Major Combat Operations

Joint Operating Concept

September 2004
As the lead author, US Joint Forces Command matured this concept through the use of joint and Service operational lessons learned and experimentation: numerous co-sponsored joint wargames, seminars, workshops and other concept development venues. Throughout, this process was guided by direct input from the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

During the development of this concept each Service, combatant command, selected members of the Joint and OSD staffs, as well as multinational partners and selected non-DoD agencies made significant contributions. Also included throughout were a host of active and retired flag and junior officers, academics, and professional strategic thinkers.

US Joint Forces Command will continue to use experimentation and lessons learned to refine this concept. Version 2.0 is expected to be staffed in the 3rd quarter 05 timeframe.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

"War is a continuation of politics with the introduction of different means".
"…War is a clash between major interests that is resolved by bloodshed -- that is the only way it differs from other conflicts…”

Carl Von Clausewitz

Wars embody political conflicts turned violent. They are fought to achieve political aims. Rare will be the case that combat alone will resolve the political confrontation and achieve political aims. To achieve our political aims we need a coherent application of force in both combat and post-combat operations. War is a continuation of politics and it must also, despite its violence, anticipate the continuation of politics during hostilities and upon their conclusion. The following concept concerns one portion of confrontation resolution – that of major combat operations – and addresses the fundamental need for unity of purpose with the political aims and coherency of action involving all instruments of national power to achieve those aims.

The Major Combat Operations Joint Operating Concept (MCO JOC) is a pillar of the Joint Chiefs of Staff’s new family of Joint Operations Concepts. It recognizes the complexity and uncertainty of tomorrow’s combat environment and the adaptive nature of our potential adversaries. It establishes a framework for the armed forces to transition from the industrial age to the information age in order to better harness our human and organizational capabilities, better target our adversaries’ critical nodes, and to place us in greater harmony with the realities of the modern battlespace. It addresses the challenges of conducting large-scale military actions in a distributed, collaborative environment against a militarily capable regional nation state with significant anti-access capabilities and weapons of mass destruction. The central theme of the MCO JOC is to achieve decisive conclusions to combat and set the conditions for decisive conclusion of the confrontation; use a joint, interdependent force that swiftly applies overmatching power simultaneously and sequentially, in a set of contiguous and noncontiguous operations; employ joint power at all points of action necessary; and create in the mind of our enemy an asynchronous\(^1\) perception of our actions—all to compel the

\(^1\) Asynchronous, in this context, refers to our desire to create an indiscernible pattern in time and space in the mind of our enemy. Our operations, however, must retain unity of purpose and coherency of action.
enemy to accede to our will. Joint power in the context of this paper includes the integration and appropriate balance of conventional and special operations forces.

To address the future challenges we face in conducting major combat operations, this concept proposes a coherent, effects-based approach used throughout the deployment-employment-sustainment of the combined force. This concept emphasizes the need to incorporate joint, interagency, and coalition power to achieve desired outcomes rather than to simply accomplish discrete tasks. Further, this concept proposes seven core building blocks that form the foundations for US success in future major combat operations as well as eleven principles to help guide the decisions and actions of Operational Commanders in conducting major combat operations. They are:

- Foundations for Major Combat Operations
  1. Fight with a warrior’s ethos.
  2. Use a coherent joint force that decides and acts based upon pervasive knowledge.
  3. Develop resourceful leaders.
  4. Train under the right conditions.
  5. Field capabilities to maintain adaptive force dominance.
  6. Uphold the values of American democracy.
  7. Conduct routine operations to gain and maintain operational access.

- How the Joint Force Fights
  1. Start with the strategic purpose in mind.
  2. Achieve decisive outcomes and conclusions.
  3. Employ a knowledge-enhanced, effects-based approach.
  4. Employ a joint, interagency and multinational force with collaborative processes.
  5. Use mission orders throughout the chain of command.
  6. Gain and maintain operational access.
  7. Engage the adversary comprehensively.
  8. Generate relentless pressure by deciding and acting distributively.

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2 See also Joint Forcible Entry Operations Concept
3 Ibid.
10. Align deployment, employment, and sustainment activities.
11. Protect people, facilities, and equipment throughout the battlespace.

The objective is not merely to destroy the adversary militarily, but to continuously shape the battlespace to effectively engulf him in every dimension. As combined forces are brought to bear from strategic and operational distances with unpredictability, relentlessness, speed, and seeming omnipresence combined to maximize shock, the battlespace as a whole is made increasingly hostile to the adversary, rendering resistance impossible or futile. This concept recognizes that the achievement of desired strategic outcomes relies on the coherent application of all relevant national and multinational means, not just military. It incorporates a superior appreciation of the adversary, the battlespace, and ourselves; and provides better means of shaping these. This concept also requires a degree of interdependence among service forces that had always been desired but had never been achievable. Interdependence relies upon technical connectivity to be sure, but even more important it relies upon breaking down long-developed cultural positions and barriers, eliminating unnecessary redundancies, and better integrating joint force employment. As we work to solve technical problems surrounding an interdependent force, we must also use our training and leader development venues to create a new, coherently joint culture.

In so doing, this concept describes a profound transformation in the way we think about and conduct major combat operations.

This concept is focused on the time horizon just beyond the Future Years Defense Program (FYDP), roughly 2015 and rests upon the following assumptions:

Assumption 1: War continues to be an important component of confrontation strategies and remains a fundamentally human endeavor. Our approach to warfighting in the information age must strike a balance between its technological and human elements.

Assumption 2: While the nature of war remains relatively fixed, the conduct of war has changed, is changing and will continue to change. Adversaries will include both state and non-state actors, including transnational organizations, terrorist groups, criminal elements and economic entities. We will often face enemies who operate outside the rule of law.
and are difficult to distinguish from noncombatants. These new adversary sets require us to develop new approaches to deterrence measures, warfighting and winning confrontations.

Assumption 3: Potential regional adversaries in the 2015 timeframe\(^4\) will be well-equipped, well-led, motivated to win, highly adaptive, with global reach in selected capabilities, and possess the will to employ those capabilities in opposition to or in a manner threatening to U.S. national security. They will also likely possess weapons\(^5\) of mass destruction\(^6\) and significant anti-access capabilities. They will observe our warfighting capabilities and methods and adjust their strategies and tactics intelligently in an attempt to counter our advantages. These adversaries will seek to exploit technological breakthroughs in novel ways.

Assumption 4: Technological advances\(^7\) will continue at least at the current pace. Commercially available dual-use technology will continue to proliferate, extending some near-peer like capabilities in selected niches to even the least sophisticated and minimally funded adversaries.

Assumption 5: Service competencies remain the foundation of joint capabilities. The Services provide the cultural identities, domain expertise and core warfighting resources that are vital to implementing this concept.

Assumption 6: The concept outlines three cases of major combat operations. Of the two likely cases, Case One, the high-end regional competitor, has the greatest impact on our total capability requirements and is accordingly the focus of Version 1.0. Case Two, major irregular combat is the other likely case in the 2015 time frame and will be the next case developed in future versions of the concept. Case Three, the peer competitor, while the most dangerous, is not anticipated within the time frame of focus and will be the last of the three developed.

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\(^6\) Implies ability to possess and globally export WMD effects through terrorist cells, special operations forces, intermediate range missiles, and, in some cases, intercontinental range missiles.

Section 1 -- INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE

“We need to change not only the capabilities at our disposal, but also how we think about war. All the high-tech weapons in the world will not transform the US armed forces unless we also transform the way we think, the way we train, the way we exercise and the way we fight.”

SecDef Rumsfeld’s Remarks to National Defense University, 31 Jan 02

1.A Introduction.

The Joint Operating Concept (JOC) for Major Combat Operations (MCO) serves as a means for generating and capturing thought and discussion on the methods for conducting major combat operations in the next decade. Additionally, this concept will provide the foundation for further development and integration of other joint operating, functional, and integrating concepts, as well as influencing Joint and Service transformation. This concept seeks to combine emerging technologies and operational concepts with timeless and enduring principles of military affairs. It departs from current doctrine where it no longer serves, but not simply to satisfy a desire for something new.

The MCO JOC addresses the challenges discussed within the Joint Chiefs of Staff Joint Operations Concepts (JOpsC) paper. It provides the operational context for the transformation of the Armed Forces of the United States by linking strategic guidance with the integrated application of Joint Force capabilities. **Major combat operations as referred to in this Joint Operating Concept are large-scale operations conducted against a nation state(s) that possesses significant regional military capability, with global reach in selected capabilities, and the will to employ that capability in opposition to or in a manner threatening to US National Security**. This future adversary will likely possess weapons of mass destruction and significant anti-access capabilities. This concept describes an operational-level approach to warfighting and conflict resolution that exploits the capability of all instruments of national and multinational power to achieve full spectrum dominance over an organized and capable adversary. It proposes

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8 Major combat operations may be conducted against a peer, an irregular competitor or a non-peer competitor with regional focus. For scoping purposes, this joint operating concept is focused on the regional non-peer competitor as discussed in Section 1.B Scope.


10 “Full spectrum dominance is the defeat of any adversary or control of any situation across the full range of military operations.” Joint Operations Concepts Dated 3 Oct 2003
a blending of diverse national and coalition nonmilitary capabilities with an overmatching military force.

MCO JOC requires a commitment to transformation within the military and in the way that military power is integrated into other elements of national and coalition influence. People remain the centerpiece of successful operations, but changes within our society, the changing international security environment, and the rapid advance and proliferation of “information age” technologies require fundamental changes in how we approach warfare and conflict resolution.

Expanding potential capabilities through incremental improvements is important; but by simply realizing more of the existing potential capabilities of warfighters and warfighting organizations we can derive greater gains. Being a post-industrial society gives us great potential for the development and exploitation of human capabilities and will. The latent power to be found in the ordinary warfighter and warfighting organization is, by industrial standards, extraordinary. We cannot count on always enjoying material advantages over our adversaries; but we can strive to be more effective with those resources at hand. The exploitation of this potential offers the most profound revolution in military affairs. The MCO JOC guides future force transformation and the way operational commanders think and act when called upon to win our Nation’s wars.

1.B Scope.

The scope of a major combat operations concept must address the following three cases:

Case 1 – Major combat operations against a conventional, high-end regional threat
Case 2 – Major irregular combat operations
Case 3 – Major combat operations against a peer competitor

Since no current intelligence estimate forecasts a peer or near-peer competitor in the 2015 timeframe, Version 1.0 of this paper focuses on Case One. This postulated high-end regional competitor possesses some near-peer like capabilities in selected niches.\(^{11}\) Such an approach captures the most challenging of the likely adversaries and conditions the US

may face in the next decade. The scope and scale of operations against a regional competitor call attention to coherent, high-tempo, simultaneous operations conducted from multiple, distributed locations throughout the theater of war—all based upon pervasive knowledge. These types of operations may entail little or no reception, staging, onward movement and integration (RSO&I) for selected units.

We must recognize that campaign development factors, as well as force capabilities and sizing will differ between the regional competitor, irregular competitor and the peer. We will require additional types of capabilities suited to the special nature of major irregular combat. Many of the capabilities developed to respond to a regional competitor will clearly apply as we scale up to the peer competitor, but not all. In fact, the sheer scale of a peer changes the character of the fight. As a result, developing the capabilities identified in this version of the concept will not provide all of the capabilities needed to address either Case Two or Case Three. Later versions of this concept will further define the full set of required capabilities.
Section 2 – DESCRIPTION OF THE MILITARY PROBLEM

2.A The Operational Environment.\textsuperscript{12}

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 marked the start of a new national security era for America. The months that followed revealed a new kind of enemy: elusive, transnational, unconventional—an enemy as different from those of the Cold War or World War II as it was possible to conceive and one who has caused us to think about future war in a new way. These new threats against the United States and her allies seek to avoid our strengths, make many of our long-held assumptions irrelevant, and challenge the forms and conventions of industrial age warfare. The changes brought forth by these events have implications for military force design and operational concepts.

The relative certainty of the bipolar Cold War period is gone. We now face uncertainty and unknowns. Gone are the days when we were relatively sure we should prepare to fight a largely symmetric conventional war, in a defined set of theaters with improved infrastructures, against a doctrinally “template-able” enemy, with fixed alliances, for predetermined political aims. We cannot forecast the type war we will fight, against whom, with whom, where, or for what aims. Our adversaries have adapted and will continue to do so. They study our strengths and quickly devise methods to overcome them. They know that our strength is unmatchable in conventional military operations where we possess distinct advantages in sensors, mobility, and firepower. Some adversaries operate in that seam between illegal and legal activities. They target civilians directly, plan and prepare to operate in areas more civilian than military, and try to avoid detection and attack by blurring the distinction between combatant and noncombatant. They use methods to mitigate our strength and put themselves in a position where they have a chance to win—if only momentarily, or in their own eyes.

