



ADRP 6-0

MISSION COMMAND

MAY 2012

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Mission Command

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Preface

Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 6-0 augments the mission command doctrine established in Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 6-0, also titled *Mission Command*. This publication contains an expanded discussion on the overarching doctrinal guidance on command, control, and the mission command warfighting function. It describes how commanders, supported by their staffs, combine the art of command and the science of control to understand situations, make decisions, direct action, and lead forces toward mission accomplishment.

The principal audience for ADRP 6-0 is all members of the profession of Arms. Commanders and staffs of Army headquarters serving as joint task force or multinational headquarters should also refer to applicable joint or multinational doctrine concerning command and control of joint or multinational forces. Trainers and educators throughout the Army will also use this publication.

Commanders, staffs, and subordinates ensure their decisions and actions comply with applicable U.S., international, and, in some cases, host-nation laws and regulations. Commanders at all levels ensure their Soldiers operate in accordance with the law of war and the rules of engagement. (See Field Manual [FM] 27-10.)

To comprehend the doctrine contained in ADRP 6-0, readers must first understand the nature of operations and the Army's operational concept described in ADP 3-0, *Unified Land Operations*. Readers must understand how the foundations of unified land operations contribute to unified action. In addition, they must be familiar with the fundamentals of the operations process established in ADP 5-0, *The Operations Process*, and the fundamentals of Army leadership.

Taken as a whole, the doctrine in ADP 6-0, ADRP 6-0, and ADP 5-0 forms the foundation for the tactics, techniques, and procedures for the exercise of mission command.

ADRP 6-0 uses joint terms where applicable. Selected joint and Army terms and definitions appear in both the glossary and the text. Terms for which ADRP 6-0 is the proponent publication (the authority) are marked with an asterisk (*) in the glossary. Definitions for which ADRP 6-0 is the proponent publication are boldfaced in the text. These terms and their definitions will be in the next revision of FM 1-02. For other definitions shown in the text, the term is italicized and the number of the proponent publication follows the definition.

ADRP 6-0 applies to the Active Army, Army National Guard/Army National Guard of the United States, and United States Army Reserve unless otherwise stated.

The proponent of ADRP 6-0 is the United States Army Combined Arms Center. The preparing agency is the Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate, United States Army Combined Arms Center. Send comments and recommendations on a DA Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms) to Commander, U.S. Army Combined Arms Center and Fort Leavenworth, ATTN: ATZL-MCK-D (ADRP 6-0), 300 McPherson Avenue, Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-2337; by e-mail to usarmy.leavenworth.mccoe.mbx.cadd-org-mailbox@mail.mil; or submit an electronic DA Form 2028.

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Introduction

Historically, military commanders have employed variations of two basic concepts of command: mission command and detailed command. While some have favored detailed command, the nature of operations and the patterns of military history point to the advantages of mission command. Mission command has been the Army's preferred style for exercising command since the 1980s. The concept traces its roots back to the German concept of *Auftragstaktik*, which translates roughly to mission-type tactics. *Auftragstaktik* held all German commissioned and noncommissioned officers dutybound to do whatever the situation required, as they personally saw it. Understanding and achieving the broader purpose of a task was the central idea behind this style of command. Commanders expected subordinates to act when opportunities arose.

Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 6-0 develops the concept of mission command to help Army forces function effectively and accomplish missions. This publication expands on the principles of mission command found in ADP 6-0. ADRP 6-0 updates mission command doctrine to incorporate the Army's operational concept of unified land operations, found in ADP 3-0. ADRP 6-0 remains generally consistent with the doctrine in the 2011 edition of Field Manual (FM) 6-0, *Mission Command*, on key topics, while adopting updated terminology and concepts as necessary. These topics include mission command as a foundation of unified land operations and updated mission command warfighting function tasks.

The significant change from FM 6-0, 2011, is the restructuring of doctrinal information. The principles of the mission command philosophy of command and the mission command warfighting function are now found in ADP 6-0 and ADRP 6-0. Under the restructuring plan, several new FMs will address the specific tactics and procedures associated with mission command.

