Restore Hope), which represented entirely different circumstances, actors, and operational environments. In both cases, other than succinct planning directives to prepare for possible operations, there was little initial information besides what could be gleaned from media outlets. In contrast, multiple tours in Iraq and Afghanistan enabled commanders to provide a wealth of information to initiate

their planning efforts. The commander will base the orientation on a study of the operational environment that includes friendly and enemy forces, competitors, and other forms of friction depending on the nature of the situation, such as terrain and weather impacts on operations. Another critical factor is the information environment, that is defined as the aggregate of individuals, organizations, and systems that collect, process, disseminate, or act on information. The information environment includes space, cyberspace, as well as domestic and international audiences.

In a mature situation with existing HHQ's plans, the commander can provide higher's intent and may even suggest possible centers of gravity (COGs) and the commander's intent for the command's subordinate forces. The degree to which the commander has, or can gain, an in-depth understanding of the situation will go a long way toward helping the OPT determine both the current and desired states of the operational environment.

Describe the Current and Desired States of the Operational Environment

Planners describe the current and desired states of the operational environment (see fig. 2-2). The current state is the status of the operational environment as it presently exists. The desired state is a hypothesis of more favorable conditions at a future time. Some desired states might be a simple transition from one part of an operation to another, or a clear subset of the HHQ's desired end state. Other desired states at higher-level commands could include transition criteria that cease hostilities altogether.

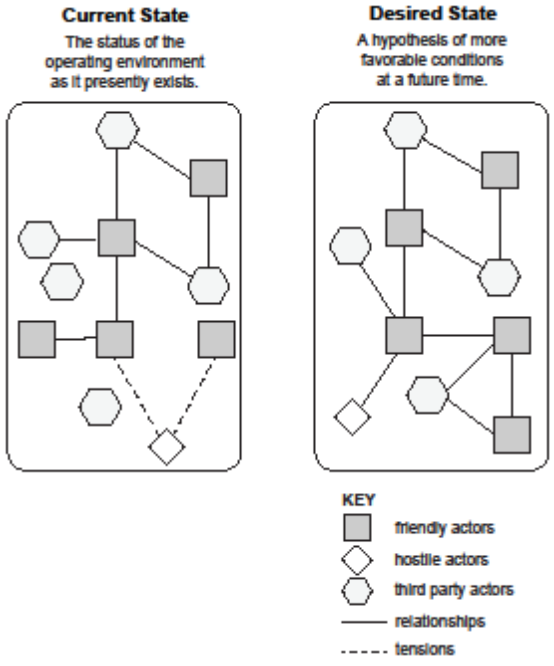

Figure 2-2. Current State to Desired State.

Planners use graphics and a narrative to best describe the current and desired states. This technique enhances the understanding of the operational environment for practitioners and provides a clear, concise, and familiar way to portray information to a commander.

The type of graphics and narratives depend on the complexity of the operation and how each commander best assimilates information. For instance, a MEF- or Marine expeditionary brigade (MEB)-level operation may describe the current and desired states across the six common operational variables—political, military, economic, social, information, and infrastructure, (PMESII). Areas, structures, capabilities, organizations, people, and events (ASCOPE) is another example that highlights civil variables that planners can use in conjunction with the operational variables to gain a more holistic understanding of the operational environment.

Other options may be a systems diagram (see fig. 2-3) or a causal loop diagram (see fig. 2-4) to describe relationships between and among a variety of factors and stakeholders.

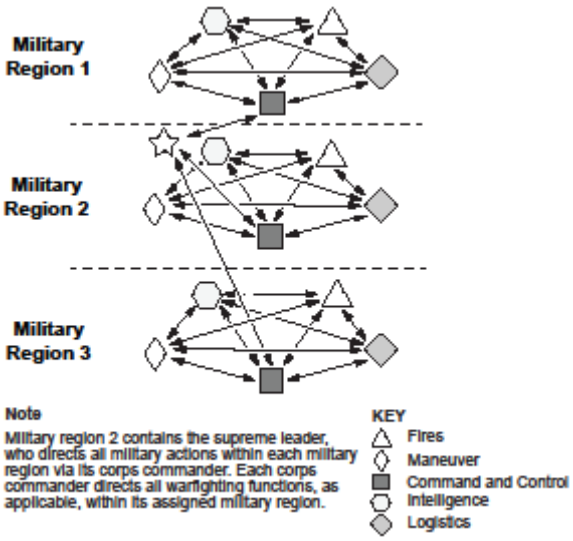

Figure 2-3. System Diagram Example.

A causal loop diagram aids in visualizing how different variables in a system are interrelated (see fig. 2-4). The diagram consists of a set of nodes that represent the variables and edges that represent a connection or a relation between the two or more variables. A link marked positive (+) indicates a positive relation and a link marked negative (–) indicates a negative relation. A positive causal link means the two nodes change in the same direction. Meaning, if the node in which the link starts decreases, the other node also decreases, or if the node in which the link starts increases, the other node increases as well. A negative causal link means the two nodes change in opposite directions. If the node in which the link starts increases, the other node decreases and vice versa. In the causal loop diagram, closed cycles are very important features that are defined as either a reinforcing loop or balancing feedback loop. A reinforcing loop is a cycle in which the effect of a

variation in any variable propagates through the loop and returns to the variable reinforcing the initial deviation. For example, if a variable increases in a reinforcing loop the effect through the cycle will return an increase to the same variable. A balancing loop is the cycle in which the effect of a variation in any variable propagates through the loop and returns to the variable a deviation opposite to the initial one. For example, if a variable increases in a balancing loop the effect through the cycle will return a decrease to the same variable.

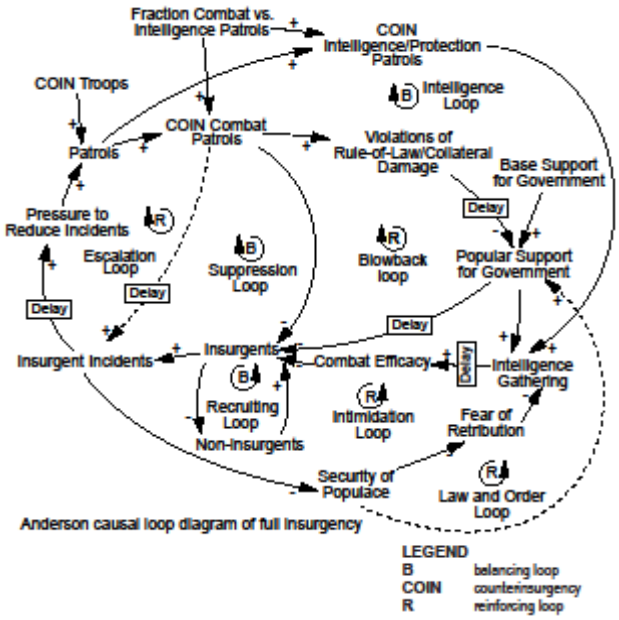

Figure 2-4. Causal Loop Diagram Example.

Define the Problem Set

Informed by the work to determine the current and desired states, planners define the problem set. The problem set is a list of reasons that can prevent the shift of the current state to the desired state (see figs. 2-5 and 2-6). Joint and other Service doctrine refer to the development of a "problem statement" within design. Problem statements are usually constrained to a single sentence and can oversimplify the challenges within the operational environment. It is unlikely that the design methodology will expose a single problem to solve. In reality, when engaging complex systems, many problems will emerge. The key is to identify relevant problems, examine relationships among them, and then package the understanding into a problem set that is representative of the operational environment and informative to the planning process.

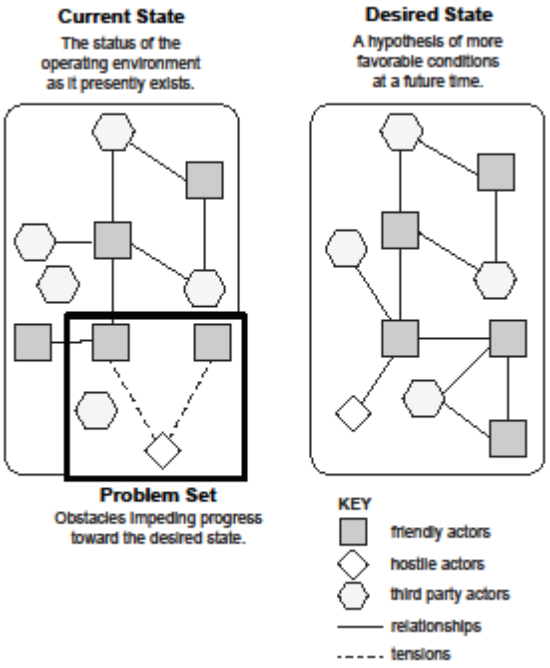

Figure 2-5. Problem Set.

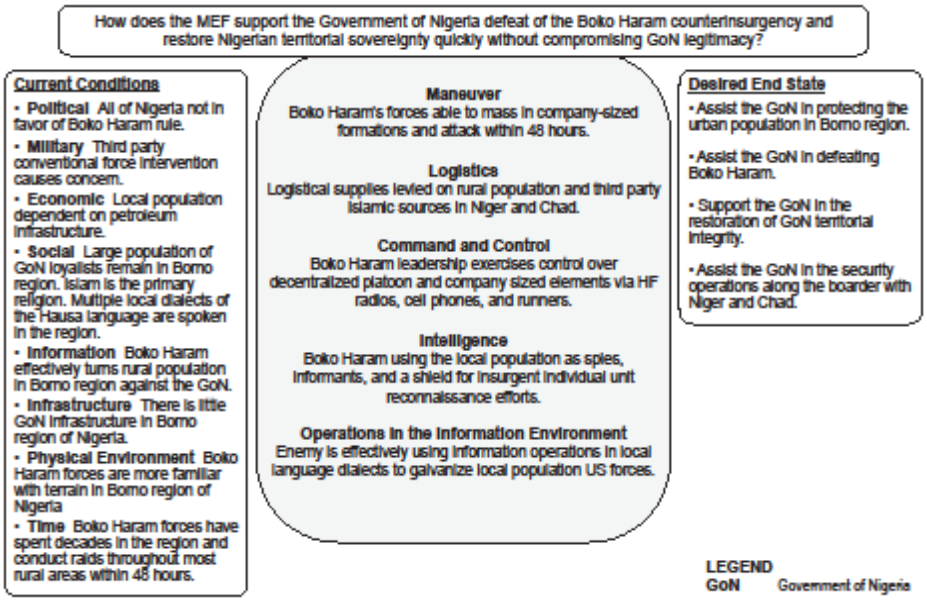

Figure 2-6. Problem Set Example.

Similar to the descriptions of the current and desired states in the previous step, Marines can categorize and describe the problem set in a number of ways. The MAGTF command elements may wish to use the operational variables PMESII and/or ASCOPE, for example, to categorize the problem set. Another option is expressing the problem set by friendly, neutral, and threat networks.

Other elements of the MAGTF may find a categorization of problems across warfighting functions to be more useful. Staffs within regiments, groups, battalions, and squadrons may prefer a simple brainstorming activity to itemize a list of problems that the staff determines are most relevant.

With a defined problem set, planners should brief the commander on the design results. This event will help guide subsequent planning. It will also allow for an early opportunity to revisit design if the commander does not agree with the problem set.

The problem set informs the mission statement developed later in problem framing. By that, the mission statement must address the problem set. If the mission statement does not, planners should revisit design and the task analysis that informed the mission statement. If the results remain the same, the planners should consult HHQ for clarification of assigned tasks. The rigor that a staff puts into the design effort will help to illuminate and provide evidence for why the assigned tasks may not address the problem set.

The development of the problem set also influences COG analysis, described later in this chapter. The relationships identified between various actors during the analysis of the current and desired states can illuminate possible friendly, enemy, and adversary COGs. Moreover, while a problem set rightfully identifies the need for simultaneity and concurrent operations using, for example, multiple lines of effort and/or operations, COG analysis helps the commander and staff determine what is most important among all the required actions. In this manner, COG analysis can help planners envision decisive actions as a basis for main effort designations and the convergence of combat power to seek a decision.

COMMANDER'S OPERATIONAL APPROACH

The commander's operational approach concludes the initial iteration of problem framing. The operational approach is broad, overarching guidance that the commander conveys through the commander's intent and COA development guidance. The operational approach requires the input and synthesis of both design and the staff actions.

The operational approach is an expression of what the commander intends to accomplish and how it will be done using available resources. This visualization reflects the commander's understanding of the situation and his/her hypothesis for achieving the overall purpose. Put another way, the better the commander understands the situation and problem set, the more self-evident the solution.

Commander's Intent

Commander's intent is a clear and concise expression of the purpose of the operation and the desired military end state that supports mission command, provides focus to the staff, and helps subordinate and supporting commanders act to achieve the commander's desired results without further orders, even when the operation does not unfold as planned. (*DOD Dictionary*) The desired state or conditions may relate to terrain-based requirements as well as the disposition of friendly, enemy, adversary, and/or civil elements. While end state conditions may change, the commander's

intent endures to the point that the purpose is the most critical aspect of planning any and all military operations.

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).

The commander may develop his/her intent early in the planning process, but will review and revise it as required. As the commander proceeds through the planning process, additional levels of understanding about the environment and the problem are gained that allow the commander to formulate and refine the intent as well as the vision of actions.

Course of Action Development Guidance

Based on a variety of considerations, such as available time or understanding of the problem and its complexity, the COA development 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. It may also include the commander's vision of decisive, shaping, and sustaining actions (which assist 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.** Decisive actions are those the commander deems fundamental to achieving mission success. Decisive actions can occur in multiple domains and throughout the battlespace. They cause a favorable change in the situation or cause the enemy/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 enemy/adversary has lost either the means or the will to resist. 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, force, or the enemy commander's decision-making process. The commander may shape the battlespace by protecting friendly critical vulnerabilities and attacking enemy critical vulnerabilities. Shaping actions do not need to wait for physical forces to deploy from home station; they could include an information campaign supported by the enterprise. Shaping can incorporate a wide array of functions and capabilities and is more than fires and targeting. It may also include engaging friendly, neutral, and threat networks through the use of operations in the information environment (also referred to as OIE), security cooperation, engineer

activities, civil affairs, civil-military operations, and counter threat finance. When faced with an armed hostile threat, shaping actions can make the enemy vulnerable to attack, impede or divert their attempts to maneuver, aid friendly maneuver, and influence the decision-making of key actors to achieve information superiority. When not involved in armed conflict, shaping can help enable the accomplishment of the mission. For example, if conducting a counternarcotic mission in support of the US Drug Enforcement Agency, a key leader engagement with US and other partners can help both sides understand the mission, limitations (i.e., restraints and constraints), thus preventing or limiting friction and enabling the mission. Shaping can dictate the time and place for decisive actions. It forces the enemy to adopt COAs favorable to the friendly force commander's plans. The commander attempts to shape events in a way that allows for several options to 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 decision-making to enhance tempo. Other examples of sustaining actions include information preservation and resiliency actions, preventative medical services and logistic operations, such as stockpiling critical ammunition, fuel, and supplies to facilitate future operations.

Additionally, COA development guidance may include—

- Minimum number of COAs to be developed.
- Enemy/adversary vulnerabilities.
- Types of operations.
- Forms of maneuver.
- Actions to influence the cognitive dimension.
- Selection and employment of the main effort.
- Reserve.
- Communication strategy and operations (COMMSTRAT).
- Command relationships.
- Task organization.
- Risk guidance.
- Further restraints and/or constraints.
- Arrangement of the operation (phasing).
- Timing of the operation.

ISSUE THE WARNING ORDER

Upon completion of problem framing, the commander directs the release of a WARNORD, which allows subordinate commands to begin concurrent planning as the higher command begins COA development. The WARNORD should emphasize critical information, but also contain all relevant information to facilitate concurrent planning. Due dates for planning products and transition events, as well as known or possible movement and execution dates, must be communicated early

in 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.

Reframe Throughout Planning and Execution

Reframing occurs when the commander, planners, and the staff revise their understanding of the environment and problem set. If required, they develop a new approach to overcome the challenges or to leverage opportunities that precipitated the need to reframe (see fig. 2-7). Reasons for reframing can include—

- Changes in the original problem set.
- Significant changes in the enemy composition.
- Significant changes in the expected enemy approach.
- Significant changes in friendly capabilities.
- HHQ policy changes or directives that change the desired state.
- Lack of friendly progress toward objectives.
- Shifts in international support or domestic will.
- Key assumptions prove to be invalid.

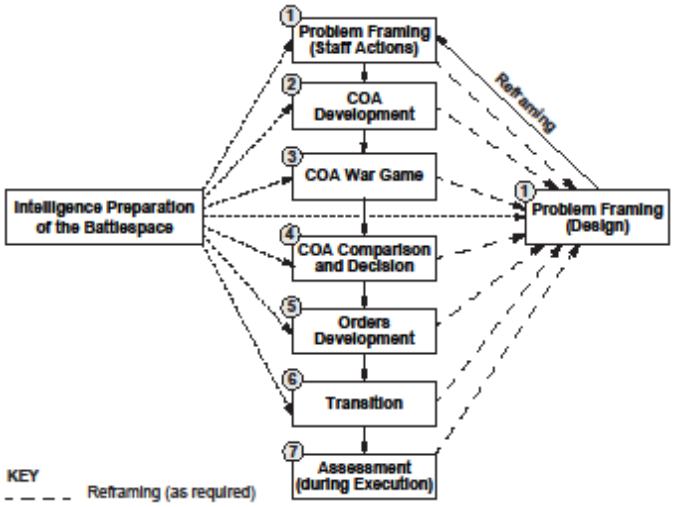

Figure 2-7. Reframing.

Note that the actions associated with the design methodology first occur during problem framing. However, this does not mean design is a singular effort that concludes after the first step of planning. In reality, commanders and their staffs should routinely reexamine the results of their design efforts during planning and throughout execution because significant changes to the operational environment will occur. The problem set that derives from design will change as the current and desired states evolve. Ultimately, the reframing challenge for commanders and

planners is to determine when a plan is no longer a basis for action. Through fragmentary orders (FRAGOs), planners routinely maintain the viability of a plan. However, at some point with enough change in the environment, the commander will need to reconvene the OPT for a complete design reset.

STAFF ACTIONS

Design does not occur in isolation; much of the information available to the commander comes from staff actions. Accordingly, staff actions are concurrent and complementary—vice sequential—activities that underwrite the design effort. These complementary activities are of little value unless they interact. The planning process provides venues for interactions between the commander, OPT, staff, and 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/her 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 largely through their contribution to the design methodology.

Task Analysis

Task analysis may occur in two stages. Initially, any known tasks provided by HHQ will heavily influence the environmental frame. As planning continues and understanding improves, planners can use the problem set as a basis for determining among the specified and implied tasks which are the more essential to mission success. 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. There may be other sources, such as verbal guidance from the HHQ or unit commander, from which to derive tasks. Additionally, as the problem and purpose are understood as a result of the design effort, the command develops tasks from the problem set.

Design and Task Analysis

Design establishes paradigms whereas task analysis is paradigm accepting. Within an accepted or established paradigm, commanders armed with task and purpose can proceed to task analysis as a basis for COA development.

With the need to reframe due to the constantly changing operational environment, the currently understood paradigm—typically described in the "Situation" paragraph—will evolve to the point that the existing plan—to include any FRAGOs—will no longer serve as a basis for action. A subsequent design effort seeks to provide an updated framework within which tasks (and purpose) to subordinate units can more directly lead to viable solutions.

- 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, annexes, and FRAGOs. Specified tasks may also derive from verbal instructions from the commander or the HHQ commander. Planners should identify and record any specified task that pertains to any element of the unit. As a general rule, each specified task will quote the stated task and cite the source (e.g., specific paragraph of the HHQ OPORD).
- Planners infer implied tasks which are necessary to accomplish specified tasks. Implied tasks are those most challenging to identify. They entail those actions required within the context of the mission but are neither stated nor part of a SOP or routine continuing action. Planners discover them through an inductive process of rigorous analysis of all specified tasks, commander's guidance, assumptions, COG analysis, doctrine, case studies, intelligence preparation of the battlespace (IPB) products, and the experience or expertise of subject matter experts (SMEs), partners, allies, and other relevant human resources. A good example is global integration that necessitates considering tasks that may not be accomplished with organic forces with existing authorities. Similar to requesting joint sorties for additonal capacity, unique capabilities, or shaping areas beyond the MAGTF area of operations, commanders will need to coordinate for expanded information capabilities to the force or support from external forces with necessary authorities and or capabilities.
- Essential tasks are the specified or implied tasks that a force must perform in order to accomplish their mission. Typically the mission statement, developed later in problem framing, includes all essential tasks. However, a commander may consider listing a single essential task to promote a focused effort toward the most decisive action. Otherwise, a mission statement that contains a sequenced list of essential tasks could start to look a lot like a CONOPS, thus putting focus at risk.

Center of Gravity Analysis

However conducted, COG analysis is a means to focus the commander and staff on what is most important—during a particular time or event—among all the variables and factors that can influence the conduct of operations.

Relative Combat Power Assessment

Relative combat power assessment (RCPA), which includes emerging capabilities never considered before—such as cyberspace units—provides planners with an understanding of friendly and enemy forces' strengths and weaknesses relative to each other. To assess relative combat power, planners generally analyze force ratios two levels below the planning unit. For example, division planners will compare numbers, readiness, etc. of friendly and enemy battalions (infantry, artillery, etc.). The RCPA provides insight on the types of operations possible for friendly and enemy forces, weaknesses, and additional resources that may be required.

While force ratios may be important, the numerical comparison of personnel and major end items is one factor among many, such as leadership, morale, equipment maintenance, training levels,

and the effects of weather. Planners present RCPA conclusions and key findings during the problem framing brief.

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 friendly, neutral, and enemy/adversary situations as well as the environment. Assumptions must answer the following:

- Is it logical?
- Is it realistic?
- Is it essential for planning to continue?
- Does it assume away an enemy/adversary capability?

Subsequent planning will identify new assumptions while confirming or disproving prior assumptions. Planners should keep a record of all assumptions and their resolution. Operation plans can and will likely contain assumptions; but OPORDs should not. Unresolved assumptions carried into execution become a risk to operations.

Where appropriate, planners forward assumptions to HHQ for validation. This ensures that 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.

Planning Limitations

Restraints (what cannot be done) and constraints (what must be done) that do not qualify as specified tasks require identification. Planners often find restraints and constraints in the rules of engagement, commander's guidance, and instructions from higher headquarters. Planners then must address these limitations during COA development and subsequent planning as they affect the conduct of operations.

Develop the Mission Statement

The mission statement is a solution-based expression of the problem set. The purpose of the operation and the essential tasks, as identified in task analysis, are the foundation for the mission. A properly constructed mission statement answers the following questions:

- Who (forces that will conduct the operation)?
- What (essential task or tasks [e.g., destroy] and, as necessary, type of operation [e.g., "conducts air assault and seizes …"]?
- When (time or event that determines when an operation will start and/or end)?
- Where (location)?
- Why (purpose of the operation)?

The commander approves the proposed mission statement, modifies it, or develops a new mission statement as a prelude to COA development. The approved mission statement becomes the foundation of an OPLAN or OPORD.

Intelligence Preparation of the Battlespace

The OPT develops and refines IPB products, to include enemy COAs. The IPB products must mature and evolve as planning progresses. For example, as the OPT works through problem framing, COA development, and COA war game, they 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. These templates will help populate the decision support template (DST), which will include named areas of interest (NAIs), target areas of interest (TAIs), and decision points.

Green Cell Activities

At a minimum, the green cell provides for the independent wills and needs of the various groups or neutral networks that may affect the MAGTF's operations. The green cell may also provide considerations for non-Department of Defense (DOD) entities, such as private sector or nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Green cell composition can range from an individual to a task-organized group of SMEs that may include liaisons from the local populace and non-DOD agencies. For more information related to green cell activities, see JP 3-25, *Countering Threat Networks*, Marine Corps Warfighting Publication (MCWP) 3-03, *Stability Operations,* and Marine Corps Tactical Publication (MCTP) 3-02A *MAGTF Network Engagement Activities*.

Red Cell Activities

The red cell "employs" enemy/adversary forces to help the commander assess friendly COAs. A red cell can range in size from an intelligence officer to a task-organized group of 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. Determining which enemy/adversary forces and echelons on which to focus is an important decision of the red cell. As planning continues, the red cell develops its own enemy/adversary mission, intent, and COAs in accordance with the enemy's doctrine, history, goals, and IPB. The red cell is different than a red team.

Red Team

Red team, or in capability terms, red teaming is a broadly applicable resource that supports the inclusion of independent, critical thought, and alternative perspectives to help facilitate problem-solving and decision-making processes, to include planning. In addition to support to planning, red teams can fully explore alternatives in operations, concepts, organizations, and capabilities within the context of the operational environment. See Appendix G, *Red Team*, for a detailed discussion about how the red team supports each step of the planning process.

Red Team vs. Red Cell

What red teams and red cells share in common—through an adversarial, contrarian approach—is the ability to expose plans to rigorous examination thereby improving an organization's adaptability to a constantly changing environment. But they differ in a number of ways. Red cells are a key OPT element from problem framing through COA war game. Red cell membership will vary by the nature of the threat whether an established nation-state military force or a non-state competitor. In contrast, red team members are school trained (0506 MOS) special staff reporting to the chief of staff. Where the red cell is integral to the OPT, red teams are an independent capability providing external support to planning efforts in addition to other command concepts, ideas, and processes.

Staff Estimates

Staff estimates provide key information (e.g., facts, assumptions, asset locations and availability, forecasted shortages) that will increase the commander's understanding and aid decision-making. Staff estimates depict how each staff section or warfighting function supports each COA. The staff estimates also list, in prioritized order, the key concerns and issues (e.g., availability of a particular port or airfield) of the associated staff officer. Staff estimates must clearly differentiate between concerns and problems that can be resolved through subsequent staff coordination, and any that require the commander's personal intervention.

Estimates of Supportability

Estimates of supportability are similar to staff estimates. The subordinate units provide focused accounts of unit readiness and associated dates, concurrent tasks and commitments, strengths, locations, shortages, deployment status, and other key concerns. Estimates of supportability are especially important for attached or supporting units, so commanders and planners can better envision employment options. These estimates should provide a timely examination of factors that support decision-making and identify significant aspects of the situation that can influence the COA and affect mission accomplishment. A running estimate that favors content over format and may be either a formal, detailed written document or an informal verbal briefing. For example, if the staff or subordinate unit is aware of a COA will have a negative impact on mission accomplishment, there is no need to complete a formal document or wait until the next planning milestone meeting.

