

CHAPTER 2

COMMAND AND SUPPORT RELATIONSHIPS

Command is central to all military action, and unity of command is central to unity of effort. Inherent in command is the authority that a military commander exercises over subordinates. Command confers authority to assign missions and demands accountability for their attainment. The authority vested in a commander must be commensurate with the responsibility assigned.

Command relationships and levels of authority, although authoritative, must be tailored to meet the requirements of the mission. Establishment of command relationships is at the heart of MAGTF command and control. Command relationships

establish the basis for interaction of unit commanders and foster freedom of action. Effective employment and support of the forces depends on the command and control command relationships established, from the highest to the lowest levels of authority.

Command relationships are the interrelated responsibilities between commanders, as well as the authority of commanders in the chain of command. They are established between units to foster mutual understanding. Forces, not command relationships, are transferred between commands.

SECTION I. UNITED STATES COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS AND OTHER AUTHORITIES

When forces are transferred, the command relationship the gaining commander will exercise (and the losing commander will relinquish) over those forces must be specified. A common understanding of each authority is necessary for effective command and control. JP 0-2, *Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF)* identifies four command relationships commanders should be familiar with: combatant command (command authority) [COCOM]; operational control (OPCON); tactical control (TACON), and support. Generally, command relationships are developed by the G-3 and approved by the commander. They are determined in concert with the development of task organization during the Marine Corps Planning Process (MCPPE).

Administrative Control

Definition

Administrative control (ADCON) is defined as the direction or exercise of authority over subordinate or other organizations in respect to administration and support, including organization of Service forces, control of resources and equipment, personnel management, unit logistics, individual and unit training, readiness, mobilization, demobilization, discipline, and other matters not included in the operational missions of the subordinate or other organizations. (JP 1-02)

Marine Corps Applicability

The definition for ADCON used in the Marine Corps and the joint community is the same. ADCON is used internally and externally to the MAGTF.

Concept

ADCON is the authority over subordinate or other organizations in respect to administration and support. MAGTF commanders will normally have ADCON over all organic, assigned, and attached Marine Corps Forces (MARFOR) but not over assigned or attached forces from the other Services. ADCON is subject to the command authority of combatant commanders. ADCON is the authority necessary to fulfill Military Department statutory responsibilities for administration and support.

Relationship

ADCON indicates that a unit is under conditional control of another commander with respect to administrative matters. The specific degree of ADCON is frequently specified in the order directing assignment to such status.

Example

A tank company is attached to an infantry battalion less ADCON (personnel and logistics responsibilities are retained by the tank battalion).

Direct Liaison Authorized

Definition

DIRLAUTH is that authority granted by a commander (any level) to a subordinate to directly consult, or coordinate an action with, a command or agency within or outside of the granting command. (JP 1-02)

Marine Corps Applicability

The definition for direct liaison authorized (DIRLAUTH) used in the Marine Corps and the joint community is the same. DIRLAUTH is used internally and externally to the MAGTF.

Concept

DIRLAUTH is the authority to directly consult or coordinate an action.

Relationship

DIRLAUTH is more applicable to planning than operations and always carries with it the requirement of keeping the commander granting DIRLAUTH informed. It is a coordination relationship, not an authority through which command may be exercised.

Example

A Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) commander gives DIRLAUTH to a division commander to consult with a United Nations relief agency for a humanitarian relief planning.

Coordinating Authority

Definition

A commander or individual assigned responsibility for coordinating specific functions or activities involving forces of two or more military departments or two or more forces of the same Service (JP 0-2).

Marine Corps Applicability

The definition for coordinating authority used in the Marine Corps and the joint community is the same. Coordinating authority is used internally and externally to the MAGTF.

Concept

Coordinating authority is a consultation relationship, not an authority through which command may be exercised. Coordinating authority is more applicable to planning and similar activities than to operations (JP 0-2).

Relationship

The commander or individual has the authority to require consultation between the agencies involved, but does not have the authority to compel agreement. In the event that essential

agreement cannot be obtained, the matter shall be referred to the appointing authority. Coordinating authority is a consultation relationship, not an authority through which command may be exercised.

Example

A Marine aviation group commander would be granted coordinating authority to work with the Army and Air Force aviation units at a forward deployed location to establish a forward operating base (FOB).

SECTION II. MARINE AIR-GROUND TASK FORCE COMMAND AND SUPPORT RELATIONSHIPS

Command relationships are not necessarily identical for all MAGTF elements. Although the terms OPCON and TACON are often used in joint and multinational operations, they are not used to establish command relationships between Marine units within the MAGTF. Relationships established within the MAGTF are framed in terms of command or support.

MAGTF elements may be organic to the MAGTF, attached or tasked to provide support. When a Marine unit is under the command of a senior Marine unit, the subordinate Marine unit is either organic or attached. Support relationships are established when one element or unit of the MAGTF provides a required capability to another element. These relationships do not imply tactical missions or techniques of employment. Although the terms organic and attach apply consistently throughout the MAGTF, support relationships can differ in meaning.

A support relationship is normally identified by the MAGTF commander when planning missions for MAGTF subordinate elements. The element making the main effort is designated as the

supported element; other elements are designated as supporting. Each support relationship is designed by the MAGTF commander to fit the situation at hand. A supporting-supported relationship allows required support to be provided by one MAGTF element to another without the need to change existing command relationships. Supported commanders do not exercise command over supporting units. Unity of effort is achieved through mutual coordination.

Designation of supported-supporting elements may change over the course of an operation. For example, when the MAGTF is conducting long-range battlespace shaping operations, the aviation combat element (ACE) may be the main effort of the MAGTF, and thus the supported element. However, as the MAGTF closes with the enemy, the ground combat element (GCE) may be designated the main effort, with the ACE shifting from a supported to a supporting role.