ADRP 6-0 contains three chapters:

Chapter 1 discusses the exercise of mission command. First, it describes the general nature of military operations, including the complex challenges for which mission command doctrine must provide solutions. Then it discusses mission command as a foundation of the Army's operational concept, unified land operations. Next, it explains the Army's approach to the exercise of mission command, including an introduction to mission command as a philosophy of command and as a warfighting function.

Chapter 2 addresses the mission command philosophy of command in greater depth. First, it discusses the principles of mission command that guide commanders and staffs. Next, it elaborates on the art of command, including authority, decisionmaking, and leadership. Then it explains the science of control, including information, communication, structure, and degree of control. It concludes with a short discussion of how commanders apply the philosophy of mission command to balance the art of command with the science of control.

Chapter 3 addresses the mission command warfighting function in greater depth. First, it defines the mission command warfighting function and describes its purpose. Next, it discusses the tasks of the mission command warfighting function, including commander tasks, staff tasks, and additional tasks. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the commander's mission command system, including personnel, networks, information systems, processes and procedures, and facilities and equipment.

This mission command doctrine makes some significant changes from FM 6-0. Changes include revising the mission command warfighting function tasks. The commander tasks are—

- Drive the operations process through their activities of understanding, visualizing, describing, directing, leading, and assessing operations.
- Develop teams, both within their own organizations and with joint, interagency, and multinational partners.
- Inform and influence audiences, inside and outside their organizations.

The staff tasks are—

- Conduct the operations process: plan, prepare, execute, and assess.
- Conduct knowledge management and information management.
- Conduct inform and influence activities.
- Conduct cyber electromagnetic activities.

The additional tasks are—

- Conduct military deception.
- Conduct civil affairs operations.
- Install, operate, and maintain the network.
- Conduct airspace control.
- Conduct information protection.

ADRP 6-0 provides a starting point for the exercise of mission command. It establishes how commanders, supported by their staffs, apply the foundational mission command philosophy with the mission command warfighting function to lead forces toward mission accomplishment. The doctrine in this publication is a guide for action rather than a set of fixed rules. In operations, effective leaders recognize when and where doctrine, training, or even their experience, no longer fits the situation, and they adapt accordingly.

Based on current doctrinal changes, certain terms for which ADP 6-0 and ADRP 6-0 are proponent have been modified. The glossary contains acronyms and defined terms. See introductory table-1 for specific term changes.

Introductory Table-1. Modified Army terms

<i>Term</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
art of command	Modifies the definition.
ASCOPE	Retained as an acronym; no longer formally defined.
commander's intent	Adopted the joint definition; Army definition no longer used.
exceptional information	No longer formally defined.
information requirement	Modifies the definition. No longer plural.
knowledge management	Modifies the definition.
METT-TC	Retained as an acronym; no longer a formally defined term.
mission command	Modifies the definition.
OAKOC	Retained as an acronym; no longer a formally defined term.
PMESII-PT	Retained as an acronym; no longer a formally defined term.
science of control	Modifies the definition.

Chapter 1

The Exercise of Mission Command

This chapter begins by describing the general nature of military operations, including intrinsic challenges. Next, it describes how mission command helps leaders overcome these challenges in the conduct of unified land operations. Then it gives an overview of the Army's approach to mission command. Finally, it introduces the mission command philosophy of command and the mission command warfighting function.

THE NATURE OF MILITARY OPERATIONS

1-1. Military operations are complex, human endeavors characterized by the continuous, mutual adaptation of give and take, moves, and countermoves among all participants. The enemy is not an inanimate object to be acted upon. It has its own objectives. While friendly forces try to impose their will on the enemy, the enemy resists and seeks to impose its will on friendly forces. In addition, operations occur in and among civilian groups whose desires influence and are influenced by military operations. The results of these interactions are often unpredictable—and perhaps uncontrollable.

1-2. The unpredictability of human behavior affects military operations. Commanders face thinking, uncooperative, and adaptive enemies. They can never predict with certainty how enemies will act and react, or how events will develop. Even the behavior of friendly forces is often uncertain because of the effects of stress, mistakes, chance, or friction. The sudden death of a local leader that leads to an eruption of violence illustrates chance. The combinations of countless factors that impinge on the conduct of operations, from broken equipment that slows movement to complicated plans that confuse subordinates, are examples of friction.