Operational Environment

The operational environment is a composite of the conditions, circumstances, and influences that affect the employment of capabilities and bear on the decisions of the commander. In the 2010 timeframe, JP 3-0 introduced the term operational environment to encourage a more thorough examination of the battlespace. Understanding friendly and enemy forces is not enough; other

factors, such as culture, language, tribal affiliations, and the human and information environments, can be equally important. Essentially, commanders analyze the operational environment in order to determine the physical dimensions of their battlespace in the form of areas of interest, influence, and operations.

Battlespace Refinement

Battlespace is environment, factors, and conditions that are studied and a resource Marines use to accomplish the mission while protecting the force. Battlespace includes the area of interest, area of influence, and operational areas. Operational areas for MAGTFs are usually an area of operations. The size, shape, and duration of the battlespace can directly influence the staff's assessment of the current state during problem framing. As planning continues, the staff may recommend battlespace refinements based on the analysis of the terrain and tasks as well as friendly and enemy COGs, capabilities, and limitations.

Resource Shortfalls

Based on the tasks, possible solutions, and available resources, planners and staff identify critical resource shortfalls which can include a need for SMEs, authorities (or agencies with those authorities), and maneuver forces that can create effects within global areas of interest.

Operation Assessment

Assessment is an inherent staff action that each member of a command performs in their respective functional area. If a command determines the need to further organize to the assessment requirement via a cell and/or some other entity like an assessment working group, the commander will either need external augmentation or source the personnel organically, since there are no assessment cells in any standing MAGTFs.

Ideally, an assessment cell, if sourced, will form with the onset of planning. With the hierarchical layering of tasks and intents, military planning provides a natural framework for assessment. While the commander will eventually need to provide the assessment cell's focus, the cell's default role at the beginning of planning typically is to shadow the planning effort looking for the more subjective aspects of the plan that will require the cell's attention.

The essential goal of an assessment cell is to explain the command's progress toward a desired state. In design terms, an assessment cell will update its environmental frame via measures of performance and measures of effectiveness. The difference between the desired state and the ever-changing current state is the basis for assessment reporting. To explain why the unit is progressing or not, the assessment cell must interact with sufficient battle rhythm events and other sources of information to obtain the feedback necessary to inform a rational narrative that may include recommendations for change. See MCDP 6, *Command and Control*, discussion "What is the Relationship Between 'Command' and 'Control'?" concerning the role of feedback as the mechanism that allows commanders to adapt to changing circumstances.

This publication does not contain an assessment process, since commanders assimilate information uniquely in their own way. Each mission is also unique to the command's understanding. For collection and reporting examples that can aid in developing a commander-friendly assessment process, see Marine Corps Reference Publication (MCRP) 5-10.1, *Multiservice Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Operation Assessment*.

Commander's Critical Information Requirements

Commander's critical information requirements (CCIRs) link to decisions. The staff may propose and will continually review and update CCIRs, which fall into two categories—priority intelligence requirements (PIRs) and friendly force information requirements (FFIRs). The PIRs are key components of the IPB process and the collections plan.

Each CCIR asks a question that, when answered, assists the commander in making a key decision. As planning continues, planners identify and list likely decisions associated with each CCIR. Planners then create branch plans that facilitate the timely execution of the decisions tied to CCIRs.

Commander's Significant Notification Events

Where CCIRs link to decisions, commander's significant notification events (CSNEs) identify the need for more information based on the presumption that CSNEs will incur a high demand for information from the chain of command as well as the media. The CSNEs are serious incidents, acts, or allegations that require the commander's immediate notification.

Requests for Information

Planners identify requirements for information to remove assumptions, support future plans, or conduct current operations. Based on the initial IPB and information requirements (including CCIRs), the commander and OPT identify gaps in information and intelligence. Planners forward requests for information (RFIs) to the appropriate staff section or to HHQ for answers. Policy questions or other complex topics are better suited for other venues, such as commander-to-commander discussions, for resolution. Over time, the number of RFIs can make the tracking effort very difficult. Therefore, RFI management tools and a RFI manager are essential to track all RFI submissions and responses.

Problem Framing Brief

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

- List of specific decisions, approvals, and guidance requested of the commander during the brief (e.g., decision on whether to request an area of operations change from HHQ, approval of proposed CCIRs).
- Situation update (status of friendly forces, stakeholders, and existing command relations; significant events in the area of operations and area(s) of interest).

- Problem set review.
- IPB update.
- Intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) collections (current and planned).
- HHQ missions (one and two levels up).
- HHQ commanders' intents (one and two levels up).
- Task analysis (specified, implied, and essential tasks listed in prioritized or sequential order).
- COG analyses (friendly, enemy).
- Assumptions.
- Limitations (restraints and constraints).
- Red cell summary.
- Green cell summary.
- Staff estimates.
- Estimates of supportability.
- Recommended battlespace refinement.
- Resource shortfalls (prioritized).
- Lessons learned summary.
- Risk.
- Draft CCIRs.
- Draft CSNEs.
- RFIs (current RFIs and recently answered RFIs, prioritized).
- Draft liaison plan.
- Planning and execution timeline.
- Other updated products from ongoing activities.
- Proposed mission statement.
- Operational approach discussion.
    - Commander's intent.
    - COA development guidance.

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

The commander generally concludes the brief by approving the mission statement and releasing a WARNORD. A critical output of problem framing is also a discussion of the broad operational approach. With the commander's intent, this broad operational approach forms a basis for the commander's COA development guidance and better postures planners for the detailed planning that follows. 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.

CONSIDERATIONS

No amount of critical thinking will ensure complete understanding of a problem set. Accordingly, design does not end with problem framing. The commander must continually return to his/her understanding of the problem, refine the guidance, and provide an update or even a new vision and description as the planners and staff work through the planning process.

The staff actions 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 operational environment and the problem set. The problem framing brief or any other planning-related brief has an intrinsic value far beyond the information presented. Whenever the commander, OPT, staff, and subordinate commanders and their staffs share a common venue where dialogue takes place, learning and awareness improve. 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. 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

Decision-making 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.

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

Course of action development leads to one or more options for accomplishing the mission in accordance with the commander's operational approach that resulted from the design effort that began during problem framing. For options to be distinguishable, each COA must employ different means or methods that address the essential tasks and incorporate the commander's operational approach.

During COA development, planners use the products carried forward from problem framing to generate options—COAs—that satisfy the mission in accordance with the commander's operational approach. 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? Is the unit(s) capable of executing this COA?
- **Acceptable:** Is the COA worth the cost in personnel, casualties, equipment, materiel, time, and/or position? Is it consistent with the law of war and is it militarily and politically supportable?
- **Distinguishable:** Does the COA differ from other COAs?
- **Complete:** Does the COA address all of the tasks? Does it address the entire mission (main and supporting efforts, reserve, associated risks, and all applicable warfighting functions)? Does the COA contain sufficient detail for COA war game?

Planners develop COAs to give the commander options for how to be successful. The commander may direct a single COA if his/her understanding of the situation and problem set makes a single COA self-evident or if operating under severe time constraints.

When developing COAs, 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.** Intelligence preparation of the battlespace enables planners to view the battlespace in terms of the enemy/adversary and the environment. It helps planners determine how the enemy/adversary will react to proposed friendly COAs, the purpose of enemy/adversary actions, the most likely and most dangerous enemy/adversary COAs, and the type of friendly operations that the terrain, weather, 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 commander and planners 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 suggest ways to interact with selected elements in the battlespace.
- **Refine CCIRs.** With the approved CCIRs, planners begin to link individual PIRs and FFIRs to specific decisions. The refined CCIRs also include related branch plans and sequels for each decision. As it is updated and refined throughout the MCPP, the CCIR list helps prepare the commander for possible key decisions required in execution and also prepares the staff and unit(s) for timely execution of or changes to the plan.
- **Continue Red and Green Cell Planning.** Red and green cells prepare to play the roles of key enemy/adversary or civilian leaders during COA war game. During COA development, the red cell builds and refines enemy/adversary COAs, using the enemy/adversary COAs in IPB as its starting point. As planning continues, the red cell provides updates and findings for IPB refinement. The red cell researches the tendencies, biographies, and/or histories of opposing force commanders and units, and refines its plan accordingly. The red cell also articulates the enemy/adversary commander's anticipated knowledge of friendly intentions and plans. The red cell must have enemy/adversary COAs completed in sufficient detail for wargaming by the end of COA development. The green cell identifies and details the initiatives, events, and important dates of populations or organizations that may affect friendly or enemy/adversary operations. The green cell also develops the consequent reactions of civilian groups to friendly and enemy/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.
- **Continue Operation Assessment Planning.** Planners, in conjunction with an assessment cell if formed, will develop an overall operation assessment framework.

DEVELOP COURSES OF ACTION

Guided primarily by the commander's COA development guidance, along with the planning products created in problem framing, planners begin developing possible ways, or options, 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; planners record all possibilities for consideration to provide the commander with a variety of distinct options.

There are numerous techniques for developing COAs. Some commanders envision a sequence of actions given goals and objectives in accordance with design; others consider key factors, such as RCPA, a useful starting point; and others focus on ways to counter the enemy's/adversary's most dangerous and most likely COAs. Regardless of the specific COA development technique used, planners should consider the following factors:

- **Battlespace Framework.** The framework allows the commander to relate the forces to one another in time, space, and purpose. Deep, close, and rear areas, as described in MCDP 1-0, *Marine Corps Operations*, are a common framework for conventional operations.
- **Array of Forces.** Friendly, enemy/adversary, and, when relevant, populations should be arrayed in the same venue while developing COAs.
- **Purpose and Tasks.** Identify the purpose for each subordinate element. Purposes are often friendly-related, and generally either accomplish the mission or support the main effort. After identifying the purpose of a subordinate element, identify the task that best accomplishes the purpose. Begin with the main effort and follow with the supporting effort(s) and reserve, if assigned.
- **Task Organization.** Task organization accounts for all units (e.g., organic, attached, supporting, headquarters elements). The task organization should reflect each unit's construct, size, and resources such as main or supporting effort and priorities for lift, fires, and resupply. Task organization identifies commanders, clarifies command relationships, and accounts for span of control.
- **Sequencing.** Planners determine the best arrangement of actions to accomplish the mission. This arrangement is often a combination of simultaneous and sequential actions. Although simultaneous actions may be ideal, resource availability may require the commander to prioritize and sequence actions.
- **Phasing.** If necessary, commanders may divide plans and operations into phases. Phases represent distinct periods in the progress of the overall operation. Phasing may require conditions to transition to the next phase. Planners identify the criteria, decisions, and authorities associated with transitioning to each phase. Phases can be subdivided into two or more stages, stages into two or more parts, and parts into two or more steps. To avoid confusion, planners should nest their phasing plan within the HHQ plan.
- **Integration.** The OPT depicts the integration of actions across time and space in the COA graphic and narrative as well as the synchronization matrix.

- **Control Measures.** Control measures (e.g., maneuver control measures, fire support coordination measures, airspace coordination areas) should expedite actions and ensure forces have sufficient battlespace and flexibility to accomplish their tasks while protecting their forces.
- **Focus on the Problem(s).** Friendly COAs, in accordance with the mission statement and commander's intent, are designed to address the problem(s) identified during problem framing.

Initial Courses of Action Brief

The commander reviews the initial COAs to see if they meet his/her intent. Normally, an informal review, referred to as a rough-cut COA brief, that the staff conducts as soon as possible once the planners have drafted initial COAs. This brief saves time by avoiding refinements to COAs that the commander will not approve or select. The review also helps the commander further refine his/her understanding and begin to see tangible results of his/her intent. The commander may eliminate COAs, direct modifications to the initial COAs, or may direct the development of additional COAs.

Completed Course of Action Requirements

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. As applicable, COAs also include a draft assessment plan. Additionally, the staff may recommend to the commander how a COA should be wargamed and evaluated. This recommendation may include the war game method and which enemy/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 intends to accomplish the mission. During conventional operations, the graphic portrays the locations and activities of the main and supporting efforts, reserve, command posts, critical maneuver control measures (e.g., objectives, boundaries, phase lines), and fire support coordination measures (e.g., coordinated fire line, no-fire areas). The narrative provides the purpose and tasks of the main and supporting efforts, the reserve, significant operations that cannot be depicted on the graphic (e.g., certain aspects of operations in the information environment), as well as the timing and sequencing of the operation. See Appendix D for additional examples of COA graphics and narratives.

In other types of operations, such as those supporting competition below armed conflict, the graphic may display civil-military activities, critical information nodes and infrastructure, 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 OPLAN or OPORD.

Task Organization

The task organization captures how the commander intends to structure the force to accomplish the mission. It also establishes command and support relationships. Proper task organization portrays each unit's structure, size, and equipment to support the commander's CONOPS. Planners must depict all units (e.g., organic, attached, supporting), including headquarters elements, in the task organization. Span of control considerations and command relationships are important aspects of task organization.

Synchronization Matrix

The synchronization matrix is a working document showing the activities of the command and subordinate elements over time. It displays how units, warfighting functions, and tasks interrelate throughout all phases, providing additional details (e.g., displacement of the command post, priorities and location of the reserve element, information integration specifics, sequencing of tasks and movements) that complement and amplify the COA graphic and narrative. 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 and military information power to achieve a decision or advantage. A synchronization matrix should not overly script the actions of subordinate units as if to create an expectation that planners can accurately predict precise unit dispositions days far in advance. 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 of war. During orders development, the completed synchronization matrix enables planners to assign tasks to subordinates. See Appendix D for additional examples of synchronization matrices.

Supporting Concepts

The staff prepares supporting, functional concepts for each COA to integrate and coordinate actions into a single, cohesive plan. The staff estimates evolve into supporting concepts. Supporting concepts may be organized by warfighting functions, as well as select activities requiring separate supporting concepts (e.g., operations in the information environment). Once the commander selects a COA, the supporting concepts inform the corresponding portions of the OPORD. For example, within the OPORD logistics is outlined in paragraph 4, "Administration and Logistics," and discussed in detail in Annex D (Logistics/Combat Service Support); and communications is oulined in paragraph 5, "Command and Signal," and discussed in detail in Annex K (Combat Information Systems).

COURSE OF ACTION DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

Planners brief each COA separately. Standardized formats help focus the brief and prevent the omission of essential information. The COA development brief may include the following:

- List of specific decisions, approvals, and guidance requested of the commander during the brief (e.g., approval of proposed CCIR changes, select COAs for wargaming, COA wargaming method selected, COA evaluation criteria confirmed, etc.).
- Situation update (status of friendly forces, stakeholders, and existing command relations, significant events in the area of operations and area(s) of interest, etc.).
- IPB update.
- ISR collections update.
- Red and green cell update.
- RFI update.
- CCIR recommended changes.
- Operation assessment plan update.
- For each COA:
  - Task organization.
  - COA graphic and narrative.
  - Synchronization matrix (referenced, as necessary).
  - Supporting concepts.
- Recommended COA wargaming guidance (see below).
- Recommended COA evaluation criteria (see below).

COMMANDER'S WARGAMING GUIDANCE AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

Following the COA development brief, the commander will select or modify the COAs for wargaming and provide wargaming guidance and evaluation criteria.

The commander's wargaming guidance may include a list of friendly COAs for wargaming against specific enemy/adversary COAs. For example, COA 1 will be wargamed against the enemy's/adversary's most likely COA, whereas COA 2 will be wargamed against both the enemy's/adversary's most likely COA and most dangerous COA. Wargaming guidance may also include priorities, wargaming method, refining the phasing or sequencing of an operation, and a list of critical events requiring greater analysis, such as a river crossing.

Before the planners begin the COA war game, the commander must choose the evaluation criteria that will be used to select the COA that will become the CONOPS. The commander establishes evaluation criteria based on judgment, personal experience, and the overall understanding of the situation and problem. The COA evaluation criteria focuses the wargaming effort and provides the framework for data collection by the OPT and staff. The commander will use the data collected in wargaming during the COA comparison and decision step. The COA evaluation criteria may include—

- Warfighting functions.

- Principles of war.
- Limitation on casualties.
- Exploitation of enemy weaknesses/friendly strengths.
- Defeat of the enemy's COG.
- Protection of the friendly COG.
- Degree of asymmetrical operations.
- Operations in the information environment
- Risk.
- Earliest date and time the operation can begin.
- Duration of the operation.
- Political considerations.
- Impact on local population and/or issues.

CONSIDERATIONS

A COA must contain sufficient detail to facilitate COA wargaming. The war game, if done properly, will usually reveal flaws and omissions in each COA. Planners often must resume COA development during wargaming, not because their COAs are infeasible, but because the COAs are incomplete and require additional detail to continue the war game.

The COA development process continues to inform the commander and the 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. In this manner, the COA development brief provides another venue for further design discussion.

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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, *The Art of War*

The purpose of COA wargaming is to improve the plan. War games enable commanders and planners to: (1) validate the COAs, by testing each COA against an enemy/adversary with an independent will or a competitor during operations below the threshold of armed conflict, under realistic environmental conditions; (2) improve each COA and the overall plan, including necessary branches or sequels; (3) evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of each COA; and (4) better understand the problem and environment. A COA war game prepares commanders, planners, and staffs for the challenges, opportunities, and decisions inherent in execution.

Whether conducted formally as a disciplined, interactive process or informally through a "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 other methods for wargaming.

Planners war game friendly COAs against selected enemy/adversary COAs through an iterative action-reaction-counteraction process. On larger staffs, a red cell creates and fights enemy/adversary COAs, while a green cell develops probable responses and actions of the population and other groups. This form of interaction coupled with feedback loops accounts for the nonlinear nature of military operations.

War Game Preparations

War Game Billets

In addition to those personnel involved throughout the planning process, a facilitator, arbiter, and recorder, who are intimately familiar with the plan, are assigned to war game the COA(s).

- Facilitator. Often the lead planner, the facilitator:
  - Ensures that the war game effectively tests the COAs, in accordance with the commander's wargaming guidance.
  - Prioritizes the wargaming focus, in accordance with the commander's wargaming guidance.
  - Ensures the data and findings are properly recorded.
  - Meets the planning and execution timeline requirements.

- Arbiter. The arbiter determines the outcomes of turns (i.e., action, reaction, and counteraction), assesses casualties (friendly, enemy, and adversary personnel, as well as civilians) and losses (e.g., military materiel and facilities, civil facilities and infrastructure), and adjudicates disagreements. Though an independent view is preferred, the facilitator could also serve as the arbiter.
- Recorder. The recorder captures all relevant data and findings (e.g., updates to the synchronization matrix, recommended modifications to a COA's task organization, input to the COA evaluation worksheet) as directed by the lead planner.

Documents and Tools

Requirements to conduct a COA war game include:

- Approved mission statement.
- Commander's intent and guidance.
- Commander's wargaming guidance.
- IPB documents.
- ISR plan.
- Friendly, complete COAs.
- Designated enemy/adversary COAs (including enemy/adversary ISR).
- Red cell supporting documents, when available, for each enemy/adversary COA.
- Green cell documents, when available.
- Operation assessment plan.
- RCPA (overall and at select locations identified for wargaming).
- Risk assessment.
- COG analysis (friendly, neutral, and enemy).
- CCIRs.
- COA war game rules.
- COA war game briefing sequence and requirements.
- Detailed timeline for the conduct of the COA war game.
- Map (paper or electronic) that includes the area of operations and area of influence with control measures depicted.
- Military symbols for units and equipment (e.g., friendly, enemy, civilian).
- Casualty estimator tool.
- COA war game worksheet.
- COA evaluation worksheet.

War Game Techniques

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

Commanders and planners may choose one, combine aspects of war game techniques, or create new techniques to meet the commander's overall wargaming requirements.

Key Event or Sequence of Essential Tasks

Wargaming a key event or essential 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 essential tasks 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 enemy deploys 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, such as 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 security 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 enemy (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, a river crossing operation, or a raid objective. It is most useful when time is limited. This technique applies to all types of units. The OPT isolates the area and focuses on the critical events within that area.

Conduct of the War Game

Prior to the execution of the war game, the facilitator leads a discussion that includes the following:

- War game purpose.
- Wargaming guidance.
- Review of friendly COAs.
- Review of enemy/competitor mission, intent, and COAs.

- Order of events (e.g., COA 1 vs. most likely COA, then COA 2 vs. most dangerous COA).
- Detailed timeline for the conduct of the war game.
- Rules, including adjudication.
- Briefing sequence (initial and per turn) and requirements.
- Conduct of the war game details.
- Starting locations (friendly and enemy units and ISR assets, populations, etc.).
- Facilitator's master scenario event list (MSEL).
- Recording methods.
- MCPP products requiring updates.
- Details regarding the future COA wargaming brief to the commander.

The COA war game itself consists of one or more turns. In most instances, a turn includes the discussion of three steps, as described below: friendly action, anticipated reaction of enemy/adversaries and the local population, and friendly counteraction. If the enemy/adversary is on the offense or has the initiative during a turn, the turn may be modified to include four steps: enemy/adversary action, friendly and civilian reaction, enemy/adversary counteraction, friendly counteraction.

- **Action.** Friendly force commanders or their representatives during the COA war game describe the operations of all forces involved during this event. They describe the force, mission, tasks, and desired outcome. They annotate the force list to account for all forces employed in the event, while moving icons on a map or electronic overlay if physical positioning is applicable. If using a map or overlay, unit representatives need to provide markers for the relevant global considerations that can impact a unit's ability to achieve its desired state.

- **Reaction.** The red cell will react to friendly actions by briefing the enemy's/adversary's (or the element that represents a threat to friendly success) actions according to its plan, and similarly moving icons. The red cell commander describes the operations enemy/adversary forces are currently executing as well as the employment of relevant forces outside the immediate area of operations but within the area of interest during this event. Friendly wargamers can then validate the portion of their plan or higher and adjacent plans that address these additional enemy/adversary forces. The red cell and friendly commanders determine where they will have contact. The red cell commander describes the locations and activities of the assets identified as high-value targets (HVTs) and highlights points during the operation where these assets are important to the enemy's/adversary's COA. If these points affect the friendly COA, friendly wargamers identify the HVTs as high-payoff targets (HPTs), making their engagement an integral part of the friendly COA. With this information, planners update 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 enemy/adversary actions, as well as any relevant civilian initiatives. The OPT discusses the impact of the contact on friendly and enemy/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 arbiter determines the outcome and the war game proceeds.

- **Counteraction.** The counteraction will require some degree of synthesis in order to respond to the enemy/adversary's actions. The war game facilitator determines the outcome, whether failure, success, losses, or casualties, as a basis for the next turn. The war game continues until the entire avenue of approach, belt(s), box, key event or sequence of essential tasks have been thoroughly wargamed.

To examine and test the details of timelines, support requirements, combat power, etc., war games generally depict and exercise units two levels down. 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 the 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 aviation combat element (ACE) would be expected to know the number of squadrons in each group (by type) and the number of aircraft in each squadron.

A casualty estimator (software, paper, etc.) is useful for quickly assigning casualties and assisting the arbiter in adjudicating battle outcomes.

Facilitators create beforehand and use a MSEL consisting of plausible war- and mission-related events, acts, crises, etc. that could occur during the operation and can be used to test the overall plan. During wargaming turns, the facilitator injects items from the MSEL to further test and examine aspects of the overall plan and each of the COAs. Examples of MSEL items include a friendly aircraft collision during an air assault to examine the tactical recovery of aircraft and personnel (TRAP) and other related responses in detail; a mass casualty event to examine the casualty evacuation capabilities and response times to Role I, II, and III facilities; and an enemy unit surrender to examine the comprehensive enemy prisoner of war (EPW) plan and associated support requirements.

During each COA's war game, planners develop the DST and decision support matrix (DSM). The DST and DSM depict decision points, refined NAIs, TAIs, time phase lines, and other key information gleaned or validated during COA wargaming and are included in theOPORD. See Appendix D for DST and DSM examples and details.

The focus of COA wargaming is on improving the plan, vice the completion of the game. The facilitator is therefore responsible for determining when each turn has met the objectives of the war game, in accordance with wargaming guidance, the established timeline, and the facilitator and lead planner's judgment.

RECORDING THE WAR GAME

As lessons and findings are discovered during the COA war game, the recorder or applicable planning team member will note recommended additions, changes, and updates for the corresponding documents listed below—

- IPB documents.
- ISR plan.
- Red and green cell documents, if applicable.
- CCIRs.
- Branches and sequels.
- Task organization.
- COA graphic and narrative.
- Synchronization matrix (additional tasks, sequencing modifications, change the location of a headquarters or combat service support area, modify the phases and stages, etc.).
- Supporting concepts.
- DST and DSM.
- TAIs.
- Resource shortfalls.
- RFIs.
- Operation assessment plan.
- Risk assessment.
- COG analysis (friendly and enemy).
- HVTs.
- HPTs.
- COA war game worksheet.
- COA evaluation worksheet.

REFINE STAFF ESTIMATES, ESTIMATES OF SUPPORTABILITY, AND SUPPORTING CONCEPTS

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 OPLAN or OPORD. Criteria used in the development of estimates and supporting concepts includes the above-mentioned COA war game recorded information, as well as—

- Personnel replacement requirements.
- EPW requirements.
- Unit, asset, and resource requirements and shortfalls.
- Projected allocation of mobility assets, lift, and sorties versus availability.
- Requirement for pre-positioning 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 requirements.
- Necessary authorities to act.

PREPARE COURSE OF ACTION WAR GAME BRIEF

The COA war game brief may include—

- List of specific decisions, approvals, and guidance requested of the commander during the brief (e.g., approval of proposed CCIR changes, COA comparison and decision guidance, etc.).
- Updated IPB.
- Updated information environment running estimate
- Review of COA wargaming guidance.
- Review of original task organizations and friendly COAs.
- Review of enemy/adversary COAs.
- Summary of the COA war game execution (by turn, or overall).
- Key findings and recommended changes discovered during the COA war game.
- Assumptions (validated and new).
- DST and DSM.
- COA war game worksheet.
- Updated friendly COAs (incorporating recommended changes).
- Advantages and disadvantages of each COA.
- Branches and sequels identified for development.
- Resource shortfalls.
- Recommended changes to CCIRs.
- RFIs.
- Updates to other planning documents (e.g., operation assessment plan).

COMMANDER'S COMPARISON AND DECISION GUIDANCE

The COA war game brief concludes with the commander's approval of the updated COAs, or any recommended changes to the original COAs, before they are compared. The commander also can take this time to provide guidance for the comparison of the COAs, such as the type of COA comparison input expected from staff officers.

