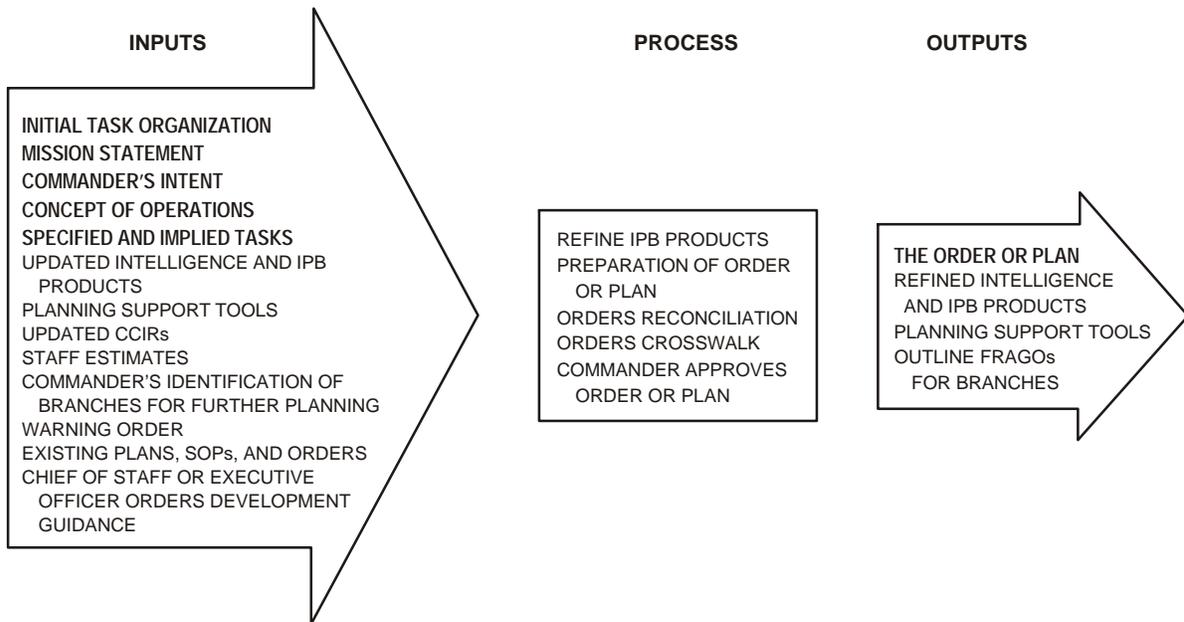


Chapter 6

Orders Development

“As a rule, plans should contain only as much detail as required to provide subordinates the necessary guidance while allowing as much freedom of action as possible.”⁶

—MCDP 5, *Planning*



BOLD TEXT INDICATES MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

The orders development step in the Marine Corps Planning Process communicates the commander's intent, guidance, and decisions in a clear, useful form that is easily understood by those executing the order. An order is a written or oral communication that directs actions and focuses a subordinate's tasks and activities toward accomplishing the mission. Various portions of the order, such as the mission statement and staff estimates, have been prepared during previous steps of the Marine Corps Planning Process.

The chief of staff or executive officer, as appropriate, directs orders development. The order contains only critical or new information—not routine matters normally found in standing operating procedures. A good order is judged on its usefulness—not its weight.

6001. Inputs

The initial task organization, mission statement, commander's intent, concept of operations, and

specified and implied tasks are the required inputs to orders development. Other inputs may include—

- Updated intelligence and IPB products.
- Planning support tools.
- Updated CCIRs.
- Staff estimates.
- Commander's identification of branches for further planning.
- Warning order.
- Existing plans, standing operating procedures, and orders.
- Chief of staff or executive officer orders development guidance.