1-3. In operations, commanders will continue to face thinking and adaptive enemies, changing civilian perceptions, and differing agendas of various organizations in an operational area. Commanders can seldom predict with certainty how enemies or civilians will act and react or how events may develop. Commanders and subordinates must learn from experience, anticipate change, and develop adaptability so they can conduct operations more effectively than their opponents.

UNIFIED LAND OPERATIONS AND MISSION COMMAND

1-4. The Army's primary mission is to organize, train, and equip forces to conduct prompt and sustained land combat operations. The Army does this through its operational concept of unified land operations. *Unified land operations* describes how the Army seizes, retains, and exploits the initiative to gain and maintain a position of relative advantage in sustained land operations through simultaneous offensive, defensive, and stability operations in order to prevent or deter conflict, prevail in war, and create the conditions for favorable conflict resolution (ADP 3-0). It is executed through decisive action by means of the Army core competencies and is guided by mission command.

1-5. *Mission command* is the exercise of authority and direction by the commander using mission orders to enable disciplined initiative within the commander's intent to empower agile and adaptive leaders in the conduct of unified land operations (ADP 6-0). Mission command is one of the foundations of unified land operations. This philosophy of command helps commanders capitalize on the human ability to take action to develop the situation and integrate military operations to achieve the commander's intent and desired end state. Mission command emphasizes centralized intent and dispersed execution through disciplined initiative. This precept guides leaders toward mission accomplishment.

1-6. Disciplined initiative fosters agile and adaptive forces. Throughout operations, unexpected opportunities and threats rapidly present themselves. The nature of military operations requires responsibility and decisionmaking at the point of action. Leaders and subordinates who exercise initiative, within the commander's intent, create opportunity by taking action to develop the situation. Agile leaders are comfortable with uncertainty and understand that disciplined initiative is an important part of being adaptive. Successful Army leaders adapt their thinking, their formations, and their employment techniques to the specific situation they face. Adaptive leaders realize that concrete answers or perfect solutions to operational problems are rarely apparent. They understand that there may be periods of reduced uncertainty as the situation evolves. Agile and adaptive leaders use initiative to set and dictate the terms of action. They accept they will often have to act despite significant gaps in their understanding. Agile and adaptive leaders make timely adjustments in response to changes in their operational environment.

1-7. Through mission command, commanders integrate and synchronize operations. Commanders understand they do not operate independently but as part of a larger force. They integrate and synchronize their actions with the rest of the force to achieve the overall objective of the operation. Commanders create and sustain shared understanding and purpose through collaboration and dialogue within their organizations and with unified action partners to facilitate unity of effort. They provide a clear commander's intent and use mission orders to assign tasks, allocate resources, and issue broad guidance. Guided by the commander's intent and the mission purpose, subordinates take actions that will best accomplish the mission. They take appropriate actions and perform the necessary coordination without needing new orders.

THE ARMY'S APPROACH TO MISSION COMMAND

1-8. To function effectively and have the greatest chance for mission accomplishment, commanders, supported by their staffs, exercise mission command throughout the conduct of operations. In this discussion, the "exercise of mission command" refers to an overarching idea that unifies the mission command philosophy of command and the mission command warfighting function. The exercise of mission command encompasses how Army commanders and staffs apply the foundational mission command philosophy together with the mission command warfighting function, guided by the principles of mission command (see figure 1-1, page 1-3).

1-9. An effective approach to mission command must be comprehensive, without being rigid. Military operations are affected by human interactions and as a whole defy orderly, efficient, and precise control. People are the basis of all military organizations. Commanders understand that some decisions must be made quickly and are better made at the point of action. Mission command concentrates on the objectives of an operation, not how to achieve it. Commanders provide subordinates with their intent, the purpose of the operation, the key tasks, the desired end state, and resources. Subordinates then exercise disciplined initiative to respond to unanticipated problems. Mission command is based on mutual trust and shared understanding and purpose. It demands every Soldier be prepared to assume responsibility, maintain unity of effort, take prudent action, and act resourcefully within the commander's intent.

1-10. Under the philosophy of mission command, commanders understand their leadership guides the actions of the force. Commanders, assisted by their staffs, use the guiding principles of mission command to balance the art of command with the science of control. They use the art of command to exercise authority, to provide leadership, and to make timely decisions. Commanders and staffs use the science of control to regulate forces and direct the execution of operations to conform to their commander's intent.