The likelihood is high that our adversaries operate from and within large, complex, and hostile urban areas. The implications of MCO in cities are dramatic.\textsuperscript{13} In urban combat operations, the US-led coalition achieves its desired end state by understanding,

\textsuperscript{12} See the Joint Operational Environment-Into the Future, draft dated 5 Mar 2004, for an expanded discussion of the future operational environment.

\textsuperscript{13} For additional detail refer to the Joint Urban Operations Integrating Concept.
controlling, and exploiting the unique elements of the urban environment (e.g., terrain, infrastructure, population, and information); sensing, locating, and isolating the adversary; and applying power rapidly, precisely, and discriminately. Essentially, an urban area is a complicated and dynamic concentration of physical, social, informational, political, economic, religious, and criminal activities. These activities are constantly interacting, and collectively produce a unique urban culture. When exposed to major combat, this unique urban culture goes into a form of “shock and paralysis.” The US-led force must tend to this urban crisis by returning the city to a functioning posture. Urban problems, in the end, tend to require very human solutions. Our joint leader must understand the operative dynamics of fighting in cities.

While the Cold War force designed to respond to a near-peer successfully deterred a general global war, the premise that such a force structure can rapidly and effectively respond to any contingency in today’s uncertain global environment requires examination. The likelihood that the United States and her coalition partners will engage in major combat operations with a regional competitor is much greater than the United States conducting major combat operations against a near-peer.\(^\text{14}\) We must identify new security concepts and organizations to fit the environment we face, not attempt to fit “our proven” concepts and organizations to the new environment.

A US-led coalition may eventually conduct major combat operations against an adversary who possesses weapons of mass destruction\(^\text{15}\) (WMD). An adversary without the conventional forces necessary to battle a more capable US and coalition force may use this extreme form of warfighting violence. Myriad diplomatic, informational, economic, social, as well as military issues surround both adversary and friendly use of WMD. The US must remain vigilant and capable of dissuading, deterring, limiting, and denying adversary employment of such weapons. If and when WMD are employed against the US, an ally, or friend, the US strategic level response is a political decision, not a military decision. At the operational and tactical levels, US forces must be trained and ready to operate in a WMD environment with little or no degradation in posture.


Operating in a WMD environment may include potential use of US nuclear weapons, when directed by the appropriate authorities, to influence the outcome of operations.

2.B Operational Level of War.

The operational level is that level that links campaigns, major operations, and tactical actions in time, space, and purpose, sequentially and simultaneously, in order to attain strategic or operational aims. The MCO JOC recognizes that required actions for confrontation, conflict resolution, and major combat operations are not only military in nature, but also include the discrete actions associated with other elements of our government and those of our coalition partners. The interaction between these areas increases the complexity of the problem for the commander as evidenced by recent operations and experimental results. A joint force commander acting at the operational level must understand that the actions of the military forces over which he has command must be harmonized with the actions of other elements of government over which he has no authority and with the actions of members of the coalition. Many of these actions occur prior to actual conflict making critical contributions to shaping the confrontation and preparing the battlespace. Furthermore, some of these civilian activities will continue during hostilities, most will expand substantially as hostilities end and they will continue well into the postconflict phase of the intervention.

The next level of complexity concerns simultaneity in military and civilian action. At the operational level, simultaneity takes two forms. The first, deployment, employment, and sustainment actions—military and nonmilitary, US and coalition, physical and information—occur at the same time. The second form takes place in multiple locations within a theater of war, and if the war is global, within multiple theaters.

Thus, the battlespace in which a joint force commander operates is both complex and expansive. Leadership at this level is different in both kind and degree from leadership at the tactical level. The joint force commander makes decisions and takes actions in a much more collaborative way than do tactical commanders. Directive leadership remains, but the joint force commander is also a leader among peer-leaders, something

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16 Derived from the Joint Publication 1-02, "DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms" definition and Joint Publication 3-0, “Doctrine for Joint Operations.”
uncommon at the tactical level. Exercising responsibility and achieving success at the operational level requires a skill set that is inclusive of, but much broader than, that set needed at the tactical level—it requires operational art.

2.C Operational Art.

Operational art, according to Joint Publication 3-0, describes “the employment of military forces to attain strategic or operational objectives through the design, organization, integration, and conduct of strategies, campaigns, major operations, and battles. Operational art translates the joint force commander’s strategy into operational design, and ultimately, tactical action, by integrating activities of all levels of war.” The MCO JOC highlights the incompleteness of this definition. Our understanding of operational art must expand to include both military and nonmilitary instruments of government action.

Operational art begins in the mind and character of the commander. A joint force commander cannot achieve what he cannot conceive. A joint force commander must derive, describe, and communicate a set of clear, achievable effects that must be realized in order to achieve the political aims he is given. He must properly apply the principles of war and other general principles of action to the specific situation in which he is operating and mission he has been assigned. Further, he must balance competing priorities and adjust them continuously as the situation unfolds over time. The application of general principles to specific cases is a form of wisdom and art that technologies can enhance but not replace.

The joint force commander at the operational level is a leader among peer-leaders. This kind of leadership position requires the ability to build trust and confidence among his seniors and subordinates in his personal judgment and action. He must also build trust and confidence among the set of peer-leaders, military and nonmilitary, who, collectively, are responsible for the attainment of US and coalition political aims. Using the interpersonal skill necessary to create systems of trust and confidence is also a form of art that technologies can enhance but not replace.

While unity of purpose and coherency in action begin in the mind of the joint force commander, they are executed in the physical, cognitive, and information domains. The
physical and information components concern the means the joint force commander uses to translate plans into actions, thus creating the effects he and his peers have identified as necessary to achieve the ends they have been given. The cognitive component involves not only the minds of the commander and his peer-leaders, but the mind of the adversary as well. A key avenue for cognitive effects is information operations and the emerging area of warfare in cyberspace.

The joint force commander also requires sufficient space in which to conduct his operations in the physical domain. This component of operational art recognizes that there is a relationship between numbers and types of forces and the physical space they require. One can have too few as well as too many forces relative to the space in which one is operating and the adversaries one faces. The relationships among the physical domain, forces—both military and nonmilitary—and adversaries are not fixed; they are dynamic. They change as the “terrain” changes, as the adversary adapts, as the opposition stiffens or lessens, and as missions change. Judgment is paramount.

One of the means the joint force commander requires is a deployment and sustainment system that is flexible enough to support his employment schemes as well as those of his peer-leaders. Having the ability to fight is useless if that ability is not accompanied by the ability to deploy and sustain. Further, the ability to fight in a certain style is useless if deployment and sustainment systems cannot support it.

Operational art includes the ability to achieve the proper ends-means relationship. The means used by the joint force commander and his peer-leaders do not operate in isolation; they operate most effectively within an organizational construct. There is no singular “correct” organizational construct. Rather, “correct” will vary as to the situation, the opponent, and the mission assigned. Regardless of organizational construct, however, there are some constants. Any organization needs ways in which to gather information, change that information into knowledge and then sufficient understanding to use as a basis for making decisions, taking actions, and adapting as the situation unfolds in the unexpected way it will always unfold in war. Any organization will need ways in which to achieve and sustain unity of purpose and coherency in action. Finally, any organization construct will have to be credible to those who must operate within it.
However, no single, established, fixed organization will be suited to the near-infinite number of possible scenarios we may face.

Perhaps the most important aspect of operational art is the ability to “fit” these elements together—in harmony. Any plan that a joint force commander constructs must satisfy political leadership, attain the political aims assigned, and be constructed collaboratively with his peer-leaders—commanders of our coalition partners, officials from civilian agencies, and leaders from the host nation—who are partners and stakeholders in attaining those aims. Further, the joint force commander’s plan must be executable by the forces made available—military and nonmilitary, US and multinational, in the physical and information domains, and within the organization he controls and adapts for the situation. If one of these elements is out of balance, the joint force commander must adjust the others—and continually re-balance as his operations unfold. How and when are matters of his judgment, a matter of his art.

The operational environment the joint force commander faces has expanded. Our understanding of what defines the operational level of war and the operational art must change in response to the changes in the environment. Some of what worked before remains essential; some, however, is distinctly counterproductive. A force that can adapt rapidly and successfully in the face of increasing uncertainty is a requirement in this new era. This concept addresses how we will accomplish this important task.
Section 3 – MAJOR COMBAT OPERATIONS – THE CONCEPT

“Where there is unity, there is always victory.”

--Publilius Syrus (First Century BC)


The complexity and uncertainty of the future operational environment shape the conduct of future military operations in partnership with civilian agency activities to achieve our political goals. Given that combat remains a profoundly brutal and human endeavor, the human dimension is central to this concept. Technology does not fight an enemy; people do. Emerging technologies enable future operations, but must not constrain them. Despite unimaginable advances in sensor and information technologies, the “fog, friction, uncertainty, complexity, and chaos” surrounding war and combat endure, especially when facing an intelligent and determined adversary or multiple adversaries. Mental preparation is as important as the technical advantage that US forces can bring to bear in combat. But success in combat alone does not guarantee achievement of political aims.

Given this background, the central theme of the MCO JOC is this: achieve decisive conclusions to combat and set the conditions for decisive conclusion of the confrontation; use a joint, interdependent force that swiftly applies overmatching power simultaneously and sequentially, in a set of contiguous and noncontiguous operations; employ joint power at all points of action necessary; and create in the mind of our enemy an asynchronous perception of our actions—all to compel the enemy to accede to our will. These decisive conclusions are enabled by the fluid and coherent application of joint military action in conjunction with interagency and

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17 Asynchronous, in this context, refers to our desire to create an indiscernible pattern in time and space in the mind of our enemy. Our operations, however, must retain unity of purpose and coherency of action.

18 Fluidity, in this context, is the ability to readily adapt, shift forces, and redirect operations; the ability to seek out, create, and exploit opportunities and adversary vulnerabilities; and the ability to engage, or appear to engage, an adversary in every dimension, relentlessly, irrespective of his efforts to disengage or to seek advantage. It is analogous to the tendency of fluid to adapt to the shape of any vessel that contains it; to pour through any crack, hole, or gap; and to engulf any object that is immersed in it. It is the manifestation of the emergent behaviors of adaptability and opportunism.

19 Coherence, in this context, is analogous to qualities of coherent light produced by a laser, as compared to incoherent or ordinary light, produced by a flashlight. Although both focus light, the light produced by a
coalition power, using an effects-based approach and leveraging pervasive knowledge in a networked environment to increase levels of collaboration, precision, unity of purpose and coherency in action. As Figure 1 below depicts, these enablers help us move from today’s paradigm of applying overwhelming force to applying overmatching power, from deconflicting actions to coherent actions, from mostly sequential to more simultaneous operations, from primarily contiguous to more noncontiguous operations, from reacting to pro-acting, and from being joint only at the operational level to becoming joint at the point of action.²⁰ Additionally, a profound shift in our warfighting concepts occurs when the US aligns and synchronizes deployment, employment, and sustainment activities to

**Figure 1**

laser differs from ordinary light in that it is made up of waves all of the same wavelength and all in phase (synchronized); ordinary light contains different wavelengths and phase relations. The result is greater power generated by the coherent light of a laser than the incoherent light of a flashlight. Ensuring that all available elements of the combined force are “in phase,” or coherent stimulates synchronization and synergy that result in increased combat power.

²⁰ “Joint at the point of action” refers to being able to apply the power of any element of the joint force at any point of action the joint commander directs.
conduct multiple, simultaneous, distributed, decentralized battles and campaigns. For example, employment options expand, allowing operational maneuver from strategic distances as well as from the sea, and tactical vertical maneuver from operational distances—capabilities vital to forcible entry as well as follow-on operations. These employment options contribute to a degree of speed and agility that allows the aggressor no opportunity to adjust his plans, reconfigure his forces, or reconstitute damaged assets. To a considerable extent, these employment options are dependent upon the adequacy of strategic and theater lift, both air and maritime. To proceed without pause and without loss of tempo, all Services are required to increase combat power output per unit of deployment and achieve a degree of interdependence not heretofore realized. The end result is the ability to achieve and maintain adaptive force dominance.

Tomorrow’s Operational Commander is key to achieving success. He must be able to generate the right effects at the right time and place to achieve the operational victory in conflict while contributing to the political victory. This requires a clear understanding of the challenges he faces in the future operational environment described earlier, the ability to leverage the six building blocks that form the foundation for combat operations, and apply a set of eleven guiding principles that influence his decision process and subsequent actions in the conduct of major combat operations.


Credible military strength deters potential adversaries. The US military must remain prepared to demonstrate the resolve of the US government and its commitment over time in order to reap the benefits in conflict. The US military no longer has a “grace” period while transitioning to war, no “time-out” for the military to catch up, and absolutely no reprieve for lack of strategic- and operational-level preparedness. Given this unforgiving “compression of time” that affects future US force projection and operations, the US military prepares by focusing on seven core building blocks that form the foundations for US success in future major combat operations:
1. Fight with a warrior’s ethos.
2. Use a coherent joint force that decides and acts based upon pervasive knowledge.
3. Develop resourceful leaders.
4. Train under the right conditions.
5. Field capabilities to maintain adaptive force dominance.
6. Uphold the values of American democracy.
7. Conduct routine Operations to Gain and Maintain Operational Access.