Command relationships among the command element (CE), GCE, ACE, and combat service support element (CSSE) are discussed in the rest of this section.

Command

The concept of command applies to all MAGTF elements.

Concept

Command is the authority that a commander in the Armed Forces lawfully exercises over subordinates by virtue of rank or assignment. Command includes the authority and responsibility for effectively using available resources and for planning the employment of, organizing, directing, coordinating, and controlling military forces for the accomplishment of assigned missions. It also includes responsibility for health, welfare, morale, and discipline of assigned personnel (JP 1-02).

Relationship

Marine Corps units are organic or attached. Organic is defined as assigned to and forming an essential part of a military organization. (JP 1-02) Attached is the placement of units or personnel in an organization where such placement is relatively temporary. (JP 1-02) When a unit is attached, it is under the command of the unit to which it is attached. Unless otherwise stated, this encompasses all command responsibilities.

Example

Organic parts of a unit are those listed in its table of organization (T/O). When used in the joint arena, organic units are listed on the T/Os for the Army and Air Force or assigned to the administrative organizations of the operating forces for the Navy.

An attached unit is bound temporarily to a command other than its organic command. For example, a tank company is attached to an infantry battalion for an operation or a tank battalion is attached to an infantry regiment. An

attached unit is under the command of the unit to which it is attached.

Attached units may be further attached to subordinate units. For example, an infantry regimental commander could further attach elements of the tank battalion to his subordinate battalions. Unless the attachment orders qualify the degree of control involved, attachment implies full responsibility for logistics, administration, training, and operations. However, the responsibility for matters relating to the transfer and promotion of personnel will normally be retained by the command to which the unit is organic. Units of like size are generally not attached to each other, with the exception of artillery units organized into groupments.

Support

The establishing authority should issue a directive that includes the purpose of the support relationship, the effect desired, and the scope of action to be taken. At a minimum, the time, place, level, and duration of the supporting effort should be specified. Each support relationship is tailored by the senior commander to fit the situation at hand.

Support relationships within the Marine Corps may differ from those used within the joint force. Joint doctrine defines four categories of support: DS, GS, mutual, and close (JP 0-2). MARFOR employ two categories of support: direct support (DS) and general support (GS). DS is a mission requiring a force to support another specific force and authorizing it to answer directly to the supported force's requests. GS is a mission given to the supporting force as a whole and not to any particular subdivision thereof. Support relationships may vary within the MAGTF.

The following paragraphs provide additional detail and examples of support relationships as they are used in each MAGTF element.

Command Element

The mission of the CE is to command and control, direct, plan and coordinate the air, ground, logistics, intelligence, and communications and information systems (CIS) operations of assigned forces. The MAGTF commander is responsible for everything that his unit does or fails to do and is given commensurate authority. He cannot delegate his responsibility or any part of it although he may delegate portions of his *authority*. The MAGTF commander has the authority to perform those functions of command over assigned forces involving organizing and employing commands and forces, assigning tasks, designating objectives, and giving authoritative direction over all aspects of military operations, training and logistics necessary to accomplish the mission.

The CE has command and attached relationships, but does not normally have support relationships. When other Services or combined units are attached, the commander can exercise OPCON and or TACON according to the command relationships defined in the operation plan (OPLAN). Subordinate MARFOR are organic or detached to the CE. External forces may be OPCON, TACON or in support of the CE.

Ground Combat Element

Identification of the enemy's centers of gravity and critical vulnerabilities helps the GCE to concentrate its combat power on objectives most likely to achieve success. During the planning process, tasks and purposes are determined as the two parts of the mission statement. The mission statement focuses the employment of forces by providing subordinates with a clear understanding of the tasks to be accomplished and the reason or intent behind the actions to be taken. Since resources are often limited, commanders must distribute and organize those available forces to provide unity of effort and economy of force for efficient employment.

The unit assigned the responsibility for accomplishing the key mission is designated as the main effort. The main effort receives priority for support since the main effort represents the commander's primary bid to achieve decisive results. Units assigned the responsibility of the supporting effort furnish support so that the main effort can accomplish its mission. Since GCE units usually tailor the combat power of forces by task-organizing, it is necessary to consider the support relationships that exist among various units taking part in the operation.

Subordinate elements of a task-organized GCE may be organic to the unit, attached to the unit or tasked to provide support. These command relationships do not imply tactical missions or techniques of employment. There are two basic types of support relationships in the GCE: direct and general. Although artillery units are part of the GCE, the nature of their employment defines two additional support relationships in those units. Therefore, their command relationships are DS, GS, reinforcing (R), and general support-reinforcing (GS-R).

Direct Support

The DS mission requires a supporting unit to furnish close and continuous support to a single supported unit. Units given a tactical mission of DS are not attached or under the command of the supported unit. The DS relationship is not established between combat and combat support units employed as separate maneuver elements because the parent commander of the supporting unit still retains command of the supporting unit.

The DS mission is the most decentralized of the support missions. DS creates a responsive, one-to-one relationship between supporting and supported units. The supported unit sends requests directly to the supporting unit. Generally, units in DS collocate although this is situation-dependent. The DS mission is usually assigned to provide the supported unit with

dedicated support to accomplish urgent, unanticipated tasks.

Assigning a supporting unit a DS mission is a common means of increasing the supported unit's combat power. Supported and supporting units must keep their respective higher headquarters informed of their operations and plans. However, the parent commander retains command of the supporting unit. The supported unit is relieved of the administrative and logistic burden imposed by the establishment of a command relationship, but receives the benefit of close, prompt support. An example of a DS mission follows.