1-11. The mission command warfighting function consists of the related tasks and a mission command system that support the exercise of authority and direction by the commander. The mission command warfighting function tasks define what commanders and staffs do to integrate the other warfighting functions. It includes mutually supporting commander, staff, and additional tasks. The commander leads the staff tasks, and the staff tasks fully support the commander in executing the commander tasks. Commanders, assisted by their staffs, integrate numerous processes and activities within the headquarters and across the force, as they exercise mission command.

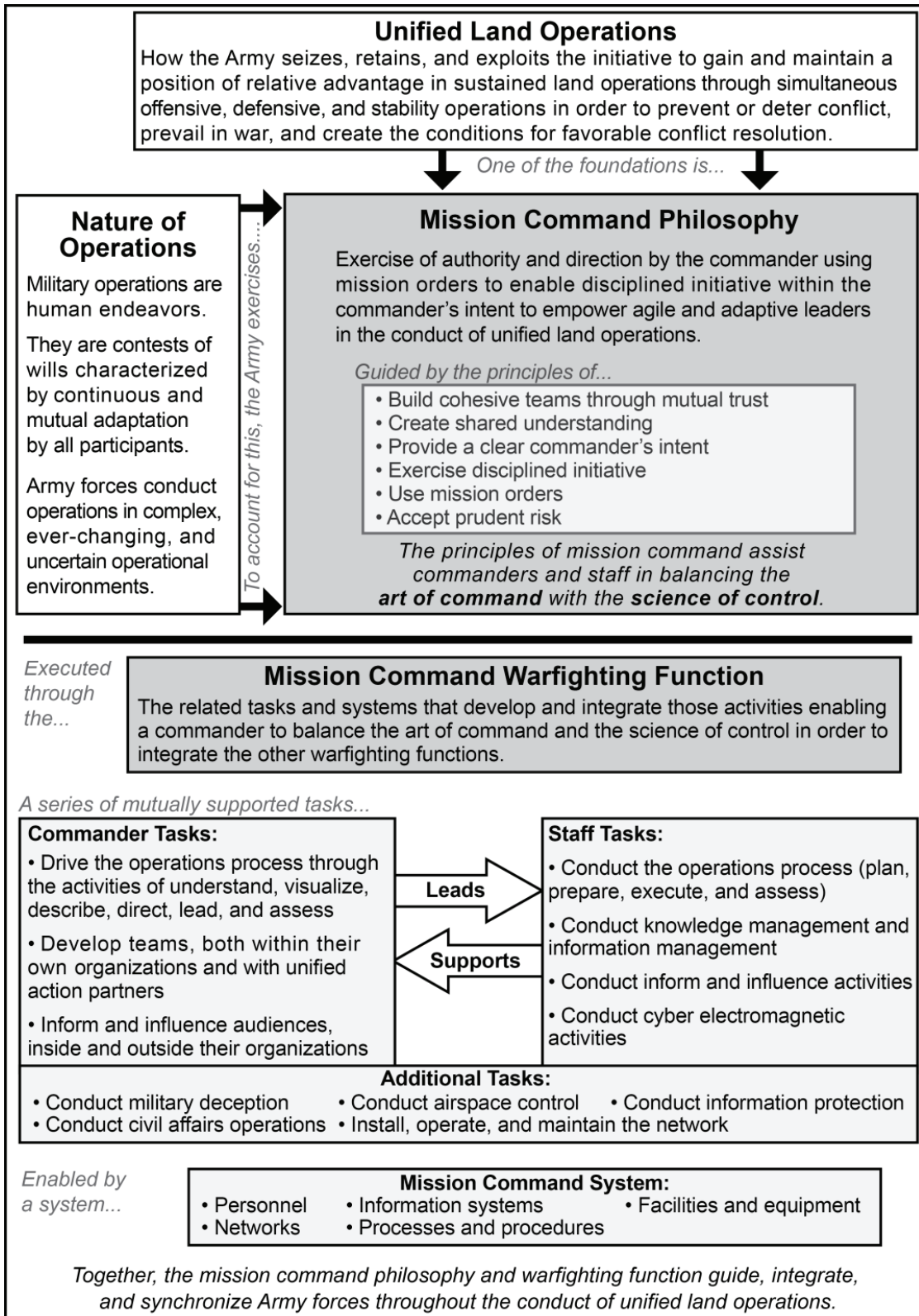


Figure 1-1. Overview of the exercise of mission command

MISSION COMMAND AS A PHILOSOPHY

1-12. As the Army's philosophy of command, mission command emphasizes that command is essentially a human endeavor. Successful commanders understand that their leadership directs the development of teams and helps to establish mutual trust and shared understanding throughout the force. Commanders provide a clear intent to their forces that guides subordinates' actions while promoting freedom of action and initiative. Subordinates, by understanding the commander's intent and the overall common objective, are then able to adapt to rapidly changing situations and exploit fleeting opportunities. They are given the latitude to accomplish assigned tasks in a manner that best fits the situation. Subordinates understand that they have an obligation to act and synchronize their actions with the rest of the force. Likewise, commanders influence the situation and provide direction and guidance while synchronizing their own operations. They encourage subordinates to take action, and they accept prudent risks to create opportunity and to seize the initiative.

1-13. Commanders at all levels need education, rigorous training, and experience to apply these principles effectively. Mission command operates more on self-discipline than imposed discipline.

MISSION COMMAND AS A WARFIGHTING FUNCTION

1-14. Mission command—as a warfighting function—assists commanders in balancing the art of command with the science of control, while emphasizing the human aspects of mission command. A *warfighting function* is a group of tasks and systems (people, organizations, information, and processes) united by a common purpose that commanders use to accomplish missions (ADRP 3-0). The mission command warfighting function consists of the mission command warfighting function tasks and the mission command system.

1-15. The mission command warfighting function integrates the other warfighting functions (movement and maneuver, intelligence, fires, sustainment, and protection) into a coherent whole. By itself, the mission command warfighting function will not secure an objective, move a friendly force, or restore an essential service to a population. Instead, it provides purpose and direction to the other warfighting functions. Commanders use the mission command warfighting function to help achieve objectives and accomplish missions.