3.B.1 Fight with a Warrior’s Ethos.

- Focus on fighting on a day-to-day basis.
- Create unit cohesion. Technology does not fight, people do.
- Instill in the individual a desire to: win, overcome obstacles, and solve problems.
- Reward aggressive action.
- Inspire everyone to believe they are warriors and that every team is a team of warriors.

Warfare routinely puts property, lives, and entire nations at risk. Those who undertake it have a grave responsibility to themselves, their comrades-in-arms, their commands, their Services, and their country. Because of this, it demands ultimate commitment on the part of warfighters. Pursuing warfighting as a job, or even as a career, is not sufficient to do it justice. It must be understood to be a true profession and a way of life. Any other approach to warfighting is unfair to the warfighter and all who rely upon him, with potentially deadly consequences.

The commitment of the warfighter to his profession requires discipline and sacrifice beyond that of ordinary professions. The warfighter must be prepared to endure extreme hardship in the performance of his duty. In order to be able to do these things when circumstances warrant, it is necessary to be always mindful of the need to prepare to do so. This requires an extraordinary focus on the essential elements of warfighting, which
in turn must be based on the internalization within each warfighter of a peculiar “Warrior Ethos”—a set of values or guiding beliefs.

To be effective in the face of the stresses of war, this ethos must include an emphasis on the values essential to success in warfighting. A representative list of such values would include: **Honor and Integrity**—doing what is right, ethically, morally, and legally; **Courage**—overcoming fear, danger, or adversity, both physical and moral; **Commitment and Selfless Service**—putting the welfare of the nation, the combined force, and your subordinates before your own; **Loyalty**—bearing true faith and allegiance to the US Constitution, the combined force, and other warfighters; **Duty**—fulfillment of obligations and acceptance of responsibility for your own actions and those entrusted to your care; **Respect**—how we treat others reflects upon each of us and all of us; and **Excellence**—achievement and maintenance of the highest possible standards of performance. These values form the foundation of leadership and the basis for teamwork and unity of action. These values must guide and mold the warfighter at every level and echelon - tactical, operational, and strategic.²¹

The warfighters, guided by a genuine warrior ethos, will dedicate their lives to constant study and practice of the skills necessary to wage war. In this way, they will prepare themselves to perform to the highest possible level when the country calls. To the degree that the combined force is manned by such warfighters, it will have maximized its human potential, and greatly enhanced its warfighting power.

### 3.B.2 Use a coherent joint force that decides and acts based upon pervasive knowledge.

- Develop joint interdependence among service capabilities and associated force structures.
- Employ a network centric method to collect, fuse, analyze then provide access to information supporting leader decision requirements.

²¹ This list of values is representative, not definitive or exhaustive. It is an amalgamation of the core values of each of the Services of the US Armed Forces, as contained in their respective publications.
- Employ a joint military/interagency decision-making process that uses a collaborative information environment and functions with coalition partners.

- Translate pervasive knowledge and predictive analysis into anticipatory decisions and precise actions to achieve desired effects in a military, interagency, and multinational environment.

The network tools of the information age allow a degree in interdependence among service forces that had always been desired but had never been achievable. Interdependence, to be sure, relies upon technical connectivity that maximizes machine-to-machine interface when and how that makes sense, but even more importantly it relies upon breaking down long-developed cultural positions and barriers. As we work to solve technical problems surrounding an interdependent force, we must also use our training and leader development venues to create a new, coherently joint culture.

Core to this new joint culture is the understanding and implementation of proper supporting and supported relationships among military and interagency partners. Proper supporting and supported relationships in the 2015 and beyond environment require an expansion first of our understanding of “forces,” “maneuver,” and “engagement.” Where these terms had referred only to military organizations, they now must apply to other elements of governmental action and national power. The second expansion concerns the dynamic aspect of supporting and supported relationships. Such relationships are not fixed. They are dynamic, and their dynamism results from changes in the battle space. A third expansion involves acknowledging that a fully networked coherently joint force can be developed in ways different from the past. In the past, commanders have dealt with the uncertainties and vagrancies of war by owning all they might need. A networked and interdependent force can deal with uncertainty and vagrancies through access to capabilities they do not own. This concept envisions a new ownership-to-access balance and sees greater interdependencies among elements of the force. The joint interdependence envisioned in this concept is the key to creating a more coherent warfighting force. Joint interdependency is more than a technical solution; it requires the breaking down of long-developed cultural positions and barriers. It is developing and clearly understanding the capabilities the joint force requires and how we can maximize
combat power and effectiveness with a given force available. This is not to say we move
the joint force to a “sole” provider for each capability but instead that we balance our
capabilities and core expertise to build a more coherent force.

For a coherent joint force working in a changing battle space, early understanding of
potential threats rises in importance. “Understanding” in this context is more than data or
information; it is pervasive knowledge. Being able to discern the precise action to take
rests upon the ability to understand—not only empirically but also culturally—the
nuances of that situation.

Early detection and understanding of an adversary’s actions intended to challenge our
interests gives us the time to take preventative actions. In many cases, pervasive
knowledge will lead to predictive analysis and anticipatory action. Early understanding
provides us with opportunities before an adversary takes action that may be lost after he
takes it. Preventative action often succeeds using lower amounts or “softer” types of
power than that which become necessary after an adversary acts.

Thus the understanding capability we seek is extensive. It is both technical and
human. It is part of a multinational, interagency, government and nongovernment system
of sensors and analysts. It is, furthermore, equally capable of providing us the
intelligence we need regardless of weather conditions, terrain, or social-political
conditions in which we must collect the raw information. We will need this capability in
cities, jungles, and mountains as well as in open and rolling terrain.

A pervasive knowledge capability is the first step in creating the sense of futility and
impunity in the mind of our adversary. This begins with predictive analysis long before
hostilities begin. The ability to predict, to understand intention based on patterns,
observed behavior, written or observed doctrine, and basic battlespace forensics - all
require a change in our habits concerning the distribution of peacetime ISR assets. ISR
must relentlessly focus on the most serious emerging threats worldwide with increased
concentration as hostilities evolve. Thus, when hostilities begin ISR will have produced
the advantage of knowledge through prediction rather than having to develop knowledge
through pure discovery in the course of battle or hostilities. This pervasive knowledge
system creates the impression that we can “observe” even an adversary’s very intent.
The adversary, aware of this system, is constantly looking over his shoulder, sure he is
being watched, followed, tracked, and heard. This is not to say that we will be all knowing. The complexity of warfare will still involve uncertainty and conditions where we will have to fight with incomplete information. Therefore, we must be confident in how we are organized, trained, and equipped for adaptability and leverage intuition, experience, and our joint and expeditionary mindset to accomplish the assigned mission.

Our pervasive knowledge capability forms the core of all other capabilities, for it provides the knowledge base from which decisions are made and actions taken. Our ability to see and understand first enables us to decide and act first. We translate that potential capability into actual, when we create a joint, interagency decision-making and action-taking methodology. Unity of purpose and coherency of action among military and interagency partners can only result from recognition of a common set of desired effects; a common approach to problem solving, deciding, and acting; and an extensive collaborative environment in which all think and work.

Rapid, decentralized decisions, based upon high-quality, near-real time understanding, and executed quickly and precisely—all contribute to the adversary’s sense of futility and perception of impunity. When a coherent joint force and their interagency and multinational partners can see and understand with equal clarity, they increase the probability of taking away just those options the adversary seeks while retaining freedom of action for themselves. Such decisions and actions not only need a specific kind of culture, but also the right set of open-architecture, collaborative tools.

### 3.B.3 Develop Resourceful Leaders.

- Use training as a leader development venue.
- Develop operational art explicitly.
- Identify future joint and service leader competencies and design appropriate training and education programs.

Although centralization best accommodates some aspects of joint military activity, the reliance on decentralized decision-making, shared understanding throughout the force, and decentralized execution expands in importance. The need for decentralization
demands that our leaders be developed to anticipate and to adapt. Understanding and operating within the commander’s intent are central to leader development. Leader flexibility, creativity, and resourcefulness are rewarded. Building trust, confidence, shared identity and understanding is nurtured between and among leaders in all components and agencies: active and reserve, and at all levels of command and staff along with their interagency, contractor, and coalition counterparts.

Leaders are developed to not only master their own specialties, but also to have an understanding of the capabilities and limitations of joint, interagency and coalition partners. Future joint leaders must possess technical and tactical expertise and be able to think on the move, adapting to an ever-changing situation. Leaders at all levels are skilled at communicating, thinking flexibly, empowering others, and providing feedback during the ebb and flow of battle. If the future joint force had the luxury of working together as a team well in advance of a crisis, then leaders could learn command techniques and teamwork at their leisure. The challenge, however, is to practice effective command with quickly formed teams comprising sub-elements from throughout the joint force. The future force practices adaptive command and teamwork among soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines who may have never met prior to battle. This team is able to wade into a complex, uncertain environment and prevail against a competent enemy.

3.B.4 Train Under the Right Conditions.

- Replicate operational level conditions in joint and Service exercises.
- Joint Task Force Headquarters AND subordinate elements—joint organize, train, and equip.
- Include Interagency and Multinational elements.

First battles and their consequences do matter. There may be no second chance for the US in major combat. The extension and melding of our Services’ training competencies contribute to joint warfighting synergies. Joint training should strengthen joint, interagency, and multinational operations by preparing forces for new warfighting concepts. Force readiness improves by aligning joint education and training capabilities and
resources with Combatant Command needs. Individuals and organizations are developed that intuitively think jointly. Individuals, staffs, and organizations improvise and adapt to crises. Unity of effort and coherency in action ensue from a diversity of means.

Achieving this level of joint training rests on joint knowledge development and distribution, joint national training, and joint assessment and enablers. Joint knowledge development and distribution prepare future leaders to respond innovatively to enemies through a global knowledge network providing immediate access to joint education and training resources.

Joint national training prepares forces by providing commands, staffs, and units with an integrated, live, virtual, and constructive training environment in a joint, interagency, and multinational context. This allows global training and mission rehearsal in support of specific operational needs. Joint assessment and enablers assist leaders in sensing the value of initiatives on individuals, organizations, and processes required to meet validated Combatant Command needs. This also yields support tools and processes that enhance both joint knowledge development and joint national training.

Creating training opportunities and effective operational relationships between the US military, members of the interagency community, multinational partners, and multilateral participants expands our leaders’ knowledge and experience. Core competencies, capabilities, and processes are examined to determine utility in major combat. This regular exposure contributes to building trust, confidence, and shared understanding among the participants. This, in turn, contributes to more effective use of all instruments of government action as well as making well-informed decisions faster.

Training, education, and leader development must be geared to stimulating emergent qualities, notably synergy, adaptability, and opportunism. Training forces to accept willingly and to cope successfully with uncertainty, risk, change, friction, chaos, and the fog of war is critical to our emerging warfighting culture. Learning organizations emerge that adapt rapidly and willingly to war’s uncertainties.

- Create proper active component reserve component force mix.
- Identify necessary standing joint organizations.
- Determine proper methods for routine “dynamic tasking.”
- Maintain Service collective, unit competencies.

America’s armed forces need to field capabilities designed with the inherent operational and tactical flexibility to defeat highly adaptive adversaries. As potential enemies strike out in new military directions, their employment options expand commensurately. Among the areas in which novel approaches are especially attractive and within the reach even of second and third tier militaries are distributed command and control, cooperative engagement from standoff, layered air defense, information operations, and the exploitation of commercial space–based communications and sensor systems. At the same time, the explosion in information technologies is a potent enabler of aspiring military forces, including transnational terrorist groups and criminal organizations such as drug cartels and Mafias. Unconstrained by legal or bureaucratic obstacles, such groups may have even greater freedom to experiment with emerging technologies than do most military organizations. Such an adversary may opt to use weapons of mass destruction to further his cause.

History has shown that any preconceived assumptions about the tactical and operational behavior of potential adversaries, especially smaller adversaries, are very likely to prove wrong in some degree—even where an adversary’s prewar behavior can be observed. Moreover, it is likely to change significantly once battle is joined and the longer hostilities persist the more frequently it is likely to change. To cope with that challenge, future forces require adaptive dominance—the ability to rapidly, and without major reorganization, adapt to changing enemy patterns of operation faster than the enemy himself can exploit them. Meanwhile, our own operations must be so rapid and disorienting that an enemy’s adaptation to them is belated and ineffective.

Adaptive force dominance is a product of military culture, fostered or inhibited by training, leadership, and other factors. It also presumes a versatile and robust force
design that incorporates such qualities as rapid situational awareness, organizational modularity, ground and air mobility, close synchronization of fires with maneuver, and effective integration of deployment, employment, and sustainment. A rapidly deployable, immediately employable, lethal, versatile, and robust force that is capable of winning decisively in major combat serves not only to help dominate the adversary in conflict but also serves foremost as a deterrent to any potential aggressor.