6002. Process

Normally, the chief of staff or executive officer coordinates with staff principals to assist the G-3/S-3 in developing an order. The chief of staff or executive officer dictates the format for the order, sets and enforces the time limits and development sequence, and determines which annexes are published by which staff section.

a. Refine Intelligence Preparation of the Battlespace Products

The staff refines or prepares IPB products to support orders development.

b. Preparation of Order or Plan

Orders are produced in a variety of forms. Orders or plans can be detailed, written documents with many supporting annexes, or they can be simple verbal commands. Their form depends on time available, complexity of the operation, and levels of command involved. Supporting portions of the order or plan, such as annexes and appendixes, are based on staff estimates, subordinate commander's estimates of supportability, and other planning documents. If the basic order has been published, a FRAGO may be issued to subordinate commanders. Whatever the format, orders

and plans must be clear, concise, timely, and useful. See appendix G for operation plan, operation order, annex, and appendix formats.

c. Orders Reconciliation

Orders reconciliation is an internal process in which the staff conducts a detailed review of the entire order. This reconciliation ensures that the basic order and all the annexes, appendixes, etc., are complete and in agreement. It identifies discrepancies or gaps in the planning. If discrepancies or gaps are found, the staff takes corrective action. Specifically, the staff compares the commander's intent, the mission, and the CCIRs against the concept of operations and the supporting concepts (e.g., maneuver, fires, support). Priority intelligence requirements and the intelligence collection plan must support the CCIRs.

d. Orders Crosswalk

During the orders crosswalk, the staff compares the order with the orders of higher and adjacent commanders to achieve unity of effort and ensure that the superior commander's intent is met. It identifies discrepancies or gaps in planning. If discrepancies or gaps are found, the staff takes corrective action.

e. Commander Approves Order or Plan

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

6003. Outputs

The output of orders development is an approved order or plan. Additional outputs may include—

- Refined intelligence and IPB products.
- Planning support tools.
- Outline FRAGOs for branches.

Appendix G

Basic Operation Plans, Operation Orders, Annexes, and Appendices

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

This appendix applies to commanders of Marine Corps forces at all levels. It contains three sections. Section I provides general administrative guidance for writing a basic operation order or plan. An operation plan/order foldout is included at the end of this appendix for easy reference. Section II provides sample formats of a plan summary, operation plan or order, appendices, tabs, etc. Sample formats are descriptive in nature and identify the information that needs to be placed in the appropriate paragraph. The formats provided in section II will be followed except when, in the judgment of the commander, modifications are required to meet command requirements. Only those annexes, appendices, and tabs applicable to the level of command are required within the operation order. Section III provides examples of a plan summary, operation plan or order, and some appendices, tabs, etc. Examples are notional and provide a written representation of an actual operation order, appendices, tabs, etc.

Section I. General Administrative Guidance

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

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

1. Paragraphing, Titling, and Numbering

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

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

1.
 - a.
 - (1)
 - 1
 - a
 - (1)
 - (a)

Subsequent lines of text for each paragraph may be flush left or equally indented at the option of the chief of staff or executive officer as long as consistency is maintained.

Flush Left

- a. (U) Situation. Text text.

Equally indented.

- a. (U) Situation. Text text.

2. Classification Markings

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

All paragraphs will have a security classification level. Use parenthetical symbols (TS), (S), (C), and (U) to indicate the security classification level of titles, paragraphs, and subparagraphs.

3. Page Numbering

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

4. Formatting Instructions

Formatting instructions are contained on pages G-4 through G-9.

Line 1. Classification.

Line 2. Changes from Oral Orders. Used when oral orders regarding this operation were previously issued. Enclosed in parentheses. Example: “(No change from oral orders except paragraphs 3b and 3f.)” Omitted in plans and in orders when no oral orders were issued.

Lines 3-7. Heading Data

Copy no. ____ of ____ copies
 OFFICIAL DESIGNATION OF COMMAND
 PLACE OF ISSUE
 Date/time group
 Message reference number

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

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

Line 9. Title

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

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

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

1. As an unnumbered entry before paragraph 1, Situation. Used when entire command of issuing headquarters is organized into task organizations for a particular operation, and task organizations are too complicated to be shown using other methods.
2. If there is no change to previous task organization, show as “No change.”
3. Under the proper subparagraph of paragraph 3. This is the simplest, and therefore preferred, method in continuing ground combat situation. Show as “No change except paragraph 3b”
4. As an annex when lengthy; e.g., division or higher. Used in amphibious operations (permits early dissemination and assists concurrent planning). Also used where planning precedes operation by a considerable period of time.