CONSIDERATIONS

Initial, informal war games will likely take place during problem framing when the commander, planners, and staff consider possible solutions as a basis for understanding as well as 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. The intuitive level of understanding gained reduces decision-making 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 that planners are attempting to resolve.

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.

The rationale for wargaming two levels down makes sense for all the reasons discussed earlier in this chapter. However, special recognititon must be given to the potential strategic impact of tactical actions in the information age.

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 COA 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*

During COA comparison and decision, the commander evaluates each friendly COA against the established criteria, compares the COAs, and selects the COA believed to best accomplish the mission. Inputs useful in COA comparison and decision may include—

- Updated IPB products.
- Updated, complete COAs.
- COA war game worksheet.
- Synchronization matrix.
- COA evaluation worksheet.
- Initial task organization.
- Resource and any shortfalls.
- Updated CCIRs.
- List of critical events and decision points.
- Staff estimates and estimates of supportability.
- DST and DSM.
- Branches and sequels identified for further planning.

PREPARE COURSE OF ACTION COMPARISON AND DECISION PRODUCTS

The planners refine the COA evaluation worksheet in preparation for the commander's COA comparison and decision. Planners use the commander's evaluation criteria as well as their own judgment to analyze each COA separately and capture the analysis on the COA evaluation worksheet. Once complete, the planners create a draft COA comparison and decision worksheet on which planners compare COAs against each other. Planners then provide these documents to the commander, staff, and subordinate leadership as early as possible for an informed COA comparison and decision discussion.

COURSE OF ACTION COMPARISON AND DECISION DISCUSSION

The commander leads a discussion with the staff and subordinates about the relative merits of each COA. The COA evaluation worksheet provides the commander with an understanding of the relative merits of each COA and aids in decision-making. The commander then compares the COAs against one another, using the COA comparison and decision worksheet. The commander may solicit COA recommendations from the staff and subordinates, with their input recorded on the COA comparison and decision worksheet. Since military operations are nonlinear by nature and the smallest input can have a disproportional effect, the numerical weighting of factors offers limited insights into the merits of one COA over another.

COMMANDER'S DECISION

In making a decision, the commander may—

- Select a COA.
- Modify a COA.
- Direct the development of a new COA, perhaps by combining favorable elements of multiple COAs.
- Discard all COAs and resume problem framing or COA development, as required.

Once a decision is made, the commander may take advantage of the setting and review the approved COA with the staff and subordinate commanders. The commander's points of emphasis guide further refinement of the COA and overall plan. The commander may also provide additional guidance for branches and sequels (priorities, degree of completion required, etc.). With a decision, detailed planning can accelerate now that the entire command's focus is on a single, tested, and validated COA.

UPDATE THE WARNING ORDER

The WARNORD informs subordinate units (e.g., organic, attached, supporting) to begin concurrent planning that facilitates a more rapid and informed transition to execution.

CONSIDERATIONS

COA comparison and decision requires the commander's involvement along with subordinate commanders and their staffs for an informed, detailed discussion of the COAs. Ideally, all participants can attend one meeting. The dialogue during this 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 set.

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

minimum, the supporting concepts of fires, maneuver, logistics, intelligence, information, command and control, and force protection. Within the context of military operations, concepts are visions of action.

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

If the commander selects a modified COA, planners fully develop the COA and then war game it against selected enemy/adversary COAs, if time allows.

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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*

The purpose of orders development is to translate the commander's decision into oral, written, and/or graphic communication sufficient to guide execution and promote initiative by subordinates. A form of detailed planning, the OPLAN or OPORD, once completed, becomes the principal means by which the commander expresses his/her decision, intent, and guidance.

The orders development step in the MCPP should communicate the commander's decision in a clear, useful form that those executing the order can easily understand. An order is a written or oral communication that directs actions and focuses a subordinate's tasks and activities toward accomplishing the mission. Planners prepare various portions of the order, such as the mission statement, during previous steps of the MCPP. The development of the order begins during problem framing and continues throughout the planning process, since so many of the planning products either inform or become a part of the directive.

The order contains the critical information and necessary details required for successful execution and assessment. Orders writers must focus on the audience (organic units, attachments, augments, other Service supporting elements, allied elements, etc.). Many of these external elements will not be familiar with the publishing command's SOP, so the planning directive may contain selected portions of the SOP or doctrinal references.

The updated, approved COA (task organization, graphic and narrative, synchronization matrix, and supporting concepts) is a required input to orders development. Other inputs include—

- Mission statement.
- Commander's intent and guidance.
- HHQ:
  - Mission.
  - Commander's intent.
  - OPORD.
  - FRAGO.
  - WARNORD.
- Updated IPB products.
- Updated CCIRs.
- Staff estimates.
- Branches and sequels.

- Operation assessment plan.
- Risk assessment.
- WARNORD/planning orders.
- Existing plans and orders.

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. Effective information management throughout the MCPP (version control of products, naming conventions, shared drive locations and access, etc.) enables efficient orders production. On large staffs, the orders development division of labor has the OPT developing the base order or plan to include command- and functional-level concepts. The appropriate special staff member(s) and general staff section(s) (i.e., G-sections/S-sections) develop respective annexes.

REFINE THE CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

Planners extract the CONOPS from the details of the approved COA. In turn, the CONOPS is the basis for 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, and their supporting staff sections, proceed with the functional and detailed planning essential for the development of the plan or order and implementation of the plan during execution.

PREPARE THE ORDER OR PLAN

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, estimates of supportability, and other planning documents inform a plan or order's annexes and appendices. See Appendix J 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 intent and assigns tasks to subordinates. The order ensures a common understanding and direction for every staff section and subordinate unit toward the same objective.

With a basic order, commanders can issue FRAGOs to subordinate commanders to address changes in the situation. 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 a process internal to the command during which the planners review in detail 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 planning team compares the commander's intent, the mission, and the CCIRs against the CONOPS and the supporting concepts, such as maneuver, fires, and logistics. Planners also ensure details throughout the OPORD, such as dates, unit locations, and tasks, are accurate and in agreement. Orders reconciliation may involve all planning team members in a single location, comparing a displayed basic OPORD against their own annexes and appendices. Another option is for the lead planner to distribute documents and collect individual feedback.

ORDERS CROSSWALK

Orders crosswalk is an external process in which the planners compare the completed, draft OPORD with the orders of higher, adjacent, and subordinate commanders to achieve unity of effort and ensure the CONOPS aligns, or nests, with the superior commander's intent. Similarly, transition events, such as confirmation briefs (discussed in chap. 7), can help a commander ensure the subordinate units nest within the plan or order.

APPROVE THE ORDER OR PLAN

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 that he/she reviews and signs the basic order or plan.

CONSIDERATIONS

For those who will receive and execute the order, they will devote most of their attention to the base (five paragraph) order or plan. Therefore, the order must provide the reader with a sufficient understanding of the overall plan to facilitate integration of functional capabilities and the nesting of tasks and intents among commands to enhance the single-battle effort. Incorporating readable, updated graphics or videos into the order are useful tools that aid the visualization of the order and single-battle concept. For example, a basic OPORD Paragraph 4 that includes a summary of the concept of logistics support and combat service support (CSS) (further articulated in Annex D, Paragraph 3.a.), along with a graphic, would enable the general audience to understand how logistics integrates into the overall plan.

All subordinate tasks are, if possible, included in the basic OPORD. If this is not practicable, higher priority tasks are listed in the basic OPORD and additional tasks should appear no lower than the appendix level.

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 "seize" and "secure." Inappropriate or inconsistent terminology can lead to unintended consequences, including mission creep, gaps, or redundancies. For more information on tactical tasks, see MCDP 1-0 (with changes 1–3).

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 SOPs 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.

While meeting orders development timelines and requirements, planners continue to develop, refine, and archive branches and sequels.

First and foremost, a plan or order must be a basis for action. Plans and orders, in conjunction with SOPs, must provide the information infrastructure for the conduct of operations. For example, the small unit leader who wishes to exploit a local advantage, still needs a detailed communication plan to request and employ the necessary fire support. In turn, the pilot providing the fire support needs detailed return-the-force procedures lest the pilot survive the engagement but not the return flight to the airfield. In areas of responsibility with long-standing contingencies, OPLANs combined with combatant command regulations and unit SOPs can provide the needed information. For example, 7th MEB used a letter of instruction to deploy its forces to Saudi Arabia in August 1990 for the first-ever, combat offload of a maritime prepositioning squadron. For other operations, particularly natural disasters, planners will likely need to apportion a significant amount of time to the production of orders to address the emergent combatant command requirements, as well as host nation(s)' considerations.

CHAPTER 7

TRANSITION

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

—MCDP 5, *Planning*

The written order is initially well-understood only by the small group that wrote it. Transition enables the far larger group of executors (current operations staff, subordinate unit commanders and staff, combat operations center members, etc.) to comprehensively understand the plan.

Transition enables the commander to personally brief, discuss, and rehearse the completed plan with the staff and subordinate commanders prior to execution. Successful transition enhances the situational understanding of those who will execute the order, reinforces the intent of the commander, promotes unity of effort, and generates tempo. Transition may involve a wide range of briefs, drills, and rehearsals necessary for a successful shift from planning to execution. Transition accounts for the human element—how people learn and understand. Simply sending a signed order to the staff and subordinates, and expecting successful comprehension and implementation, is unwise. Seeing, hearing, discussing, questioning are important elements of understanding the overall plan. At a minimum, this step includes a CONOPS brief along with a discussion of key portions of the OPORD. Whenever possible, the transition step includes rehearsals as well as confirmation briefs by subordinate commanders.

Transition is a continuous process that requires a free flow of information between commanders and staffs by all available means. A designated planner coordinates details for the commander's transition events as well as required staff transition requirements (e.g., orders brief to the combat operations center watch floor personnel). The planners ask and answer questions, highlight key aspects of the order, and otherwise facilitate understanding of the plan for those who did not take part in the planning process.

Transition occurs at all levels of command. On staffs with distinct planning and execution capabilities (e.g., plans, future operations, and current operations), responsibility of the OPLAN or OPORD must formally transfer during the transition step. If the unit SOP does not prescribe when this transfer occurs, the transfer will generally occur after the commander's final transition event and resolution of any questions or issues raised during that event. Clear staff responsibility and ownership of the plan is essential, so that one identified group (e.g., current operations) is prepared to issue FRAGOs, refine and implement branches and sequels, etc., based on the evolving situation. This formal staff transition also frees the OPT planners to focus on other plans and problems or return to their parent units and sections.

For transition to occur, an approved OPLAN or OPORD must exist. The approved order or plan and the products of continuing staff actions form the input for transition. Other transition inputs may include—

- HHQ updates and FRAGOs.
- Refined IPB products.
- Planning support tools.
- Draft FRAGOs for branches and sequels.
- Any outstanding issues.

TRANSITION PREPARATION

The planning and execution timeline, as well as the WARNORD issued after the COA comparison and decision, prescribe many of the components of the transition events. As necessary, the command issues a message to the staff and subordinates (including attachments, supporting units, etc.) with amplifying details and requirements to ensure proper attendance and preparation.

Details common to nearly all transition events include:

- Date and time.
- Type of transition event.
- Location.
- Venue.
- Focus.
- Required briefers (e.g., specifying subordinate commanders or their operations officers).
- Sequence of events and briefs.
- Required attendees.
- Operations security requirements.
- Transition event rehearsal details.
- Recorder.
- Seating.
- Audio/visual/lighting arrangements.
- Display or terrain model preparations and responsibilities.
- Confirmation brief format, date, time, and location.

TRANSITION EVENTS

Ongoing missions, time, resources, operational security concerns, and other factors influence the type of transition events. A common purpose these various events share is the need, in the interest of tempo, to convey an intuitive level of understanding the planners gained to those that will execute the plan. Options include:

- Full dress rehearsal.

- Reduced force rehearsal.
- Key leader rehearsal.
- Combined arms rehearsal.
- Rehearsal of concept drill.
- Communications exercise.
- Terrain model brief.
- Map brief.
- Transition brief.

TRANSITION COMPONENTS

Briefs within transition events include—

- HHQ mission (tasks and intent).
- Situation (friendly, enemy/adversary, and civilian population).
- Updated IPB.
- Mission.
- Commander's intent.
- CCIRs.
- Task organization.
- CONOPS (overall, or by phase).
- Supporting concepts.
- Operation assessment overview.
- Assumptions (for plans).
- Execution (including branches and potential sequels).
- Planning support tools.

CONFIRMATION BRIEFS

Subordinate commanders provide a confirmation brief to their higher commander to—

- Confirm the subordinate commander's understanding of the HHQ commander's intent.
- Confirm the subordinate commander's specific task and purpose.
- Discuss the relationship between the subordinate unit's mission and that of the other units in the operation.
- Discuss the subordinate unit's draft COA or completed CONOPS.

The confirmation brief allows the HHQ commander to identify gaps in the plan, discrepancies between his/her and the subordinate commanders' plans, and learn how subordinate commanders intend to accomplish their missions.

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APPENDIX A

MARINE CORPS PLANNING IN JOINT OPERATIONS

The MCPP is the vehicle through which commanders and their staffs in the Fleet Marine Forces provide input to the joint planning process. See Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *Joint Planning*.

JOINT PLANNING

The Joint Operation Planning and Execution System (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 of the Services 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 figure A-1.

Contingency planning and CAP share common planning activities and interrelate. Contingency planning occurs in non-crisis 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 existing contingency plans for rapid execution. Crisis action planning shortens the process in light of the dynamic requirements of changing events (see fig. A-2 on page A-2).

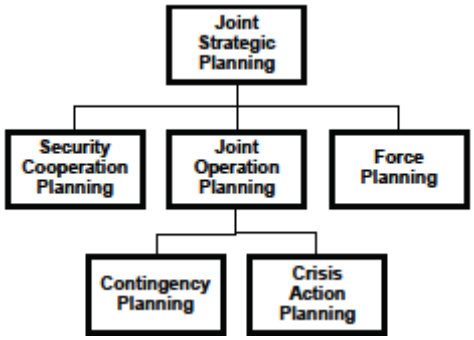

Figure A-1. Joint Strategic Planning.

THE MARINE CORPS PLANNING PROCESS AND JOINT PLANNING

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 Fleet Marine Forces and outline the actions of assigned and augmenting forces. The MCPP provides an approach for commanders and staffs to prepare supporting plans. Marine Corps Order P3000.18, *Marine Corps Planner's Manual*, establishes Marine Corps policies, procedures, and standards for developing and 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, United States Marine Corps planners and for the commanders and staffs in the Fleet Marine 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.

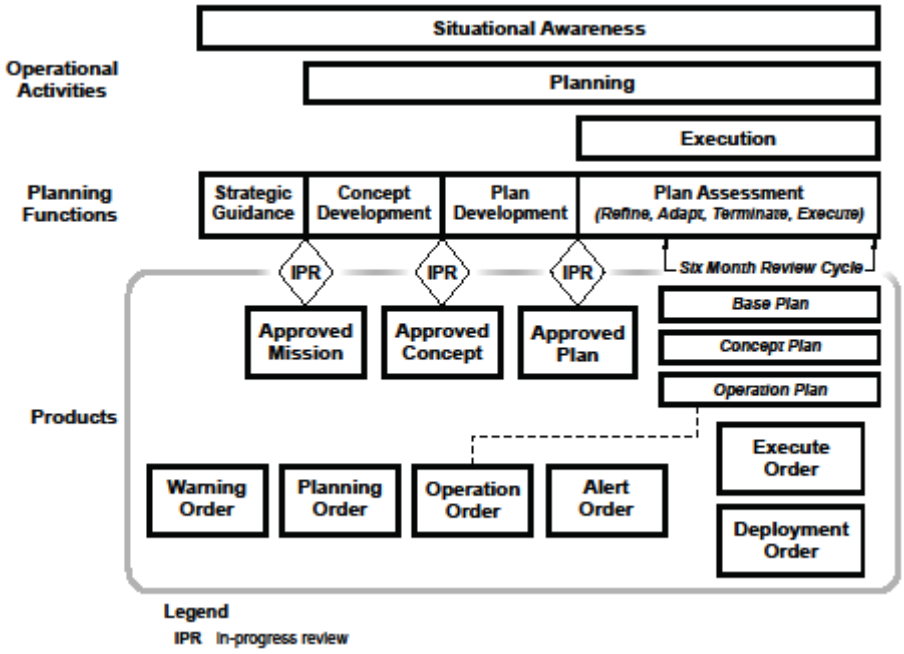

Figure A-2. Contingency and Crisis Action Planning Activities, Functions, and Products.

APPENDIX B

ORGANIZATION FOR PLANNING

The commander organizes the staff to gather, manage, and process information essential to decision-making. Organization for planning not only involves personnel, structure, and a plan to plan, but planning modes will affect the organization for planning, as well.

PLANNING MODES AND LEVELS

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 adapt 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. Commanders and planners consider these modes when organizing their planning efforts to ensure they use a mode and planning sequence appropriate to the situation. See MCDP 5 for further discussion on planning modes.

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 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, primary staff officers, and select special staff officers. Figure B-1 shows the planning organization and relationships found at lower levels of command, such as a battalion.

Higher levels of command (MEF, MEB, division, wing, or logistics group) form specialized planning staff elements and organizations. Figure B-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.

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.

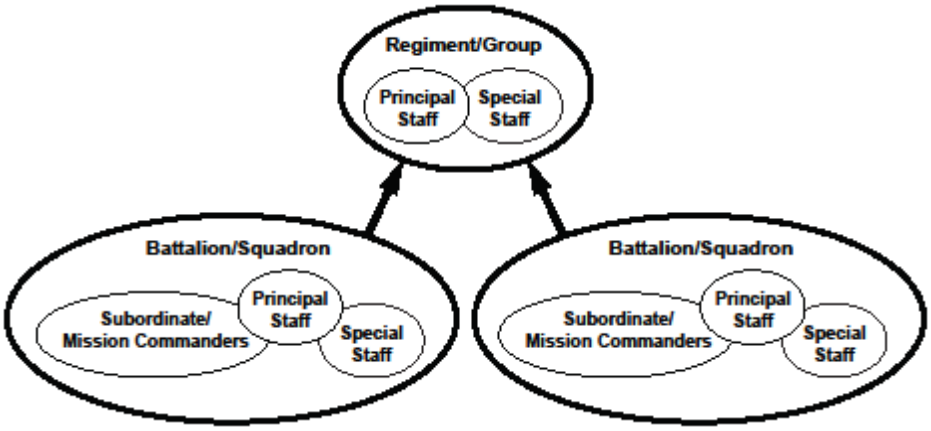

Figure B-1. Notional Lower Level Organizations and Planning Relationships.

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 prior to 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.

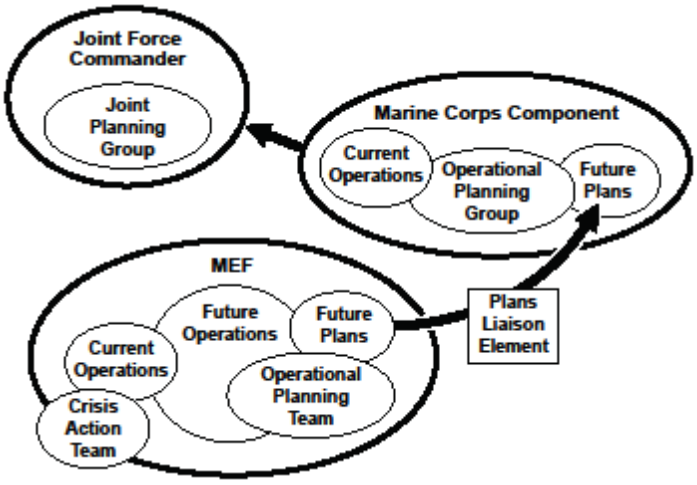

Figure B-2. Notional Component and Marine Expeditionary Force Organizations and Planning Relationships.

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 an 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 leads or 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 from the G-1, G-2, G-3, G-4, G-5, G-6, staff judge advocate, provost marshal, health services, or COMMSTRAT sections, as appropriate to the mission. The OPT may also include the warfighting function or lines of operations (LOOs) 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 the 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. To facilitate a common situational awareness, potential members of the CAT are identified in advance and recalled for initial crisis action planning. 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.

WARFIGHTING FUNCTION REPRESENTATIVES

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

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 is needed 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.

USE OF LIAISONS

Liaisons are the point of contact through which intercommunication is maintained between elements of military forces to ensure shared understanding and unity of purpose and action. Through direct communications, a liaison 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 liaisons are another tool to help commanders reduce the fog of war, 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/She 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 the command. The ability to communicate effectively is essential, as is the liaison officer's sound judgment and immediate access to the commander.

Liaison Team

A liaison team, usually headed by the liaison 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 the liaison 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 and is expected to provide more information than is contained in the message being delivered. 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, these individuals' primary responsibility is to the planning effort. They may only be able to provide part-time support to other activities, such as logistics coordination or targeting.

APPENDIX C

MARINE CORPS PLANNING PROCESS DIAGRAMS

Figures C-1 through C-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 each step.

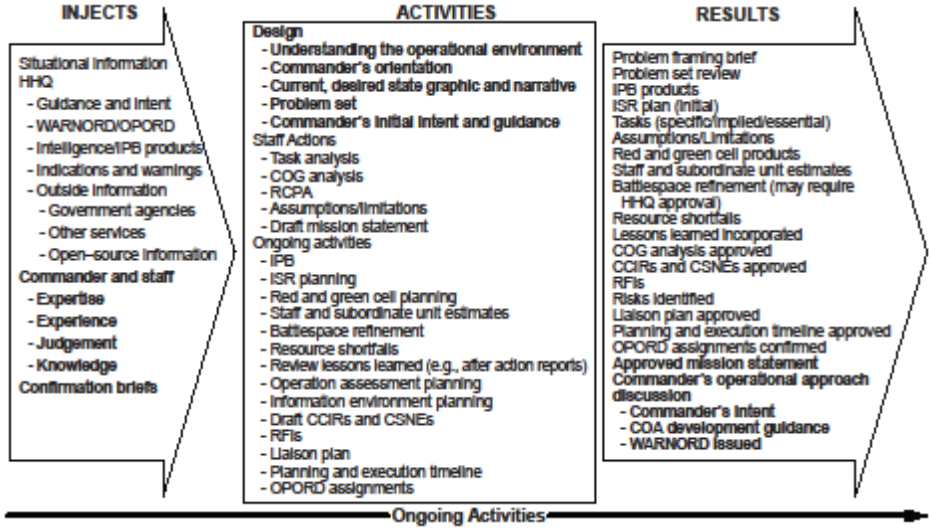

Figure C-1. Injects, Activities, and Results Diagram for Problem Framing.

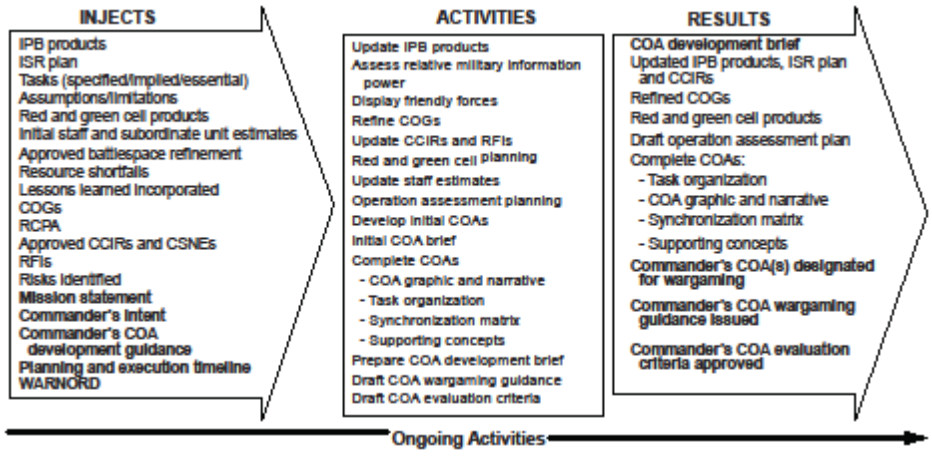

Figure C-2. Injects, Activities, and Results Diagram for Course of Action Development.

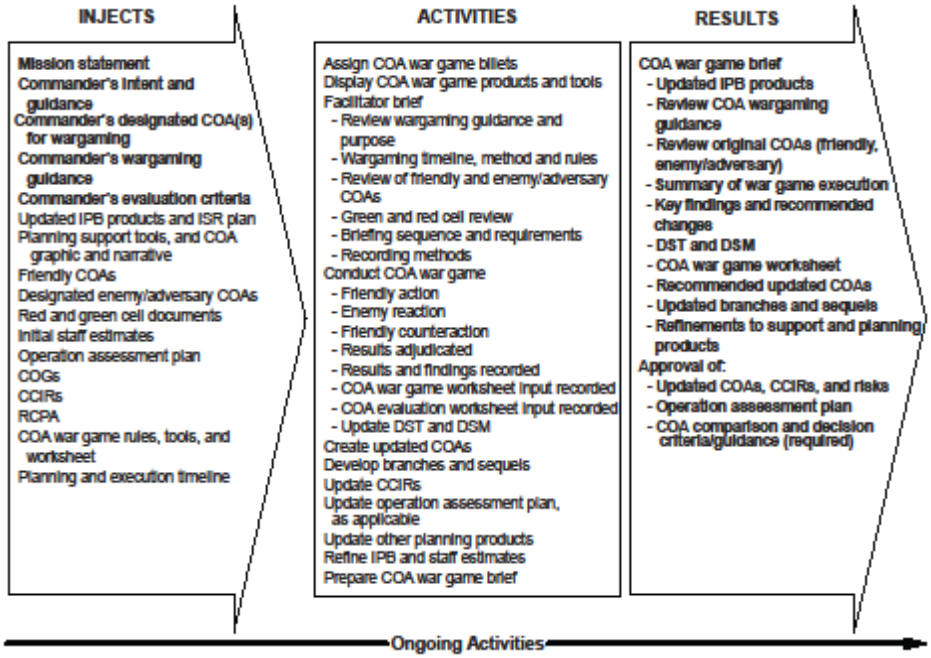

Figure C-3. Injects, Activities, and Results Diagram for Course of Action War Game.