### 3.B.6 Uphold the Values of American Democracy

- Meet our moral obligation to uphold the US Constitution.
- Value human dignity.
- Use force with proportionality and discrimination.

In the employment of military power, the American warfighter has the moral obligation to uphold the Constitution and values upon which our country was founded and operates. As instruments of the people, the Armed Forces of the United States are accountable to those people through their duly elected and appointed civilian leaders.

Today, the United States enjoys a position of unparalleled military strength and great economic and political influence. In keeping with our heritage and principles, we do not use our strength to press for unilateral advantage. We seek instead to create a balance of control that favors human freedom for every person in every society. We stand firmly for human dignity and its nonnegotiable demands: the rule of law; limits on the absolute power of the state; free speech; freedom of worship; equal justice; respect for women; religious and ethnic tolerance; and respect for private property.

The complex and often ambiguous nature of the 21st-century adversary complicates our ability to wage war in accordance with the law of armed conflict. Nevertheless, we vigorously adhere to the fundamental principles of humanity and discriminate use of force by distinguishing between civilians and combatants. We also avoid unnecessary harm to the adversary, civilians, civilian objects and the environment by weighing the potential military advantage realized against potential casualties and collateral damage in
an attempt to limit the devastating effects of war. We maintain the moral high ground against our enemies, even when they resort to terrorism and other dubious tactics.

As professionals in arms, we embrace and defend those inalienable rights invoked in the Declaration of Independence, embodied in the Constitution, and cherished by the American people.

3.B.7 Conduct routine Operations to Gain and Maintain Operational Access.

- Establish a set of basing options (permanent and situational).
- Exploit interagency and coalition partnerships to guarantee basing and isolate the adversary diplomatically.
- Identify proper mix of CONUS based, forward deployed, prepositioned equipment, and rotational capabilities.
- Develop joint assured access capabilities to include expeditionary forcible entry\(^\text{22}\).
- Develop lift capabilities that facilitate maneuver from strategic and operational distances.
- Create modular forces that require little or no reception, staging, onward movement, and integration.

Assuring access through forcible entry and rapid force projection combine to expand our MCO options while limiting enemy options to inflict damage on US forces, coalition partners, and the civilian populace in harm’s way. Because the US does not know when and where the next major fight may occur, our military needs a comprehensive basing strategy with a menu of options to assure global reach and access. Furthermore, most major combat operation cases will require a forcible entry operation or set of operations to set the right conditions for major combat. A complete description of forcible entry operations is contained in a separate concept, Joint Forcible Entry Operations.

The US must have strategic and operational capabilities along with the flexibility and agility to counter anti-access threats and area denial strategies by various means to ensure

\(^{22}\) See Joint Forcible Entry Operations Concept
the use of needed lines of communication and infrastructure. Forward stationing and the forward-presence of US forces reassure friends and allies, and tend to dissuade potential adversaries. Also, these forward-deployed forces are potentially the first responders to counter anti-access and area denial strategies. Implementing a combination of flexible deterrent options potentially deters further aggressive acts by an adversary. Additionally, the proper mix of forces, the appropriate forcible entry as well as air and sea lift capabilities to maneuver from strategic distances and deliver forces where the adversary does not expect, reengineered mobilization processes, and the concept of modular force packaging requiring less reception, staging, onward movement, and integration—all enhance our strategic agility and deal with the anti-access challenges.

Different regions have different geo-political, ethnic and religious underpinnings that will influence chosen deterrent options. In some instances, the best course of action for the US will be to monitor from afar or covertly instead of maintaining an overt military presence.

US and coalition partners gain access into a joint operations area from all dimensions, including space and cyberspace. This access contributes to the Commander’s freedom of action to seek positional advantage through rapid maneuver and engagement in pursuit of his objectives. Key to providing access is the development of the requisite forcible entry capabilities combined with lift capabilities that facilitate maneuver from strategic and operational distances and delivers forces where the adversary does not expect. Additionally, creating modular forces that require little or no reception, staging, onward movement, and integration provides the foundation for conducting forcible entry operations when required. Further, the right mix of joint, interagency, and multinational capabilities is employed to thwart the enemy’s anti-access and area denial strategies. Coherent involvement of the interagency and coalition communities and other organizations creates powerful partnerships. This coherent application of all instruments of national and multinational power contributes to isolating the enemy diplomatically as

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23 Working definition: Engagement is the imposition of friendly combat power upon the enemy. Force application expands the view of how the enemy forces can be affected beyond the traditional use of lethal fires. Engagements on future battlefields must capitalize on the synergies of timely and effective use of kinetic and nonkinetic weapons to create lethal as well as nonlethal effects.
well as convincing third parties to remain neutral and uninvolved or taking positions favorable to our interests.

3.C  **How the Joint Force Fights: Eleven Execution Principles.** Every major combat fight will be different. The following principles, however, capture what will be common to every major combat operation. These principles are not intended to be prescriptive or to limit the individual commander in the way he wages war. The principles capture both continuity and change in that they adhere to classical principles of military art while melding these principles with those found in cutting edge military, complexity, chaos, and productivity theories. The following eleven Guiding Principles of Major Combat Operations provide a set of tools to help shape commander’s thoughts, decision process, and actions. The principles are meant to guide commanders as they plan and prepare to conduct major combat operations and deploy, employ, and sustain the joint force during the conduct of major combat operations. The proposed principles for Operational Commanders to consider and implement are:

1. Start with the strategic purpose in mind.
2. Achieve decisive outcomes and conclusions.
3. Employ a knowledge-enhanced, effects-based approach.
4. Employ a joint, interagency and multinational force with collaborative processes.
5. Use mission orders throughout the chain of command.
6. Gain and maintain operational access.
7. Engage the adversary comprehensively.
8. Generate relentless pressure by deciding and acting distributively.
10. Align deployment, employment, and sustainment activities.
11. Protect people, facilities, and equipment throughout the battlespace.
3.C.1 Start with the Strategic Purpose in Mind.

- Derive intent from assigned strategic aims.
- Convey intent with clarity and simplicity to achieve unity of purpose and coherency of action.
- Disintegrate, disorient, dislocate, or destroy the enemy’s combat capability as a means to achieve decisive conclusions in post-combat operations.
- Harmonize combat with other elements of government action.

Action begins with a vision of the desired outcome. A policy-maker envisions first a desired political outcome, then considers the ways and means necessary to achieve it, and finally sets about taking action according to that strategic purpose. At every subsequent military planning step, the strategic purpose must be the focus of effort. In linking the necessary actions (or tasks), necessary ways and means (effects and resources), and the desired end state, the principle of simplicity should always be observed. The simpler the plans and relationships are, the easier it will be to implement and maintain them.

The formation and conveyance of the overarching strategic purpose take place at every level of the chain of command, throughout the combined force. At each level, the intent of higher levels guides the formation of intent tailored to the level in question. This chain reaches from the Commander in Chief to the lowest ranking warfighter in the field. In this way, the appreciation of intent is embedded in all actions taken by the combined force, and is made universal throughout the battlespace.

The process of developing commander’s intent begins with the President of the United States or the Secretary of Defense envisioning the strategic purpose of the action, determining the means necessary to achieve it, and assigning the responsibility for those means, as a mission, to an appropriate Combatant Commander. Effects to achieve this desired political outcome would likely continue well past the conclusion of major combat operations. Achieving the political end state relies upon all relevant instruments of government action: diplomatic coercion, public diplomacy, information operations, military force, law enforcement, economic assistance, etc. The commander then develops his statement of intent in terms of a desired operational end state for the military
campaign. This intent is translated into desired effects that are expected to satisfy the purpose. The commander's intent also incorporates supporting and supported relationships among all available elements of power. Subordinate commanders then use this process to develop their own "nested" intent, compatible with and supportive of higher-level intent. This process continues down to the lowest practical levels.

At every level, it must be understood that warfighting is but one instrument of national policy used in concert with others to achieve national aims. Achieving those aims decisively generally lies beyond the scope and duration of combat operations alone. Universal understanding of the desired political end and maintenance of focus on it at every level by both military and civilian officials are therefore the keys to achieving coherence throughout the entire operation.

3.C.2 Achieve Decisive Outcomes and Conclusions.\(^\text{24}\)

- Achieve strategic aims: Win at the tactical level to set the conditions for winning at the operational level.
- Disintegrate, disorient, dislocate, or destroy the enemy fighting capabilities and will.
- Use decisive defeat of enemy combat forces as a means to achieve decisive conclusion to war.

All actions commanders take in the conduct of major combat operations must be focused on achieving a decisive conclusion to the war. Winning in combat does not necessarily equal winning the war. Successfully imposing our will on an adversary whose behavior brought us to engage him in combat operations may very well rest upon what we do after we have forcefully and successfully engaged an adversary's ability to resist. All of our actions must aim to decrease our adversary’s will and increase our ability to exert our own will. Decisive conclusions result from the achievement of all the strategic objectives or goals—the desired strategic aim. The military, diplomatic,

\(^{24}\) Working definition --Decisive conclusions in this context refer to the “achievement of the strategic purpose (desired political end) as rapidly as possible with the least cost of life and national treasure.”
information and economic elements of national and multinational power contribute to achieving our strategic objectives that create and maintain the desired end state.

While achieving military objectives alone will not necessarily lead to a decisive conclusion, it is a sine qua non of the desired end state. The strategic military objectives are achieved through operational and tactical level actions focused on achieving decisive outcomes and conclusions. These actions coherently apply all the capabilities of the joint, multinational and interagency forces, nuclear or conventional, lethal or nonlethal, to disintegrate, disorient, dislocate or destroy the opponent. Similarly, it is the combination, of combat and stability operations that ensure all required strategic objectives have been met. Tactical level actions in each of these type operations are undertaken with the purpose of directly contributing to operational or strategic objectives. The coherent application of military and nonmilitary capabilities, involving all instruments of national, multinational and nongovernmental power, combines to decisively conclude the war.


- Achieve pervasive knowledge that translates into increased precision and decisiveness of action.
- Link tactical actions to operational and strategic aims.
- Avoid drawn out attrition-based campaigns and operations; focus on effects relative to enemy centers of gravity, decisive points, and other critical areas, organizations, and activities.
- Adapt: Change tasks when needed to achieve desired effects.

One of the main focuses for all operations concerns having the effects on the enemy that the commander desires. These effects, individually or collectively, result in the enemy’s disintegration, disorientation, dislocation, or destruction. Effects can be lethal or nonlethal. Effects can be generated by military forces or nonmilitary organizations. They can be generated by kinetic or nonkinetic means.

The effects-based approach also enhances the effectiveness of warfighting organizations by highlighting the importance of commander’s intent. Commanders and
decision-makers at every level must determine how their organization, military and not, can best contribute to the realization of the overall intent at their level. An effects-based approach links specified tasks to necessary effects to desired end states, while preserving the freedom of decision-makers to determine the best means of achieving the necessary effect, to include the freedom, within specified limits, to change tasking. An effects-based approach leverages mutual trust and confidence and high levels of dedication, initiative, training, and competence. It also leverages organizational and procedural structures that encourage autonomy and decentralized decision and action in support of unified purpose in order to realize the full creativity and energy resident throughout the chain of command.

The effects-based approach, by focusing on intent, relies on the initiative, will and creativity of decision-makers to improvise and change these assigned tasks as needed in order to achieve desired results. An effects-based approach requires a great deal of intrinsic motivation, personal character that permits decision-making, a high degree of training, and a high level of trust up, down, and across the chain of command.

The effects-based approach serves as the framework for campaign design and reflects an appreciation of the complex web of interdependent relationships within and between the adversary, the battlespace, and ourselves. The term effects-based approach describes a way of thinking about and solving military problems and incorporates effects-based thinking, processes, operations, and targeting. Whenever possible, the effects-based approach attempts to avoid a long drawn out attrition based campaign, but should such a campaign be required, the effects-based approach still applies. It is a method that starts with the identification of higher purpose, centers of gravity, and decisive points. The effects-based approach then works downward to identify subordinate purposes and the effects necessary to achieve them. The effects themselves are understood to be physical or behavioral outcomes that result from a friendly action or set of actions. The desired effects are conveyed downward through the chain of command to provide guidance and establish both unity of purpose and coherency of action. It may, at times, be advantageous to specify guiding tasks as means of achieving desired effects, but this must always be balanced by the commander with his perception of the need of subordinate units for autonomy in order to best realize his intent. The effects-based approach is a
commander-centric method because it encourages commanders at every level to exercise initiative by constantly looking for ways to support higher-level intent by contributing to the achievement of specified effects. Lateral transmission to adjacent units, or to interagency or coalition forces may also be appropriate. At every level, the focus remains on the achievement of specified effects, rather than tasks.

3.C.4 **Employ a Joint, Interagency and Multinational Force with Collaborative Processes.**

- Include interagency and multinational partners in collaborative planning and execution processes.
- Create an appropriate information-sharing environment with all partners.