Shown in 1 and 4 above, the organization of the issuing headquarters, including service and administrative groupings that will perform normal functions, is the first entry. Following that, each task groupment that is to receive a tactical mission is shown in the sequence in which the missions are assigned in paragraph 3.

1	CLASSIFICATION
2	(No change from oral orders)
3	Copy no. __ of __ copies
4	I MEF
5	GREENTOWN, BLUELAND
6	17 Apr 2001
7	ABD-1
8	<u>OPERATION ORDER 0002-01 (OPERATION SHARP SWORD) (U)</u>
9	BASIC ORDER (U)
10	(U) REFERENCES:
11	(a) Maps and Charts: Series ONC, sheet G-2 (ORANGELAND, BLUELAND),
12	edition 12, 1:1,000,000
13	(b) USCINCPAC Planning Directive, 27 March 2001
14	(U) TIME ZONE: Zulu
15	(U) TASK ORGANIZATION. Annex A



Lines 17-18. General. For plans only, describe the general politico-military environment that would establish the probable preconditions for execution of the plan.

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

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

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

Lines 23-26. Paragraph 2. Paragraph 2 is a clear concise statement of the tasks and purpose of the operation. State the who, what, when, where, why, and as much of the how as necessary. There are no subparagraphs. The mission is always stated here even if shown on an operation overlay or map.

Line 27. Paragraph 3. Paragraph 3 addresses execution.

Line 28. Commander's Intent. Commander's intent is the commander's personal expression of the purpose of the operation. It must be clear and concise. The purpose of providing intent is to allow subordinates to exercise judgement and initiative—to depart from the plan when the unforeseen occurs—in a way that is consistent with the higher commander's aims.

Line 29. Concept of Operations. The concept of operations is a summary statement of how the operation will be accomplished. It amplifies paragraph 2. It may be shown graphically or published as an appendix to annex C. Specific unit designations are not used.

Lines 30-36. Tasks. This subparagraph identifies tasks to subordinate elements. Each task assigned to a unit will include the purpose of the task (e.g., in order to . . .). Each unit, organic or attached, or tactical grouping that is executing a tactical task is assigned a separate, numbered subparagraph. All tactical tasks must be listed in the body of the basic order. List tasks for major subordinate elements as follows:

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

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

Line 37. Reserve. The reserve is tasked separately from the remainder of the units. It is usually designated the main effort when committed. If there is no reserve designated, then so state.

Line 38. Commander's Critical Information Requirements. Commander's critical information requirements (CCIRs) identify information the commander has deemed critical to maintaining his situational awareness, planning future activities, and assisting in timely and informed decisionmaking.

Line 39. Coordinating Instructions. This paragraph is the final subparagraph in paragraph 3. It contains instructions common to two or more units, coordinating details and control measures applicable to the command as a whole, and time or conditions when plan is to be executed. It refers to annexes or references for coordinating details when appropriate. Communications instructions are shown in paragraph 5 only.

Line 40. Paragraph 4. Paragraph 4 contains logistic and personnel information and instructions for the operation. It usually refers to appropriate annexes.

Line 41. Page number.

Line 42. Classification.

- 16 1. (U) Situation
- 17 a. (U) General. With the failure of deterrence, Blueland forces crossed the Or-
- 18 angeland border and have been successful in their initial battles.
- 19 b. (U) Battlespace. See Appendix 18 to Annex C.
- 20 c. (U) Enemy Forces. See Annex B and current INTSUMs.
- 21 d. (U) Friendly Forces
- 22 e. (U) Attachments and Detachments
- 23 2. (U) Mission. On order, I MEF, as the main effort, conducts offensive operations
- 24 to defeat enemy forces in zone in order to restore the Blueland border. Be prepared to
- 25 continue offensive operations into Orangeland to destroy remaining Orangeland
- 26 offensive military capabilities.
- 27 3. (U) Execution
- 28 a. (U) Commander's Intent
- 29 b. (U) Concept of Operations. This operation will be conducted in three phases.
- 30 c. (U) Tasks
- 31 (1) (U) 1st MARINE DIVISION (Rein)
- 32 (2) (U) 3^d MARINE DIVISION (-) (Rein)
- 33 (3) (U) 3^d MARINE AIRCRAFT WING
- 34 (4) (U) 1st FORCE SERVICE SUPPORT GROUP (-) (Rein)
- 35 (5) (U) SPECIAL PURPOSE MAGTF-B
- 36 (6) (U) REAR AREA COMMANDER
- 37 d. (U) MEF Reserve
- 38 e. (U) Commander's Critical Information Requirements
- 39 f. (U) Coordinating Instructions
- 40 4. (U) Administration and Logistics