An engineer company (supporting unit) assigned a DS mission to an infantry regiment (supported unit) would be required to do the following:

- Report directly to the commander of the supported unit and provide liaison personnel if required.
- Respond to the supported unit's priority of work and priority of effort tasks within the supported unit's zone of action or sector of defense.
- Establish direct communications between the supporting and supported unit.
- Answer requests for engineering support in priority from the supported unit, own engineer platoons or higher engineer headquarters.

General Support

A GCE unit assigned a mission of GS supports the supported force as a whole. The GS mission is the most centralized support relationship. The supporting unit commander retains full control over his organic assets and attached forces. Therefore, the parent commander retains complete authority over, and responsibility for, the operation of the supporting unit. He employs them in the most beneficial manner for the supported command as a whole.

A supporting unit given a GS mission is not required to establish separate communications or liaison from standard operations. However, the supporting unit must conduct coordination with higher, adjacent, and supporting units to ensure proper integration within the force as a whole. An example of a GS mission follows.

Combat support assets such as the division's reconnaissance battalion are assigned a GS mission in support of the Marine division. A GS relationship is usually assigned when centralized control of that force enables flexible employment of that force's assets and when the enemy disposition is relatively uncertain. GS units provide the GCE with immediately available support to influence the battle or to allocate to subordinate commands to influence widely separated actions. An example would be the Marine division employing the teams of the reconnaissance battalion in the division's security area. The supporting unit given a GS mission is required to plan assignments based on missions and priorities established by the parent higher headquarters.

Marine artillery units use the four categories of support. Although DS and GS are similar to the traditional MAGTF definitions, there are some differences.

The DS mission requires a unit to furnish close and continuous fires to a single supported unit, normally a regiment or separate maneuver battalion. The commander of an artillery unit with a DS mission ensures that his firing units are positioned to deliver fires in the zone of action/sector of the supported unit, that the fires have been planned effectively, and that he has continuous communications with the liaison team and forward observer teams located with the supported team.

The GS mission requires a unit to support the force as a whole and be prepared to support any subordinate element. The fires of a unit in GS are controlled by higher artillery headquarters. See also MCWP 3-16.1, *Artillery Operations*.

Reinforcing

An R mission requires one unit to augment the capabilities of another unit. Typically, a unit given an R mission will augment the capabilities of a similar unit. The R unit will receive tasks from the reinforced unit and higher headquarters. Priority of support goes to the reinforced unit, but other tasks may be undertaken if they do not interfere with support of the reinforced unit. Responsibility for administration and logistical support of the R unit remains with its parent command. As in the DS mission, the relationship is one-to-one between the R and reinforced units.

If a supporting unit requires augmentation to meet supported unit requirements, the common commander can furnish additional capability by establishing R support with another supporting unit for a specific task, operation or period of time. Since augmentation of ground units is most easily accomplished by attachment, reinforcement is normally used only with indirect fire support agencies, principally artillery units.

The R support relationship places no additional administrative burden associated with reassignment of personnel and equipment on either the unit being reinforced or the unit it is supporting. The unit assigned the R mission can reinforce only one unit at a time. The reinforced unit, however, may be reinforced by several other units. A unit may only reinforce a similar MAGTF unit. For example, an artillery unit can only reinforce another artillery unit since no other unit in the MAGTF can provide the same fire support capabilities. The relationship between R and reinforced units is the same as that for supporting and supported units. The higher headquarters of the R or reinforced unit does not perform detailed planning or routine coordination between the two units. However, both units must keep their

respective higher headquarters informed of operations and plans. An R unit's area of operations (AO) includes that of the reinforced unit to the extent required for the support being required. (See MCWP 3-16, *Fire Support Coordination in the Ground Combat Element*.) An example of an R mission follows.

An artillery battalion R the fires of another artillery battalion would be required to do the following:

- Establish a zone of fire that corresponds to the zone of fire of the reinforced unit.
- Establish communications and liaison with the reinforced unit.
- Furnish forward observers upon request of the reinforced unit.
- Position firing batteries per direction of the reinforced unit or as ordered by the higher artillery headquarters.
- Provide fires planned by the reinforced unit.
- Answer calls for fire in priority from a reinforced unit, own field observers, and higher artillery headquarters.

General Support-Reinforcing

The GS-R mission requires the supporting unit to furnish support for the force as a whole while simultaneously augmenting the capabilities of another similar unit as a second priority. GS-R is assigned only to indirect fire support agencies, principally artillery units. This type of assignment permits dedicated support to specific units; it does not deprive the entire force of its required support. See also MCWP 3-16.

GS-R is the most flexible standard artillery tactical mission. An artillery unit with this mission will support the force as a whole and answer calls for R fires from a designated artillery unit in DS. Priority of fires of GS-R units is to the higher artillery commander unless otherwise specified. To increase responsiveness, a designated net (quick-fire channel) may be established between the GS-R unit and the reinforced DS unit. An example of a GS-R mission follows.

An artillery battalion providing GS-R to an artillery regiment. The unit given a GS-R mission is required to do the following:

- Provide a zone of fire that covers the zone of action of the supported unit to include the zone of fire of the reinforced unit.
- Furnish forward observers upon request of the reinforced unit subject to prior approval of higher artillery headquarters.
- Position firing batteries as directed by the higher artillery headquarters or reinforced unit subject to prior approval by higher artillery headquarters.
- Respond to fires planned by the higher artillery headquarters.
- Establish communications and liaison with the reinforced unit.
- Answer calls for fire in priority from a higher artillery headquarters, a reinforced unit, and own observers.