Collaboration strengthens the degree to which joint, interagency, and multinational capabilities can be applied in a coherent manner to bring about the desired conditions for successful operations.

Proper collaboration increases the thoroughness of decisions, precision of actions, and the speed of adaptation within a joint force. Proper collaboration also contributes to unity of purpose and coherency of action, especially if all partners in an operation—military as well as non military—participate in the collaboration.

Collaboration simply entails working together to formulate plans, develop and analyze alterations, decisions, direct actions, assess effectiveness of those actions, then adapt accordingly. Information age networked tools have begun to redefine “working together.”

In a distributed network, time and space shrink. Many more activities can be executed “now” when they are networked. In a networked environment functions can occur simultaneously both vertically and horizontally among organizations. For example, collaborative planning for an operation can include senior and subordinate leaders and their staffs, as well as interagency leaders and staffs and coalition leaders and their staffs. Furthermore, this collaboration can take place simultaneously either as a whole or in parts, usually organized along functions.
“Physical space” also shrinks in a distributed network. “Reachback,” as well as, “Forward and Rear” as concepts become irrelevant in a network environment. Simply put: everyone on the network is “here” for all practical purposes.

Certainly, operating in this kind of distributive, collaborative network takes some getting used to. Certainly such operations require extensive information sharing protocols, cultural change, and lots of practice. Equally certain, however, is this: the power of collaboration is undeniable.

3.C.5 Use Mission Orders Throughout the Chain of Command.

- Focus mission orders on effects to be achieved.
- Nest orders, disseminate them vertically and horizontally, and facilitate collaboration and decentralization.

The key to implementing an effects-based approach is commander’s intent, conveyed through mission orders. Commander’s intent is a concise expression of the purpose of the operation and the effects necessary to achieve it. It should always be crafted primarily with reference to the effect that it is intended to have on the adversary, which is a change from current practices that focus on accomplishment of friendly tasks. It must be “nested”—incorporating and promoting the satisfaction of higher headquarters intent, be clear and compelling, and should be disseminated and understood vertically and horizontally, in order to foster maximum cooperation in every direction. The commander's desired effects must be clearly understood and should encourage autonomy and freedom of action of subordinates to collaborate, innovate, adapt, and exploit opportunities at all levels, across the combined force, within the bounds of his intent.

Mission orders are the means of conveying commander’s intent. While mission orders have no set format; in general, a joint force commander’s mission order contains:

- His intent (defined in terms of the effect the commander wants to achieve relative to his enemy),
- Mission,
- Supporting and supported relationships and any constraints or limitations.
Desired end states, and the effects necessary to achieve them, tend to stay fixed; but supporting tasks are subject to dynamic change. It is the emphasis on intent that allows decision-makers to innovate and adapt to dynamic circumstances as prescriptive tasks are overtaken by events. The focus on intent fosters a shared frame of reference promoting a common understanding. The scope of this understanding, and collaboration based upon it, should encompass all participants, including U.S. civilian agencies and coalition partners.

Mission orders facilitate collaboration and decentralization through empowerment. Shared understanding and creativity mean little if the command system does not allow for the exercise of appropriate authority at every level. Such empowerment results in a proliferation of decision-makers, a compressed decision cycle, and greater self-optimization. This does not mean that commanders must employ only decentralized command and control; rather, a balanced approach, allowing for centralization or decentralization as required, is needed. The level of decision-making must adapt to the mission, the terrain, the information flow, and the enemy situation on a continuous basis. Decentralized command and control cannot succeed without empowerment of competent, trusted, and trusting subordinates. Mission orders are the means of doing that.

3.C.6 Gain and Maintain Operational Access.\textsuperscript{25}

- Establish necessary control of air, sea, space and cyberspace required to gain operational access.
- Use forcible entry operations when required.
- Use speed to thwart enemy efforts to establish operational exclusion zones.
- Overwhelm the enemy through simultaneous and sequential employment of rapid maneuver and precision engagement capabilities.
- Swiftly introduce fully capable and immediately employable forces to set the conditions for rapid transition to follow-on operations.
- Directly deliver tailored mission capability packages through a combination of strategic and intratheater lift, and self-deployment.

\textsuperscript{25} For additional detail refer to the Joint Forcible Entry Operations Integrating Concept.
Both before conflict erupts and once it becomes apparent that external intervention is likely, an adversary’s first objective will be to use all the means at his disposal to deny intervening forces easy access to the theater. Where possible, he will seek to deter intervention altogether by means ranging from diplomacy to the threat of action against the U.S. and its allies, including threats to their respective homelands. At the same time, he will seek through a combination of persuasion, bribes, and other forms of intimidation to deprive the U.S. of regional allies, and thus of access to local territory, airspace, and port facilities.

A complete description of how the joint force sets the conditions for and conducts forcible entry, as well as how forcible entry forces support follow-on operations can be found in the joint forcible entry concept. That concept describes, in detail, how the joint force sets the initial conditions for, then uses speed, stealth, stand-off, and precision to force its way through the anti-access exclusion zone, defeat the adversary’s area denial forces, and achieve the desired effects. The concept also describes the force packages that will normally accompany joint forces maneuvering from operational and strategic distances into areas lightly defended, or not defended at all. Operational access includes necessary control of air, sea, space and cyberspace required to deliver forcible entry and mission capability packages. Finally, the concept describes the continuous forcible entry operations required to sustain distributed operations and prevent our adversary from re-establishing their exclusion zones and area denial operations.

Adversaries employ anti-access and area denial capabilities such as ballistic and cruise missiles, submarines, undersea minefields and salvoes of anti-ship missiles, unconventional forces, integrated air defense systems, strike aircraft, terrorism and weapons of mass effects. Conceivably, the anti-access threat facing US and coalition forces actually begins at our home stations and ports of embarkation. Area denial capabilities also include information warfare, to include deception, and space-based platform degradation. In conjunction with these efforts, the enemy may attempt to establish and enforce an operational exclusion zone encompassing areas within his reach. In this zone he may target our forces and their deployment entry points, lodgments, staging and air bases, logistical support systems, and maritime operating areas.
Throughout, the enemy understands and applies the same synergy and simultaneity on which US operations are based, confronting the US with multiple and diverse threats, any one of which, if left unattended, potentially unhinges US and coalition operations.

To gain access in this kind of anti-access and area denial environment involves coordinating and executing difficult and complex sets of activities. The joint force commander must employ tailored capabilities-based forces to enter forcibly at multiple points of entry. The goal is to alter initial conditions and set future conditions as quickly as possible, through multiple avenues for rapid transition to follow-on operations. These entry forces are organized and employed to achieve their objectives within acceptable risk levels. Direct delivery of these mission capability packages occurs by a combination of strategic and intratheater lift and self-deployment to gain and maintain access. In most cases, delivery of such mission capability packages will have to follow forcible entry operations, which set the conditions for successful combat operations. In either case, the enemy is subjected to and overwhelmed by the simultaneous employment of rapid maneuver and precision engagement capabilities.

While not a complete set of required capabilities, some examples include: special operations, predictive ISR, information operations to include deception, highly mobile air-mechanized assault forces, offshore naval fires, long-range precision bombing, and close air support. Additionally, dynamic, effects-based and knowledge-enhanced planning and execution contribute to quickly achieving assured access and force application as well as rapidly attaining the desired effects. A holistic force protection scheme must exist prior to, during, and following operations designed to gain and maintain access. There is less reliance on fixed airfields and seaports for initial entry operations. Forcible entry and initial follow-on forces require less reception, staging, onward movement, and integration activities. The entry force requires less of a logistics footprint since the units are self-sustaining for specified periods of time, and supported by a dynamic distribution network. The key aim is the swift introduction of fully capable and “immediately employable” forces into a battlespace in order to set the conditions for rapid transition to follow-on operations and quickly attain the desired effects.

26 A complete description of forcible entry operations can be found in a separate concept.
Operations to gain and maintain access set all of the conditions required for forcible entry. To gain and maintain access, the joint force commander must establish early, sustained control of physical (air, land, sea, space) and information domains, optimize joint synergy, and focus combat power against those objectives that will have the most significant and enduring effect on the enemy’s powers of resistance. Establishment of these conditions begins prior to the conduct of forcible entry operations. When the situation permits simultaneous operations, then the establishment of these conditions could begin at the same time, or just in advance of forcible entry operations. The neutralization of threats to access, such as ballistic missiles, sea mines, SAMs, and adversary air necessary to begin or continue forcible entry operations, will employ the components in a fully integrated joint operation. Furthermore, the joint force commander must sustain these conditions during the introduction of and in support of follow-on force packages. As described more fully in the Joint Forcible Entry Concept, gaining and maintaining access is not a “one time affair.” Rather, in the robust anti-access exclusion zone that potential adversaries may construct, gaining and maintaining access is a continuous operation.

3.C.7 Engage the Adversary Comprehensively.

- Apply force along multiple axes simultaneously or sequentially, as appropriate, and decisively against critical objectives: enemy forces, Command and Control, Communications and Computer networks, as well as Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance assets.
- Present asynchronous picture to the enemy without losing unity of purpose and coherency of action.

Operations should maneuver against and engage critical objectives, identified as centers of gravity and decisive points, throughout the enemy’s area of operations along multiple separate air and ground axes. Such operations require early, multi-dimensional integration of precision fires, maneuver, and tactical assault to disrupt or destroy an enemy’s ability to respond, fracture the operational integrity of enemy forces, sever
enemy sensor–to–shooter links, deprive him of freedom of maneuver and mutual support, destroy selected forces and isolate the remainder from sustainment or reinforcement. Additionally, when quick decision is not achieved, the joint force must possess the durability to continue operations for as long as necessary. Forces committed must have the inherent ability to ramp up or down smoothly both in scale and intensity of operation.

The picture our operation should paint in the enemy’s mind is an asynchronous one. While our operations must retain unity of purpose and coherency of action, our unity and coherency should not be recognizable from the enemy’s perspective. To him, we should be “patternless,” thus diminishing his ability to react effectively.

3.C.8 Generate Relentless Pressure by Deciding and Acting Distributively.

- Present adversary with multiple dilemmas and create a sense of futility.
- Go for the jugular and don’t let up.
- Apply strength to create and exploit enemy weaknesses.
- Act distributively.

At the strategic, operational, and tactical level we seek a degree of relentlessness in the pace of our operations that yields no unintended pauses to our adversary. This degree of relentlessness can be achieved only through unity of purpose and coherency in action involving all instruments of government action, both military and nonmilitary, including actions taken by coalition partners. Whether our actions are taken simultaneously or sequentially or by some combination is situation dependent. The joint force initiates action on its own terms whenever possible to alter initial conditions and set conditions for future operations. The point is to create relentless pressure—strategic, operational, and tactical—as viewed and felt from the adversary’s perspective. By deciding and acting distributively we generate constant pressure on the adversary’s system and create multiple dilemmas for him. One of the results is an adversary who has a sense of “being overwhelmed.” Friendly actions will be conducted sequentially and simultaneously, but to the adversary “everything is happening at once, from every direction, and in every dimension.”
Rapid, decentralized decisions based upon high-quality, near-real-time understanding, and executed coherently, quickly, and precisely—all contribute to the adversary’s sense of futility and perception of our impunity. When joint military forces and their interagency and multinational partners can see and understand with equal clarity, adversary centers of gravity and decisive points can be identified. Once identified, they provide the means to achieve unity of purpose and coherency in action that increase the probability of taking away those options the adversary seeks while retaining freedom of action for themselves. Such decisions and actions not only need a specific kind of culture, but also the right set of open-architecture, collaborative tools.

Distributed operations vary in time, space, and purpose, i.e., simultaneous and sequential, multiple theaters, multiple locations within each theater, and multiple types of operations seeking multiple effects. Joint operations occurring simultaneously within the battlespace against multiple points of vulnerability provide increasing pressure on the adversary. At certain times and places distributed operations are characterized as noncontiguous and operating simultaneously with other physically separated units and areas of operations. At other times and places units will operate contiguously, more along recognized lines of operation, with more sequenced phases. At times capabilities are generated from fixed bases in the United States or abroad and along fixed lines of operation.

The forces involved all share several major characteristics. They are coherently joint, focused on achieving desired effects that lead to strategic objectives, and aimed at creating relentless pressure on the adversary. This involves attacking from multiple directions and dimensions, and with all instruments of national and multinational power. Forces combine and recombine as the situation changes. Each combination is tailored to achieve the desired effects within its own subordinate battlespace. Enemies who witness combined force operations of the future will not perceive a pattern or deduce a template. Instead, combined force operations appear patternless—even incoherent, except in the minds of the combined force leaders. This force has a shared understanding of both the enemy and the current situation, thus contributing to the continual fight for information superiority. They are capable of rapidly adapting their plans, decisions, and actions to achieve the desired effects. Distributed operations encompass all of these characteristics;
distributing the right power, in the right manner, at the right place and time throughout the battlespace.