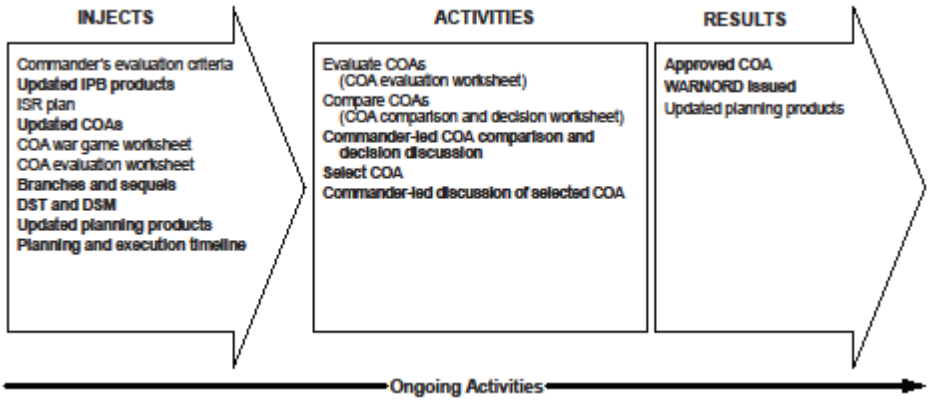

Figure C-4. Injects, Activities, and Results Diagram for Course of Action Comparison and Decision.

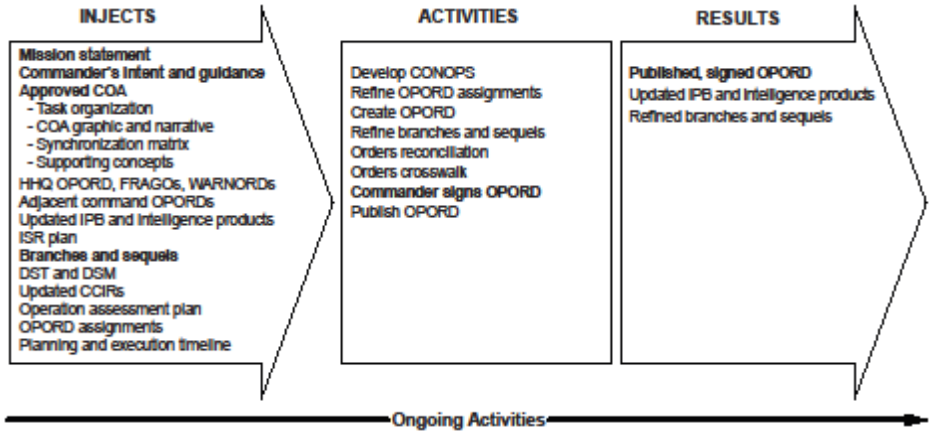

Figure C-5. Injects, Activities, and Results Diagram for Orders Development.

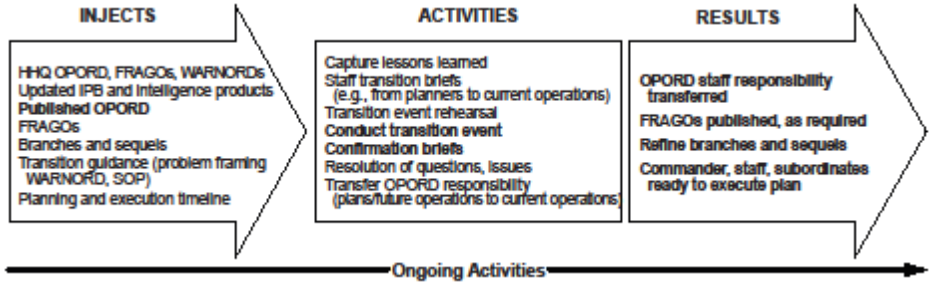

Figure C-6. Injects, Activities, and Results Diagram for Transition.

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APPENDIX D

MARINE CORPS PLANNING PROCESS TOOLS

The commander and staff use the MCPP tools to record, track, display, and analyze critical planning information. These tools help the commander, planners, and staff better understand the environment, facilitate the commander's decision-making, 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 available tools that are appropriate for their particular problem. Many of these tools are either directly or indirectly included in the OPORD.

Table D-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 D-1. Marine Corps Planning Process Tools.

Overlays, Templates, Matrices, Work-sheets, and Graphics and Narratives	Problem Framing	COA Development	COA War Game	COA Comparison and Decision	Orders Development	Transition
IPB Integration (see table D-2)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Modified combined obstacle overlay (see fig. D-1)	X	X	X		X	X
Adversary template (see fig. D-2)	X	X	X			
Situation template (see fig. D-3)	X	X	X		X	X
Event template (see fig. D-4)	X	X	X			
Event matrix (see table D-3)	X	X	X			
Decision support template (see fig. D-5)			X	X	X	X
Decision support matrix (see table D-4)			X	X	X	X
COA graphic and narrative (see figs. D-6a and D-6b)		X	X	X	X	
Synchronization matrix (see table D-5)		X	X	X	X	X

COA war game work-sheet (see table D-6)			X	X	X	
Comparison and decision matrix with comments (see table D-7)				X		
OPORD assignment matrix (see table D-8)	X	X	X	X	X	
Liaison plan (see table D-9)	X				X	
Planning and execution timeline (see table D-10)	X	X	X	X	X	X
ASCOPE matrix (see fig. D-7)	X	X	X			

INTELLIGENCE PREPARATION OF THE BATTLESPACE PRODUCTS

Intelligence preparation of the battlespace is the systematic, continuous process of analyzing the threat and environment in a specific geographic area. The four steps of IPB are: (1) define the operational environment, (2) describe the effects on operations, (3) evaluate the enemy/adversary, and (4) determine enemy/adversary courses of action. Led by the intelligence section, IPB is a whole-of-staff activity and is conducted and updated continually.

The OPT develops and refines IPB products, to include enemy COAs. The IPB products must mature and update 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. These contribute to a DST created later in the MCPP, complete with NAIs, TAIs, and decision points.

Below are summaries and examples of IPB products. For additional information, consult MCRP 2-10B.1, *Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield/Battlespace*.

Table D-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[1]
Situation template G-2/S-2 →						Continuous[1]

Pertinent enemy / adversary COAs	G-2/S-2 →					Continuous[1]
Refined and prioritized adversary COAs and event templates and matrices	G-2/S-2 →	→				Continuous[1]
Initial decision support template		G-3/S-3/OPT →	→			Continuous[1]
Decision support template and matrix			G-3/S-3/OPT →	→		Continuous[1]
Note: [1]Templates are updated throughout the operation.						

Modified Combined Obstacle Overlay

The modified combined obstacle overlay (also referred to as MCOO) (fig. D-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 crosscountry 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.

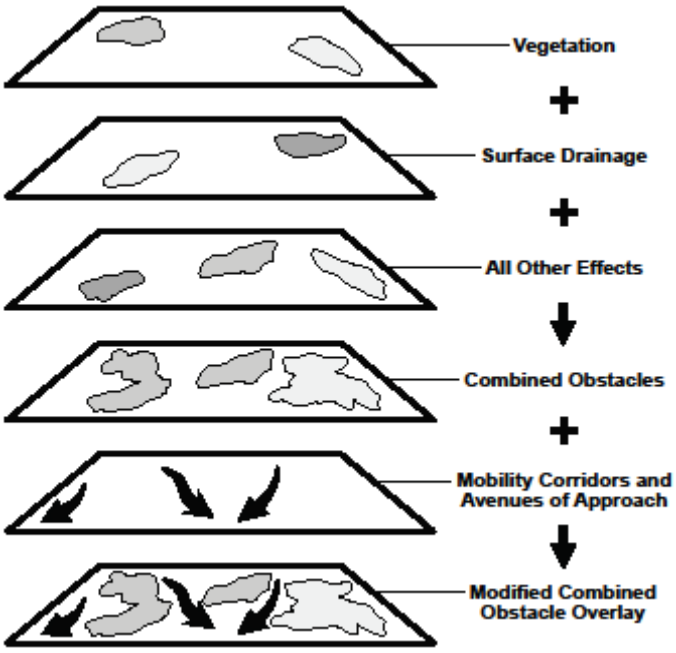


Figure D-1. Modified Combined Obstacle Overlay.

Adversary Template

Adversary templates (see fig. D-2) are models based on enemy doctrine. They illustrate the disposition and activity of enemy forces conducting a particular operation arrayed on ideal (often flat, open) terrain. Adversary templates depict the enemy'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 the use of improvised explosive devices or population support, over time. Commanders should also consider adversary actions external to the area of operations that may have immediate impacts within the battlespace.

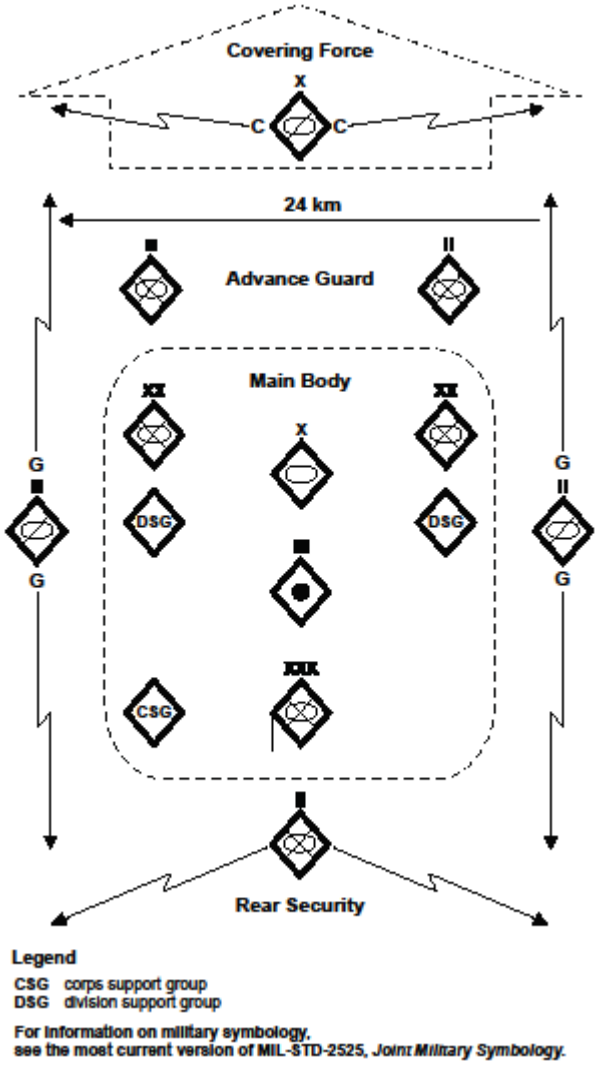


Figure D-2. Adversary Template.

Situation Template

A situation template (fig. D-3) is an adversary template that has been modified to depict enemy/adversary dispositions based on the effects of the battlespace and the pursuit of a particular COA. This template accounts for the enemy's/adversary's current situation with respect to the terrain, training and experience levels, logistic status, losses, and dispositions. Normally, the situation template depicts enemy/adversary units' two levels down and critical points in the COA. Situation templates are one part of an enemy/adversary COA model. Models may contain more than one situation template to depict locations and formations at various times.

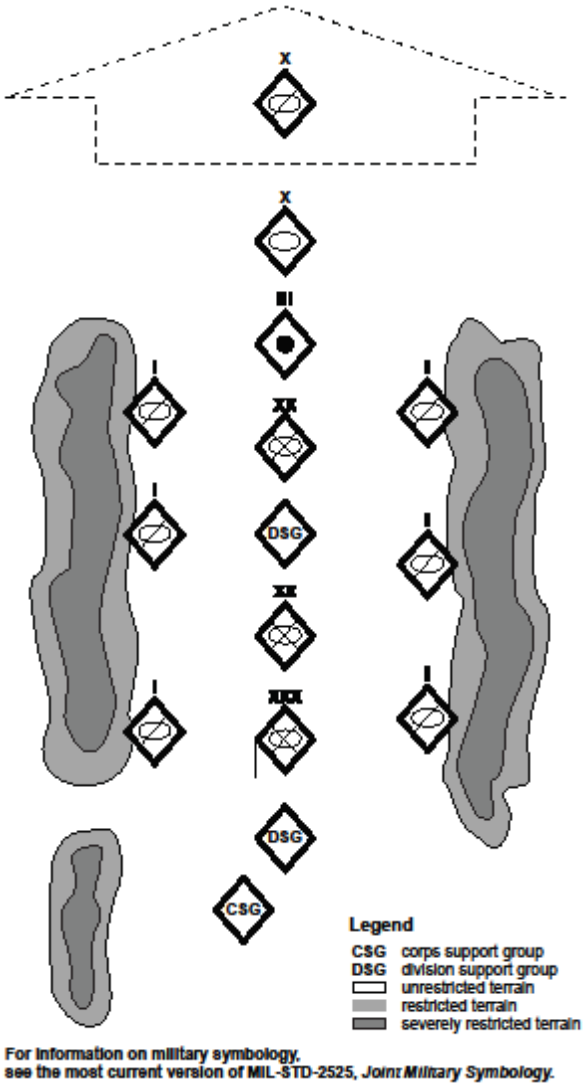


Figure D-3. Situation Template.

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 enemy/adversary has adopted. Event templates contain time phase lines that depict movement of forces and the expected flow of the operation. Movement rates depend on the terrain (modified combined obstacle overlay) and the enemy/adversary COA (DRAW-D [defend, reinforce, attack, withdraw, and 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 D-4 and table D-3.

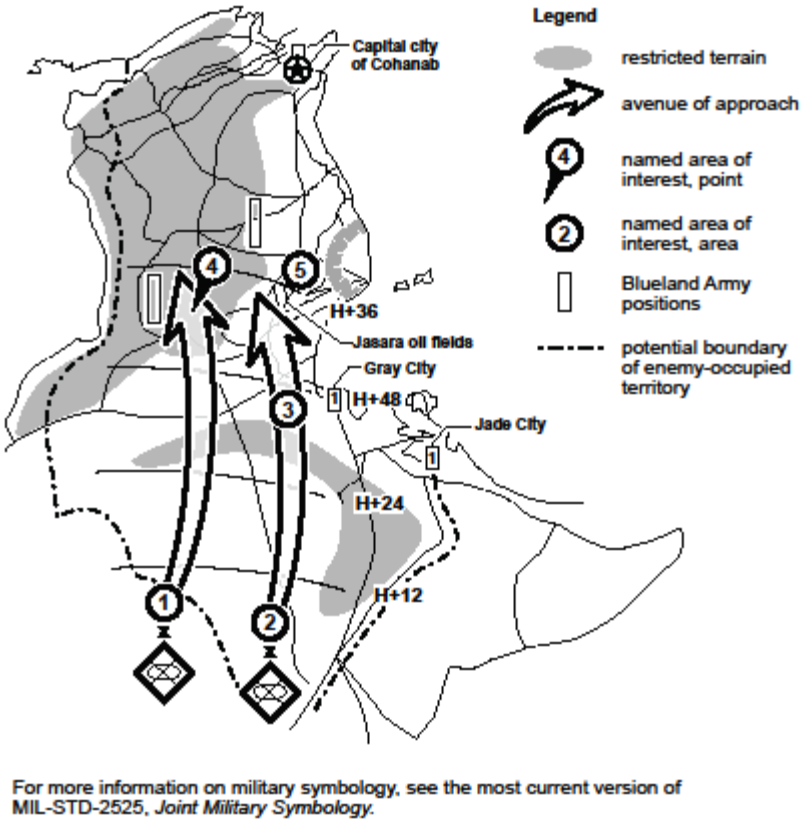


Figure D-4. Event Template.

Table D-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 DST is normally developed during COA wargaming. It is derived from enemy/adversary, situational, and event templates. The DST depicts decision points, time phase lines associated with movement of enemy/adversary and friendly forces, the flow of the operation, and other information required to execute a specific friendly COA. The DST is a key planning tool for use during transition and execution. The DSM provides an outline 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 decisions and decision points to CCIRs, ISR, NAIs, TAIs, and potential friendly response options. The DST and DSM may be refined as planning progresses after the COA war game, and is published in the final OPORD. See figure D-5 and table D-4.

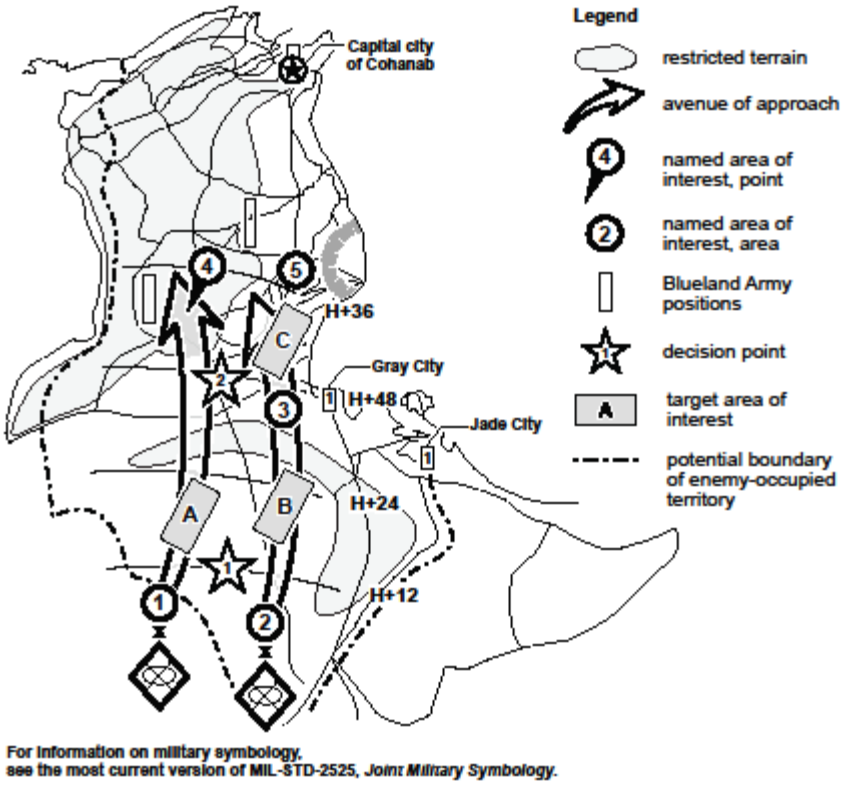


Figure D-5. Decision Support Template.

Table D-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 Blueland. 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	1st and 3d 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 decision-making 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.

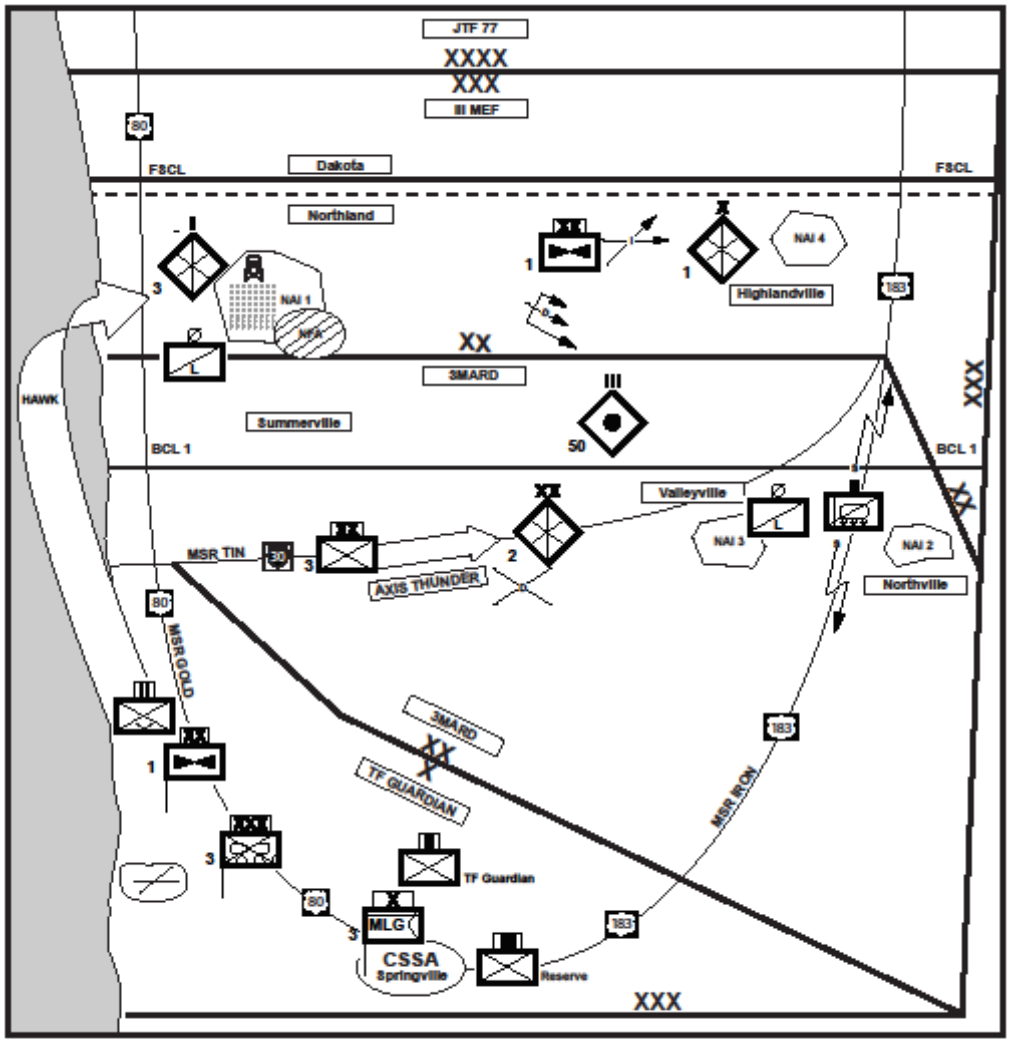
Course of Action Graphic and Narrative

The COA graphic and narrative clearly portray how the organization will accomplish the mission, identifying: who (task organization), what (tasks), when, where, how, and why (intent). See figures D-6a and D-6b. Planners must determine how best to depict the key elements of the COA without cluttering the graphic. The COA graphic and narrative, when approved by the commander, forms the basis for the CONOPS and operations overlay in the OPLAN or OPORD.

Depending on the unit, problem, environment, and type of operation, COA graphic and narrative elements may include:

- Form of maneuver.
- Main effort tasks and purpose.
- Supporting efforts (task and purpose of each).
- Reserve (location, priorities).
- Control measures (e.g., fire support coordination measures, maneuver control measures, airspace coordinating measures).
- Boundaries.
- Objectives.
- Command posts.
- Rear area boundaries and associated unit (e.g., rear area commander).
- NAIs.
- TAIs.
- Combat service support areas.

- Airfields.
- Forward arming and refueling points.
- ISR locations.
- Enemy/adversary forces.
- Adjacent forces.
- Civilian groups.
- Routes and axes.
- Barriers and obstacles.
- Essential fire support tasks.
- Operations in the information environment support tasks.



For more information on military symbology, see the most current version of MIL-STD-2525, *Joint Military Symbology*.

Figure D-6a. Course of Action Graphic.

Phase III, Stage A

At D+6, III MEF defeats Dakotian forces south of International Boundary IOT restore Northland sovereignty.

3d MARDIV (ME):
T1: Destroy the 2nd Infantry Div.
P1: IOT restore Northland sovereignty.
T2: Screen east of Valleyville.
P2: IOT deny ENY reinforcing forces IVO Valleyville.
T3: Provide one RLT as the MEF Reserve.
P3: Provide the MEF CG with flexibility to react to ENY actions.

1st MAW (SE1):
T1: Interdict ENY forces IVO Highlandville.
P1: IOT prevent ENY reinforcing forces IVO Valleyville.
T2: Provide air assault support to TF Hawk.
P2: IOT support TF Hawk seizure of Summerville oil fields and key infrastructure.

TF Hawk (SE2):
T1: Conduct air assault IVO Summerville oil fields and destroy ENY forces.
P1: IOT reclaim Summerville oil fields and key infrastructure.

3d MLG (SE3):
T1: Provide DS to ME attack.
P1: IOT facilitate the ME attack against the 2nd Infantry Div.
T2: Establish CSSA IVO Springville.
P2: IOT sustain MEF operations during Phase III, Stage B.

TF Guardian (SE4):
T1: As RACOM, conduct 8 functions rear area operations.
P1: IOT allow MEF to conduct decisive operations against Dakotian forces.

Reserve (SE5):
T1: Locate east of CSSA Springville
Priorities: BPT

EF ST1:
T1: Disrupt 50th Fires Regt.
P1: IOT facilitate ME attack.

OIE ST1:
T1: Deny information on ME direction and timing.
P1: IOT create an advantage for the MEF.

Legend

BCL	battlefield coordination line	IVO	in the vicinity of	OIE	operations in the information environment
BPT	beach party team	JTF	joint task force	P	purpose
CG	commanding general	MARDIV	Marine division	RACOM	rear area commander
CSSA	combat service support area	MAW	Marine aircraft wing	Regt	regiment
Div	division	ME	main effort	RLT	regimental landing team
DS	direct support	MLG	Marine logistics group	SE	supporting effort
EFST	essential fire support task	MSR	main supply route	ST	supporting task
ENY	enemy	NAI	named area of interest	T	task
FSCL	fire support coordination line	NFA	no-fire area	TF	task force
IOT	in order to				

Figure D-6b. Course of Action Narrative.

Synchronization Matrix

The synchronization matrix (see table D-5) is a working document showing the activities of the command and subordinate elements over time. It displays how units, warfighting functions, and tasks interrelate throughout all phases, providing additional details that complement and amplify the COA graphic and narrative. Additional details to this matrix may include displacement of the command post, priorities and location of the reserve element, information integration specifics, and sequencing of tasks and movements. A synchronization matrix should not be used to overly script the actions of subordinate units. 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 of war. The detailed, completed synchronization matrix is a key component of a productive COA war game. During orders development, the completed synchronization matrix enables planners to efficiently assign tasks to subordinates and aids in developing Annex X (Execution Checklist) of the OPLAN or OPORD.

Table D-5. Synchronization Matrix.