41 Page number

42 CLASSIFICATION

Line 1. Classification.

Lines 2-6. Paragraph 5. Paragraph 5 contains instructions that establish and maintain command and signal procedures.

Command Relationships. Used in a large operation, or when relationships are unusual. Otherwise omitted.

Command Posts and Headquarters. May reference operations overlay for locations.

Succession to Command. Designates the succession to command for the operation.

Signal. Usually references annex K and other communication publications such as standing operating procedures or communications-electronics operating instructions. Includes instructions or restrictions about communications-electronic such as radio restrictions or pyrotechnic signals.

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

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

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

Appendixes, tabs, exhibits, and maps do not require signature or authentication except when distributed separately from the basic operation order or plan.

1. Original signed by commander:

Name
Rank and Service
Title

2. Original signed by chief of staff/executive officer:

BY COMMAND OF COLONEL NAME

Name
Rank and Service
Title

1	CLASSIFICATION
2	5. (U) <u>Command and Signal</u>
3	a. (U) <u>Command Relationships</u> . See Annex J (Command Relationships).
4	b. (U) <u>Command Posts and Headquarters</u>
5	c. (U) <u>Succession to Command</u>
6	d. (U) <u>Signal</u> . See Annex K (Combat Information System).
7	ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT
8	
9	GERALD C. THOMAS
10	Lieutenant General, USMC
	Commanding



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

The annex formats and designations shown in this appendix are mandatory unless otherwise indicated. The annex title is upper and lower case. Within the body of the basic operation order or plan, the annex title is also enclosed in parentheses. When any of these annexes are not required, the annex is noted as “not used” or “not applicable” in the table of contents. Elements that will be developed later may be noted as “to be issued.” The annex format is preferred for other attachments (appendices, tabs, etc.), but it may be altered when information or instructions must be included for which no provision is made in the standard format.

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

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

Line 32-36. Authentication. Authenticated by G/S-3 when commander’s or executive officer’s signature is on the original only; G/S-3 authentication appears on all other copies.

Line 37. Page number.

Line 38. Classification.

11 ANNEXES:

- 12 A – Task Organization
- 13 B – Intelligence
- 14 C – Operations
- 15 D – Logistics
- 16 E – Personnel
- 17 F – Public Affairs
- 18 G – Civil Affairs
- 19 H – Meteorological and Oceanographic Operations
- 20 J – Command Relationships
- 21 K – Combat Information Systems
- 22 L – Environmental Considerations
- 23 M – Geospatial Information and Services
- 24 N – Space Operations
- 25 P – Host Nation Support
- 26 Q – Medical Services
- 27 S – Special Technical Operations
- 28 U – Information Management
- 29 W – Aviation Operations
- 30 X – Execution Checklist
- 31 Z – Distribution

32 OFFICIAL:

33 s/
34 M.B. TWINING
35 Colonel, USMC
36 AC/S G-3

37 Page number
38 CLASSIFICATION

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Section II. Sample Formats

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

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Sample Format of a Plan Summary

A plan summary allows commanders, staffs, and other individuals and agencies to quickly review the envisioned activities of a command. They are particularly useful in creating situational awareness in newly assigned personnel and in higher, supporting, and adjacent commands. A plan summary is normally only prepared at higher levels of command, such as the component (Marine Corps Forces) and Marine expeditionary force, in support of a unified command plan.