Aviation Combat Element

Central to the concept of employment for the Marine ACE is the philosophy of centralized command and decentralized control. This philosophy is based on two fundamental requirements of the ACE commander. First, the commander plans, directs, and coordinates all aspects of aviation employment for the MAGTF. Second, the commander optimizes the flexibility, versatility, and responsiveness of aviation by allowing control of assets to be conducted by subordinate agencies. These agencies are responsive to the commander and in touch with the changing dynamics of the situation. Plans and orders are brief. Execution depends on the sound judgment of well-trained subordinates, their initiative, and their understanding of the commander's intent. This style of command and control supports rapid decisionmaking and allows the ACE to maintain a high operational tempo.

The command support relationship established for the ACE by the MAGTF commander is almost always GS of the MAGTF. Because the

ACE is organic to the MAGTF, the mission is inherent in the mission of the ACE in any MAGTF. This command relationship is established for several important reasons. The ACE inherently has limited resources to meet a high operational demand. Since availability of aviation assets for mission tasking rarely meets the demand, the MAGTF commander will keep the ACE in GS of the MAGTF. Marine aviation is inherently able to fight or provide support throughout the MAGTF AO. The GS role ensures a synergistic effect to the overall force and the most efficient and effective allocation of aircraft to the MAGTF. This process is orchestrated through the air tasking order (ATO) cycle, allowing flexible and prioritized tasking. By using and completing the ATO cycle, planners can ensure that finite aviation assets are allocated to achieve maximum effect with correct prioritization based on the commander's intent. See also MCWP 3-2, *Aviation Operations*.

Relative to the ACE, the terms GS and DS are most often used conceptually. The ACE is in GS of the MAGTF, and some sorties or missions may be flown to support a particular MAGTF unit. Formal command relationship terms (such as would be assigned an artillery battalion or combat service support detachment [CSSD]) are not used regarding the ACE.

Direct Support

A formal DS command relationship rarely exists between ACE subordinate units and other MAGTF units. While an individual sortie or mission may be executed to support a designated MAGTF unit, typically there is not a formal command relationship of DS established. This support relationship usually exists only within the context of mission tasking, where individual sorties are allocated for a specific MAGTF unit conducting a particular mission (usually of short duration). Since these sorties do not represent subordinate units of the ACE, the ACE GS command relationship inherent in the task organization of the MAGTF does not change. However,

low altitude air defense (LAAD) units may be assigned such relationships during joint, combined or multinational operations.

If aviation support is required for a long or complex mission such that detailed coordination and prior planning must be conducted before execution, the aviation mission commander may be assigned a DS mission. With the designation of an aviation unit to the DS role comes the requirement to establish direct liaison, direct communications to receive critical information, coordination of local security, and logistic support from the support unit. LAAD units that must be dispersed are often assigned a DS mission to provide a defense within the supported commander's zone or AO.

An ACE unit assigned a DS role is immediately responsive to the needs of the supported unit. It furnishes continuous support to that unit and coordinates its operations to complement the concept of operations of the supported unit. The DS role creates a one-to-one relationship between supporting and supported units. The higher headquarters of the supporting and supported units become involved only on a by-exception basis. However, each unit must keep its higher headquarters informed of its operations and plans. The supported unit makes requests directly to the supporting unit. An example of a DS mission follows.

An attack squadron is in DS of one subordinate unit of the GCE, a helicopter lift is provided in direct support of a maneuver battalion or a LAAD section in DS of an infantry battalion.

General Support

The ACE will be assigned the role of GS and supports the MAGTF commander's main effort. The GS command relationship is a formal relationship established between the MAGTF and ACE commanders. It provides the ACE commander the most flexible, efficient, and effective means of apportionment, allocation, and prioritization of all aviation assets in support of the MAGTF.

The ACE commander retains full control over his subordinate units, including establishing the priority of their efforts. This prevents supporting aviation units from dealing directly with various GCE or combat service support (CSS) agencies. Sorties allocation will be apportioned indirectly through the ATO cycle process to requesting units; e.g., a GCE/CSSE agency will submit air support requests through the direct air support center (DASC) or tactical air command center (USMC) (TACC). The ACE commander may control how and when he fills those requests as long as he meets the MAGTF commander's apportionment and prioritization guidance.

Combat Service Support Element

CSS is the activity that actually provides services and supplies to the combat forces. Central to the concept of employment for the CSSE is centralized control and decentralized execution. The CSSE manages and provides the required support through task organization of the CSSD. The CSSD is tailored to the requirements of supported units. The CSSE is always in GS of the MAGTF and executes its mission through task organization and command relationship assignment.

Direct Support

DS is a mission requiring a force to support another specific force and authorizing it to answer directly to the supported force's request for assistance. (JP 0-2)

A CSS unit that is in DS of another unit is immediately responsive to the needs of the supported unit. It furnishes continuous support to that unit and coordinates its operations to complement the concept of operations of the supported unit. A one-to-one support relationship is created between supporting and supported units. The DS mission is the most decentralized of the four standard missions. The higher headquarters of the supporting and supported units become involved only on an exception basis. The supported unit sends requests directly to the supporting unit.

The following subparagraphs analyze considerations for assigning the DS mission either to permanently organized or task-organized CSS units. The unit the DS mission is assigned may be a single-function unit or a multifunction unit:

- **Permanently Organized Units.** The CSSE commander may assign the DS mission to any of his permanent subordinate organizations; e.g., he may give this mission to his engineer or motor transport. Permanent CSS organizations may provide DS to any other MAGTF element, although certain CSS organizations, such as the supply and maintenance battalions, are not likely to have a DS mission.
- **Task-Organized Units.** The CSSE commander may assign the DS mission to a CSSD. CSSDs are most often in DS. The commander must ensure that the task-organized unit has enough assets to accomplish the DS mission. Of particular concern is the ability to establish and maintain communications with the supported unit.