		Phase II Stage C	Phase III Stage A	Phase III Stage B	Phase III Stage C
Major Events		Shaping, Force Re-Set, MILDEC, Counterreconnaissance	Fix, Penetrate, Exploit	Clear / Defeat Bypassed Forces/ Secure Valleyville	Withdrawal
Desired State		2 x CAG Bns IVO 1st Motor Div are combat ineffective. 1st MID & 2nd Mech DAGs are combat ineffective. Air threat reduced to manpad. Logistically postured for Phase III. Armor formations are attrited to XX%. GCE readiness rate is above XX%.	GCE IVO Springville. Right flank protected. Logistically postured for Phase III, Stage B.	Bypassed ENY is cleared / defeated. Valleyville secured.	5th Corps fixed. NORTHLAND border restored.
Maneuver	**GCE**	T - DEFEAT ENY reconnaissance south of XXX. P – Ensure tactical surprise in Phase III Stage A.	T - FIX 1st Motor Div IVO Valleyville (regain / maintain contact). P - ALLOW penetrations of defensive belts. T - PENETRATE 1st Motor/2nd Mech Div defensive belts on E-5. P - ALLOW exploitation into ENY rear area. T - DISRUPT ENY CSS and C2 nodes IVO MEF OBJ A (Springville). T - INTERDICT GLOCs IVO MEF OBJ A (Springville). P - PREVENT commitment of ENY strategic reserve (5th Corps). T - BPT block 101 AD.	T - CLEAR bypassed ENY in zone in NORTHLAND. T - DEFEAT bypassed ENY in zone in DAKOTA. T - SECURE Valleyville. P - ENABLE NORTHLAND-DAKOTA international border restoration.	T - WITHDRAW south of NORTHLAND-DAKOTA international border. T - OCCUPY defensive sectors along the border. T - BPT transition security to host nation.

	ACE	T - SHAPE IVO XXXXX. P – XXXXX. T - Provide sorties to CFACC ISO shaping. T - Aerial reconnaissance.	T - GUARD GCE's right (east/southeast) flank. P - ALLOW exploitation to MEF OBJ A (Springville). T - BPT block 101 AD. T - BPT establish FARP at XXX. T - BPT displace EW/C.	T - INTERDICT reinforcements IVO XXXXX.	T - WITHDRAW south of NORTHLAND-DAKOTA international border.
	Mobility / Countermobility		T - Breach obstacle belts IVO XXXXX. T - Ensure mobility through wet/dry gap crossing.		T - ASSIST in clearing obstacles and improving mobility.
	Adjacent		TF West and 1st NORTHLAND - FIX (invert Stage A & B tasks). CFMCC amphibious demonstration.	TF West and 1st NORTHLAND - FIX (invert Stage A & B tasks).	RIP/TOA with host-nation security forces in liberated areas of NORTHLAND.
	Reserve	Mech infantry heavy Bn TF located IVO XXXX. Priorities: 1.XXXXX, 2. XXXXXX.			
Intelligence	**NAIs**		1, 2	3, 4	5
	Organic Collections	Recon. Route reconnaissance of MSR RED. Shaping. SIGINT Support Team. Identifying C2/AD nodes. CI support to FP. Locate HPTs. UAS. Identify ENY recon elements in passes and obstacle belts. HUMINT. Identify HPTs in Valleyville.	SIGINT Support Team. I&W of 1st Corps brigades movement. UAS. Identify ENY recon elements in passes and obstacle belts. IVO NAI XXXX, YYYY, ZZZZ.	Recon. Provide I&W of 1st Corps units moving south. UAS. Identify ENY positions south of Valleyville. Provide recce for supply convoys. HUMINT. XXXXX. SIGINT. Identify movement of 25th/2nd defensive positions.	UAS. Identify any emplaced obstacles or destroyed routes in MEF's rear area. HUMINT. Identify remaining DAKOTIAN SOF within NORTHLAND. Identify population sentiment of CF withdrawal. Identify intentions of 1st and 5th Corps. SIGINT. Identify remaining DAKOTIAN forces within NORTHLAND.
	Higher's Collections	UAS and IMINT identify obstacle belts along MSR RED. UAS/SIGINT identify I&W of 2nd MID/101st AD movement. IMINT identify battle positions of 20th/25th/101st. UAS/SIGINT identify I&W of 5th Corps movement or mobilization / WMD employment. Locate HPTs/ ENY collection assets.	UAS/SIGINT identify I&W of 2nd MID/ 101st AD movement. UAS/SIGINT identify I&W of 5th Corps movement or mobilization / WMD employment. Locate HPTs.	UAS/SIGINT Identify movement of 1st Corps units south to reinforce. UAS/SIGINT identify I&W of 5th Corps movement or mobilization / WMD employment. Locate HPTs.	IMINT. Identify change of battle positions of 1st or 5th Corps units. UAS/SIGINT. Identify I&W of movement of 1st or 5th Corps units. Assess DAKOTAIN and NORTHLAND ability to provide internal security within their borders.
	HPTs	SA-15, SA-17, Skyguard, Crotale, ADA radar. C2 nodes (Div and above) / commanders. CAG / DAG (Btry / Bn).	Priorities may change.	HPTs may change.	HPTs may change. SOF.

Fires	**Lethal**	NEUTRALIZE HPTs (mobile AD, Div/Corps artillery, Div and above C2 nodes).	LIMIT ability of ENY armor formations (101 BDE, Div Tank BDEs) to CATK vs GCE maneuver.	LIMIT ability of ENY armor formations (101 BDE, Div Tank BDEs) to CATK GCE maneuver. INTERDICT reinforcements. SUPPORT GCE operations against bypassed forces.	T - SUPPORT GCE operations.
	FSCMs	Leave FSCM as is, if CFACC can strike targets we nominate. Request battlespace and establish FSCMs after AD assets are neutralized if CFACC cannot/will not strike our targets.	BCL shift. Sync w/ adjacent units.	ESTABLISH FSCMs to support GCE.	SHIFT FSCMs to rear.
Information	**EMSO**	T-1 – Determine any ENY attempts to degrade, disrupt, neutralize, or destroy friendly force C2. P-1 – Determine ENY C2 targets and protect against electronic attack. T-2 – Establish signature management plan in conjunction with deception effort at decoy rally point to the West IVO Freeway 101. P-2 – Protect friendly force C2 practices ISO Phase III operations.	T-1 – Determine any ENY attempts to degrade, disrupt, neutralize, or destroy friendly force C2. P-2 – Determine ENY C2 targets and protect against electronic attack. T-2 -- Disrupt ENY AD capabilities. P-2 – Support friendly force ACE operations. T-3 – Disrupt ENY battalion and division C2 signals IVO Springville. P-3 – Limit ENY force coordination and response to friendly force actions.	T-1 – Determine any ENY attempts to degrade, disrupt, neutralize, or destroy friendly force C2. P-2 – Determine ENY C2 targets and protect against electronic attack. T-2 -- Disrupt ENY AD capabilities. P-2 – Support friendly force ACE operations. T-3 – Disrupt ENYbattalion and division C2 signals IVO Springville. P-3 – Limit ENY force coordination and response to friendly force actions.	T-1 – Employ signature management plan for steady state operations. P-1 – Establish normal reporting networks for post operation requirements.
	CYBER	T-1 – DCO: Defend local network against cyberattack/cyberdenial. P-1 – Ensure tactical friendly force C2. T-2 – Defend HHQ servers against cyberattack. P-2 – Ensure reach back support from HHQ ISO of friendly force operations.	T-1 -- DCO: Defend local network against cyberattack/cyberdenial. P-1 – Ensure tactical friendly force C2. T-2 – Defend HHQ servers against cyberattack. P-2 – Ensure reach back support from HHQ ISO of friendly force operations. T-3 – OCO: Target DAKOTIAN propaganda networks. P-3 – Deny DAKOTIAN ability to upload/share misinformation / disinformation via social media.	T-1 -- DCO: Defend local network against cyberattack/cyberdenial. P-1 – Ensure tactical friendly force C2. T-2 – Defend HHQ servers against cyberattack. P-2 – Ensure reach back support from HHQ ISO of friendly force operations. T-3 – OCO: Target DAKOTIAN propaganda networks. P-3 – Deny DAKOTIAN ability to upload/share misinformation / disinformation via social media.	T-1 -- DCO: Defend local network against cyberattack/cyberdenial. P-1 – Ensure tactical friendly force C2.
	SPACE		T-1 – Disrupt ENY use of GPS. P-1 -- Limit ENY force coordination and response to friendly force actions.	T-1 – Disrupt ENY use of GPS. P-1 -- Limit ENY force coordination and response to friendly force actions.	
	INFLUENCE	T-1 – Deploy CA contact team to Valleyville to engage with local political leaders. P-1 – Influence civilian population to support friendly force efforts IVO Valleyville. T-2 – Broadcast radio messages about friendly forces conducting joint training with NORTHLAND defense forces. P-2 – Influence DAKOTIAN forces to depart Valleyville.	T-1 – Create billboard IVO Freeway 101 en route to decoy rally point. P-1 – Influence DAKOTIAN forces to no longer support mission/leadership. T-2 – Broadcast radio messages about NORTHLAND civilian support for friendly force. P-2 – Influence DAKOTIAN forces to depart Valleyville.	T-1 – Broadcast radio and TV messages about friendly force support to NORTHLAND defense and rebuilding civilian infrastructure. P-1 – Influence civilian population to support friendly force efforts IVO Valleyville.	T-1 – CA contact team begins support to rebuild civilian infrastructure IVO Valleyville. P-1 – Reinforce narrative that friendly forces are NORTHLAND allies and are enabling NORTHLAND self-governance.

	DECEPTION	T-1 – Establish decoy rally point to the West IVO Freeway 101. T-2 – Establish pattern-of-life with personnel and equipment at decoy rally point. P-1 – Deceive ENY by presenting a credible threat to ENY forces from the decoy rally point.	T-1 – Conduct a feint attack to the West IVO Freeway 101. T-2 – Limit C2 transmissions from feinting force. P-1 – Influence 1st Corps CDR to commit forces to the West IVO Freeway 101.	T-1 – Terminate decoy rally point and feint force return to base. P-1 – Reconstitute ground forces IVO assembly area.	
	INFORM	T-1 – Coordinate NORTHLAND media outlets' reporting on CA engagement with local politicians. P-1 – Inform foreign and domestic audiences of friendly force efforts to support NORTHLAND infrastructure development projects. T-2 – Release images or social media posts at least every six hours showing friendly force training with NORHTLAND forces. P-2 – Inform NORTHLAND audiences that friendly forces are supporting NORTHLAND forces against DAKOTIAN aggression. T-3 – Release images or social media posts at least every six hours showing friendly force support to local population. P-3 – Reinforce narrative that friendly forces are enabling NORTHLAND self-governance. T-4 – Release news story and photos to domestic NORTHLANDIAN communities in the US showing friendly force conducting partnered training operations with NORTHLAND defense forces. P-4 – Inform domestic audiences with ties to NORTHLAND about narratives for friendly force support to NORTHLAND.	T-1 -- Release images or social media posts at least every six hours showing friendly force support to local population. P-1 – Reinforce narrative that friendly forces are enabling NORTHLAND self-governance. T-2 – Release images or social media posts at least every six hours showing friendly force training with NORHTLAND forces. P-2 – Counter DAKOTIAN misinformation / disinformation efforts and inform NORTHLAND audiences that friendly forces are supporting NORTHLAND forces against DAKOTIAN aggression.	T-1 -- Release images or social media posts at least every six hours showing friendly force support to local population. P-1 – Reinforce narrative that friendly forces are enabling NORTHLAND self-governance. T-2 – Release images or social media posts at least every six hours showing friendly force training with NORHTLAND forces. P-2 – Counter DAKOTIAN misinformation / disinformation efforts and inform NORTHLAND audiences that friendly forces are supporting NORTHLAND forces against DAKOTIAN aggression.	T-1 – Coordinate NORTHLAND media outlets' reporting on CA engagement with local politicians. P-1 – Inform foreign and domestic audiences of friendly force efforts to support NORTHLAND infrastructure development projects. T-2 -- Release images or social media posts at least every six hours showing friendly force support to local population. P-2 – Reinforce narrative that friendly forces are enabling NORTHLAND self-governance. T-3 – Release news story and photos to domestic NORTHLANDIAN communities in the US showing friendly force conducting partnered training operations with NORTHLAND defense forces. P-3 – Inform domestic audiences with ties to NORTHLAND about narratives for friendly force support to NORTHLAND.
Logistics	**Trans**	Adequate transportation assets are available for resupply.	BPT support Regt-sized movement from XXX to YYY. Move EPWs as directed.	Move EPWs as directed.	Move EPWs as directed.
	Supply	Ensure adequate stockages available for resupply.	Establish RRP under I, III, V.	Establish RRP under I, III, V.	Establish RRP under I, III, V.
	Gen Engr		BPT support construction of EPW facilities.	BPT support construction of EPW facilities.	BPT support construction of EPW facilities.
	Maint	Ensure required readiness levels are established.	Priority to GCE.		"Maintenance Standdown"

	HSS	Ensure Role I and II facilites are established.	Establish forward Role II sites as required.	Establish forward Role II sites as required. BPT treat civilian casualties.	Establish forward Role II sites as required. BPT treat civilian casualties.
	Services	Coordinate port handling with US Army logistics	Provide combat replacement companies as required	Coordinate with JFC withhold shipping	Arrange for MPF reconstitution
Command and Control	Forward		Establish C2 node north of Clayton pass along MSR RED IVO Valleyville.	Establish C2 node north of Clayton pass along MSR RED IVO Valleyville.	Maintain MEF(FWD) communications established in either Stage A or B. Provide retransmission sites to MARDIV(FWD) as required.
	Main	COC established at XXX.	Establish retransmission sites (as needed) to maintain connectivity with MARDIV(FWD). Maintain rear area communications with 3d MAW and 1st MLG.	Establish retransmission sites (as needed) to maintain connectivity with MARDIV(FWD). Maintain rear area communications with 3d MAW and 1st MLG.	Establish retransmission sites (as needed) to maintain connectivity with MARDIV(FWD). Maintain rear area communications with 3d MAW and 1st MLG.
	Rear	BPT establish C2 node.	BPT establish C2 node.	BPT establish C2 node.	BPT establish C2 node.
	Retrans		BPT establish IVO MARDIV MAIN to maintain MEF connectivity with FWD.	BPT displace as required to maintain terrestrial data communications with MARDIV(FWD).	BPT displace as required to maintain terrestrial data communications with MARDIV(FWD).
Force Protection	TF Guardian (RACOM)	T- Assume RACOM at D-6. T - SECURE critical sites and GLOCs in MEF rear area. P - PROTECT critical requirements to include personnel, supplies, equipment, and facilities.	T - SECURE critical sites and GLOCs in MEF rear area. P - PROTECT critical requirements to include personnel, supplies, equipment, and facilities.	T - SECURE critical sites and GLOCs in MEF rear area. P - PROTECT critical requirements to include personnel, supplies, equipment, and facilities.	T - SECURE critical sites and GLOCs in MEF rear area. P - PROTECT critical requirements to include personnel, supplies, equipment, and facilities.
	EPWs	Identify location of temporary collection facility IOT facilitate the processing of EPWs. As GCE identifies forward EPW collection points coordinate EPW exchange. Move EPWs to a temporary holding facility in rear area. Coordinate the movement of EPWs to permanent detention facility.	Identify location of temporary collection facility IOT facilitate the processing of EPWs. As GCE identifies forward EPW collection points coordinate EPW exchange. Move EPWs to a temporary holding facility in rear area. Coordinate the movement of EPWs to a permanent detention facility.	Identify location of temporary collection facility IOT facilitate the processing of EPWs. As GCE identifies forward EPW collection points coordinate EPW exchange. Move EPWs to a temporary holding facility in rear area. Coordinate the movement of EPWs to a permanent detention facility.	Identify location of temporary collection facility IOT facilitate the processing of EPWs. As GCE identifies forward EPW collection points coordinate EPW exchange. Move EPWs to a temporary holding facility in rear area. Coordinate the movement of EPWs to a permanent detention facility.
	MIG		LE Bn route control WRT IDPs. Set up temporary EPW facilities.	LE Bn route control WRT IDPs. Set up temporary EPW facilities.	SUPPORT the reestablishment of the rule of law. BPT partner with NORTHLAND law enforcement agencies.

Legend

AD airborne division
ADA air defense artillery
BCL battlefield coordination line
BDE brigade
Bn battalion
BPT beach party team
EW/C early warning/control
FARP forward arming and refueling point
FP force protection
FSCM fire support coordination measure
FWD forward
GCE ground combat element
MEF Marine expeditionary force
MID mechanized infantry division
MIG Marine expeditionary force information group
MILDEC military deception
MISO military information support operations
MLG Marine logistics group

Btry	battery	GEN ENG	general engineering	MSR	main supply route
C2	command and control	GLOC	ground line of communications	NAI	named area of interest
CA	civil affairs	Gov't	government	OBJ	objective
CAG	civil affairs group	GPS	Global Positioning System	OCO	offensive cyberspace operations
CATK	counterattack	HHQ	higher headquarters	OPSEC	operations security
CDR	commander	HPT	high-payoff target	P	purpose
CF	conventional forces	HSS	health service support	RACOM	rear area commander
CFACC	combined force air component commander	HUMINT	human intelligence	Recon	reconnaissance
CFMCC	combined force maritime component commander	I&W	indications and warnings	Regt	regiment
		IDP	internally displaced person	RIP	relief in place
CI	counterintelligence	IMINT	imagery intelligence	RRP	repair and replenishment point
COC	combat operations center	Intel	intelligence	SIGINT	signals intelligence
COMMSTRAT	communication strategy and operations	IOT	in order to	SOF	special operations forces
CSS	combat service support	ISO	in support of	sync	synchronize
DAG	division artillery group	IVO	in the vicinity of	T	task
DAK	Dakotian	LE	law enforcement	TF	task force
DCO	defensive cyberspace operations	Maint	maintenance	TOA	transfer of authority
Div	division	MARDIV	Marine division	Trans	transportation
ENY	enemy	MAW	Marine aircraft wing	UAS	unmanned aircraft system
EPW	enemy prisioner of war	Mech	mechanized	WMD	weapons of mass destruction
EW	electronic warfare				

Course of Action War Game Worksheet

The COA war game worksheet (see table D-6) is used during the war game to record friendly action, enemy/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.

Table D-6. Course of Action War Game Worksheet.

COA 1, STAGE A; BOX: MOST LIKELY							
Action	**Reaction**	**Counteraction**	**Assets**	**Approximate Time**	**DP**	**CCIR**	**Remarks**
MARDIV envel-ops Orangeland forces north of Gray City.	102d and 103d Armored Brigades counterattack.	MAW interdicts moving enemy forces. MARDIV engages and destroys enemy armor at long range.	Surge MAW attack assets to interdict enemy armor.	D+3	DP 3	Will 102d and 103d Armored Brigades move west to counterattack.	MARDIV has priority of close air support.

Legend

DP decision point **MARDIV** Marine division **MAW** Marine aircraft wing

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 D-7. The commander may use the COA comparison and decision matrix to aid the 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.

Table D-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 enemy lines of communications limits enemy's ability to reinforce.		Deception likely to be effective.
Asymmetrical operations	ACE operates against second echelon armor forces. GCE mechanized forces attack enemy dismounted infantry.	MEF mechanized forces against enemy mechanized forces.	
Maneuver	Frontal attack followed by penetration.	Limited to frontal attack.	Turning movement.
Decisive actions	ACE disrupts deployment of second echelon forces through interdiction.		Isolate first echelon forces. Disrupt lines of communica- tions, logistic facilities, and assembly areas.
Simplicity		Simplest	Demanding command and coordination requirements.

Legend
GCE ground combat element

Table D-8. OPORD Assignment Matrix.

Document	Title	Responsible POC	Billet	Action Officer	Billet
BASIC ORDER					
Annex A.	**Task Organization**				
Appendix A-1	Time-Phased Force Deployment List				
Appendix A-2	Shortfall Identification				
Appendix A-3	Flexible Response and Flexible Deterrent Options				
Annex B.	**Intelligence**				
Appendix B-1	Priority Intelligence Requirements				
Appendix B-2	Signals Intelligence				
Tab B-2-A	Communications Intelligence Collection Requirements				
Tab B-2-B	Operational Electronic Intelligence Collection Requirements				
Appendix B-3	Counterintelligence				
Tab B-3-A	Counterintelligence Target List				
Tab B-3-B	Multidiscipline Counterintelligence Threat Report				
Tab B-3-C	Designation of Theater Counterintelligence Executive Agency				
Appendix B-4	Targeting Intelligence				
Tab B-4-A	Target List (Conventional)				
Tab B-4-B	Network Targeting (nonlethal actions against friendly and neutral networks and nodes)				
Appendix B-5	Human Resource Intelligence				
Tab B-5-A	HUMINT Operations Cell Operations				
Tab B-5-B	EPW/Civilian Detainees				
Appendix B-6	Intelligence Support to Operations in the Information Environment				
Appendix B-7	Imagery Intelligence				
Appendix B-8	Measurement and Signature Intelligence				
Appendix B-9	Captured Enemy Equipment				
Tab B-9-A	Specific Prioritized Intelligence Collection Requirements				
Tab B-9-B	Equipment Releasable for Operational Purposes				
Tab B-9-C	Network Analysis				
Appendix B-10	National Intelligence Support Team				
Appendix B-11	Intelligence Estimate				
Appendix B-12	Intelligence Products				
Appendix B-13	Intelligence Collection Plan				
Tab B-13-A	Signals Intelligence Employment Plan				
Tab B-13-B	Counterintelligence/ Human Source Intelligence Employment Plan				
Appendix B-14	Reconnaissance and Surveillance Plan				
Tab B-14-A	Ground Reconnaissance and Surveillance Plan				
Tab B-14-B	Sensor Surveillance Plan				
Exhibit B-14-B-1	Sensor Implant Plan				
Exhibit B-14-B-2	Sensor Employment Plan				
Exhibit B-14-B-3	Sensor Monitoring and Dissemination Plan				

Table D-8. OPORD Assignment Matrix.

Document	Title	Responsible POC	Billet	Action Officer	Billet
Exhibit B-14-B-4	Sensor Resources				
Appendix B-15	Geographic Intelligence				
Appendix B-16	Intelligence Operations				
Appendix B-17	Support to Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape				
Annex C.	**Operations**				
Appendix C-1	Nuclear Operations				
Appendix C-2	Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Defense Operations				
Appendix C-3	Special Operations				

Legend

CBRN	chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear	Det	detachment	LtCol	lieutenant colonel
Col	colonel	HUMINT	human intelligence	Maj	major
CWO 4	chief warrant officer 4	LDR	leader	Ops	operations

Table D-9. Liaison Plan.

MEF LNO Plan

LNO TO MEF				LNO FROM MEF			
UNIT FROM	**BILLET**	**RANK**	**NAME**	**UNIT TO**	**BILLET**	**RANK**	**NAME**
DIV	DIV LNO	LTCOL	SMITH	JTF HQ	MEF LNO	LTCOL	HARDY
ACE	ACE LNO	MAJ	BROWN	Doctors w/o Borders	MEF LNO	CAPT	BLACK
MLG	DIV LNO	LTCOL	ELROD	Centralian Gov't	MEF LNO	COL	JONES
TF WEST	TF WEST LNO	LTC	MOORE	TF WEST	MEF LNO	MAJ	PAIN
TF EAST	TF EAST LNO	LCDR	ROW	TF EAST	MEF LNO	MAJ	MAY

Legend

Capt	captain	JTF	joint task force	Maj	major
Col	colonel	LCDR	lieutenant commander (Navy)	MLG	Marine logistics group
Div	division	LNO	liaison officer	TF	task force
Gov't	government	LTC	lieutenant colonel (Army)	w/o	without
HQ	headquarters	LtCol	lieutenant colonel		

Table D-10. Planning and Execution Timeline.

Planning and Execution Timeline					
Day	**Time**	**Event**	**Location**	**CG Attends?**	**Notes**
D Day		Execution		Y	
D-1		Unit Movement to AA		Y	
D-3		Unit Rehearsals		Y	
D-4		Transition Brief		Y	MSC COs required to brief
D-5		Transition Event Rehearsal			MSC OpsOs required
		Transition Event Preparation			Lead: G-3 Ops chief
		MSC Confirmation Brief		Y	OPT lead will send template to MSC OpsOs; MSC COs brief
D-7		OPORD Published			
D-8		CG Signature on OPORD		Y	
		Staff Review & Feedback of OPORD			
		OPORD Draft Complete			
		OPORD Crosswalk			
		OPORD Reconciliation			
D-10		Complete OPORD			
		COA Comparison and Decision Brief		Y	
		COA Comparison and Decision Brief Preparation			
		COA Comparison and Decision Brief OPT Work			
D-12		COA Wargaming Brief		Y	
		COA Wargaming Brief Prep			
		COA Wargaming Brief OPT Work			
D-13		COA War Game			
		COA War Game Preparation			Order 10 ft x 20 ft map POC: Capt X for set-up
		COA War Game OPT Work			
D-16		COA Development Brief		Y	
		COA Development Brief Preparation			
		COA Development Brief OPT Work			
		Operational Approach Discussion		Y	

Table D-10. Planning and Execution Timeline (Continued).

D-19		Problem Framing Brief		Y	
		Problem Framing Brief Preparation			
D-20		Problem Framing OPT Work			
		WARNORD Issued			SIPRNET; must identify way to send to coalition TACON units
		Design Discussion		Y	
D-22		Commander's Orientation		Y	AC/S G-3: BPT lead discussion
		Form OPT			
		Identify OPT Membership and Requirements			
D-23		Identify OPT Leader			

Legend

AA	avenue of approach	CG	commanding general	Ops	operations
AC/S	assistant chief of staff	CO	commanding officer	OpsO	operations officer
BPT	beach party team	ft	feet	SIPRNET	SECRET Internet Protocol Router Network
Capt	captain	MSC	major subordinate command	TACON	tactical control

PLANNING SUPPORT TOOLS FOR STABILITY OPERATIONS

The following planning support tools have emerged and evolved as a result of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom lessons learned. For detailed information on stability operations, see MCWP 3-03, *Stability Operations*.

Civil Considerations

Civil considerations are a factor in all types of military operations, but they are of particular significance in stability operations and security cooperation. 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. Given the global and accelerated nature of information flows, civil considerations must also take into account international audiences as well as American domestic audiences. 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 enemy/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 of ASCOPE: areas, structures, capabilities, organizations, people, and events. See figure D-7.