CLASSIFICATION

Copy no. ____ of ____ copies
OFFICIAL DESIGNATION OF COMMAND
PLACE OF ISSUE
Date/time group
Message reference number

OPLAN (Number) (Operation CODEWORD) (U)

PLAN SUMMARY (U)

1. (U) Purpose
 - a. (U) Describe the purpose to be achieved by executing the plan and the desired endstate. If this is a supporting plan, indicate what plan it supports.
 - b. (U) Include a statement similar to the following: "This summary provides military decisionmakers with the major aspects of this plan. It is based on planning factors and estimates available at the time of preparation and is subject to modification in the context of a specific contingency. The information contained herein must be updated before use in adopting courses of action in a particular situation."
2. (U) Conditions for Implementation/Execution
 - a. (U) Politico-Military Situation. Summarize the politico-military situation in which execution of the plan should be considered.
 - b. (U) Legal Considerations. Summarize any legal considerations that may affect plan implementation (status of forces, rules of engagement, international agreements, Law of Armed Conflict, etc.).
3. (U) Operations to be Conducted
 - a. (U) Forces Assigned. Summarize the major forces (assigned, attached, or supporting) and augmentation required from other sources.
 - b. (U) Deployment. Summarize the movements of forces necessary to place combat forces in the operational area. When applicable, include operational security measures to be carried out before full execution of the plan.

Page number

CLASSIFICATION

CLASSIFICATION

- c. (U) Employment. State the general nature of combat operations to be conducted, including amphibious operations, information operations, command and control warfare, etc., when applicable. These operations may be discussed in the phases of the operations. A mission statement, commander's intent, and concept of operations may be written for each phase. This discussion may contain a concise statement of the operation's endstate and endstate for each phase. It may include how unit dispositions at the end of each phase facilitate transition to the next phase. A discussion of the commander's estimate of the enemy's intent may also be included.
 - d. (U) Supporting Plans. List any requirements for supporting plans to be prepared by subordinate and supporting commands or agencies.
 - e. (U) Collateral Plans. List operation plans (OPLANs) that could be implemented before, during, or after the subject plan.
4. (U) Key Assumptions. List assumptions deemed essential to the success of the plan, including the degree of mobilization and mobility (sea and airlift) assumed.
 5. (U) Operational Constraints. List major factors that may impede accomplishment of the mission.
 6. (U) Time to Commence Effective Operations. If appropriate, include a table showing the required time-phased buildup of combat forces in the objective area. Indicate which forces must be available in the operational area before effective operations can begin. Show the elapsed time, following an order to implement the plan, when each significant level of combat force required by the plan could begin effective operations in the objective area. Note that the lowest level of force reported will be the smallest force increment that could initiate effective operations. List successively higher force levels up to the maximum level called for in the basic plan. List any assumptions applied in preparing the table that are not specified in the plan. In determining the time to commence effective operations, consider forces to be deployed or employed to be at normal conditions of readiness; that is, no preparations except those required for force protection. Also consider the following additional factors, as appropriate.
 - a. (U) Time required to carry out command and control warfare as specified in the relevant plans.
 - b. (U) Time for preparation and transmission of necessary orders.
 - c. (U) Reaction time, including all necessary preparations for movement and, if necessary, staging.
 - d. (U) Availability and capability of strategic transportation resources and facilities.
 - e. (U) Time en route to the operation area, using available lift and considering possible restrictions on the use of deployment routes.

Page number

CLASSIFICATION

CLASSIFICATION

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

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Sample Format of a Basic Order or Plan

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Date/time group

Message reference number

OPERATION ORDER OR PLAN (Number) (Operation CODEWORD) (U)
TITLE (U)

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

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

(U) TASK ORGANIZATION: Annex A.

1. (U) Situation

a. (U) General. (May be omitted.) Describe the general politico-military environment that would establish the probable preconditions for execution of the plan. If applicable, state U.S. policy goals and the estimated goals of other parties and outline political decisions needed from other countries to achieve U.S. policy goals and conduct effective U.S. military operations to attain U.S. military missions. Specific details are found in Annex B (Intelligence).

b. (U) Battlespace

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

(2) (U) Area of Interest. Describe the commander's area of interest covered by the basic operation order or plan. This description should address all air, ground, and sea areas that directly affect the operation. A map may also be included as an attachment.