The net effect of creating relentless pressure by deciding and acting distributively increases the likelihood that the joint force will create three results. First, achieve a degree of pressure greater than the sum of its parts. Second, create in the minds of our adversary the clear understanding that defeat is inevitable, thus continued action is futile. Third, convince adversary leaders and actors at every level that we can act with impunity. From the perspective of an adversary, regardless of weapon used, tactic employed, action taken, he is constantly at the disadvantage. He is constantly faced with the insurmountable.


- Generate complementary and reinforcing kinetic and nonkinetic actions taken by military and nonmilitary organizations to achieve the desired lethal and nonlethal effects.
- Exploit extensive connectivity and collaboration among all partners.
- Take the broadest view of engagement.
- Achieve “true” economy of power—every action contributes.

The art of war at the operational level rests on the commander’s ability to realize the full potential of the joint, interagency, and coalition force by recognizing and leveraging the synergies available from combining the competencies and capabilities resident in each of these entities. A first step in achieving this synergy is to broaden the current common understandings of maneuver and engagement. The most common understanding of maneuver entails the movement of forces and the most common understanding of engagement involves the delivery of kinetic, lethal munitions by military units. To meet the challenges of the future, these narrow understandings must be expanded and made mutually inclusive.

We must create the capability of moving both military and nonmilitary instruments of government action to a location of positional or temporal advantage, thus expanding our
understanding of “forces” and “maneuver.” “Nonmilitary forces” such as diplomatic, economic, and informational power, for example, must be maneuverable in time and place against the adversary just as are those of the military. The combination of all instruments of government action creates a coherency of action that presents the enemy with multiple dilemmas, not only in the physical domain, but the information and his own cognitive domains. Maneuvering various types of forces of all elements of power—including our technical and human means of achieving understanding as well as our collaborative tool set—isolates and inhibits an adversary, thus limiting or eliminating his options. If he chooses to maneuver in kind, he becomes vulnerable to our engagement. If he chooses to stay in place, he is equally vulnerable. The sense of his futility and our impunity grows.

Our understanding of the term engagement must also expand. Engagements are not limited to kinetic and lethal attacks; they can be nonkinetic and nonlethal. Coherent economic actions, computer network attacks, as well as actions in the public diplomacy and public information realms represent nonkinetic and nonlethal engagements that, when coupled with kinetic and lethal military strikes, optimize the commander’s ability to generate effects in the battlespace.

When correctly combined, maneuver and engagement—whether kinetic or not, lethal or not, military or not—can generate complementary and reinforcing effects on the adversary. They are complementary in that the effects may be multiplicative rather than additive; reinforcing in that each adds to the weight, and ultimately the effect, of the other. Even if not used, that they exist, that they are or could be in a position to engage whenever we want, and that they are aimed precisely because of information from the understanding base, that they are coming from so many directions—all contribute to the sense of futility within the minds of our adversary.


- Use a coherent mobilization and deployment sustainment system.
- Strategically deploy capabilities not commodities.
• Reduce, and when required eliminate, reception, staging, onward movement and integration requirements.
• Avoid strategic or operational pause, except to achieve effect.

A profound shift in our warfighting concepts occurs when the US aligns and synchronizes deployment, employment, and sustainment activities to conduct multiple, simultaneous, distributed, decentralized battles and campaigns. A coherent mobilization, deployment, and sustainment set of systems that are as flexible and responsive as employment systems increases the strategic agility of the entire joint force. For example, employment options expand, allowing operational maneuver from strategic distances as well as from the sea, and tactical vertical maneuver from operational distances. A flexible, joint maritime basing option together with rapidly constructed expeditionary airfields and fixed bases offer a set of opportunities to rapidly project operationally significant air and ground forces directly into locations our enemy does not expect, thereby precluding a lengthy, transitional build-up period ashore. These employment options contribute to momentum that allows the aggressor no opportunity to adjust his plans, reconfigure his forces, or reconstitute damaged assets. To a considerable extent, these employment options are dependent upon the adequacy of strategic and theater lift, both air and maritime. To proceed without pause and without loss of tempo, all Services are required to reengineer their mobilization process and increase combat power output per unit of deployment. The end result is the ability to achieve and maintain adaptive force dominance.

Setting the conditions to employ a US-led combined force is essential. Here, pre-crisis preparations within the mobilization and military industrial bases, Services, Combatant Commands, and other supporting agencies are crucial. A unifying deployment and sustainment structure promotes force adaptability, flexibility, agility, endurance, protection, and mobility. The required deployment and sustainment enablers, both materiel and nonmateriel, are sufficient enough to allow rapid force projection and world-class provisioning.

Our deployers and sustainers are imbued with a warrior ethos. In a noncontiguous battlespace, they must be capable of defending themselves and not over-reliant upon
traditional combat formations for security. An adaptive, ubiquitous sustainment system, along with the requisite informational architecture, exists so that few of our agile maneuver forces ever outrun or lose their ability to request and receive responsive, time-definite, sustainment support.

Rapid and global employment, mobility, endurance, and worldwide sustainment are future force hallmarks. Fully capable and immediately employable forces must be projected swiftly from the sea, from the air, over land, or by a combination thereof into a joint operations area that may have no developed infrastructure. Mobility contributes to strategic and operational reach as well as to improved protection. Endurance equates to staying power and the ability to withstand the rigors of a campaign. Sustainment and its dynamic distribution network assure unrivaled provisioning even when lines of communication are not secure, and during forcible-entry operations.

3.C.11 Protect People, Facilities and Equipment Throughout the Battlespace.

- Preserve our combat power.
- Protect the force comprehensively from homeland to points of employment.
- Prevent interruption of space and information systems.

With increased emphasis on rapid global force projection, it is vital that comprehensive protection of the joint force centers of gravity and decisive points is assured from locations of origin to points of employment. Non-peer adversaries will likely resort to asymmetric attacks at accessible locations that have been assessed as the most vulnerable of the probable staging, transit and beddown locations for US and friendly forces. Action may well be taken against the force through attacks on military families and friends, other civilians, food and water supplies, contracted commercial support, host nation support or other indirect means, all of which must be included within the scope of full-dimension protection.

A significant potential for such attacks on or near US soil exists because of fixed home stations, the relatively limited number of origin-to-port of embarkation combinations available for movement, and the open nature of US society. Protection of
forces while in homeland areas, including the littoral, is largely the province of the Homeland Security Joint Operating Concept (JOC) but is critical to preserving the ability to project the force for major combat. The enemy may also attempt to attack our centers of gravity or decisive points such as the joint forces distributed operating bases and the extended lines of communication supporting the joint forces distributed operations.

A key component of protection is defense against chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and high yield explosives (CBRNE) attack, not only for casualty avoidance, but to limit the effect on our force access and speed of operations. A focused defense should require that only those units affected by the hazard take protective measures. Large numbers should not have to assume a full protective posture as a precautionary measure against a general CBRNE threat. This aspect of protection is a principal concern of the Strategic Deterrence JOC, and includes defense against weapons of mass destruction.

In order to protect friendly centers of gravity such as forces, facilities, and noncombatants from the threat of theater ballistic missiles, the US requires rapidly deployable, persistent, and multilayered missile defense capabilities, employable both in the continental United States and in operations abroad.

Force survivability is linked to its inherently offensive orientation, as well as its speed, lethality and ability to apply force from standoff distances. While speed of operations affords some degree of protection by presenting the enemy with a “moving target,” the agile conduct of operations requires force enhancements that improve survivability during the intended mission. Distributed forces, including logistic support assets, are not generally afforded the luxury of dedicated accompanying defensive platforms or large-scale security forces. Defensive capability must therefore be organic and integrated at the unit of action level.

In order to prevail in the cognitive and information domains and effectively execute operational decisions, we must assure the fullest use of our information capabilities in the face of enemy attacks. This includes not only defense of our computer networks and decision-making infrastructures, but extends to defense of our space-based systems (including their ground components) upon which we rely heavily for intelligence, early warning, communications, environmental monitoring, and positional data.
3.D Applying the Principles.

There is no single prescription or formula that operational commanders can call upon to effectively conduct major combat operations. Every conflict poses different challenges. Operational commanders must adapt to the conditions present and employ the force according to their judgment in order to achieve operational and strategic aims. The following three figures therefore, are illustrative of potential major combat operations, from long campaigns to discreet operations. The details of the application of the elements depicted will necessarily vary according to the circumstances.

**Figure 2**

The extended campaign, illustrated in Figure 2 above, involves multiple operations conducted over time to decisively defeat a robust enemy. Escalation to this type of major combat will likely follow a failure of crisis response measures to deter aggression outright. As soon as it is clear that deterrence has failed, the priority shifts to joint forcible entry operations to defeat enemy anti-access capabilities, arrest enemy offensive
operations and shape the theater for transition to follow-on operations. Such operations would involve a combination of basing and prepositioning options to include projecting power directly to objectives from strategic and operational distances. The breadth and duration of the campaign demand a comprehensive effort to: dismantle the enemy’s anti-access systems, including their command and support; establish robust air and missile defenses and security forces able to protect indigenous forces and populations, coalition entry points, key bases and critical facilities; and gain control of air, land, sea and space approaches to the theater. Early establishment of multidimensional battlespace dominance, coupled with the uninterrupted flow of combat power into the joint area of operations, allows us to engage the enemy comprehensively, defeat his efforts to rapidly attain key objectives, deny him a protected posture, and set the conditions for reaching decisive conclusions as described in the execution principles. The endurance demands of such a campaign place a premium on initial and prepositioned sustainment as well as an ability to anticipate requirements and develop alternative sources of supply. The ability to successfully execute the extended campaign is critically dependent upon the successful alignment of deployment, employment and sustainment activities.
The approach to the limited campaign, illustrated in Figure 3, is similar to that of the extended campaign but involves a single joint operating area. The application of the execution principles is the same in both campaign types; however, the scope in this particular example is more limited in duration and less demanding in terms of requisite endurance. Forcible entry with associated follow-on operations remains, but force reconstitution, relocation and reemployment are less prevalent than in the extended campaign. The use of joint seabasing or other methods for limiting the buildup ashore of command and control and logistics functions is typical of this type of campaign.
In a single operation such as is illustrated in Figure 4 the application of combat power for effects generation is less distributed and of shorter duration than in the previously described campaigns. The military objective is narrow in scope. Such an operation typically employs forward positioned forces and forces with global reach executing the forcible entry and follow-on operations and is characterized by reliance on speed and surprise. While access requirements are relatively limited, both in space and time, it is perhaps the most critical element of success for this type of operation. Logistics footprint is minimal as forces are organically sustained and directly deploy to (and redeploy from) the objective. Battle command for the single operation takes critical advantage of the competencies and readiness derived from adherence to the MCO foundations described in 3.B of this concept.

The following illustration describes a notional long duration campaign conducted in a single JOA. An illustration of a multiple JOA, extended campaign would demonstrate even more complexity. In this illustration the joint force is conducting a major combat operation that follows a set of unsuccessful deterrence efforts. Initial forcible and early entry operations have been completed and stability operations are conducted during and following major combat. This illustration focuses on major combat operations and demonstrates the linkage of major combat operations with joint forcible entry and stability operations. Such linkage is not universal, however. It would be a stretch to say, for example, that we “forced” our entry prior to Operation Just Cause.

This illustrative campaign also depicts the dueling nature of warfare against an adaptive adversary. The joint force commander and enemy leadership engage in a mental contest that is played out in operations. Adherence to the previously described execution principles enables the joint force to maintain the upper hand in this duel and win the conflict. The conduct of major combat operations requires the joint force to plan and prepare for the conduct of operations and then deploy, employ and sustain forces. Each of these elements is addressed, in turn, below.

The illustration in Figure 5 below does not use the legacy, phased campaign construct: deter, shape and enter, decisive operations, and transition operations. Instead, we use the Joint Operations Concept framework as a “placeholder” until we conduct the broad, intellectual discussion with associated experimentation that will lead us to an adequate future campaign construct. That future construct will be inserted in version 2.0 of the Joint Operations Concepts.

3.E.1 Planning. To develop a campaign plan that is fully integrated and effectively harmonized with other instruments of government action, the joint force plans for major combat in a collaborative and inclusive manner. Trusted relationships with interagency and multinational partners, developed and practiced as part of the core foundations for

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major combat,28 are brought to bear in dynamic plan formulation. Ongoing, distributive, collaborative planning is conducted. The pre-existing, collaborative information environment has been employed routinely for planning and training, allowing subordinate service operational headquarters to have previous relationships with the standing joint command and control elements. Multiple US agencies as well as multinational partners are part of the 2015 collaborative information environment and routinely use it to participate in campaign planning.

The presence of this in-place collaborative information environment provides one of the significant relevant differences in 2015 from today. In the fight to gain information superiority, information from immediately available ISR sources, to include human intelligence, and joint force status reporting systems is used to gain an early understanding of the situation. The information will never be perfect, but to gain information or decision superiority, the joint force’s information needs only to be better than the adversary’s. Based on specifics of the emerging situation, the joint force commander adjusts his plan collaboratively—that is, all those who will execute the plan, including interagency and multinational partners, help make the adjustments. This planning is supported by network structures and processes that: support synchronized collaborative planning; extend horizontally and vertically; and span the strategic to tactical levels.