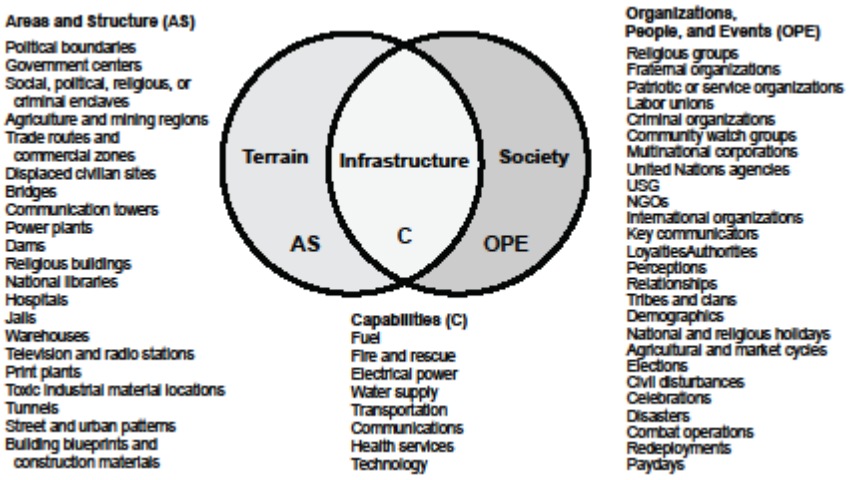


Figure D-7. Sample Civil Considerations (ASCOPE).

Areas

Areas are key localities or aspects of the terrain within a commander's operational environment 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 affairs Marines and 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 under consideration.

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 subject to protection 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, capacity, 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 themselves, 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, sanitation, 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. Under a hostile threat condition, 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 by personnel with functional expertise in civil affairs or civil engineering. 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 religious groups, companies, patriotic or service organizations, community watch groups, international organizations, 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. Some of these organizations may also form the nucleus of humanitarian assistance programs, interim governing bodies, civil defense efforts, and other population-centric 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 unit's area of operations. Major categories of civilians likely to be encountered include—

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

- Local civil authorities, such as elected and traditional leaders at all levels of government.
- Expatriates.
- Foreign government employees.
- Employees of international organizations and NGOs.
- US Government 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, holidays, 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.

APPENDIX E

DESIGN: AN EXAMPLE

ITERATIVE DESIGN DURING OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM II

During Operation Iraqi Freedom II, 1st Marine Division employed design (see fig. E-1). The Commanding General, Major General James N. Mattis, began with an assessment of the people that the Marines, Soldiers, and Sailors would encounter within the 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 Operation Iraqi Freedom 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," was composed of two major elements encompassed in an overarching "bodyguard" of information operations.

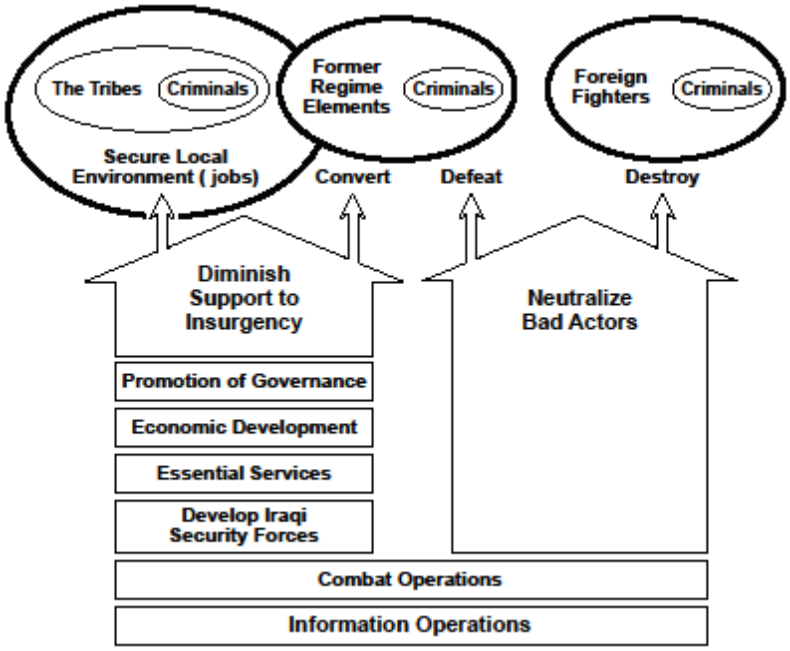
The first element, and the main effort, was reducing support for insurgency. Guided by the maxims of "first do no harm" and "no better friend, no worse enemy," the objective was to establish a secure local environment for the indigenous population so people could pursue their economic, social, cultural, 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 enemy and/or adversary, 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 neutralized 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 enemy 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, as corruption was historically prevalent among Iraqi officials, generating cynicism toward government. Decades of Arab media mischaracterization of US actions created mistrust of US 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 Marine Division faced an adaptive enemy/adversary. Persistent US presence and interaction with the populace threatened the insurgents and caused the enemy/adversary to employ more open violence in selected areas of Al Anbar. This response resulted in learning and adaptation within 1st Marine Division. Design enabled 1st Marine Division to adjust the blend of "diminishing support for insurgents" and "neutralizing bad actors" to meet local challenges. Throughout the operation, 1st Marine Division continued learning and adapting with the espoused vision providing a constant guide to direct and unify the effort.



Note: The term "information operations" is a legacy term in this context and was replaced by "operations in the information environment" in the Marine Corps.

Figure E-1. 1st Marine Division Design for Operation Iraqi Freedom II.

APPENDIX F

STAFF ESTIMATES AND ESTIMATES OF SUPPORTABILITY

Keeping commanders informed to facilitate their decision-making 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 and the estimates of supportability.

Staff estimates are generally functional in nature, such as fires, logistics, or intelligence, and often require subordinate unit information, such as the ACE's sortie calculations. Staff estimates evolve into supporting concepts as COAs are developed. Once the commander approves a COA, the staff estimate and supporting concept become the first draft of their respective portion of the order or plan. Estimates of supportability, especially estimates provided by attached, supporting, etc. units, enable the commander and planners to better understand the capabilities, requirements, limitations, and shortfalls of the particular unit.

Estimates may be text documents, slides, graphic representations, or an oral presentation of the analysis and recommendations. These estimates enable commanders, staff, and planners to develop a plan and develop complete COAs. Done properly, estimates contribute information to the annexes and appendices to OPORDs and OPLANs.

Commanders and staffs use estimates as they collect, process, and evaluate information. A subordinate unit or a staff section, upon discovering a fatal flaw, should not wait to complete a document to raise concerns about a particular COA. The sooner the commander and planners know of a problem, the sooner they can either discard or modify the COA. 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, and/or requirements or capabilities change.

STAFF ESTIMATES

The staff and warfighting function representatives develop staff estimates (see figs. F-1a through F-1e). 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.

Figures F-1a through F-1e provide examples of staff estimates. The G-2, with input assistance from all staff members, will also prepare and disseminate the IPB as a separate and continuously updated product.

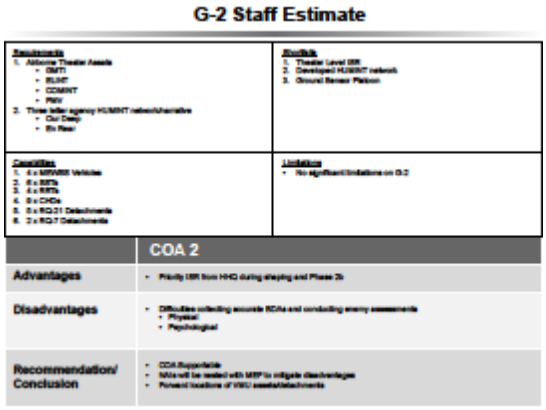


Figure F-1a. Notional G-2 Staff Estimate.

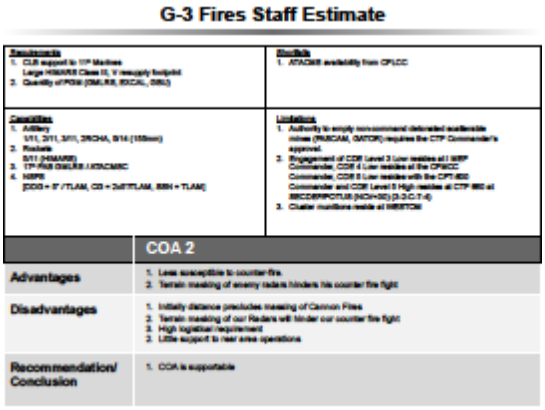


Figure F-1b. Notional G-3 Staff Estimate.

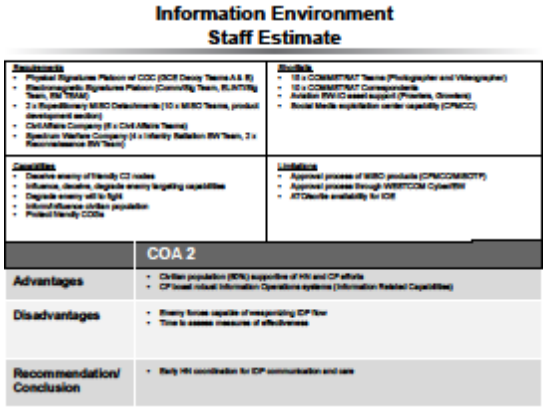


Figure F-1c. Notional Information Environment Staff Estimate.

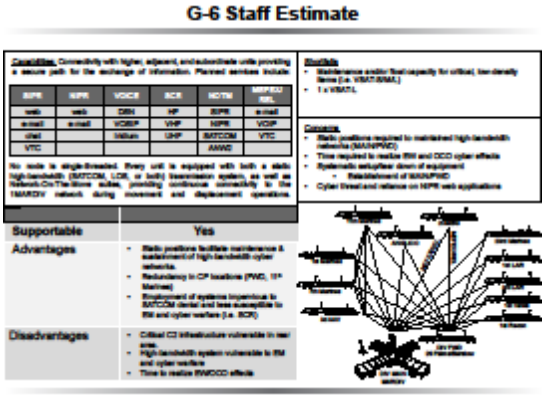


Figure F-1d. Notional G-6 Staff Estimate.

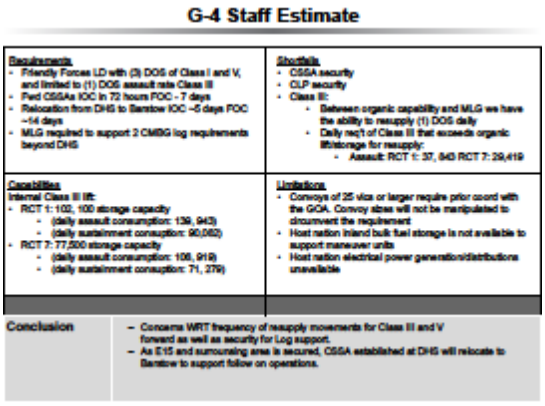
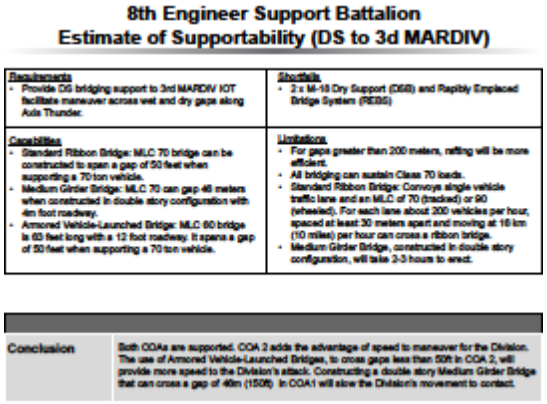


Figure F-1e. Notional G-4 Staff Estimate.

ESTIMATES OF SUPPORTABILITY

Estimates of supportability are produced by subordinate commanders or their planners to assist the higher commander with planning. Estimates of supportability are especially important for attached, supporting units. Figure F-2 provides an example of an estimates of supportability.



8th Engineer Support Battalion
Estimate of Supportability (DS to 3d MARDIV)

Requirements • Provide DS bridging support to 3rd MARDIV IOT facilitate maneuver across wet and dry gaps along Axis Thunder.	**Shortfalls** • 2 x M-19 Dry Support (DSB) and Rapidly Emplaced Bridge System (REBS)
Capabilities • Standard Ribbon Bridge: MLC 70 bridge can be constructed to span a gap of 50 feet when supporting a 70 ton vehicle. • Medium Girder Bridge: MLC 70 can gap 46 meters when constructed in double story configuration with 4m foot roadway. • Armored Vehicle-Launched Bridge: MLC 60 bridge is 63 feet long with a 12 foot roadway. It spans a gap of 50 feet when supporting a 70 ton vehicle.	**Limitations** • For gaps greater than 200 meters, rafting will be more efficient. • All bridging can sustain Class 70 loads. • Standard Ribbon Bridge: Convoys single vehicle traffic lane and an MLC of 70 (tracked) or 90 (wheeled). For each lane about 200 vehicles per hour, spaced at least 30 meters apart and moving at 16 km (10 miles) per hour can cross a ribbon bridge. • Medium Girder Bridge, constructed in double story configuration, will take 2-3 hours to erect.

Conclusion	Both COAs are supported. COA 2 adds the advantage of speed to maneuver for the Division. The use of Armored Vehicle-Launched Bridges, to cross gaps less than 50ft in COA 2, will provide more speed to the Division's attack. Constructing a double story Medium Girder Bridge that can cross a gap of 46m (150ft) in COA1 will slow the Division's movement to contact.

Figure F-2. Notional Estimate of Supportability.

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APPENDIX G

RED TEAM

This appendix describes red team principles and provides perspectives for the employment of red teams and red-teaming techniques in the MCPP. See MCBUL [Marine Corps Bulletin] 3510/C461, *Marine Corps Red Team Policy*.

Red teams, like red cells, have direct application to planning and provide commanders with an independent capability to fully explore alternatives in plans, operations, concepts, organizations, and capabilities in the context of the operational environment. Red teams also provide the perspectives of partners, enemy/adversaries, and others, vice that of the planning organization and of Western military thought in general. People and organizations court failure in predictable ways, by degrees, almost imperceptibly, and according to their own culture and context. As a countermeasure, Marines can fully explore alternatives in that context and from differing perspectives.

Red teams can apply at all levels of warfare, across the range of military operations, and during all phases of operations. Red teams challenge the OPT's understanding of the problems and the environment, as well as assumptions. Red teams also seek to qualify the assumptions, develop targeted cultural questions, propose alternative perspectives, and identify any cognitive biases or instances of groupthink.

Red teams succeed when they help commanders and staffs avoid complacency and consider a wider range of perspectives and COAs. All planners and analysts endeavor to think critically, consider alternatives, and avoid bias and error. However, red teams are distinguished by their—

- Independence that helps them view problems and processes from detached perspectives.
- Specialized training that helps them identify and counter biases and stimulate critical and creative thought.
- Purposeful out-of-the-box approach to problems that helps them consider issues with fewer concessions to convention, policy, established community positions, and functional specialization.

Red teams participate in each phase of the planning process, often without overt intervention and while remaining largely in the background. Commanders may direct alternate approaches. Red teams identify unseen opportunities, alternatives, gaps, vulnerabilities, and threats to the friendly COAs that may generate development of additional branches and sequels not previously considered. Separate, discrete red team briefs and discussions may better serve the commander. The red team's communication skills and finesse will determine its effectiveness during planning. Red teams can be a useful tool, but their existence does not relieve planning teams of their responsibility to think critically about their plan from multiple perspectives.

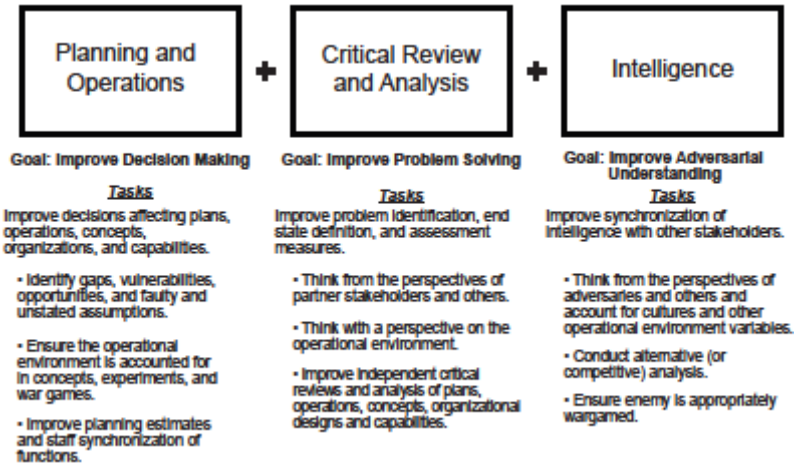

Figure G-1: Three Red Team Focus Areas.

Red Team Tools Within the Marine Corps Planning Process

Red teams help establish an initial hypothesis about the character of the friendly, adversarial, and wider environmental factors which define the situation. Red teams also explore cultural narratives, institutional histories, propensities, and strategic trends to postulate a general structure of the factors and their relationships to the problem. Red team contributions to the planning process as well as details for the development of the red team tools and products are discussed below. See figure G-2.

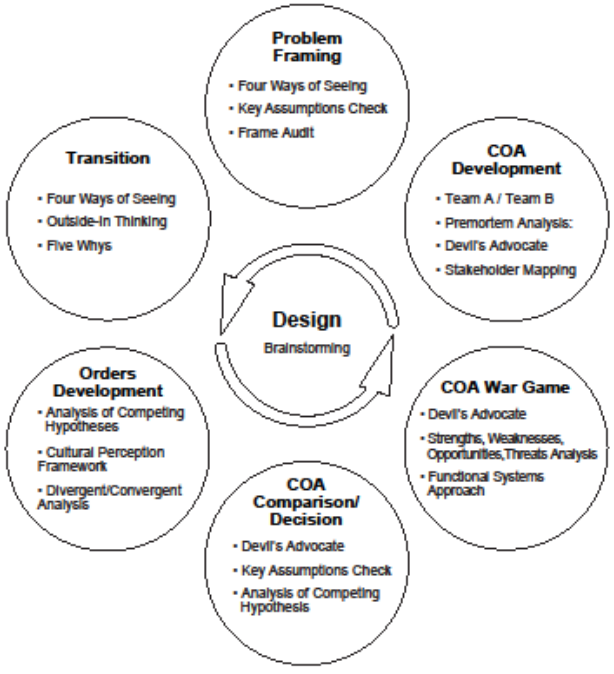

Figure G-2: Red Team Tools Within the Marine Corps Planning Process.

Problem Framing

The purpose of problem framing is to achieve a greater understanding of the environment and the nature of the problem set to identify an appropriate conceptual solution. The red team, or red team techniques, contributes to the design methodology by reinforcing the effort to frame the correct problem. While not prescriptive or a checklist, design is based on—

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

For the red team, critical thinking is purposeful and reflective judgment on 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. Critical thinkers are often open-minded yet skeptical individuals who: gather, assess, and interpret relevant information; question their own assumptions; and, consider the quality of information and the associated implications and consequences.

Red teams gain perspective by using multiple tools. Commanders and planners can leverage many of these tools, some of which include:—

- Four Ways of Seeing. Using multiple lenses, commanders and planners can reveal challenges to mission accomplishment and heighten understanding. These lenses include: how friendly forces view themselves; how the enemy/adversary views themselves; how the enemy/adversary views friendly forces; and, how friendly forces view the enemy/adversary.
- Key Assumption Check. The red team can play a key role in validating assumptions and may, therefore, undertake a systematic effort to question the assumptions that guide an analyst's interpretation of evidence and the reasoning underlying any particular judgment or conclusion.
- Frame Audit. A tool to help identify more useful frames and reframe an issue in more useful ways.

Red teams may present their products as part of the problem framing brief or at a separate time.

Course of Action Development

Red teams provide options for commanders by an approach to solve the problem from an alternate perspective. Red teams make independent assessments of possible COAs, while identifying and addressing catastrophic points of failure and utilizing available internal and external resources.

Red teams provide independent validation of the suitability, feasibility, acceptability, and completeness of the COAs. Red team tools for COA development include—

- Team A / Team B. A competitive analysis that pits Team A against Team B.
- Premortem analysis. A red team strategy in which the red team imagines that a project or organization has failed and then works backward to determine what potentially could lead to

the failure of the project or organization. The technique breaks possible groupthinking by facilitating a positive discussion on threats, increasing the likelihood of identifying the main threats. The red team can then analyze the magnitude and likelihood of each threat to recommend preventive actions to protect the project or organization from suffering an untimely failure.

- Devil's advocate. Advocating an opposing or unpopular cause for the sake of argument or to expose it to a thorough examination.
- Stakeholder mapping. Identifying and understanding key stakeholders, where they come from, and what they are looking for in relationship to your operation.

Red team products may be briefed with the OPT's COA development products or separately.

Course of Action War Game

The red teams assist with the examination and refinement of options in light of enemy/adversary capabilities and potential actions and reactions. They also examines other factors specific to the operational environment, such as the local population and how it may respond to friendly and enemy/adversary interactions. While planners are wargaming friendly COAs against selected enemy/adversary COAs through an iterative action-reaction-counteraction process, red teams focus their efforts on the examination of the risk inherent to each COA to find alternative ways to minimize risk. Red teams work independently from the OPT and their tools include—

- Devil's advocate.
- Functional systems approach. Conceptualizing everyday concepts as an interconnected dynamic system rather than as separate processes.
- Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats analysis. This analysis is a framework that adds value by essentially forcing the red team to think through the various perspectives of a given situation using different situations and actors. Doing so helps the red team attain alternative perspectives and a more holistic view of the environment.

Red teams may brief their products and assessment as part of the COA war game brief or in a separate discussion with the commander.

Course of Action Comparison and Decision

Red teams examine the synchronization matrix and identify possible catastrophic points of failure. In addition, red teams conduct independent assessments for the commander as required or instructed utilizing the following tools:

- Devil's advocate.
- Key assumptions check.
- Analysis of competing hypotheses. A methodology for evaluating multiple competing hypotheses (suppositions or proposed explanations made on the basis of limited evidence as a starting point for further investigation) for observed data.

The dialogue during the COA comparison and decision step represents a continuation of the design effort. Red teams offer differing perspectives to deepen the group's understanding of the environment and the problem.

Orders Development

Red teams assist commanders by ensuring the OPORD is useful, realistic, and can be understood by all audiences.

Red teams utilize the following tools to assist during this step of the process:

- Analysis of competing hypotheses.
- Cultural perception framework. A conceptual framework of the different mechanisms by which culture conditions perception and cognition.
- Divergent/convergent analysis. The use of divergent and convergent modes of thought—generating and taking seriously alternative possibilities, even comparing and contrasting alternative models and types of analysis, and yet in the end offering a reasonable (and reasonably definitive) conclusion.

Transition

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. Red teams conduct an independent assessment of overall mission requirements and commander's intent.

Red teams utilize the following tools to assist during this step:

- Four ways of seeing.
- Outside-in thinking. Harnesses insight about the external environment to make the most intelligent choices about where to compete and how to win the competition. The primary role of this tool is to create an intense focus on the few things that matter most for the achievement of competitive advantage.
- 5 Whys. An iterative interrogative technique used to explore the cause-and-effect relationships underlying a particular problem.

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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—

- Significant MCPP knowledge and experience.
- 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 6 hours. The rapid planning techniques discussed in this appendix focus on the MEU and its 6-hour timeline, but these techniques may be tailored and employed to meet other 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.

ACTIONS PRIOR TO RAPID PLANNING

To best employ the 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 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 operation. 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 TRAP or a platoon-sized reinforcement, are prestaged in readily accessable locations in their magazines 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, the growth of technology greatly increased 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/her 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.

COMPOSITION OF MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNIT PLANNING CELLS

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, the 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 the 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 reconnaissance and surveillance (R&S) mission planning cell may 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 ground combat element 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.

MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNIT RAPID RESPONSE PLANNING PROCESS

The R2P2 is a time-constrained, six-step process that mirrors the MCPP. The six steps of 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 decision-making, 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 and acknowlegement 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 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 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/her intent; an assessment of COGs and critical vulnerabilities; ongoing, standby, and follow-on mission priorities; COA considerations and/or 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 the 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 the 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 assumes that the mission commander is developing COAs. The mission commander begins COA development by convening the mission planning cell and conducting roll call. A review significant material from the first step of the process may be conducted 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/her own. If information is required to support COA development, the commander directs specific members of the 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 decision-making and operational SOPs to meet the reduced timeline of the 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.
- Operations in the Information Environment.
- 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 a 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 their COAs in a shorter period of time, but the R&S effort must support the information needs of the primary mission commander.

The COA development 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 the planning cell is preparing their 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 development 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 PIRs, FFIRs, or RFIs.

The mission commander summarizes the MEU and ARG mission, the envisioned end state, measures of effectiveness, and the COAs. The mission commander 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 their 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/her 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 "y" amount will be available tomorrow.

An intelligence officer is also usually tasked to produce an estimate from the enemy commander's perspective. The enemy 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 most likely COAs. 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 and provide concise estimates of supportability. An execution matrix or synchronization matrix is started or refined 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 decision maker, typically concurrence is sought from the supporting commander, particularly when relying 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 commanders 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 is converted into the 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 the 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, 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 the graphic and 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 the 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
Problem Framing				
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 Limitations (constraints [must do] and restraints [cannot do]) Assumptions Resource/SME shortfalls COG analysis Approved CCIRs	Battlestaff forms Cross-deck requirements Command and staff supervision
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

Table H-1. Sample Planning Matrix (Continued).				
COA Development				
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
COA War Game/COA Comparison and Decision				
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
Orders Development				
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
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

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APPENDIX I

INTERAGENCY/INTERORGANIZATIONAL COORDINATION

Joint and multinational operations are integrated at the strategic level and coordinated at the operational and tactical level with the activities of participating US Government departments and agencies, relevant international organizations, NGOs, host nation agencies, and elements of the private sector to achieve common objectives. Refer to JP 3-08, *Interorganizational Cooperation*, for additional information.

Annex V (Interagency/Interorganizational Coordination) of the OPORD or OPLAN reflects the commander's priorities and approach to interorganizational cooperation. Information in the annex provides a basis for staff and liaison interaction with these numerous organizations and agencies. 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 Corps planners must become familiar with interagency strategies, assessments, and plans at all levels (see table I-1). 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 component command. 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. These assessments, coupled with their authorities, make interagency coordination a valuable process. This is especially true for operations in the information environment, where the application of military information power complements diplomatic efforts, federal law enforcement agencies as well as cyberspace and space operations. All security cooperation events will require assessment, monitoring, and evaluation to determine the outcomes of partner capability development. (For more information, see JP 3-20, *Security Cooperation*.) Assessment tools, such as the Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework, should be the starting point for an interagency team to assess conflict systematically and collaboratively prepare for interagency planning. Planners may employ other tools, such as Measuring Peace in Conflict Environments (MPICE): A Metrics Framework and the Interagency Management System for Reconstruction and Stabilization, to facilitate interagency activities. The United States Institute of Peace publication *Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction* is an example of a reference that would augment the applicable joint doctrine, such as JP 3-07, *Stability*. A liaison or staff officer assigned to interorganizational cooperation needs to study the relevant joint and agency publications. 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	Department of Defense	Annual classified document that prioritizes theater strategic end states that include interagency cooperation and integration.
Country Development Cooperation 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.
Integrated Country Strategy (ICS)	Chief of mission; to include all other US Government agencies that reside on the country team	Annual interagency objectives by priority.
Operational Plan	USAID mission in country	Annual plan that feeds into mission support plan.

