

CHAPTER II

COMMAND, CONTROL, AND COMMUNICATIONS

“The measure of command and control effectiveness is simple: either our command and control works faster than the enemy’s decision and execution cycle or the enemy will own our command and control.”

Fleet Marine Force Manual 3

1. Purpose

CAS requires an integrated, flexible, and responsive command and control structure to process CAS requirements and a dependable, interoperable, and secure communications architecture to exercise control. This chapter outlines the joint and component airspace control agencies involved and joint force connectivity required for integrated CAS operations.

2. General

The JFC normally exercises operational control (OPCON) through component commanders. CAS in joint operations is controlled via the joint air operations center (JAOC), using host component organic C2 architecture. Figure II-1 graphically illustrates joint force CAS connectivity. The JFACC/JFC staff requires reliable, secure communications to exchange information with component commanders. In joint operations, components provide and operate the C2 systems, which have similar functions at each level of command. If a JFACC is designated, the JFACC tasks capabilities/forces made available for joint tasking through these Service component C2 systems. Figure II-2 depicts functional equivalents among the US Air Force (USAF) theater air control system (TACS), Army air-ground system (AAGS), Navy tactical air control system (NTACS), Marine air command and control system (MACCS), and special operations command and control, as well as liaison elements.

3. CAS Support for Joint Force Operations

During joint force operations, a command relationship between land components (e.g., tactical control [TACON], OPCON, support) may or may not exist.

a. If a command relationship is established between components, the supporting component uses the CAS C2 system of the supported component. For example, if an Army brigade is OPCON to a Marine MAGTF, the Army brigade directs CAS requests through the brigade fire support element (FSE) to the Marine fire support coordination center (FSCC) in the MACCS. The CAS request is handled the same as any other CAS request in the MACCS system.

b. If a command relationship is not established between components, each component forwards CAS requests utilizing its respective CAS process to the JAOC for consideration/fill. For example, a MAGTF and an Army division are operating as adjacent units under the JFC. Each component would direct CAS requests through their respective CAS process to the JAOC for consideration/fill.

c. Figures II-3 (Air Force/Army TACS/AAGS nets) and II-4 (Navy/Marine amphibious tactical air control system [ATACS] nets) depict component air C2 agencies and communications nets. This information is provided for supporting components to determine control agencies and frequency band connectivity for CAS.