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

c. (U) Enemy Forces. Identify the opposing forces expected on execution (location, disposition) and appraise their general capabilities (defend, reinforce, attack, withdraw, delay). Limit this information to what is vital for the entire command or what is likely to affect mission accomplishment. See Annex B (Intelligence) for details. Address known or potential terrorist threats. When applicable, identify the enemy's operational and tactical center(s) of gravity.

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- d. (U) Friendly Forces
- (1) (U) This paragraph provides information on nonorganic forces having a bearing on the operation. The information is presented in the following order:
- (a) (U) Higher. State the mission statement and commander's intent of the higher commander.
- (b) (U) Adjacent. State the mission statement or relevant tasks of adjacent commanders.
- (c) (U) Supporting. State the command relationship with the supporting commanders (operational control, tactical control, tactical missions, general support, direct support, etc.), or relevant tasks of supporting commanders.
- (2) (U) Identify applicable friendly centers of gravity that require support and protection for successful mission accomplishment.
- (3) (U) If applicable, list the tasks of government and nongovernmental departments, agencies, and organizations associated with the operation (e.g., Department of State, Doctors Without Borders, Red Cross).
- e. (U) Attachments and Detachments. List nonorganic units attached to or units detached from the issuing headquarters. If no units are attached or detached, state "None."
- f. (U) Assumptions. (Omitted in orders.) List all assumptions on which the plan is based.
- g. (U) Legal Considerations. List those significant legal considerations on which the plan is based (e.g., status of forces agreements, Law of Land Warfare).
2. (U) Mission. A concise statement of the tasks and purpose of the operation. State the who, what, when, where, why, and as much of the how as necessary to ensure command, control, and coordination. The who, what, when, and where are derived from the essential tasks. The why is derived from the purpose of the operation.
3. (U) Execution
- a. (U) Commander's Intent. Commander's intent is the commander's personal expression of the purpose of the operation. It must be clear, concise, and easily understood. It may also include how the commander envisions achieving a decision as well as the endstate or conditions, that when satisfied, accomplish the purpose.
- b. (U) Concept of Operations. A description of how the operation will be conducted to accomplish the mission. It includes a narrative of the actions to be taken and a generic organization for combat (main and supporting effort, reserve, etc.). The concept of operations is the course of action approved by the commander during planning. It may be summarized here if a detailed concept of operations is

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contained in Annex C (Operations). The concept of operations provides a basis for supporting concepts such as—

- (1) (U) Concept of Maneuver. See Annex C (Operations) and Annex W (Aviation Operations) (if applicable) for detailed description.
- (2) (U) Concept of Fires. See Annex C (Operations) and Annex W (Aviation Operations) (if applicable) for detailed description.
- (3) (U) Concept of Support. See Annex D (Logistics/Combat Service Support) for detailed description.
- (4) (U) Other Concepts as Required. See appropriate annex for detailed description.

c. (U) Tasks

- (1) (U) List the tasks assigned to each subordinate commander in separate, numbered subparagraphs. Tasks are listed in order of priority or accomplishment. Tasks may be listed by phase. Designation of main effort or supporting effort is noted in tasking.
- (2) (U) Some actions are so critical that the commander may assign them as missions. These should be assigned as task and purpose (in order to . . .). Other actions are assigned simply as tasks because the purpose is understood. The commander assigns subordinate commanders tasks he deems necessary to fulfill his concept of operations.
- (3) (U) Unit or element task assignments are listed in the following order:
 - (a) (U) Offensive operations: ground combat units or elements (infantry first followed by artillery and combat support units numerically or alphabetically), aviation combat units or elements (aircraft units, combat support, combat service support), combat service support units or elements.
 - (b) (U) Defensive operations: units or elements closest to the enemy are listed first, ground and aviation combat units in the forward defense area are then listed in numerical order, other units are then listed alphabetically.
- (4) (U) Each task assignment may begin with the assets (attached or in support) available to the unit or element.