APPENDIX J

BASIC OPERATION PLAN, OPERATION ORDER, 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) 3130.03A, *Planning and Execution 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 plan or order. An operation plan/order foldout is included at the end of this publication for quick 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 plan or order 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 supplemental documents to the basic plan/order is as follows: annex, appendix, tab, exhibit.

The last page of the basic operation plan or order 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 a combination of upper and lower case letters that are 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.

When a paragraph is subdivided, it must have at least two subdivisions. When paragraphs are subdivided, they will be numbered and lettered as follows:

1.

a.

(1)

(a)

1

a

(1)

(a)

Subsequent lines of text for each paragraph may be align flush with the left margin or equally indented (as in the following examples) as long as consistency is maintained.

Example 1: Flush with left margin

a. (U) Situation. Follow-on text. Text, text.

Example 2: Equally Indented.

a. (U) Situation. Follow-on text. Text, text.

Classification Markings

Mark front and back covers with the overall classification of the operation plan/order. Mark the first page of plan elements—plan summary, basic plan, and each annex, appendix, tab, and exhibit—with the overall classification of the element. Unclassified plan elements are marked as such. Mark each interior page of the classified plan element with the highest classification and sensitive classified information code word of the material contained on the page. If the page does not contain classified material, mark it as unclassified. Center classification markings between the left and right margins at both the top and bottom of the page. The classification marking is written in uppercase letters, as in UNCLASSIFIED.

All paragraphs will have a security classification level. Use parenthetical symbols (TS), (S), (C), and (U) to indicate the security classification level of titles, paragraphs, and subparagraphs. For additional guidance related to classification marking for documents, see Department of Defense Manual 5200.01 Volume 1, *DoD Information Security Program: Overview, Classification, and Declassification*.

Page Numbering

Page numbers are located at the bottom of the page and centered. Page C-1-A-3, for example, denotes page 3 of Tab A to Appendix 1 to Annex C. There is a single space between the page number and the classification marking.

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 their 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 airborne 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 to receive a tactical mission is shown in the sequence in which the missions are assigned in paragraph 3.

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

1	CLASSIFICATION
2	(No change from oral orders)
3	Copy no.__ of__ copies
4	I MEF
5	GREENTOWN, BLUELAND
6	DD Mmm YYYY
7	ABD-1
8	OPERATION ORDER 0002-10 (OPERATION SHARP SWORD) (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) USINDOPACOM Planning Directive, DD Mmm YYYY
14	(U) TIME ZONE: Zulu
15	(U) TASK ORGANIZATION. Annex A

Figure J-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 include information obtained during 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—Enemy Forces. The enemy forces section includes information vital to the entire command or information likely to affect mission accomplishment. It may refer to such attachments as the intelligence annex, operation overlay (if enemy 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 and the desired end state. It must be clearly and concisely written. 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. The highest priority task or tasks to subordinates will include the purpose, as in "in order to …" Additional tasks may simply be listed, if the purpose is understood. Each unit (organic, attached, supporting, etc.) 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 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.

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. For each subordinate element, tasks are listed in priority of importance or in sequential order.

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 situational awareness, planning future activities, and assisting in timely and informed decision-making. The commander's critical information requirements consist of priority intelligence requirements and friendly force information requirements that will be numbered (e.g., PIR #1: Is the 2d Centralian Armored Brigade crossing the Green River?). Each numbered priority intelligence requirement and friendly force information requirement will include anticipated decisions and associated branches and sequels, as developed during the Marine Corps Planning Process. Operations divided into multiple phases may have separate commander's critical information requirements lists for each phase.

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. At a minimum, this paragraph provides a summary of the concept of logistics, then directs readers to the appropriate annexes and appendices.

Line 40—Page number.

Line 41—Classification.

See fig. J-2 for an example of the aforementioned lines 16–41.

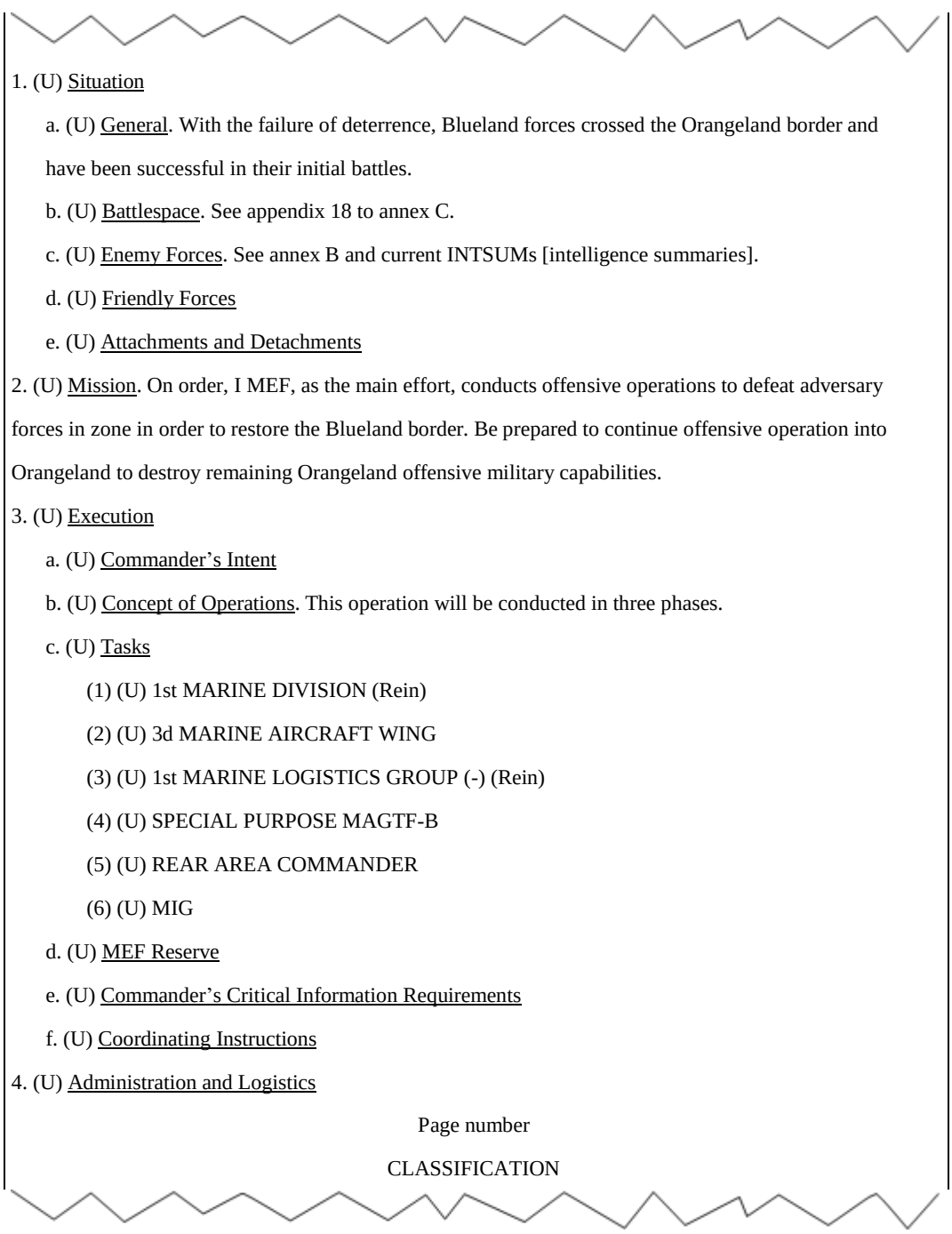

Figure J-2. Sample Operation Plan or Operation Order Format, Lines 16–41.

Page two of the OPLAN or OPORD provides the following information and is exemplified in fig. J-3:

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. If command relationships are clarified in the task organization, there is no requirement to restate them in this paragraph.
- 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 plan or order and each annex within are signed or authenticated by the commander. 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 11–34—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 (e.g., overlays, graphs, or tables) for the body of the plan or order. Annexes amplify and clarify information and details within 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 plan or order, 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.

Usually annexes A, B, C, 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 35–39—Authentication. Authenticated by deputy, executive officer, chief of staff, or G-3/S-3 when the commander's or executive officer's signature is on the original only. This authentication appears on all other copies. The original is signed by chief of staff/executive officer:

OFFICIAL:
Name
Rank and Service
Title

Line 40—Page number.

Line 41—Classification.

CLASSIFICATION

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

GERALD C. THOMAS
Lieutenant General, USMC
Commanding

ANNEXES:

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

OFFICIAL

s/
M.B. TWINING
Colonel, USMC
AC/S G-3

Page number

CLASSIFICATION

Figure J-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 select annexes, appendices, and tabs. Sample formats are descriptive in nature and identify the information necessary for the appropriate paragraph. For annexes and appendices, commanders may modify the format, to include using graphs and slides, to meet the needs of the unit and their operation. The following table of contents lists standing formats. Bold text indicates the format is provided in this section. Examples for many of the annexes and appendices may be found in CJSCM 3130.03A, *Planning and Execution Formats and Guidance*.

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 Marine Corps component commands and Marine expeditionary force, in support of a unified command plan.

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Copy no. ___of ___ copies
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PLACE OF ISSUE
Date-time group
Message reference number

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 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 decision makers 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

   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.

Page number

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c. (U) Employment. State the general nature of combat operations to be conducted, including amphibious operations, operations in the information environment, 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 enemy'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 (sealift 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 information operations as specified in the relevant plans.

b. (U) Time for preparation and transmission of necessary orders.

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 enemy action against forces in transit.

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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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Rank and Service
Title

Page number

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SAMPLE FORMAT OF A BASIC ORDER OR PLAN

CLASSIFICATION

Copy no.___ of ___copies
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PLACE OF ISSUE
Date-time group
Message reference number

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 accomplish 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/her 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.

(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 maritime areas that directly affect the operation. A map may also be included.

(3) (U) Area of Operations. Describe the specific area covered by the operation. A map may also be included.

c. (U) Enemy Forces. Identify the opposing forces expected on execution (location, disposition) and appraise their general capabilities and possible actions (defend, reinforce, attack, withdraw, and delay). Address enemy information that is vital for the entire command

Page number

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or is likely to affect mission accomplishment. See Annex B (Intelligence) for details. Address known or potential unconventional, terrorist, separatist, criminal, etc. threats, as appropriate. When applicable, identify the enemy'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, 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, international, nongovernment, host nation, and private sector 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. As appropriate, state "See Task Organization." If no units are attached or detached, state "None."

g. (U) Assumptions. (Omitted in operation 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

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to exercise proper initiative if the task they are assigned is no longer appropriate to the situation. It may include the desired end state.

b. (U) Concept of Operations. A written statement and graphic that clearly and concisely express 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) All tactical tasks must be listed in the body of the basic order. The highest priority task(s) to subordinates must include the task and purpose (in order to …) Additional tasks may simply be listed, if the purpose is understood. The commander assigns subordinate commanders tasks deemed necessary to fulfill the concept of operations. The synchronization matrix is the chief resource for assigning tasks to subordinates.

(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 enemy are listed first. Ground and aviation combat units in the forward defense area are then listed in numerical order. Other units are listed alphabetically after that.

(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. To ensure responsiveness and success, list planning priorities for the reserve unit (e.g., Planning Priority #1: Be prepared to conduct exploitation operations in vicinity of MEF Objective 3). If the unit or element will be

the reserve in the future, their current assigned tasks will be listed in paragraph 3c. If a unit or element in reserve is given a future task 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 the commander has deemed critical to maintaining his/her situational awareness, planning future activities, and assisting in timely and informed decision-making. 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. Commander's critical information requirements consist of priority intelligence requirements and friendly force information requirements. Commander's critical information requirements will be numbered (e.g., PIR #1: Is the 2d Centralian Armored Brigade crossing the Green River?). Each numbered priority intelligence requirement and friendly force information requirement will include anticipated decisions and associated branches and sequels, as developed during the Marine Corps Planning Process. Operations divided into multiple phases may have separate commander's critical information requirements lists for each phase.

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 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.

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c. (U) Communication Strategy and Operations. Include appropriate information in this subparagraph or refer to Appendix 4 of Annex I (Information).

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, adjacent, and subordinate commanders' headquarters echelons. When headquarters are to be displaced, indicate the known or estimated location and time of opening of the new headquarters and closing or displacing 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
G–Civil-Military Operations
H–Meteorological and Oceanographic Operations
I–Information
J–Command Relationships
K–Combat Information Systems
L–Environmental Considerations
M–Geospatial Information and Services
N–Space Operations
P–Host-Nation Support
Q–Medical Services
R–Reports
S–Special Technical Operations
T–Network Engagement
U–Information Management
V–Interagency/Interorganizational 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 the forces to support the scheme of maneuver. 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. Commands may use either a graphic (e.g., wire diagram) or a written format to display the task organization.

For written task organizations, underlining indicates that the unit or task grouping has an assignedtask. 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 task 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 tasks 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 task 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 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.

When the Marine Corps component commander prepares a supporting plan, Appendix 1 (Time-Phased Force and Deployment List) must be included.

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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

COMMANDER

Indicate names of commanders of the parent organization and principal units

Issuing Headquarters
The first entry is the organization of the issuing headquarters.

Subordinate Unit or Task Grouping
Units or task groupings with no assigned tasks, 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 tasks, 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.

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Appendices:

1–Time-Phased Force and Deployment List
2–Shortfall Identification
3–Flexible Response and Flexible Deterrent Options

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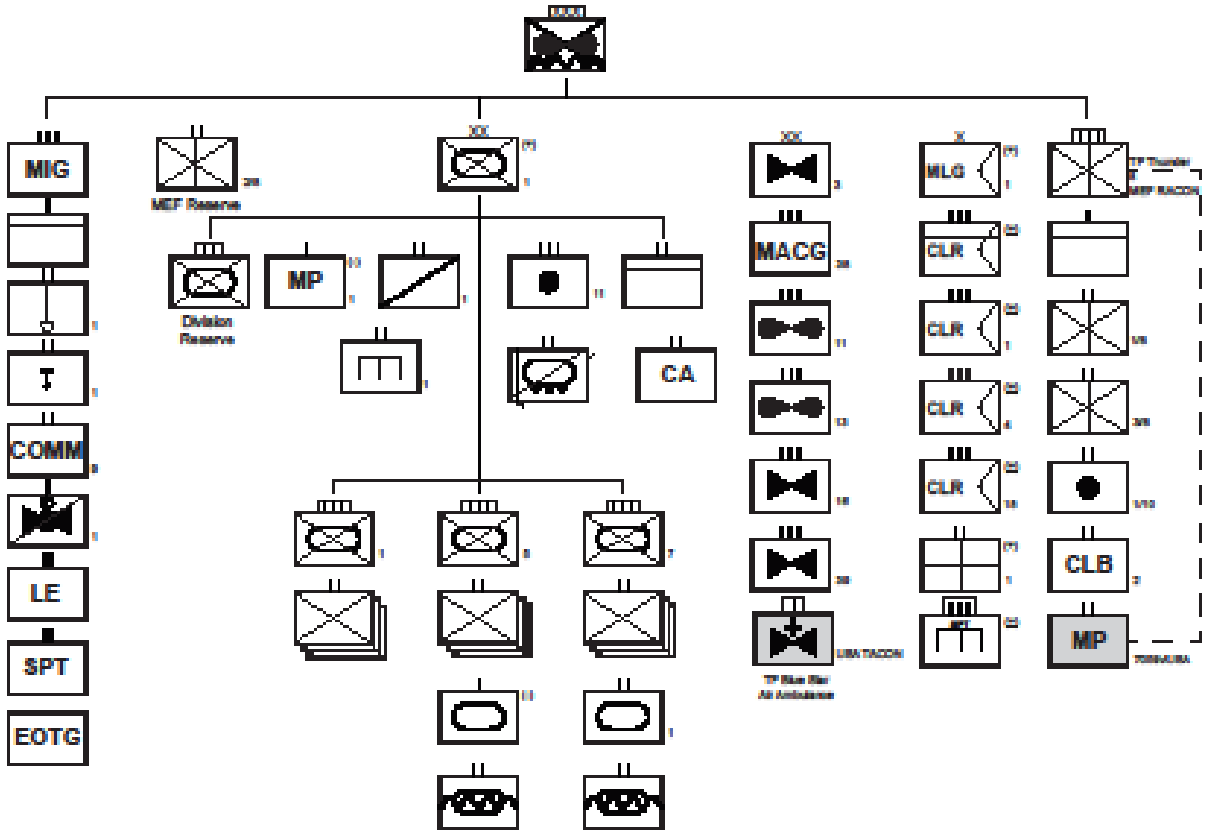
Task Organization Graphic Example



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SAMPLE FORMAT OF ANNEX B (INTELLIGENCE)

The purpose of Annex B (Intelligence) is to provide detailed information/intelligence on the enemy/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 enemy/adversary, including order of battle, location and biographical information on enemy/adversary commanders, capabilities, and intentions. One of the most important aspects covered in the enemy/adversary's intentions is the identification and discussion of the most likely and most dangerous COAs.

The battlespace also includes informat ion 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 OPORD 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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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).

(c) Appropriate publications on Marine Corps and joint intelligence doctrine.

(d) Appropriate standing operating procedures and other documents providing guidance on intelligence operations.

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(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 Enemy/Adversary Capabilities. Summarize the enemy's/adversary's situation, capabilities, and possible courses of action. Provide the enemy's/adversary's order of battle, estimates of the enemy's/adversary's strengths and weaknesses, and, at a minimum, the enemy's/adversary's most likely and most dangerous courses of action. When summarizing the enemy/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 enemy's/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.

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,

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exploiting, producing, disseminating, and evaluating the necessary intelli- gence. 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 require- ments 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 appro- priate 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.

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).

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(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 appropri- ate paragraphs of Annex K (Combat Information Systems). Include comments on interop- erability of these communications system.

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 communication strategy and operations, use of specialized intelligence personnel and personnel augmentation requirements, 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–Intelligence Support to Operations in the Information Environment
7–Imagery Intelligence
8–Measurement and Signature Intelligence
9–Captured Enemy 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. Annex C should amplify information and concepts from the basic OPORD. Simply repeating paragraphs and diagrams from the basic OPORD is counterproductive. 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 amplifying 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 16 (Operations Overlay).

3. (U) Conduct of Operations. Provide any guidance required for the conduct of specific operations that is not already included in the basic OPORD. Provide an overview of any of the included Annex C appendices and tabs, as appropriate.

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

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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
2–Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Defense Operations
3–Special Operations
4–Evasion and Recovery Operations
5–Risk
6–Rules of Engagement
7–Reconnaissance
8–Air Base Operability
9–Noncombatant Evacuation Operations
10–Explosive Ordnance Disposal
11–Amphibious Operations
12–Force Protection
13–Rear Area Operations
14–Cyberspace Operations
15-Liaison Plan
16–Operations Overlay
17–Fire Support
18–Countermechanized Plan
19–Obstacle and Barrier Plan
20–Breaching Plan
21-Decision Support Matrix and Template

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22-Operation Assessment Plan
23-Enemy Prisoners of War and Civilian Internees Plan
24-Authorities Matrix

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SAMPLE FORMAT OF APPENDIX 16 (OPERATIONS OVERLAY) TO ANNEX C

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APPENDIX 16 TO ANNEX C TO OPERATION ORDER OR PLAN (Number) (Operation CODE WORD) (U)

OPERATIONS OVERLAY (U)

Use appropriate marks and graphics from MIL-STD-2525D, *Department of Defense Interface Standard: Joint Military Symbology*, to visually depict desired aspects of the operation. If the operation is divided into phases, stages, etc., this appendix may require multiple overlays. The basis of the operations overlay is the approved course of action graphic. The overlay must provide a clear depiction of the CONOPS. The overlay strikes a correct balance between necessary detail and simplicity. Creating an overly dense and cluttered operations overlay is counterproductive. The overlay may depict—

- Form of maneuver
- Main effort purpose and tasks
- Supporting effort purposes and tasks
- Reserve (location, priorities)
- Control measures (FSCMs, maneuver control measures, ACMs, etc.)
- Boundaries
- Objectives
- Command posts
- Rear area boundaries and associated unit (e.g., RACOM)
- Named areas of interest
- Target areas of interest
- Combat service support areas
- Airfields
- Beaches
- Ports
- Forward arming and refueling point
- Intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance locations
- Enemy/adversary forces

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- Adjacent forces
- Civilian groups
- Routes and axes
- Obstacles
- Essential fire support tasks
- Operations in the information environment support tasks

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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*. MCTP 3-40.B, *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 logistic combat element 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 aviation combat element OPORD or OPLAN.

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

LOGISTICS/COMBAT SERVICE SUPPORT (U)

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

1. (U) Situation

a. (U) Enemy. Refer to Annex B (Intelligence). Provide available information on enemy actions or intent to conduct actions to disrupt or degrade envisioned friendly logistic and combat service support operations. Include information on enemy 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.

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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.

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 Logistics

a. (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.

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2 (U) Indicate the prepositioned war reserve materiel requirements to support the time-phased deployments pending resupply.

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 Enemy/Adversary Materiel. Provide instructions for the collection, classification, and disposition of enemy/adversary materiel. See Annex B (Intelligence) for further guidance. See Appendix 10 to Annex B (Intelligence) for specific instructions for the disposition of captured enemy/adversary cryptographic equipment.

(e) (U) Local Acquisition of Supplies and Services. See Joint Publication 4-01, *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 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.

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(b) (U) Include significant inter-Service and cross-Service support arrange- ments. 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 organi- zations 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).

(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.

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(10) (U) Aviation Logistic Support. Refer to Appendix 10 (Aviation Logistic Support) or Annex D (Logistics/Combat Service Support) of the aviation combat ele- ment 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 Appendix 11 (Operations Security) to Annex I (Information). 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 sub- mission.

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

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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 I (INFORMATION)

Operations in the information environment are actions taken to generate, preserve, or apply military information power in order to increase and protect competitive advantage or combat power potential within all domains of the operational environment. Military information power is broadly applicable in competition and war, and is a necessary mutually supporting element to combat power. The Marine Corps defines military information power as "the total means of force or information capability applied against a relevant actor to enhance lethality, survivability, mobility, or influence." The essence of military information power is the ability to exert one's will or influence over an opponent through the generation, preservation, denial, or projection of information.

Annex I (Information) provides an integration framework for the information warfighting function by ensuring Marine Corps operations in the information environment are planned in concert with MAGTF operations in all domains to create and exploit military information power. Marine Corps operations in the information environment are persistently conducted in global campaigns throughout the competition continuum and during armed conflict to support naval, Service, combatant command, and joint force objectives in the information environment and across all domains. In all cases, operations in the information environment are planned and executed in accordance with the following seven functions/tasks:

(1) Assure enterprise C2 and critical systems
(2) Provide information environment battlespace awareness
(3) Attack and exploit networks, systems, and information
(4) Inform domestic and international audiences
(5) Influence foreign target audiences
(6) Deceive foreign target audiences
(7) Control operations in the information environment capabilities, resources, and activities

Marine Corps operations in the information environment are planned and executed using the means provided by the following six capability areas:

(1) Electromagnetic spectrum operations (EMSO)
(2) Cyberspace operations
(3) Space operations
(4) Influence operations
(5) Deception operations
(6) Inform operations

Operations in the information environment take place across the full range of military operations. MAGTF information plans must be nested within the joint force commander's plan. Information planning requires a whole-of-staff or whole-of-operational planning team approach and extensive coordination among commands to avoid conflicts and to ensure nested and reinforcing efforts. As in other areas, intelligence support to operations in the information environment is critical.

The information annex should clearly state the primary tasks of each of the applicable seven functions/tasks of operations in the information environment. Tasks should identify how a specific capability within a capability area will be used to accomplish the task. Tasks may also include how a specific capability associated other warfighting functions (e.g., fires and maneuver) may be used to accomplish or support the accomplishment of the information tasks. For example, the primary information function/task "Assure Command and Control" may require the physical attack (e.g., air delivered fires) of enemy long range precision fires targeting friendly C2 nodes. This same task may also require the use of defensive cyberspace operations, electronic attack, and electronic warfare support. The information annex should provide enough guidance to ensure that these elements are all working toward the accomplishment of operations in the information environment as well as detailed execution instructions for each of the capabilities required in the subsequent tabs.

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

INFORMATION (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 operations in the information environment.

a.(U) Enemy/Adversary. Summarize the enemy/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 operations in the information environment.

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

c.(U) Assumptions. List any assumptions made of friendly, enemy, 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 basic OPORD.

3. (U) Execution

a. (U) Concept of Support. Summarize how the commander visualizes the execution of operations in the information environment from its beginning to its termination. Describe how information will support the command's mission. Describe the integration of the applicable information tasks within the CONOPS and overall plan. Summarize the concepts for supervision and termination of operations in the information environment.

(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.

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(2) (U) When an operation involves various phases, such as peace or pre-hostilities, crisis, war, or post-hostilities, the concept of support should include subparagraphs describing the role of information tasks in each phase.

b. (U) Operations in the Information Environment Tasks. Identify the major tasks for each of the applicable seven functions/tasks of operations in the information environment. As operations in the information environment tasks and capability areas cross various units and warfighting functions, specific tasks related to achieving information objectives may be found elsewhere in the order (e.g., physical attack in unit tasks (Basic OPORD paragraph 3.c. (Tasks) and Annex C, Appendix 17 (Fires Support); Communication Strategy and Operations tasks in Annex I, Appendix 4, Tab A (Communication Strategy and Operations); etc.). This paragraph lists information tasks not captured elsewhere in the OPORD.