Mission Command Warfighting Function Tasks

1-16. The commander is the central figure in mission command. While staffs perform essential functions that amplify the effectiveness of operations, commanders are ultimately responsible for accomplishing assigned missions. Throughout operations, commanders encourage disciplined initiative through a clear commander's intent while providing enough direction to integrate and synchronize the force at the decisive place and time. To this end, commanders perform three primary mission command warfighting function tasks. The commander tasks are—

- Drive the operations process through their activities of understanding, visualizing, describing, directing, leading, and assessing operations.
- Develop teams, both within their own organizations and with joint, interagency, and multinational partners.
- Inform and influence audiences, inside and outside their organizations.

1-17. Staffs support commanders in the exercise of mission command by performing four primary mission command warfighting function tasks. The staff tasks are—

- Conduct the operations process: plan, prepare, execute and assess.
- Conduct knowledge management and information management.
- Conduct inform and influence activities.
- Conduct cyber electromagnetic activities.

1-18. Five additional tasks reside within the mission command warfighting function. These commander-led and staff-supported additional tasks are—

- Conduct military deception.
- Conduct civil affairs operations.
- Install, operate, and maintain the network.
- Conduct airspace control.
- Conduct information protection.

Mission Command System

1-19. Commanders need support to exercise mission command effectively. At every echelon of command, each commander establishes a *mission command system*—the arrangement of personnel, networks, information systems, processes and procedures, and facilities and equipment that enable commanders to conduct operations (ADP 6-0). Commanders organize the five components of their mission command system to support decisionmaking and facilitate communication. The most important of these components is personnel.

1-20. A commander's mission command system begins with people. Commanders base their mission command system on human characteristics more than on equipment and procedures. Trained personnel are essential to an effective mission command system; the best technology cannot support mission command without them.

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Chapter 2

The Mission Command Philosophy of Command

This chapter begins by describing the principles of mission command. Then, it explains the art of command. Next, it discusses the science of control. It concludes with a brief discussion of how commanders apply the philosophy of mission command to balance the art of command with the science of control.

PRINCIPLES OF MISSION COMMAND

2-1. The mission command philosophy helps commanders counter the uncertainty of operations by reducing the amount of certainty needed to act. Commanders understand that some decisions must be made quickly and are better made at the point of action. Mission command is based on mutual trust and a shared understanding and purpose between commanders, subordinates, staffs, and unified action partners. It requires every Soldier to be prepared to assume responsibility, maintain unity of effort, take prudent action, and act resourcefully within the commander's intent.

2-2. Through leadership, commanders build teams. They develop and maintain mutual trust and a shared understanding throughout the force and with unified action partners. Commanders understand that subordinates and staffs require resources and a clear intent to guide their actions. They allow them the freedom of action to exercise disciplined initiative to adapt to changing situations. Because mission command decentralizes decisionmaking authority and grants subordinates' significant freedom of action, it demands more of commanders at all levels and requires rigorous training and education.

2-3. In exercising mission command, commanders are guided by six principles—

- Build cohesive teams through mutual trust.
- Create shared understanding.
- Provide a clear commander's intent.
- Exercise disciplined initiative.
- Use mission orders.
- Accept prudent risk.

BUILD COHESIVE TEAMS THROUGH MUTUAL TRUST

2-4. Mutual trust is shared confidence among commanders, subordinates, and partners. Effective commanders build cohesive teams in an environment of mutual trust. There are few shortcuts to gaining the trust of others. Developing trust takes time, and it must be earned. It is the result of upholding the Army values and exercising leadership, consistent with the Army leadership principles.

2-5. Trust is gained or lost through everyday actions more than grand or occasional gestures. Trust is based on personal qualities, such as professional competence, personal example, and integrity. Soldiers must see values in action before they become a basis for trust. Trust comes from successful shared experiences and training, usually gained incidental to operations but also deliberately developed by the commander. During shared experiences, the two-way communication and interaction between the commander, subordinates, and Soldiers reinforces trust. Soldiers expect to see the chain of command accomplishing the mission while taking care of their welfare and sharing hardships and danger.

2-6. Trust must flow throughout the chain of command. To function effectively, commanders must trust their subordinates, and subordinates must trust their commanders. Subordinates are more willing to exercise initiative when they believe their commander trusts them. They will also be more willing to exercise initiative if they believe their higher commander will accept and support the outcome of their decisions. Likewise, commanders delegate greater authority to subordinates whose judgment they trust.

2-7. Commanders initiate team building, both inside and outside their organizations, as early as possible and maintain it throughout operations. Team building requires hard work, patience, time, and interpersonal skill from all leaders and team members. Commanders must trust and earn the trust of their unified action partners and key leaders within the operational area. Building trust with unified action partners and key leaders requires significant effort by commanders and staffs to overcome differences in cultures, mandates, and organizational capabilities.

2-8. Effective commanders build teams within their own organizations and with unified action partners through interpersonal relationships. *Unified action partners* are those military forces, governmental and nongovernmental organizations, and elements of the private sector that Army forces plan, coordinate, synchronize, and integrate with during the conduct of operations (ADRP 3-0). Uniting all the diverse capabilities necessary to achieve success in operations requires collaborative and cooperative efforts that focus those capabilities toward a common goal. Where military forces typically demand unity of command, a challenge for building teams with unified action partners is to forge unity of effort. *Unity of effort* is the coordination and cooperation toward common objectives, even if the participants are not necessarily part of the same command or organization—the product of successful unified action (JP 1).

CREATE SHARED UNDERSTANDING

2-9. A critical challenge for commanders, staffs, and unified action partners is creating shared understanding of their operational environment, the operation's purpose, problems, and approaches to solving them. Shared understanding and purpose form the basis for unity of effort and trust. Commanders and staffs actively build and maintain shared understanding within the force and with unified action partners by continual collaboration throughout the operations process (planning, preparation, execution, and assessment). They collaboratively frame the operational environment, frame problems, and visualize approaches to solving them. Red teams help commanders understand the alternative perspectives of unified action partners, adversaries, and others.

2-10. Collaboration is not merely coordination. Collaboration is two or more people or organizations working together towards a common goal. Through collaboration, commanders establish human connections to create a shared understanding. They use dialogue to build trust and facilitate information sharing. Effective commanders and staffs use collaboration and dialogue to create a shared understanding of the operational issues, concerns, and approaches to solving them. Commanders gain valuable insight and while also sharing their own vision and commander's intent.