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

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- e. (U) Commander's Critical Information Requirements. Commander' critical information requirements identify information on friendly and enemy activities and the battlespace that the commander deems as critical to maintaining situational awareness, planning future activities, and assisting in timely and informed decisionmaking. They help the commander tailor the command and control organization and are central to effective information management, which directs the processing, flow, and use of information throughout the force.
- f. (U) Coordinating Instructions. List the instructions applicable to the entire command or two or more elements of the command that are necessary for proper coordination of the operation but are not appropriate for inclusion in a particular annex. They should establish the conditions for execution and provide information about the timing of execution and deployments.
4. (U) Administration and Logistics
- a. (U) Personnel. In preparing this paragraph, refer to Annex E (Personnel). Identify detailed planning requirements and subordinate taskings. Assign tasks for establishing and operating personnel facilities, managing accurate and timely personnel accountability and strength reporting, and making provisions for staffing. Discuss the administrative management of participating personnel, the reconstitution of forces, command replacement and rotation policies, and required individual augmentation to command headquarters and other operational requirements.
- b. (U) Logistics. In preparing a basic operation order or plan, refer to Annex D (Logistics/Combat Service Support). Logistic phases are normally concurrent with operational phases. This subparagraph should address sustainment priorities and resources, base development and other civil engineering requirements, host nation support, and inter-Service responsibilities. Identify the priority and movement of major logistic items for each option and phase of the concept. Identify strategic and theater ports for resupply. Outline transportation policies, guidance, and procedures for all options. Identify logistic and transportation assumptions and include them with other plan assumptions in subparagraph 1.f (Assumptions). Identify detailed planning requirements and subordinate taskings.
- c. (U) Public Affairs. Include appropriate information in this subparagraph or refer to Annex F (Public Affairs).
- d. (U) Civil Affairs. Include appropriate information in this subparagraph or refer to Annex G (Civil Affairs).
- e. (U) Meteorological and Oceanographic Services. Include appropriate information in this subparagraph or refer to Annex H (Meteorological and Oceanographic Operations).
- f. (U) Geospatial Information and Services. Include appropriate information in this subparagraph or refer to Annex M (Geospatial Information and Services).

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g. (U) Medical Services. In preparing the basic operation order or plan, refer to Annex Q (Medical Services). Identify planning requirements and subordinate tasks for hospitalization and evacuation. Address critical medical supplies and resources. Refer to wartime host nation support agreements or provisions to support in Annex P (Host Nation Support).

5. (U) Command and Signal

a. (U) Command Relationships. Include appropriate information in this subparagraph or refer to Annex J (Command Relationships). Indicate any changes to major commands and the time of the expected shift. Identify all existing memorandums of understanding and those that require development.

b. (U) Command Posts and Headquarters. The command post is the headquarters echelon (forward, main, rear) where the commander is located. List the designations and locations of the issuing commander's headquarters echelons and appropriate senior, adjacent, and subordinate commanders' headquarters echelons. When headquarters are to be displaced, indicate the location and time of opening of the new headquarters and closing of the old headquarters.

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

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

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ANNEXES:

- A – Task Organization
- B – Intelligence
- C – Operations
- D – Logistics/Combat Service Support
- E – Personnel
- F – Public Affairs
- G – Civil Affairs
- H – Meteorological and Oceanographic Operations

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- J – Command Relationships
- K – Combat Information Systems
- L – Environmental Considerations
- M – Geospatial Information and Services
- N – Space Operations
- P – Host Nation Support
- Q – Medical Services
- S – Special Technical Operations
- U – Information Management
- W – Aviation Operations
- X – Execution Checklist
- Z – Distribution

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Sample Format of Appendix 18 (Operations Overlay) to Annex C

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

Utilize appropriate register marks and graphics from MCRP 5-2A, Operational Terms and Graphics, to visually depict desired aspects of the operation. The basis of the operations overlay is the approved course of action graphics sketch. It may depict—

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

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