(1) (U) Assure enterprise command and control and critical systems

(2) (U) Provide information environment battlespace awareness

(3) (U) Attack and exploit networks, systems, and information

(4) (U) Inform domestic and international audiences

(5) (U) Influence foreign target audiences

(6) (U) Deceive foreign target audiences

(7) (U) Control operations in the information environment capabilities, resources, and activities

(9) (U) Electromagnetic spectrum operations

(10) (U) Cyberspace operations

(11) (U) Civil-military operations

(12) (U) Operations security

(13) (U) Signature Management

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

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

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

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APPENDICES:

1–Assure Enterprise Command and Control and Critical Systems
2–Provide Information Environment Battlespace Awareness
3–Attack and Exploit Networks, Systems, and Information
4–Inform Domestic and International Audiences
5–Influence Foreign Target Audiences
6–Deceive Foreign Target Audiences
7–Control Operations in the Information Environment Capabilities, Resources, and Activities
8–Electromagnetic Spectrum Operations
9–Cyberspace Operations
10–Civil Military Operations
11–Operations Security

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Sample Format for Tab A (Military Deception) to Appendix 6 to Annex I

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*. 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, this 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 secure electronic communications 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 6 TO ANNEX I TO OPERATION ORDER OR PLAN (Number) (Operation CODE WORD) (U)

MILITARY DECEPTION (U)

(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) Enemy

      (1) (U) General Capabilities. Identify enemy 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 decision makers (or organizations).

      (4) (U) Probable Enemy 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 enemy to weight their defense in the eastern corridor, to mislead the enemy as to the time and place of forcible entry operations, to cause dissension within the enemy coalition such that…"

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

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

(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 Operations in the Information Environment Elements. Discuss the use of other operations in the information environment elements in support of the deception operation. Discuss all other operations in the information environment element plans and activities 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 enemy/adversary response. Describe impact on friendly forces from enemy/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 enemy/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 deception plan.

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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.

b. (U) Specific. State access restrictions, handling instructions, and who has authority to grant access to the deception appendix or plan. Describe the 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 6 to Annex I

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 6 TO ANNEX I 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) Enemy/Adversary

(1) (U) Target Description. 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.

(2) (U) Target Biases and Predispositions

(3) (U) Enemy/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.

(4) (U) Enemy/Adversary Counterintelligence Organizations. Describe missions, capabilities, and operations.

(5) (U) Enemy/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.

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(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 enemy/adversary would use deception in response. This subparagraph provides in-depth information to document the risk assessments presented in Tab I-6-A (Military Deception) and Exhibit I-6-A-3 (Information).

(9) (U) Third-Party Reaction. Provide an analysis of the impact of the deception on allies, neutrals, and potential enemy/adversaries and their responses. This subparagraph provides in depth information to document the risk assessments presented in Tab I-6-A (Military Deception) and Exhibit I-6-A-3 (Information).

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.

(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 6 to Annex I

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ATTACHMENT A TO EXHIBIT 2 TO TAB A TO APPENDIX 6 TO ANNEX I 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 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 7-10, *Marine Corps Componency*. 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).
- Department of Defense Directive 3025.14, *Evacuation of U.S. Citizens and Designated Aliens from Threatened Areas Abroad*, 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.
- Relationships between the US Information Agency and the US Armed Forces in the conduct of military information support operations.

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ANNEX J TO OPERATION ORDER OR PLAN (Number) (Operation CODE WORD) (U)
COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS (U)

(U) REFERENCES: List documents that provide necessary guidance on the command relationships of forces concerned.

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.

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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

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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APPENDIX:
1–Command Relationships Diagram

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SAMPLE FORMAT OF APPENDIX 1 (COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS DIAGRAM) TO ANNEX J

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APPENDIX 1 TO ANNEX J TO OPERATION ORDER OR PLAN (Number) (Operation CODE WORD) (U)

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 T (NETWORK ENGAGEMENT)

The purpose of Annex T (Network Engagement) is to provide detailed information on the interactions with friendly, neutral, and threat networks that will facilitate guidance to help achieve the commander's objectives within an operational area. These networks consist of people, places, and things. There can be multiple friendly, neutral, and threat networks in the battlespace. Annex T assist the commander and staff with gaining an understanding of the operational environment. Intelligence is a critical component to build the necessary products that will facilitate understanding. The products of network engagement support targeting and engagement. The network engagement annex provides information that facilitates generating lethal and nonlethal effects against threat networks. It also organizes information to facilitate generating nonlethal effects exclusively with friendly and neutral networks, through partnership, cooperation, and engagement.

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ANNEX T TO OPERATION ORDER OR PLAN (Number) (Operation CODE WORD) (U)
NETWORK ENGAGEMENT (U)

(U) REFERENCES:

(a)Diagrams, matrices and charts required for an understanding of this annex.

(b)Documents providing intelligence required for planning. Including related annexes, such as Annex B (Intelligence).

(c) Appropriate publications on Marine Corps and joint network engagement doctrine.

(d)Appropriate standing operating procedures and other documents providing guidance on network engagement.

(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) Friendly. Summarize and categorize the friendly networks in the battlespace (i.e., allied military forces, host nation government, international organizations, etc).

b.(U) Neutral. Summarize and categorize the neutral networks in the battlespace. (i.e., Local tribes, labor unions, international organizations, etc).

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c.(U) Threat. Summarize and categorize the threat networks in the battlespace. (i.e., Nation state military force, non-state actors, criminal, terrorist, etc).

2. (U) Mission. Provide the command's mission from the basic OPORD.

3. (U) Execution

a. (U) Concept of Support. Summarize how the commander visualizes the integration of network engagement into the operation.

b. (U) Network Engagement Products. Provide appropriate guidance for network engagement products across the multiple friendly, neutral, and threat networks.

(1) (U) Critical variables. Identify the key resources or conditions within the operational environment that must be shaped or maintained to attain the commander's desired end state.

(2) (U) Relevant Networks. Identify the relevant networks within the operational environment that must be considered for planning, targeting and engagement to support the attainment of the commander's desired end state. These networks should associate in some manner to the critical variables identified to meet the commander's intent.

(3) (U) Association matrix. Identify the existence of relationships between nodes in each friendly, neutral, and threat network, as determined by direct contact, that are relevant to the operation. The nodes for each relevant network identified should be included in this product to capture key information.

(4) (U) Activities matrix. Determine the connections between a key actor and organizations, events, locations, or activities for each friendly, neutral, and threat network that are relevant to the operation. The nodes for each relevant network identified should be included in this product to capture key information.

(5) (U) Network diagram. Graphically display the connections between individuals, organizations, and activities for each friendly, neutral, and threat network that are relevant to the operation.

(6) (U) Social network analysis. Provide quantitative data regarding the degree of links between nodes using mathematical computations to determine the relevancy of nodes within a network that are relevant to the operation.

(7) (U) Network function templates. Organize known information about the relevant networks to graphically depict the association of the network's structure to its functions.Templates assist in visualizing how networks function and may be used to facilitate critical factors analysis.

(8) (U) Critical factors analysis. Apply critical factors analysis to each relevant network to identify the critical factors needed for planning and targeting. The critical factors to be identified are the network's critical variables, conditions in the operational environment

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that may affect the formation and sustainment of friendly, neutral, or threat networks that are relevant to the operation, critical capabilities, critical requirements, and critical vulnerabilities.

c. (U) Targeting and Engagement. Summarize network engagement support to targeting and engagement. Refer to Annex B (Intelligence) and Annex C (Operations).

d. (U) Operation Assessment. Summarize network engagement support to the operation assessment plan. Refer to Appendix 22 (Operation Assessment Plan) to Annex C (Operations).

4. (U) Administration and Logistics. Address any network engagement administrative or logistic requirements.

5. (U) Command and Signal. List any network engagement command and control instructions. State the command structure to support network engagement. Identify any special network engagement communications, software, or reporting requirements.

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Appendices:

1–Critical Variables
2–Relevant Networks
3–Association Matrices
4–Activities Matrices
5–Network Diagrams
6–Social Network Analysis
7–Network Function Templates
8–Critical Factors Analysis

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SAMPLE FORMAT OF ANNEX V
(INTERAGENCY/INTERORGANIZATIONAL COORDINATION)

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ANNEX V TO OPERATION ORDER OR PLAN (Number) (Operation CODE WORD) (U)
INTERAGENCY-INTERORGANIZATIONAL 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 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.

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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 interorganizational cooperaton 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 government, non-governmental, and private organization participation in the operation. Identify the resources or capabilities from the each agency 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 Response. Define the areas of requested action and responsibility from US Government agencies and non-governmental 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 non-governmental 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 nongovernmental organizations.

4. (U) Administration and Logistics. Provide concept for furnishing administrative and logistic support to US Government agencies and international 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.

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CLASSIFICATION

CLASSIFICATION

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 international organizations.

a. (U) US Government. Identify the chain of authority for US Government agencies.

b. (U) International Organizations. Identify the expected chain of authority for intergovernmental organizations should they become involved.

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Title

APPENDICES:

As required. Could include detailed information on key interagency, international organization and nongovernmental organization stakeholders, such as mission, current and planned programs, locations, point of contact information, or assessments.

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Title

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 synchronization matrix is the key MCPP tool used to create the execution checklist. The execution checklist allows subordinate commands and supporting and adjacent forces to coordinate their actions and maintain situational awareness. The execution checklist also serves as an excellent command and control and information management tool for the combat operations center. Critical events and tasks are included in the execution checklist. Events and tasks should be listed in the order of envisioned execution.

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

EXECUTION CHECKLIST (U)(U) Generally displayed as a spreadsheet, with the applicable following items listed in order of expected execution:

- Line number
- Unit
- Task
- Condition
- Location
- Communications nets
- Brevity code
- Planned date/time
- Blank space for recording actual date/time the task is initiated or completed
- Blank space for recording notes

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GLOSSARY

SECTION I. ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACE ..... aviation combat element
APEX ..... Adaptive Planning and Execution
ARG ..... amphibious ready group
ASCOPE ..... areas, structures, capabilities, organizations, people, and events

CAP ..... crisis action planning
CAT ..... crisis action team
CCIR ..... commander's critical information requirement
CJCSM ..... Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff manual
COA ..... course of action
COG ..... center of gravity
COMMSTRAT ..... communication strategy and operations
CONOPS ..... concept of operations
CSNE ..... commander's significant notification event
CSS ..... combat service support

DOD ..... Department of Defense
DSM ..... decision support matrix
DST ..... decision support template

EPW ..... enemy prisoner of war

FFIR ..... friendly force information requirement
FRAGO ..... fragmentary order

G-1 ..... assistant chief of staff for personnel/personnel staff section
G-2 ..... assistant chief of staff for intelligence/intelligence staff section
G-3 ..... assistant chief of staff for operations and training/operations and training staff section
G-4 ..... assistant chief of staff for logistics/logistics staff section
G-5 ..... assistant chief of staff for plans/plans staff section
G-6 ..... assistant chief of staff for communications/communications system staff section

HHQ ..... higher headquarters
HPT ..... high-payoff target
HVT ..... high-value target

IPB ..... intelligence preparation of the battlespace

ISR .....intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance

JP..... joint publication

LOO ..... line of operation

MAGTF..... Marine air-ground task force
MCDP ..... Marine Corps doctrinal publication
MCPP..... Marine Corps planning process
MCRP .....Marine Corps reference publication
MCTP.....Marine Corps tactical publication
MCWP .....Marine Corps warfighting publication
MEB.....Marine expeditionary brigade
MEF .....Marine expeditionary force
METT-T..... mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops and support available-time available
MEU.....Marine expeditionary unit
MSE .....major subordinate element
MSEL.....master scenario event list

N-2 .....Navy component intelligence staff officer
NAI ..... named area of interest
NGO.....nongovernmental organization

OPLAN .....operation plan
OPORD..... operation order
OPT .....operational planning team

PIR .....priority intelligence requirement
PMESII .....political, military, economic, social, information, and infrastructure

R&S..... reconnaissance and surveillance
R2P2..... rapid response planning process
RCPA.....relative combat power assessment
RFI ..... request for information

S-2..... intelligence officer/intelligence office
S-3.....operations and training officer/operations and training office
S-4.....logistics officer/logistics office
SME ..... subject matter expert
SOP .....standing operating procedure

TAI.....target area of interest

TRAP ..... tactical recovery of aircraft and personnel

US ..... United States

WARNORD ..... warning order

SECTION II. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

acceptability—The plan review criterion for assessing whether a contemplated course of action is proportional, worth the cost, consistent with the law of war; and is militarily and politically supportable. See also **feasibility**. (DOD Dictionary)

adversary—A party acknowledged as potentially hostile to a friendly party and against which the use of force may be envisaged. (DOD Dictionary)

adversary template—(See DOD Dictionary for core definition. Marine Corps amplification follows.) 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 unconstrained by the operational environment. (MCRP 1-10.2)

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. (DOD Dictionary)

area of interest—That area of concern to the commander, including the area of influence, areas adjacent thereto, and extending into enemy territory. Also called **AOI**. See also **area of influence**. (DOD Dictionary)

area of operations—An operational area defined by a commander for land and maritime forces that should be large enough to accomplish their missions and protect their forces. Also called **AO**. See also **area of responsibility**. (DOD Dictionary)

area of responsibility—The geographical area associated with a combatant command within which a geographic combatant commander has authority to plan and conduct operations. Also called **AOR**.

assumption—A specific supposition of the operational environment that is assumed to be true, in the absence of positive proof, essential for the continuation of planning. (DOD Dictionary)

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. Also called **AA**. (DOD Dictionary)

battlespace—The environment, factors, and conditions that must be understood to successfully apply combat power, protect the force, or complete the mission. This includes the air, land, sea, space, and the included enemy and friendly forces; facilities; weather; terrain; the electromagnetic spectrum; and the information environment within the operational areas, areas of interest, and areas of influence. (MCRP 1-10.2)

branch—The contingency options built into the base plan 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 enemy actions and reactions. See also **sequel**. (DOD Dictionary. Part 4 of a 4-part definition.)

campaign—A series of related operations aimed at achieving strategic and operational objectives within a given time and space. (DOD Dictionary)

center of gravity—(See DOD Dictionary for core definition. Marine Corps amplification follows.) A key source of strength without which an enemy cannot function. Also called **COG**. (MCRP 1-10.2)

collection plan—A systematic scheme to optimize the employment of all available collection capabilities and associated processing, exploitation, and dissemination resources to satisfy specific information requirements. (DOD Dictionary)

commander's critical information requirement— (See DOD Dictionary for core definition. Marine Corps amplification follows.) Information regarding the enemy and friendly activities and the environment identified by the commander as critical to maintaining situational awareness, planning future activities, and facilitating timely decision making. The two subcategories are priority intelligence requirements and friendly force information requirements. Also called **CCIR**. (MCRP 1-10.2)

commander's intent—(See DOD Dictionary for core definition. Marine Corps amplification follows.) 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 that guides the exercise of initiative in the absence of instructions. (MCRP 1-10.2)

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. Also called **CONOPS**. (DOD Dictionary)

constraint—(See DOD Dictionary for core definition. Marine Corps amplification follows.) Something that must be done that limits freedom of action. Constraints are included in the rules of engagement, commander's guidance, or instructions from higher headquarters. See also **restraint**. (MCRP 1-10.2)

contingency—A situation requiring military operations in response to natural disasters, terrorists, subversives, or as otherwise directed by appropriate authority to protect United States interests. (DOD Dictionary).

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. (MCRP 1-10.2.)

critical vulnerability—(See DOD Dictionary for core definition. Marine Corps amplification follows.) An aspect of a center of gravity that, if exploited, will do the most significant damage to an enemy's and/or adversary's ability to resist. A vulnerability cannot be critical unless it undermines a key strength. Also called **CV**. (MCRP 1-10.2)

D-day—The unnamed day on which a particular operation commences or is to commence. (DOD Dictionary)

decision point—(See DOD Dictionary for core definition. Marine Corps amplification follows.) An event, area, or point in the battlespace where and when the friendly commander will make a critical decision. (MCRP 1-10.2)

decisive action—Any action the commander deems fundamental to achieving mission success. See also **shaping action; sustaining action**. (*Note: Decisive actions are part of a purpose-based battlespace framework.*) (MCRP 1-10.2)

decision support template—(See DOD Dictionary for core definition. Marine Corps amplification follows.) A staff product initially used in the wargaming process that 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 event (such as lifting or shifting of fires). Also called **DST**. (MCRP 1-10.2)

design—The conception and articulation of a framework for solving a problem. (MCRP 1-10.2)

end state—The set of required conditions that defines achievement of the commander's objectives. (DOD Dictionary)

event template— (See DOD Dictionary for core definition. Marine Corps amplification follows.) A model against which enemy 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 1-10.2)

feasibility—The plan review criterion for assessing whether the assigned mission can be accomplished using available resources within the time contemplated by the plan. See also **acceptability**. (DOD Dictionary)

fragmentary order— (See DOD Dictionary for core definition. Marine Corps amplification follows.) An abbreviated form of an operation order, usually issued on a day-to-day basis, that eliminates the need for restating information contained in a basic operation order. It may be issued in sections. Also called **FRAGO**. (MCRP 1-10.2)

friendly force information requirement—(See DOD Dictionary for core definition. Marine Corps amplification follows.) 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. Also called **FFIR.** (MCRP 1-10.2)

H-hour— 1. The specific hour on D-day at which a particular operation commences. 2. In amphibious operations, the time the first landing craft or amphibious vehicle of the waterborne wave lands or is scheduled to land on the beach and, in some cases, the commencement of countermine breaching operations. (DOD Dictionary)

high-payoff target—A target whose loss to the enemy will significantly contribute to the success of the friendly course of action. Also called **HPT.** See also **high-value target; target**. (DOD Dictionary)

high-value target—A target the enemy commander requires for the successful completion of the mission. Also called **HVT**. See also **high-payoff target; target**. (DOD Dictionary)

information environment—The aggregate of individuals, organizations, and systems that collect, process, disseminate, or act on information. (DOD Dictionary)

information requirements—(See DOD Dictionary for core definition. Marine Corps amplification follows.) All information elements the commander and staff require to successfully conduct operations, that is, all elements necessary to address the factors of mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops and support available—time available.Also called **IRs**. (MCRP 1-10.2)

intelligence preparation of the battlespace—(See DOD Dictionary for core definition. Marine Corps amplification follows.) The systematic, continuous process of analyzing the threat and environment in a specific geographic area. Also called **IPB**. (MCRP1-10.2)

joint planning process—An orderly, analytical process that consists of a logical set of steps to analyze a mission, select the best course of action, and produce a campaign or joint operation plan or order. Also called **JPP**. (DOD Dictionary)

line of operation—A line that defines the interior or exterior orientation of the force in relation to the enemy or that connects actions on nodes and/or decisive points related in time and space to an objective(s). Also called **LOO**. (DOD Dictionary)

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 1-10.2)

Marine Corps Planning Process—A six-step methodology that 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 war game, course of action comparison and decision, orders development, and transition. Also called **MCPP.** *(Note: Tenets of the MCPP include top-down planning, single-battle concept, and integrated planning.)* (MCRP 1-10.2).

mission—The task, together with the purpose, that clearly indicates the action to be taken and the reason therefore. (DOD Dictionary)

mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops and support available–time available—1. In the context of information management, the major subject categories into which relevant information is grouped for military operations. 2. In the context of tactics, the major factors considered during mission analysis. Also called **METT-T**. (MCRP 1-10.2)

named area of interest—(See DOD Dictionary for core definition. Marine Corps amplification follows.) 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 enemy course of action. Also called **NAI**. (MCRP 1-10.2)

operational approach—A broad description of the mission, operational concepts, tasks, and actions required to accomplish the mission. (DOD Dictionary)

operational planning team—A group built around the future operations section that integrates the staff representatives and resources. The operational planning team may have representatives or augmentation from each of the standard staff sections, the seven warfighting functions, staff liaisons, and/or subject matter experts. Also called **OPT**. (Upon promulgation of this publication, the modified definition is approved for use and will be included in the next edition of MCRP 1-10.2.)

operation assessment—1. A continuous process that measures the overall effectiveness of employing capabilities during military operations in achieving stated objectives. 2. Determination of the progress toward accomplishing a task, creating a condition, or achieving an objective. (DOD Dictionary)

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.** (DOD Dictionary)

operation plan—A complete and detailed plan containing a full description of the concept of operations, all annexes applicable to the plan, and a time-phased force and deployment data. Also called **OPLAN.** See also **operation order**. (DOD Dictionary)

planning order—A planning directive that provides essential planning guidance and directs the development, adaptation, or refinement of a plan/order. Also called **PLANORD.** (DOD Dictionary)

priority intelligence requirement—(See DOD Dictionary for core definition. Marine Corps amplification follows.) An intelligence requirement associated with a decision that will critically affect the overall success of the command's mission. Also called **PIR**. (MCRP 1-10.2)

rapid response planning process—A time-constrained version of the full, six-step Marine Corps Planning Process developed to enable the Marine expeditionary unit to plan and begin execution of certain tasks within a 6-hour time period. Also called **R2P2**. (MCRP 1-10.2)

rear area—That area extending forward from a command's rear boundary to the rear of the area assigned to the command's subordinate units. This area is provided primarily for the performance of combat service support functions. (MCRP 1-10.2)

restraint—(See DOD Dictionary for core definition. Marine Corps amplification follows.) 1. Something that a commander is prohibited from doing that may limit freedom of action. 2. Something that a commander prohibits subordinates from doing. See also **constraint**. *(Note: Restraints are included in the rules of engagement, commander's guidance, or instructions from higher headquarters.)* (MCRP 1-10.2)

risk—1. Probability and severity of loss linked to hazards. 2. The chance of hazard or bad consequences resulting in exposure to possible injury or loss. Risk level is expressed in terms of hazard probability or severity. (Upon promulgation of this publication, the modified definition is approved for use and will be included in the next edition of MCRP 1-10.2.)

sequel—The subsequent operation or phase based on the possible outcomes of the current operation or phase. See also **branch**. (DOD Dictionary)

shaping actions—The lethal and nonlethal activities conducted throughout the battlespace to attack an enemy capability or force or to influence the enemy commander's decision-making. See also **decisive action; sustaining actions**. (*Note: Shaping actions are part of a purpose-based battlespace framework.*) (MCRP 1-10.2)

situational awareness—Knowledge and understanding of the current situation that promotes timely, relevant, and accurate assessment of friendly, enemy, and other operations within the battlespace in order to facilitate decision-making. An informational perspective and skill that foster an ability to determine quickly the context and relevance of events that are unfolding. Also called **SA**. (MCRP 1-10.2)

situational understanding—The product of applying analysis and synthesis to relevant information to determine the relationship among the mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops and support—time available variables to facilitate decision-making. (MCRP 1-10.2)

situation template— (See DOD Dictionary for core definition. Marine Corps amplification follows.) A series of projections that portray, based on enemy doctrine, the most probable disposition and location of enemy forces within constraints imposed by weather and terrain. (MCRP 1-10.2)

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. Also called **SPOTREP**. (Note: In reconnaissance and surveillance usage, spot report is not to be used.) (DOD Dictionary)

staff estimate—A continual evaluation of how factors in a staff section's functional area support and impact the planning and execution of the mission. (DOD Dictionary)

supporting effort—Designated subordinate unit(s) whose mission is designed to directly contribute to the su ccess of the main effort. (MCRP 1-10.2)

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. (DOD Dictionary)

sustaining actions—Activities conducted to prepare and support friendly forces (e.g., planning, logistics, force protection) that promote unity of effort and extend operational reach. See also **decisive action; shaping actions**. (*Note: Sustaining actions are part of a purpose-based battlespace framework.*) (MCRP 1-10.2)

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 enemy's and/or adversary's course of action. (Upon promulgation of this publication, the modified definition is approved for use and will be included in the next edition of MCRP 1-10.2)

target—An entity or object that performs a function for the threat considered for possible engagement or other action. (DOD Dictionary)

target area of interest— The geographical area where high-value targets can be acquired and engaged by friendly forces. Also called **TAI**. See also **area of interest; high-value target; target**. (DOD Dictionary)

targeting—The process of selecting and prioritizing targets and matching the appropriate response to them, considering operational requirements and capabilities. See also **target**. (DOD Dictionary)

wargaming—A step-by-step process of action, reaction, and counteraction for visualizing the execution of each friendly course of action in relation to enemy/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. (MCRP 1-10.2)

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 commander. Also called **WARNORD**. (DOD Dictionary)

REFERENCES AND RELATED PUBLICATIONS

Department of Defense Issuances

Department of Defense Directive (DODD)
3025.14 Evacuation of U.S. Citizens and Designated Aliens from Threatened Areas Abroad

Department of Defense Instruction (DODI)
1100.22 Policy and Procedures for Determining Workforce Mix

Department of Defense Manual (DODM)
5200.01, Vol. 1 DoD Information Security Program: Overview, Classification, and Declassification

Military Standard (MIL-STD)
2525D Department of Defense Interface Standard: Joint Military Symbology

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Manual (CJCSM)

3130.03 Planning and Execution Formats and Guidance

Joint Issuances

Joint Publications (JPs)

1 Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States
3-0 Joint Operations
3-07 Stability
3-08 Interorganizational Cooperation
3-13.4 Military Deception
3-20 Security Cooperation
3-25 Countering Threat Networks
3-33 Joint Task Force Headquarters
4-01 The Defense Transportation System
5-0 Joint Planning

Miscellaneous

DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms
Joint Doctrine Note 1-16, Command Red Team

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Standardization Agreement (STANAG)

2014 NATO Formats for Orders and Designation of Timing, Locations, and Boundaries

United States Army

Field Manual (FM)

7-100.1 Opposing Force Operations

Training Circular (TC)

7-100.2 Opposing Force Tactics

United States Marine Corps

Marine Corps Doctrinal Publications (MCDPs)

1 Warfighting
1-0 Marine Corps Operations w/Changes 1, 2, and 3
4 Logistics
5 Planning

Marine Corps Warfighting Publications (MCWPs)

3-03 Stability Operations
3-32 Marine Air-Ground Task Force Information Operations
7-10 Marine Corps Componency

Marine Corps Tactical Publications (MCTPs)

3-02A MAGTF Network Engagement Activities
3-40.B Tactical-Level Logistics

Marine Corps Reference Publications (MCRPs)

1-10.2 Marine Corps Supplement to the DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms
2-10B.1 Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield/Battlespace
5-10.1 Multi-Service Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Operation Assessment

Marine Corps Order (MCO)

3500.27C Risk Management

Miscellaneous Marine Corps Publications

MAGTF Staff Training Program (MSTP) Pamphlets

2-0.1 Red Cell – Green Cell
2-0.2 Intelligence Planner's Guide
5-0.2 Operational Planning Team Leaders Guide

Marine Corps Intelligence Activity (MCIA) 1540-002-95, *Generic Intelligence Requirements Handbook (GIRH)*

Miscellaneous

Operation Plan/Operation Order Format