General Support

A CSS unit that is in GS supports the MAGTF under the direction of the CSSE commander.

The GS mission is the most centralized mission. The CSSE commander retains full control over his subordinate units, including establishing the priority of their efforts. This does not prevent supported units from dealing directly with various CSS agencies; e.g., they submit requisitions directly to the supply source. However, the CSSE commander may control how and when he fills those requisitions. He follows the priorities and allocations of the MAGTF commander. In cer-

tain cases, the MAGTF commander may stop the issue of supplies or items of equipment without prior approval of the CSSE commander. In other cases, he might specify a priority of issue for certain items or may assign a specific quantity to each unit. An example of a GS mission follows.

The MAGTF CSSE always has a GS mission. The CSSE commander, however, may assign different missions to his subordinate units consistent with the requirements of the tactical situation. The concept of logistics and CSS, found in Annex D of the MAGTF operation order (OPORD), specifically addresses this topic. It tells precisely how to satisfy the requirements of a particular tactical situation. The following paragraphs are examples of GS missions:

- **Permanently Organized Units.** The CSSE commander may assign the GS mission to any of his permanent subordinate organizations; e.g., the force service support group (FSSG) commander may give the engineer support battalion the mission of GS of the MAGTF. The battalion would provide support based on the MAGTF commander's priorities. The CSSE commander would not assign this mission without prior coordination with and approval from the MAGTF commander.
- **Task-Organized Units.** The CSSE commander may assign the GS mission to a CSSD or landing force support party (LFSP). Task-organized CSS units must have sufficient assets to perform the functions associated with this mission. Of particular concern is the ability to establish and maintain communications and liaison with the supported unit and parent organization.

SECTION III. NAVY AND MARINE CORPS COMMAND AND SUPPORT RELATIONSHIPS

The Navy and Marine Corps are inextricably joined together as the Nation's naval forces. The relationship is strong, but not without differences in perspectives. Since command relation-

ships for expeditionary operations were doctrinally established just prior to World War II, they have been the subject of continual discussion and evolution.

Expeditionary Operations

JP 3-02, *Joint Doctrine for Amphibious Operations*, is the overarching doctrine on the conduct of expeditionary operations and defines command relationships within AFs. An AF is an amphibious task force (ATF) and a landing force (LF) together with other forces that are trained, organized, and equipped for expeditionary operations.

Maritime Prepositioning Forces Operations

The establishing authority may delegate an OPCON or TACON relationship between the MAGTF commander and the commander, maritime prepositioning force (CMPF). The establishing authority is responsible for establishing command relationships and the command and control structure. The command relationship established between the MAGTF commander and CMPF is a key decision, and should provide for unity of effort, simplicity, and flexibility. Ultimately, the command relationship between the MAGTF commander and CMPF should be predicated upon the establishing authority's assessment of mission requirements. It should provide a clear, well defined, and easily understood command channel with the requisite authority to prosecute the maritime prepositioning forces (MPF) operation in a timely, efficient, and effective manner.

While the establishing authority normally has OPCON or TACON of subordinate forces, the relationship between the CMPF and MAGTF commander is normally TACON or support.

Tactical Control Command Relationships

TACON may be delegated to and exercised at any level at or below the level of combatant

command. TACON is typically limited to the detailed and usually local direction and control of forces necessary to accomplish assigned tasks. TACON provides sufficient authority for controlling and directing the application of force or tactical use of combat support assets. TACON can be delegated by the establishing authority to subordinate commanders within the MPF.

Support Command Relationships

Each joint force subordinate element can support or be supported by other elements. A supporting relationship is established by a superior commander between subordinate commanders when one organization should aid, protect, complement or sustain another force. A support command relationship between the MAGTF commander and the CMPF may be appropriate when the establishing authority decides that the mission and associated taskings do not require one force to have TACON of the other. The establishing authority is responsible for ensuring that the supported and supporting commander understand the degree of authority the supported commander is granted. The following are examples:

- **Tactical Control Command Relationships.** A TACON command relationship between the MAGTF commander and CMPF may be appropriate when the establishing authority decides that, because of the threat, timing or the nature of the mission, it is necessary for at least part of the operation for one element to have a significant degree of control over the other.
- **Support Command Relationships.** Since the essential purpose and primary focus of an MPF operation is establishing a MAGTF fully prepared to execute an employment mission, then in a broad sense CMPF supports the MAGTF. The establishing authority may decide that a specified support relationship between the MAGTF commander (supported) and the CMPF (supporting) should be established for the duration of an MPF operation. However, there

may be certain requirements in a phase of an MPF operation that may mitigate against such a generality, and may require the support relationship to change from phase to phase. For example, during the movement phase CMPF relies on the MAGTF commander to coordinate the air transportation of the Navy support element (NSE). In another, the CMPF's critical responsibility during the arrival and assembly phase is the off-load of the maritime prepositioning ships squadron (MPSRON), a tasking that cannot be accomplished without assistance from the MAGTF; e.g., the LFSP. In these two instances the MAGTF is providing support to the CMPF.

While a support relationship is a viable command authority, it is incumbent upon the establishing authority to make clear in the initiating directive the requirements for support, who is supporting whom, and the parameters for transitioning this command relationship. It should also include the following:

- Forces and other resources allocated to the supporting effort.
- Time, place, level, and duration of the supporting effort.
- Relative priority of the supporting effort.
- The authority, if any, of the supporting commander to modify the supporting effort in the event of exceptional opportunity or an emergency.
- Degree of authority granted to the supported commander over the supporting effort.

