

LESSON 6

ORDERS DEVELOPMENT

“Nothing succeeds in war except in consequence of a well prepared plan.”
—Napoléon Bonaparte

Lesson Introduction

The fifth step of the MCPP, Orders Development, communicates the commander’s intent, guidance, and decisions into a clear, useful form that the subordinates responsible for its execution can understand. Even the best COA is of little use if it is not translated into an understandable, precise, and succinct plan or order. The goal in developing an order is to accurately convey common understanding of the plan to the entire force.

Student Requirements by Educational Objective

Requirement 1

Objective 1. Recognize the inputs, tasks, and outputs associated with the Orders Development step.

Objective 2. Use the Orders Development step to create the appropriate outputs of this step in the context of an operational or tactical situation. [JPME 2(c),3(a)(c)]

Read:

- MCWP 5-1, pp. 6-1 to 6-2 (2 pages)

The G-3, with the assistance of the chief of staff, normally heads the effort to develop the operations order or plan. The OPT’s role in this step is three-fold. First, it must provide all the outputs of the MCPP for inclusion into the order. Some outputs become part of the order directly, such as the mission statement, commander’s intent, concept of operations, and tasks to subordinates. Assumptions that have been carried through the entire planning process and that have been proven neither true nor false are included in paragraph 1f as risks. Second, the OPT must prepare the final IPB products and planning support tools for transition to the G-3 current operations section for the next step. Finally, any branches that the commander identified and agreed to earlier in the process must be acted upon either by this OPT, if tasked, or a separate OPT, if specifically established to plan for this branch. In either case, the current OPT must ensure material is organized to assist in the planning effort.

Terminology is important throughout the planning process. In Orders Development, however, our goal is to promote common understanding of the plan throughout the entire force; thus, terminology is absolutely critical. Terms must be precise; therefore, use of *Joint Pub 1-02 Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, *MCRP 5-12A Operational Terms and Graphics*, and *MCRP 5-12C Marine Corps Supplement to Joint Pub 1-02* is vital. If none of these references satisfy what we need to convey, a note of explanation in

the order is appropriate. For example, MCRP 5-12A defines the term “destroy” as “a tactical task to physically render an enemy force combat-ineffective unless it is reconstituted.” If the commander requires a more precise definition (such as quantify what “destroy” means), then we might add a statement in our order that specifies what percentage of the targeted unit needs to be rendered incapable of accomplishing its mission.

The major challenge in Orders Development is collapsing all the information, products, and outputs created through the planning process into a logical and coherent order or plan. Crossing the intellectual bridge required to transform planning products or outputs into written orders is not easy. OPTs and staffs must take tremendous amounts of information and details and put them in standardized JOPES order formats.

The interactive multimedia instruction (IMI) (Web/CD-based) product allows each student to use the Orders Development step in a practical application setting. You can accomplish objective 2 only by using the practical application portion of the IMI product.

**** View the Interactive Multimedia Instruction for lesson #6 immediately following this lesson’s summary.**

Requirement 2

Objective 3. Identify the impact of JOPES Volume II on Orders Development [JPME 2(a)(d), 3(a)].

Read:

- MCWP 5-1, Appendix G, pp. G-1 to G-11 (11 pages) and review Appendix G, pp. G-13 to G-178

Joint Operations Planning and Execution System (JOPES) is the integrated command and control system used to plan and execute joint military operations. It combines joint operational planning policies, procedures, and reporting structures supported by automated data processing systems on the Global Command and Control System (GCCS). The capabilities of the JOPES applications support translation of the policy decisions of the President and Secretary of Defense into planning and execution of joint military operations. MAGTF planners use these applications for deployment and employment planning. In order to fit into the joint planning scheme, it is important that Marine Corps plans and orders be formatted in compliance with JOPES Volume II.

Formatting is not only important for joint compliance, but it also is efficient, allowing for greater effectiveness. Standardized paragraphs, annexes, and appendices allow staff and MSCs to quickly and effectively peruse detailed orders and extract information and pertinent details without disrupting planning tempo. Once individuals on the various staffs become accustomed to the formats outlined in Appendix G of MCWP 5-1, generation of basic orders, plans, annexes, and appendices becomes relatively easy and fast.

Lesson Summary

In today's very complex and technical battlespace, written orders are critical for the success of joint force projection and employment. Since the MAGTF is an important asset to our regional combatant commanders, it is absolutely necessary that all Marine staff officers be able to generate outputs from a planning process and collapse those outputs into a coherent and concise operations order or plan. The tendency today is to use briefings and briefing slides to convey the tasks subordinate commands are required to accomplish. Unfortunately, briefing slides rarely address the details subordinate commands need. Additionally, commands rarely have procedures for briefing slides that address copy control, date and time of issuance, reference numbers, and most important, information format. Anyone who has prepared briefing slides understands that slides can become increasingly complicated and as a result consume an inordinate amount of time and effort to create. Briefings and briefing slides are an important aspect of staff work but the preparation of orders and plans is equally critical. Marine staff officers must be as comfortable developing orders as they are developing briefings and briefing slides. Ultimately, the preparation of orders and plans must become instinctive.

JPME Summary

| AREA 1 | | | | | AREA 2 | | | | AREA 3 | | | | | AREA 4 | | | | | AREA 5 | | | | |
|--------|---|---|---|---|--------|---|---|---|--------|---|---|---|---|--------|---|---|---|---|--------|---|---|---|--|
| A | B | C | D | E | A | B | C | D | A | B | C | D | E | A | B | C | D | E | A | B | C | D | |
| | | | | | X | | X | X | X | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | |