

## LESSON 4 JOINT TARGETING PROCESS

*“When I became [combatant commander] I asked my component commanders to get together and start defining certain things, like joint fires ... They got together, locked themselves in a back room with a lot of black eyes and bloody noses. I kept checking in asking, “Do I have to weigh-in?” They said, “Stay out of it.” In the end, they produced [CENTCOM] joint fires standard operating procedures.”*

—General Anthony C. Zinni, USMC  
Former Commander, US Central Command

### Introduction

This lesson presents the joint targeting process—along with the component targeting processes and how they are integrated into the joint targeting process. It also introduces joint force targeting agencies along with their duties and responsibilities.

In the broadest sense targeting is a functional process we use to match our desired effects with the appropriate assets to produce tasking orders for subordinate commanders. (See the following figure.) Subordinate commanders use these tasking orders to create fire plans to attack the enemy. Targeting helps us to select appropriate targets and match them to the suitable response (lethal and non-lethal). Targeting requires an understanding of the enemy situation and the commander’s mission (task and intent). From these we can derive centers of gravity, critical enemy vulnerabilities and those targets that, if exploited, deny the enemy resources critical to his ability to resist.



Targeting is a continual decisionmaking process that begins with receipt of the mission and continues through the orders development, execution of the order, and assessment of the attack. It is grounded in the friendly scheme of maneuver and plan. It includes an assessment of the weather, terrain, and the enemy situation. This assessment identifies those enemy units, equipment, facilities, and systems that must be attacked or influenced to facilitate success.

Targeting includes specifying which targets are to be acquired and attacked, when they are to be acquired and attacked, and what is required to achieve the desired effects. During combat assessment (CA) it may be determined that the initial attack did not produce the desired effect. If it is a crucial target this may require retargeting for further attack.

The component targeting processes are integrated into the joint targeting process in two ways—

- Directly through executing an assigned joint task.
- Indirectly through conducting or directing actions that support the joint force commander's (JFC's) targeting guidance and intent.

To manage his targeting effort (plan, coordinate, and deconflict), the JFC typically establishes a joint targeting coordination board (JTCCB). The JTCCB may be a coordinating and integrating center for the targeting oversight effort or a JFC-level review mechanism. In any event, the JFC defines the role and determines who chairs the JTCCB.

## **Student Requirements by Educational Objective**

### **Requirement 1**

Objective 1. Explain the purpose of the joint targeting process. [JPME Areas 2(a), 3(a)(c), 4(e)]

Objective 2. Describe the joint targeting process. [JPME Areas 2(a), 3(a)(c), 4(e)]

Read:

- Joint Pub 3-60, *Joint Doctrine for Targeting*, 17 Jan 2002, pp. I-1 to I-2 (paragraphs 2 and 3) and II-1 to II-11 (12 pages)

The joint targeting process determines the employment of military force to achieve the JFC's objective. Both operations and intelligence share this function. The joint targeting process includes the steps by which target intelligence and target materials are produced and applied to support operational decisionmaking and force employment. The joint targeting process is depicted as a "cyclical process" with sequential phases. However, the joint targeting process is really a continuously operating series of closely related, interacting, and interdependent functions. It provides for a logical progression in the development of targeting solutions and proceeds from the definition of the problem to an assessment of the solution. The cycle allows the commander to test multiple solutions and refine his understanding of the problem and the proposed solutions.

Joint targeting is not a static, inflexible process but rather a dynamic process. Each phase can directly affect other phases of the process. For example, CA directly affects subsequent force application if mission results prove inadequate. Likewise, capabilities directly affect execution planning, as the type of weapon will influence execution tactics.

## Requirement 2

Objective 3. Compare and contrast the land and maritime component four-phase targeting process. [JPME Area 2(a)(b), 3(c)]

Objective 4. Identify the air component six-phase targeting process. [JPME Area 2(a)(b), 3(c)]

Objective 5. Summarize how information operations (IO) is integrated into the joint targeting process. [JPME Area 2(a), 3(c), 5(c)]

Read:

- Joint Pub 3-60, *Joint Doctrine for Targeting*, pp. C-1 to C-10 (stop at 7. Joint Targeting Process Within Deliberate and Crisis Action Planning) (10 pages)

*“Fire and maneuver win battles. The purpose of movement is to get fires in a more advantageous place to play on the enemy. [To this end] Air and Ground commanders must be constantly on the alert to devise and use new methods of cooperation ... for there can never be too many projectiles in a battle.”*

—General George S. Patton Jr., USA  
*War As I Knew It*, 1947

The components have developed targeting processes to accommodate their separate requirements. While these processes differ, they are complementary to and in support of the joint targeting process to ensure accomplishment of the JFC’s targeting efforts. (See the two following figures.)

Targeting occurs at all levels of command within a joint force and is applied by Service and component-level forces capable of attacking targets with lethal and nonlethal means to achieve the desired effects. Component personnel who plan, integrate, execute, or assess fires must understand the joint targeting process to fulfill the JFC’s and component commander’s intent and objectives. Effective coordination, deconfliction, and synchronization maximize the strategic, operational, and tactical effects of joint targeting. Component personnel must have effective targeting procedures that perform the following:

- Comply with the JFC’s and component commander’s objectives, guidance, and intent.
- Coordinate, synchronize, and deconflict attacks.
- Respond rapidly to time-sensitive targets.
- Avoid fratricide.
- Eliminate duplication of effort.
- Provide expeditious effects assessment.
- Ensure a common perspective of all targeting efforts.

Decisions to modify missions or direct attacks that deviate from the planned activity must be based on the commander's guidance. These decisions are made with the understanding of the perspective and target priorities of other component targeting efforts throughout the campaign.



**Joint and Component Targeting Relationship.**

Joint Targeting Process	Land/Maritime Targeting Process	Air Targeting Process
COMMANDER'S OBJECTIVES, GUIDANCE, AND INTENT	DECIDE	OBJECTIVES AND GUIDANCE
TARGET DEVELOPMENT, VALIDATION, NOMINATION, AND PRIORITIZATION		TARGET DEVELOPMENT
CAPABILITIES ANALYSIS	DETECT	WEAPONERING
COMMANDER'S DECISION AND FORCE ASSIGNMENT	DELIVER	FORCE APPLICATION
MISSION PLANNING AND FORCE EXECUTION		EXECUTION PLANNING AND FORCE EXECUTION
COMBAT ASSESSMENT	ASSESS	COMBAT ASSESSMENT

**Targeting Processes Comparisons.**

### Requirement 3

Objective 6. Outline the organization and role of the joint targeting coordination board (JTCB). [JPME Areas 1(b), 2(a), 3(c), 4(e)]

Objective 7. Explain the responsibilities of the component targeting boards. [JPME Areas 1(b), 2(a), 3(c), 4(e)]

Objective 8. Describe joint targeting documents and how they are produced and approved. [JPME Areas 2(a), 3(c)]

Read:

- Joint Pub 3-60, *Joint Doctrine for Targeting*, pp. III-1 to III-12 (stop at 11. Joint Targeting Steering Group) (11 pages)

Representatives from the components and the joint force staff man the JTCB. The JTCB coordinates targeting information, recommends targeting priorities to the JFC, and prepares the joint integrated prioritized target list (JIPTL). Normally, JTCB meetings are conducted daily to disseminate JFC targeting guidance and objectives, monitor effectiveness of targeting efforts through CA, coordinate and deconflict all joint targeting operations, validate the no-strike list, approve new target nominations for inclusion in the joint target list, and establish priority targets in the JIPTL. The JTCB is concerned with future operations, not the current battle. The JTCB ensures deconfliction between operations of the various components. It also ensures that various components support each other and support the JFC's campaign strategy. Fires-related conflicts that arise between the components—and that cannot be solved by the JTCB—are submitted to the JFC for resolution.

Component commanders typically establish a targeting board. The targeting board must have representatives from the component staff, other component LNOs, and major subordinate units. The targeting board provides the members a forum to review joint targeting guidance and joint apportionment and for advising the commander on alternatives for achieving the JFC's objectives. The board members consider the combined surface, subsurface, air, and information warfare capabilities (lethal and nonlethal) of their force and other component forces. Specific responsibilities of these boards may include the following:

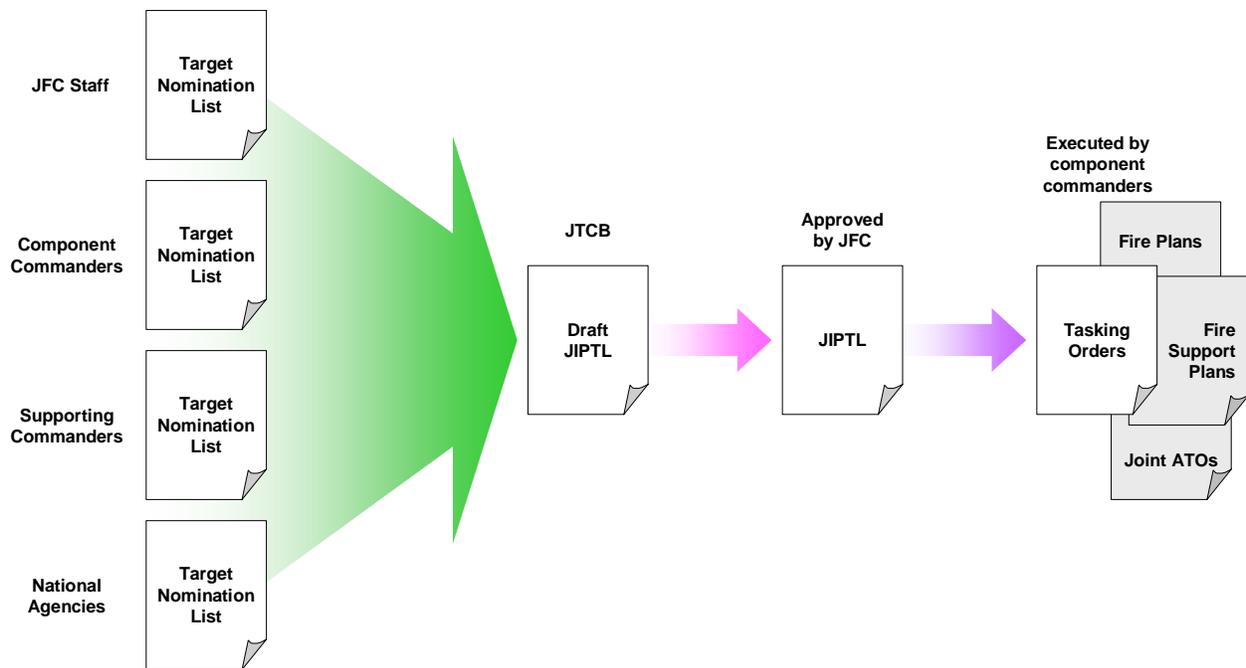
- Assigning component target priorities.
- Specifying the desired effects of joint targeting in the component area of operations.
- Developing a component prioritized target list for submission to the JFC for inclusion in the JIPTL.
- Identifying requests for supporting fires from other component commanders.
- Coordinating with other component targeting efforts to avoid duplication of effort and reduce the risk of fratricide.

There are additional agencies or elements that may be established at the joint or component level to assist in the joint targeting efforts. The JFC may establish a joint fires element (JFE) within the J-3. The JFE gives the assistant chief of staff J-3 recommendations on joint fires planning

and coordination and may also support the JTCB. The joint force air component commander (JFACC) may organize a joint guidance, apportionment, and targeting team (JGAT). The JGAT team links joint targets to be attacked by aviation forces/capabilities made available to the JFACC through the JFC (based on the JFC's guidance), recommends air apportionment to the JFACC, and provides other targeting support to the JFACC.

Once the JIPTL has been approved by the JFC, it is disseminated through the joint force. The component commanders develop fire plans to accomplish the JFC's objectives. (See the following figure.) To ensure that this occurs, they must complete the essential targeting functions—synchronize, integrate, deconflict, allocate resources, and match appropriate weapons to particular targets.

All component commanders should have a basic understanding of each component's mission and scheme of maneuver to support the JFC's campaign plan. Therefore, each component commander provides a description of his fire support plan through the liaison elements to the other Service and functional component commanders. This basic understanding promotes unity of effort through the coordination and deconfliction of targeting efforts between components, multinational forces, and other agencies.



**Flow of Joint Targeting Process Documents.**

The JIPTL is the basis for the joint air weaponing assessment (recommended aim points, weapons systems and munitions, fuzing, target identification and description, target attack objectives, probability of destruction, and collateral damage concerns). The final prioritized targets are included into the master air attack plan (MAAP). The MAAP is the joint air plan of employment that is the foundation of the joint ATO.

## Lesson Summary

Targeting is a complex process. The three basic issues are (1) what is to be attacked, (2) how to attack the target, and (3) how to assess results of the attack.

The joint targeting process helps commanders and their staffs select appropriate targets from all the personnel, equipment, and facilities in the battlespace that are vulnerable could be attacked. This process provides targets that, if attacked, have the greatest likelihood of meeting the commander's objectives by defeating the enemy's center(s) of gravity. By understanding the actions taken within each of the steps of the targeting process, you understand how best to achieve the commander's objectives.

The joint targeting process was developed as an aid to decisionmaking. It provides a logical progression in the development of targeting solutions. The cycle can be adapted to fit circumstances throughout the range of military operations. It is important to note that the cycle is **NOT** tied to any particular weapons system, theater of operations, level of conflict, or automated operational support systems.

## JPME Summary

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