SECTION IV. JOINT COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS

All Service forces (except as noted in Title 10, *United States Code*, section 162) are assigned to combatant commands by the Secretary of Defense *Forces for Unified Commands* memorandum (JP 0-2). As establishing authorities for

Marine Expeditionary Unit

Marine Corps Order (MCO) 3120.9B, *Policy for Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable)* prescribes the following command relationships:

- When the Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) is in the continental United States (CONUS) and not embarked aboard ship, the MEF commander exercises OPCON of the MEU. When embarked aboard amphibious ready group (ARG) ships, the fleet commander in whose AO the ARG is operating normally will exercise OPCON of the MEU during routine activities. During contingencies, command relationships will be prescribed in the alert, warning, and/or execute order. The MEU may be designated a separate component within a joint force or designated as the LF of an AF. It is unacceptable for the MEU commander to be designated as a functional warfare commander within the Navy composite warfare commander construct; nor is it acceptable for the MEU to be embedded in a command relationship that fails to provide the commander, landing force (CLF) the decisionmaking authority and span of control prescribed in joint doctrine for LF operations.
- Typically, when units within the naval services are transferred, the term change of operational control (CHOP) is used. CHOP is defined as the date and time (coordinated universal time) when a force or unit is reassigned or attached from one commander to another where the gaining commander will exercise OPCON over that force or unit.

subordinate unified commands and JTFs, combatant commanders may direct the assignment or attachment of their forces to those subordinate commands as appropriate. When forces are transferred, the command relationship the gaining

commander will exercise over those forces must be specified.

The combatant commander's OPLANs and concept plans (CONPLANs) will often provide a concept for command relationships in that theater, including units assigned. Units are assigned when placement is relatively permanent or where such organization controls and administers the units or personnel for the primary function or greater portion of the functions of the unit or personnel. When transfer of forces to a joint force will be temporary, forces will attach to the gaining command. Joint force commanders (JFCs) will exercise OPCON or TACON over attached forces.

Command includes the authority and responsibility for effectively using available resources and for planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, and controlling military forces for the accomplishment of assigned missions. A command relationship defines the interrelated responsibilities between commanders as well as the authority of those commanders. JP 0-2 prescribes four command relationships to be used by United States (US) military forces—COCOM, OPCON, TACON, and support. These command relationships and levels of authority, although authoritative, must be adapted to meet mission requirements. Collectively, they provide the flexibility to organize forces to respond to all situations.

SECTION V. COMPONENT COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS

Establishing component commands within a joint force and the relationships between the component commands and the forces assigned to the component commands is a complex topic. JP 0-2, MCDP 1-0, *Marine Corps Operations*, and MCDP 1-0.1, *Componency*, contain an in-depth treatment of componency issues. It is important that Marines at all levels of the MAGTF understand the basics of Marine componency and the effect it has on the relationships among the units of a joint force. Proper establishment of command relationships within the joint force can foster effectiveness.

Joint Forces

To address the command relationships between the MAGTF and the component commanders of a joint force, the basic characteristics and structure of a joint force must be understood. The three levels of joint forces are unified commands, subordinate unified commands, and JTFs.

Unified commands are combatant commands and are established in accordance with the Unified Command Plan by the President through the Sec-

retary of Defense with the advice and assistance of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS). A unified command has a broad and continuing mission and is composed of significant components of two or more Military Departments. The unified commander exercises COCOM over all assigned forces and, normally, OPCON over attached forces.

When authorized through the CJCS, commanders of unified commands may establish subordinate unified commands; e.g., United States Forces, Korea, is a subordinate unified command established by the Commander, United States Pacific Command. Subordinate unified commanders exercise OPCON over all assigned forces and, normally, over all attached forces.

A JTF may be established by the Secretary of Defense, a combatant commander, a subordinate unified commander or an existing JTF commander. A JTF is normally established to accomplish a mission with a specific limited objective and is dissolved when that mission is accomplished. The commander of a JTF exercises OPCON over all assigned forces and, normally, over all attached forces.

The JFC organizes his forces in the most effective manner to accomplish the mission. The JFC may conduct operations through Service components, functional components or some combination of the two based on mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops and support available-time available (METT-T). Usually, the JFC organizes the force in a combination of Service and functional component. This combination takes advantage of the benefits of Service component while allowing the combatant commander to centralize resources. Regardless of how the JFC organizes the assigned forces, if MARFOR are included, there will be a Marine Corps Service component with responsibility for administrative and logistic support of MARFOR.

Service Component Commands

The Service component command will consist of the component commander and all of the Service forces that have been assigned to the joint force. Because administration and logistics are Service responsibilities, joint forces always include Service component commands that exercise ADCON over the forces of that Service that have been assigned to the joint force.

Operations will normally be conducted through the Service component when the situation requires organizational integrity of Service forces. Conducting operations through Service components fully exploits the capabilities and experience that the individual Service can bring to a joint command by allowing Service organi-

zations to function as they were designed and trained. Figure 2-1 depicts a joint force organized to conduct operations through Service component commands.

Functional Component Commands

The JFC may establish functional component commands, which are employed when forces from two or more Military Departments must operate in the same dimension (or medium) or there is a need to accomplish a distinct aspect of the assigned mission. Joint force land, air, maritime, and special operations component commands are functional component commands.

Normally, the Service component commander with the preponderance of forces to be tasked to accomplish a particular function will be designated as the functional component commander. However, in selecting a functional component commander, the JFC must also consider the command and control capabilities of the Service components. A Service component commander designated as the functional component commander retains Service component responsibilities. Figure 2-2 is an example of a joint force organized to conduct operations through functional components.

The responsibilities and authority of a functional component command must be assigned by the JFC. Establishing a functional component commander will not affect the command relationships between Service component commanders and the JFC. The

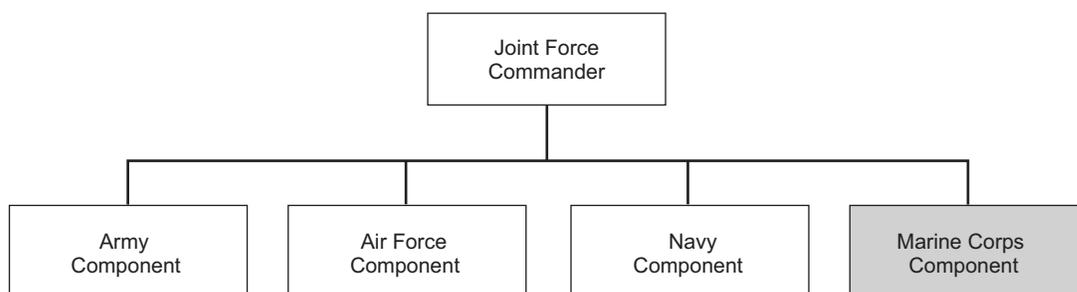


Figure 2-1. Joint Force with Service Components.

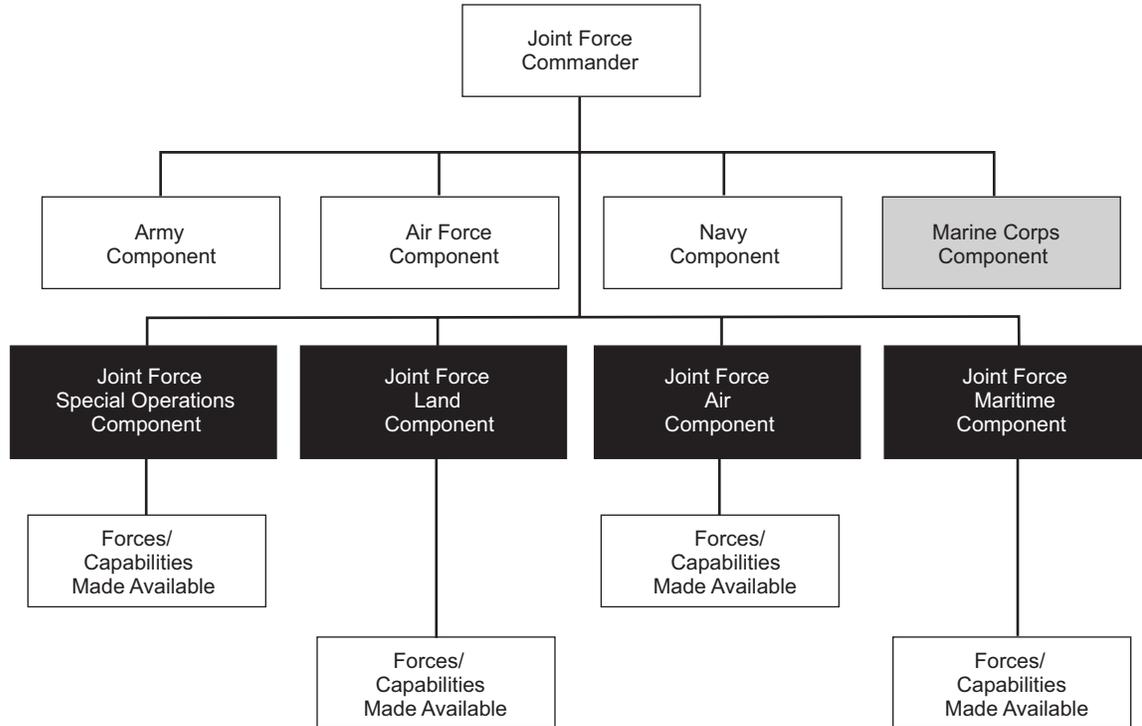


Figure 2-2. Joint Force with Functional Components.

JFC must designate the military capability that will be made available by Service component commanders for tasking by the functional component commander and the command relationship that the functional component commander will exercise. The appropriate command relationship will depend on the overall situation and the nature of the forces or capability involved.

Joint force special operations component commanders, land component commanders, and maritime component commanders normally have OPCON or TACON of forces made available to them for employment, while discussed previously, a joint force air component commander (JFACC) is normally delegated TACON of aircraft sorties or other capabilities made available. All Marines should be aware of the following policy for command and control of Marine Corps aviation promulgated in JP 0-2, chapter V:

The MAGTF commander will retain OPCON of organic air assets. The primary mission of the

MAGTF aviation combat element is the support of the MAGTF ground combat element. During joint operations, the MAGTF air assets normally will be in support of the MAGTF mission. The MAGTF commander will make sorties available to the JFC, for tasking through the JFACC, for air defense, long-range interdiction, and long-range reconnaissance. Sorties in excess of MAGTF direct support requirements will be provided to the JFC for tasking through the JFACC for the support of other components of the joint force or the joint force as a whole. Nothing herein shall infringe on the authority of the geographic combatant or subordinate joint force commander in the exercise of operational control, to assign missions, redirect efforts (e.g., the reappportionment and/or reallocation of any Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF) TACAIR [tactical air] sorties when it has been determined by the joint force commander that they are required for higher priority missions), and direct coordination among the subordinate commanders to ensure unity of effort in

accomplishment of the overall mission, or to maintain integrity of the force.