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The joint force commander, using an effects-based approach, derives his intent from the strategic aims and a vision of the required end state (Figure 5). The commander also takes into account the effects he must affect relative to enemy and friendly centers of gravity, decisive points, and other critical locations or activities. This effects-based intent describes desired lethal and nonlethal effects that then are used to develop initial tasks for the joint, multinational, and interagency force. Conceivably, initial tasks could be to set conditions for, then project an operationally significant combat force rapidly and directly into the adversary’s capital city, defeat enemy forces in the urban area, remove the ruling regime, and set the conditions to return the city to a functioning posture. The effects-based approach serves as the framework for campaign design and helps create both unity of purpose and coherency of action. The effects-based intent is distributed in a nested fashion throughout the joint force through mission orders. These mission orders serve as a basis for the task organization and preparation of joint force packages. The joint force
commander uses his best judgment to anticipate the actions of the enemy. Campaign planning of branches and sequels provides the organizational flexibility necessary to adjust to potential enemy responses and adaptation. Fully integrated joint deployment, employment and sustainment planning is continuous, adaptive, and responsive to changes. Likewise, multinational and interagency partners are available to support planning because they are part of the collaborative network.

3.E.2 Preparing. During the conduct of combat operations, preparations include a set of activities to: confirm and enhance the US-led coalition force’s understanding of the operational environment; refine plans; tailor the US-led coalition force; and conduct initial operations including covert, clandestine, and overt activities.

Enhanced understanding and the adaptive nature of joint force packages change how forces will prepare in 2015. Commanders at all levels must continually fight for information superiority. To understand the complex environment comprehensively, the entire joint, interagency and multinational force operates with full knowledge of the commander’s intent. The coherently joint force commits and exploits robust intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities, including space-based platforms and HUMINT assets, in order to gain and maintain full-dimensional awareness. This overall net assessment of the operational environment also includes information gleaned from nongovernmental sources. This robust sensing and assessment capability reduces but does not eliminate uncertainty. It does, however, increase the probability of success by allowing leaders to make better decisions faster than the enemy—the meaning of “decision superiority.” A common relevant operational picture emerges from this assessment. The collaborative information environment permits frequent updating and dissemination of this picture.

In 2015, deployment preparations are distinctively different in order to conduct coherently joint operations and generate effects rapidly. These preparation differences include a unifying and adaptive force projection and sustainment construct that enables early identification of requirements, joint capabilities-based force packaging, and use of joint rotational capabilities. The US-led force consists of capabilities-based, expeditionary, networked, modular, adaptive force packages. These forces are both
CONUS-based and forward deployed. The collaborative information environment, when coupled with delivery means that permit deployment from strategic and operational distances direct to areas the adversary does not expect, allow 2015 preparation to be much more distributed than it is today. Operational security and deception are enhanced by these preparatory methodologies. An air and sea bridge to the JOA is activated and pre-positioned equipment and sustainment are in use. Operational forces are postured to conduct rapid and decisive combat operations, or are in the force flow. Forces that are en route to the JOA possess command, control, mission planning, automated decision support, and rehearsal capabilities. As required, air, space, sea, and cyber-space dominance is achieved, or preparations to achieve such dominance are set into place.

With the MCO conditions set, the US-led force is trained and ready to conduct multiple, simultaneous and sequential, contiguous and noncontiguous, distributed operations, regardless of conditions, and for as long as necessary to achieve military objectives. Furthermore, these operations are coherently joint, interagency, and multinational—from the start.

3.E.3 Joint Deployment, Employment and Sustainment. With the force having pervasive knowledge, as the situation permits, and relatively full understanding of the commander’s intent, combat operations commence to achieve desired effects and military objectives. Forcible entry and follow-on combat operations may actually begin from multiple locations: CONUS, forward-based, and sea-based, for example. They might also use rapidly constructed expeditionary airfields as temporary launching pads and support bases. In 2015 deployment, employment, and sustainment activities are much more closely aligned. We developed this alignment in response to intelligent, adaptive, and committed enemies—ones that knew our reliance on fixed, improved air and seaports. The 2015 deployment, employment, and sustainment system projects a fully capable, immediately employable, and sustainable force anywhere in the world on short notice. This close alignment contributes to the commander’s ability to combine, recombine, and employ capabilities to achieve the desired operational effects, and it is what differentiates the conduct of operations in 2015 from today. Provided the flexibility afforded by such an alignment, the joint force commander is able to respond to changes
in the operational situation, whether brought about by the enemy’s responses, physical environmental factors, third party actions, or other causes. The joint force is able to rapidly execute the campaign branches and sequels necessary to win the aforementioned duel.

Airlift and sealift assets are available, managed, and controlled in order to go where and when we want to go, and where the enemy does not suspect we will go. A holistic force protection scheme exists, i.e., from space-based platforms to strategic and theater bases and lines of communication to individual combatants. The protection scheme addresses, in particular, the myriad threats to coalition forces found in hostile urban areas.

Forcible entry operations—some robust and extensive, others less so—usually precede the direct delivery of potent and fully integrated military forces from strategic and operational distances and from the sea. The timing of forcible entry operations, their extent, and their duration all will depend upon the specific situation, the “thickness” of enemy exclusion zones, and the effects the joint force commander wants to have on the enemy. Follow-on forces are fully capable; some require no RSOI while others need very little. They are adaptive, modular, and highly mobile. Operational maneuver from strategic distances and from the sea, as well as vertical tactical maneuver from operational distances creates a degree of simultaneous pressure that our enemy will find hard to resist. Creating predictable patterns of movement is avoided. The force is not reliant upon fixed seaports and airfields as initial points of entry for either maneuver forces or their sustainment. The enemy is confronted with multiple, unrelenting, simultaneous and distributed operations at all critical points the command chooses to confront. Forcible entry operations are executed for however long necessary to establish a secure operational battlespace, ensure continued sustainment of follow-on operations, and prevent the enemy from re-establishing exclusion zones and area denial operations.

The US seeks to alter initial conditions to control the operational tempo. To do this, the US-led force continues to dismantle the enemy’s residual anti-access systems to maintain access; establishes robust air and missile defenses and security forces; and achieves multi-dimensional battlespace dominance. Large-scale, simultaneous and distributed, multi-dimensional operations occur regardless of existing target area infrastructure and environmental conditions. The US-led force achieves operational
momentum by moving with great speed and by engaging the adversary immediately with great discrimination. The force identifies and eliminates the enemy’s asymmetric advantages, while securing and strengthening friendly asymmetric advantages. Kinetic and nonkinetic engagements are integrated with maneuver to achieve lethal and nonlethal effects (Figure 6).

**Figure 6 – Forcible entry and follow-on operations: Early Combat Efforts Synchronized in Physical and Information Domains**

Initially, there is no significant logistics build-up ashore. Maneuver forces are self-sustaining for specified periods of time. If a logistics build-up is required ashore for a protracted campaign, then multiple, small agile operating bases are established. To cope with the ever-present unpredictable nature of combat, the deployment employment and sustainment strategy is to “sense early” and to “respond quickly” in order to satisfy requirements. A sense and respond joint deployment, employment, and sustainment framework focuses on speed and quality of effects. A responsive, ubiquitous, adaptable, and survivable distribution-based sustainment system supports rapid and distributed
combat operations. Few maneuver units will outrun or lose their ability to request and receive time-definite sustainment support. Time-definite delivery standards are stringent, and customer wait time is measured in minutes and hours rather than days and weeks. In order to conduct relentless operations, the need for sustainment pauses is reduced to only those the commander directs.

**Figure 7 – Continued forcible entry and follow-on operations: Combat Continuation – Some Endstate Conditions Attained, transition operations begin**

Assessment of current actions is undertaken to determine their impact on either achieving desired effects or demonstrating potential to do so (Figure 7). Where directed actions no longer appear to achieve the desired effects, subordinate commanders use their initiative to change tasks or new ones are assigned. Execution in a collaborative information environment allows much more decentralized decisions and actions than in the past—without loss of unity of purpose or coherency of action. Similarly, the joint force commander must assess whether political aims and his supporting military endstate
remain valid. When appropriate, the desired effects are modified if the military endstate has changed (Figure 8 below).

Figure 8 – Actual Campaign Endstate
Section 4 - CAPABILITIES

Sections 4.A through 4.E below are essential major combat operations capabilities, categorized by functional area (Command and Control, Battlespace Awareness, Force Application, Focused Logistics, and Protection). To execute future major combat operations against a regional nation state, the Joint Force Commander and his force require the ability to:


4.A.1 Clearly express a compelling and nested intent of what needs to be accomplished, using common frames of reference among military, interagency and coalition partners.

4.A.2 Define desired effects discretely enough to focus planning and determine requisite actions at all levels, and communicate desired end state(s) and effects to the lowest level required in order to execute the actions that lead to desired effects, assess the results of those actions, and adapt as necessary to achieve those effects.

4.A.3 Express commander’s intent that will achieve the overall strategic purpose, or the eventual political end state, while in a dynamic environment, without undue focus on specified tasks; and assure understanding of the commander’s intent at the lowest, actionable, relevant level.

4.A.4 Facilitate both centralized and decentralized decision-making as appropriate, exploiting decision support tools to make well-informed decisions faster than the opponent.

4.A.5 Provide effective leadership (based on selection, training, education, and experience of leaders) in a combined, adaptive, collaborative environment.

4.A.6 Maintain a robust, joint network that (1) avoids single points of failure, (2) enables graceful degradation, (3) is based on uniform standards at the data and information level to allow warfighters throughout the force to use applications without compromising interoperability, and (4) promotes the ability of commanders at all levels to decide and act with greater assurance and speed.
4.A.7 Field and employ coherently joint, trained, and practiced headquarters elements that integrate a standing joint command and control capability with Service operational headquarters without disruption to or degradation of command and control functions.

4.B Battlespace Awareness Capabilities.

4.B.1 Maintain persistent situational awareness and achieve shared understanding through a collaborative environment among joint, interagency, and multinational partners in order to know the full dimensions of the operational environment, our adversaries, others, and ourselves.

4.B.2 Conduct planning in a collaborative environment that is flexible, robust, supported by automated decision tools (including a common relevant operational picture [CROP]), and extends beyond the bounds of MCO in order to facilitate stability operations.

4.B.3 Deploy a robust, pervasive, dynamically tailored, and high-fidelity intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) system, to include human intelligence (HUMINT) and space platforms.

4.B.4 Comprehensively, expertly, and robustly analyze intelligence, using in-depth knowledge of area studies, local cultures, and languages; and the ability to perform effects-assessment (including non-quantifiable effects), all incorporating a thorough appreciation of friendly, adversary, and other actors in the battlespace.

4.B.5 Establish a secure, broadly accessible, tailorable, and user-friendly common relevant operational picture (CROP), based on an Operational Net Assessment (ONA)-like system that is authoritative and updated frequently.


4.C.1 Develop processes, procedures, and automated support systems to fully integrate fires and maneuver, using enhanced kinetic and nonkinetic weapons, to increase lethality.

4.C.2 Provide offensive capability to counter enemy anti-access systems including:

- Rapidly detecting, neutralizing or destroying mines at standoff ranges and in-stride.
• Using fixed and deployable detection and tracking sensors at strategic port approaches and chokepoints to complement persistent anti-submarine warfare.
• Rapidly defeating improved enemy air defense systems.
• Countering enemy theater and tactical missiles with highly deployable systems that provide warning, intent, location, launch, and destruction (pre-launch, cruise and terminal phase, and over-the-horizon).

4.C.3 Rapidly project force directly to the objective from strategic and operational distances.

4.C.4 Rapidly deploy, employ, and sustain adaptive, modular, mission capability forces and packages to and throughout the battlespace, without creating predictable patterns.

4.C.5 Fully integrate joint, interagency, and coalition (combined) capabilities, from the strategic level down to the lowest practical level, to be able to employ all useful means and avenues of influence among all relevant actors, throughout the battlespace.

4.C.6 Empower commanders to conduct flexible and responsive operations at every useful level, to include Information Operations (IO) and maneuver and precision engagement operations that are supported by enhanced integrated combined fires and compressed sensor-to-shooter-to-impact engagement capabilities.

4.C.7 Streamline deployment processes to satisfy Combatant Command needs, positioning friendly forces within operational reach of critical targets, while denying adversary forces access to key friendly targets.

4.C.8 Conduct large-scale, simultaneous and distributed, multidimensional combat operations (including unconventional and forcible-entry operations) regardless of existing target area infrastructure and environmental conditions; isolate the battlespace from unwanted influences; engage with great discrimination; move with great speed; and identify and eliminate or neutralize an opponent’s asymmetric advantages, while securing and strengthening friendly asymmetric advantages.

4.C.9 Integrate Deployment, Employment, and Sustainment (DES) of the force in order to eliminate unnecessary redundancies, reduce friction, stimulate synergy, and enhance the effectiveness, efficiency, and economy of operations.