NOTE: Sorties provided for air defense, long-range interdiction, and long-range reconnaissance are not "excess" sorties and will be covered in the air tasking order. These sorties provide a distinct contribution to the overall joint force effort. The JFC must exercise integrated control of air defense, long-range reconnaissance, and interdiction aspects of the joint operation or theater campaign. Excess sorties are in addition to these sorties.

The JFC may reappportion or reallocate MAGTF TACAIR sorties when they are required for higher priority missions in support of the JFC's campaign. Although the JFC may assign the reappportioned or reallocated air to the JFACC for use, the JFACC does not have the authority to reappportion or reallocate MAGTF TACAIR sorties.

Combination of Service and Functional Components

The most common method the combatant commander uses to organize his available forces is

a combination of Service and functional competency. If operations are being conducted through functional component commanders, the MAGTF commander could be either OPCON or TACON to the joint force maritime component commander (JFMCC) or the joint force land component commander (JFLCC), depending on the nature and phase of the operation.

The combination of Service and functional components takes advantage of the benefits of Service competency while allowing the combatant commander to centralize certain functions to achieve his strategic or operational objective. Service components retain command of their forces, while providing forces and capabilities through the combatant commander to the functional component commander. Regardless of how the combatant commander organizes his assigned or attached forces, if MARFOR are included, there will be a Marine Corps component. See figure 2-3 for an example of a joint force designed to conduct operations through four Service components and a special operations component.

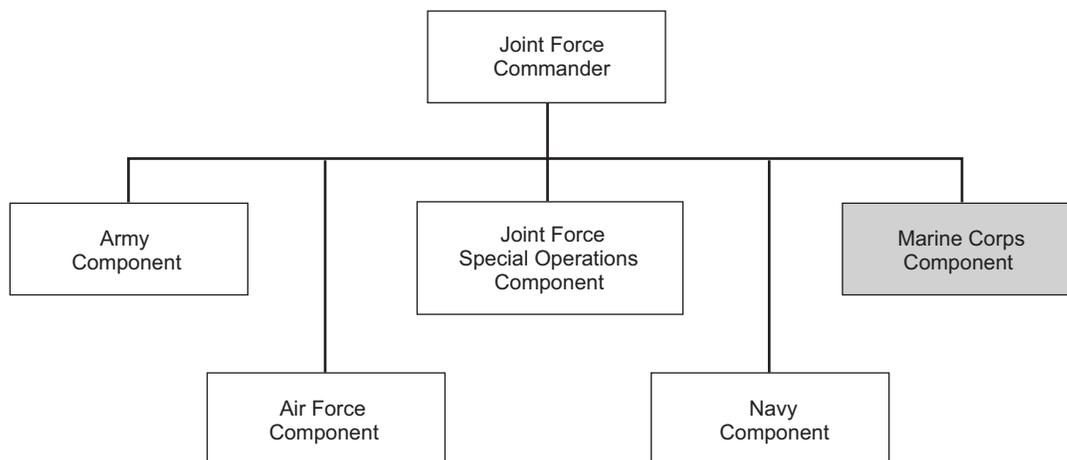


Figure 2-3. Joint Force with Service and Functional Components.

Marine Air-Ground Task Force Component Command Relationships

A Marine Corps component commander's assigned MARFOR will normally include one MAGTF and, depending on the scope of the assigned mission, include a Marine Corps Logistic Command (MLC) and a rear area coordinator. Normally, an MLC and rear area coordinator would be established only to support MARFOR conducting sustained operations ashore in a major theater war.

The Marine Corps component can also include forces from other Services and nations. The Marine Corps component commander will

always exercise ADCON over the assigned MAGTF and, if operations are being conducted through Service components, will exercise OPCON. If operations are being conducted through functional component commanders, the MAGTF commander could be OPCON to the JFMCC, JFACC or the JFLCC, depending on the nature and phase of the operation. The MAGTF commander could also be the JFLCC, JFACC or JFMCC; e.g., a MAGTF might conduct an expeditionary operation under OPCON of the maritime forces component commander and then CHOP OPCON to the land forces component commander or MARFOR.

SECTION VI. NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS

NATO was founded in 1949 as a defense alliance to protect member nations against aggressions. Marines should be aware that North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) doctrinal measures sometimes differ from US joint doctrine. It is important that common authorities be clearly spelled out and mutually understood by all nations involved.

Military Command Structure

In September 1999, NATO adopted a three-level command structure—strategic, regional, and subregional. Subregional exists only in Allied Command Europe.

Strategic Commands

Allied Command Atlantic is commanded by the Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic (SACLANT) and is headquartered in Norfolk, VA. Allied Command Europe is commanded by the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR) and is headquartered in Brussels, Belgium.

Regional Commands

There are three regional commands in the larger Allied Command Atlantic area for the maintenance of regional identities and geographic expertise: West, East, and South Atlantic Areas (WESTLANT, EASTLANT, and SOUTHLANT). There are also two combatant commands directly subordinate to SACLANT: Striking Fleet Atlantic (STRIKFLTANT) and Submarine Allied Command Atlantic (SUBACLANT). These commands provide coordination/command and control functions in relevant operational warfare areas.

Within Allied Command Europe, the operational focus is provided by two regional commands based on the natural division of Europe north and south of the Alps: Allied Forces North Europe (AFNORTH) and Allied Forces South Europe (AFSOUTH).

Subregional Commands

Within Allied Command Europe is a mix of geographically dispersed joint subregional commands (NORTH, NORTHEAST, CENTRE,