4.C.10 Provide multidimensional precision engagement, including close fire support by exploiting high-endurance manned and unmanned launch platforms which combine ISR
and engagement capabilities, deep-reach precise fire support including sea-based and long-range aerospace components to support forcible-entry operations, lethal and nonlethal (nuclear and conventional) fires, fires capable of type-target discrimination, time-sensitive targeting, and in-flight re-targeting of smart weapons.

4.D Focused Logistics Capabilities.

4.D.1 Establish and operate an adaptive, elastic, and ubiquitous distribution-based sustainment system, along with the requisite informational architecture, so that agile and dispersed forces do not outrun or lose their ability to request and receive time-definite support, with customer wait time measured in minutes and hours, not days and weeks.  
4.D.2 Establish a joint sustainment force that is rapidly deployable, fully capable, immediately employable, flexible, highly mobile, modular, tailored, networked, survivable, and responsive to supported forces.
4.D.3 Maintain persistent deployment, employment, and sustainment situational awareness, and achieve shared understanding at multiple echelons (to include coalition partners), enabled by a coherently joint logistics common relevant operational picture, a reliable information and communications network, and automated decision tools in order to anticipate, predict, plan collaboratively, synchronize, and satisfy deployment and sustainment requirements that occur throughout a campaign. 
4.D.4 Project and sustain forces when the adversary is competent and determined, strategic and theater lines of communication are not secure, access through fixed seaports and airfields in the battlespace is denied, and supported forces are widely dispersed in the battlespace.
4.D.5 Reduce the need for sustainment pauses, enabled by improved commonality, reliability, maintainability, sustainability, and survivability in order to conduct relentless operations.

4.E Protection Capabilities.

4.E.1 Provide security for our forces, systems and processes (to include critical infrastructure, information and space capabilities) from origin to final objective positions within the Joint Operations Area.
4.E.2 Rapidly sense, detect, identify from standoff range, defend against, and recover the force from chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and enhanced-explosives attack.

4.E.3 Employ combat vehicles and support vehicles (and platforms) designed with survivability features such as improved speed, low observable and low signature stealth, protective construction (e.g., blast mitigation coatings, fragmentation resistant materials, shock resistance, reactive armor), and organic automated defense against smart weapons.

**Table 1 - MCO Capabilities Mapping to JOpsC Core Capabilities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Para</th>
<th>MCO Capability</th>
<th>Command Understanding</th>
<th>Decision Superiority</th>
<th>Adaptive</th>
<th>Rapid Employment</th>
<th>Continuous Pressure</th>
<th>Disrupt the Adversary</th>
<th>Distributed DES</th>
<th>Coordinate with IA &amp; MV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.A.1</td>
<td>Clear vision</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4.A.2</td>
<td>Define desired effects</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.A.3</td>
<td>Express Commander’s intent</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.A.4</td>
<td>Facilitate collaborative decision and action</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.A.5</td>
<td>Effective leadership</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.A.6</td>
<td>Robust joint network</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<td>4.A.7</td>
<td>Coherently joint HQ</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.B.1</td>
<td>Persistent situational understanding</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.B.2</td>
<td>Collaborative planning &amp; decision tools</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.B.3</td>
<td>Robust ISR systems</td>
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<td>4.B.4</td>
<td>Comprehensive intelligence analysis</td>
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<td>4.B.5</td>
<td>Timely, accessible intelligence dissemination</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.C.1</td>
<td>Fully integrated fires and maneuver</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>4.C.2</td>
<td>Counter anti-access offensive systems</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.C.3</td>
<td>Project force directly to objective</td>
<td></td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.C.4</td>
<td>Rapid mobility of forces</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.C.5</td>
<td>Integrated employment of forces</td>
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<td>4.C.6</td>
<td>Empower Commanders</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.C.7</td>
<td>Enhanced force projection</td>
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<td>4.C.8</td>
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<td>4.C.9</td>
<td>Integrated DES</td>
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<td>4.C.10</td>
<td>Multidimensional precision engagement</td>
<td></td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>4.D.1</td>
<td>Adaptive distribution-based sustainment</td>
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<td>4.D.2</td>
<td>Joint sustainment force packages</td>
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<td>4.D.3</td>
<td>Persistent DES situational understanding</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4.D.4</td>
<td>Project &amp; sustain without infrastructure</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.D.5</td>
<td>Continuous deployment &amp; sustainment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>4.E.1</td>
<td>Full-dimension protection</td>
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<td>4.E.2</td>
<td>CBRNE protection</td>
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<td>4.E.3</td>
<td>Self-protection assets</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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</table>
CONCLUSION

“Improvement will require not only technological solutions, but also cultural change—a willingness to challenge standard practices, and question current organizational patterns and command practices.”

General Richard B. Myers, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff

Today, we have a historic opportunity to transform our military as we shift from an industrial age to an information age. Our military capabilities are rapidly evolving. The power of information age technology has vastly improved our ability to achieve our objectives through the application of military power. We can move further, faster, and fight better than ever before and the future promises that these capabilities will only continue to improve. Simultaneously, we are changing the way we work together as a military and the way we work with our interagency and multinational partners. Figure 9 below depicts this evolution to a more coherent joint force.

*Attributes of a Transforming Joint Force*

**The Operator’s approach**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deconflict</th>
<th>Coordinate</th>
<th>Integrate</th>
<th>Interdependent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service Forces</td>
<td>Stitch Service Seams</td>
<td>Services/SOCOM Capabilities</td>
<td>Coherently Joint, Capabilities-based, Collaborative and Network Centric</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Supported/Supporting Relationships**

Figure 9
In the past, we could segregate military forces based on their primary battlespace – air, land, and sea. The overlap between battle spaces was relatively small – limited to weapons ranges and line of sight. Over the last 50 years, managing that overlap has become increasingly difficult, as it has grown in size and complexity. Today, each Service has the capability to reach hundreds, even thousands of miles, into the battlespace. That’s good because it increases our capability, but it also requires a greater degree of integration. Other trends include changes in the need for dispersion, greater weapons lethality, higher volumes and increased precision of fires, evolving ideas on the employment of mass and effects, integrative technologies, changes in invisibility and detectability, and merging of deployment, employment and sustainment activities. We’re moving toward a coherent joint force with full spectrum capabilities. Increased capability through greater degrees of coherence is multiplicative, not additive. But we’re not there yet. What remains key to the transformation of our military is our culture.

Our warfighting culture must change if we are going to successfully conduct major combat operations in tomorrow’s global battlespace. While much of our culture is a continuing source of strength, some of it can actually stand in the way of progress. Warfighting culture is a constantly evolving construct, influenced by our ideals, history, and shared experiences. Warfighting culture provides the animating force behind decision-making, education, doctrine, organization, training, and all other aspects of warfighting. A nation’s warfighting culture can be a force for dynamic change, or it can be a brake to progress through unflagging conservatism. The trick is to draw strength from the past, while ushering in needed change.

What, then, must change about our warfighting culture? As we create new ways to combine joint forces for maximum effect, we must be ready, able, and willing to transcend old ideas of how to fight, how to organize, and how to command. Everything must be subject to question; so that we can clear the path for breakthrough ideas that will save American lives in the future. Each soldier, sailor, airman, and Marine must be willing to change his most treasured ideas on how to fight. In this way, we clear the decks for American ingenuity to find the right answers for tomorrow.

One of the most important cultural changes that must occur is the elimination of “Service and functional stovepipes.” Each Service has core competencies, and we must
continue to cultivate them. Further, the Services are the touchstone of recruitment and training: our soldiers, airmen, sailors, and Marines learn their basic and advanced skills from Service training facilities. But it is the unproductive stovepipes that must go. This is a daunting task, and it’s been tried before. From the regulatory requirements of Title 10, US Code to the existing organizational layout of the Services, there is a lot of natural friction against close integration of joint forces. But we must overcome the challenges if we are to realize the full potential of future joint operations. Materiel systems must be “born joint”, rather than retrofitted later. Joint task optimization must replace Service-centric ideas of self-sufficiency. Rather than insisting upon ownership of organic assets, future commanders must become adept at achieving strategic and operational goals with shared joint assets and capabilities. Trust must replace ownership.

In a similar manner, we must become more adept at interagency and multinational operations. The systemic view of the enemy and friendly force leads to a greater appreciation for the integration of the efforts of the various agencies of the US government as well as our multinational partners. When joint force commanders transcend a strictly military view of the campaign and instead understand how all the instruments of national and multinational power—indeed, how all the diverse entities in the battlespace—relate and can benefit each other, they will multiply their strategic effectiveness. Interagency and multinational operations in the future will not be an anomalous or exceptional circumstance, but rather routine and integral to American strategy and the backdrop for effective combined force operations.

Finally, many who contemplate the nature of current and future operations have noted that military operations often result in something less than traditional military victory. In the 19th and 20th centuries, some theorists called for the utter destruction of the enemy as the logical goal of military operations. The strategic realities of tomorrow will require joint forces to combine successful engagement of the enemy’s armed forces with the need to control terrain or population, assist in peace operations, or provide stability and support to struggling nations. Clausewitz was correct when he wrote, “The whole of military activity, the end for which a soldier is recruited, clothed, armed, and trained…is simply that he should fight at the right place and at the right time.” However, while the ultimate test of any military is its ability to fight and win, future commanders must also
have the savvy and resources to fulfill a wide array of other strategic missions to help win
the confrontation. This is a cultural issue, because traditional American warfighting
culture has deified military victory and eschewed any other activities deemed to be a
distraction from it. In the words of General Douglas MacArthur: “There is no substitute
for victory.” The reality of tomorrow insists that we understand victory for what it is:
strategic success—attainment of the set of political aims through the effects-based and
coherent application of all elements of national and multinational power.
APPENDIX A -- TIME HORIZON, ASSUMPTIONS, AND RISKS

This concept is focused on the time horizon just beyond the Future Years’ Defense Plan (FYDP), roughly 2015 and rests upon the following assumptions:

Assumption 1: War continues to be an important component of confrontation strategies and remains a fundamentally human endeavor. Our approach to warfighting in the information age must strike a balance between its technological and human elements.

Assumption 2: While the nature of war remains relatively fixed, the conduct of war has changed, is changing and will continue to change. Adversaries will include both state and non-state actors, including transnational organizations, terrorist groups, criminal elements and economic entities. We will often face enemies who operate outside the rule of law and are difficult to distinguish from noncombatants. These new adversary sets require us to develop new approaches to deterrence measures, warfighting and winning confrontations.

Assumption 3: Potential regional adversaries in the 2015 timeframe will be well-equipped, well-led, motivated to win, highly adaptive, with global reach in selected capabilities, and possess the will to employ those capabilities in opposition to or in a manner threatening to U.S. national security. They will also likely possess weapons of mass destruction and significant anti-access capabilities. They will observe our warfighting capabilities and methods and adjust their strategies and tactics intelligently in an attempt to counter our advantages. These adversaries will seek to exploit technological breakthroughs in novel ways.

Assumption 4: Technological advances will continue at least at the current pace. Commercially available dual-use technology will continue to proliferate, extending

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30 Implies ability to possess and globally export WMD effects through terrorist cells, special operations forces, intermediate range missiles, and, in some cases, intercontinental range missiles.


sophisticated niche capabilities, some approaching near peer, to even the least sophisticated and minimally funded adversaries.

Assumption 5: Service competencies remain the foundation of joint capabilities. The Services provide the cultural identities, domain expertise and core warfighting resources that are vital to implementing this concept.

Assumption 6: The concept outlines three cases of major combat operations. Of the two likely cases, Case One, the high-end regional competitor, has the greatest impact on our total capability requirements and is accordingly the focus of Version 1.0. Case Two, major irregular combat is the other likely case in the 2015 time frame and will be the next case developed in future versions of the concept. Case Three, the peer competitor, while the most dangerous, is not anticipated within the time frame of focus and will be the last of the three developed.

**Risks** are hypothetical events that could render this concept invalid. They help frame the context in which this JOC applies.

Risk: A new generation of warfare could emerge that employs concepts and technologies that have not been envisioned—and whose consequences have not been considered. Developments could occur that compromise or negate today’s critical force structure investments and thereby offset or eliminate projected US advantages in such areas as low observability (stealth), precision targeting and information operations. Conceivably, we could witness the convergence of information technologies, biological sciences, and advanced manufacturing techniques with significant military implications. There is potential that advances in energy-based weapons, immersive technologies, biology-based or psychotronic weapons, and other capabilities designed to alter the ability of the human body to process stimuli may have a profound effect on warfare in the information age.

Risk Mitigation: Risk posed by the uncertainties inherent in future science and technology advances can be mitigated by the continued investment in national and cooperative science and technology programs. Adequate funding will enable continued
development of maturing technology and development of methods to counter its exploitation by the competition.

**APPENDIX B -- PRINCIPLES OF WAR IN A NETWORKED AGE**

Under development for inclusion in MCO JOC Version 2.0