2-11. Establishing a culture of collaboration is difficult but necessary. Through collaboration and dialogue, participants share information and perspectives, question assumptions, and exchange ideas to help create and maintain shared understanding, resolve potential misunderstandings, and assess the progress of operations. Shared understanding takes time to establish. Successful commanders invest the time and effort to visit with Soldiers, subordinate leaders, and partners to understand their issues and concerns. Through such interaction, subordinates and partners gain insight into the commander's leadership style and the issues and concerns of the commander. An excellent historical example of command based on trust and shared understanding is Grant's orders to Sherman in 1864 (page 2-3).

**Command Based on Mutual Trust and Shared Understanding—
Grant’s Orders to Sherman, 1864**

In a letter to MG William T. Sherman, dated 4 April 1864, LTG Ulysses S. Grant outlined his 1864 campaign plan. LTG Grant described MG Sherman’s role:

“It is my design, if the enemy keep quiet and allow me to take the initiative in the Spring Campaign to work all parts of the Army together, and, somewhat, toward a common center. . . . You I propose to move against Johnston’s Army, to break it up and to get into the interior of the enemy’s country as far as you can, inflicting all the damage you can against their War resources. I do not propose to lay down for you a plan of Campaign, but simply to lay down the work it is desirable to have done and leave you free to execute in your own way. Submit to me however as early as you can your plan of operation.”

MG Sherman responded to LTG Grant immediately in a letter dated 10 April 1864. He sent Grant, as requested, his specific plan of operations, demonstrating that he understood Grant’s intent:

“ . . . Your two letters of April 4th are now before me . . . That we are now all to act in a Common plan, Converging on a Common Center, looks like Enlightened War. . . . I will not let side issues draw me off from your main plan in which I am to Knock Joe [Confederate GEN Joseph E.] Johnston, and do as much damage to the resources of the Enemy as possible. . . . I would ever bear in mind that Johnston is at all times to be kept so busy that he cannot in any event send any part of his command against you or [Union MG Nathaniel P.] Banks.”

The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant, Volume 10: January 1–May 31, 1864, by Ulysses S. Grant, edited by John Y. Simon. Ulysses S. Grant Foundation. ©1982. Excerpt from pages 251 through 254, used by permission.

PROVIDE A CLEAR COMMANDER’S INTENT

2-12. The *commander’s intent* is a clear and concise expression of the purpose of the operation and the desired military end state that supports mission command, provides focus to the staff, and helps subordinate and supporting commanders act to achieve the commander’s desired results without further orders, even when the operation does not unfold as planned (JP 3-0). The higher commander’s intent provides the basis for unity of effort throughout the larger force. Each commander’s intent nests within the higher commander’s intent.

2-13. Commanders articulate the overall reason for the operation so forces understand why it is being conducted. They use the commander’s intent to explain the broader purpose of the operation beyond that of the mission statement. Doing this allows subordinate commanders and Soldiers to gain insight into what is expected of them, what constraints apply, and most importantly, why the mission is being conducted.

2-14. The commander’s intent becomes the basis on which staffs and subordinate leaders develop plans and orders that transform thought into action. A well-crafted commander’s intent conveys a clear image of the operation’s purpose, key tasks, and the desired outcome. The commander’s intent provides a focus for subordinates to coordinate their separate efforts. Commanders personally prepare their commander’s intent. When possible, they deliver it in person. Face-to-face delivery ensures mutual understanding of what the commander wants by allowing immediate clarification of specific points. Individuals can then exercise disciplined initiative within the overarching guidance provided in the commander’s intent. The shorter the commander’s intent, the better it serves these purposes. Typically, the commander’s intent consists of three to five sentences. A clear commander’s intent that lower-level leaders can understand is key to maintaining unity of effort. Soldiers two echelons down must easily remember and clearly understand the commander’s intent. (See ADRP 5-0 for the format of the commander’s intent.)

2-15. Successful commanders understand they cannot provide guidance or direction for all contingencies. Commanders formulate and communicate their commander's intent to describe the boundaries within which subordinates may exercise disciplined initiative while maintaining unity of effort. Commanders collaborate and dialogue with subordinates to ensure they understand the commander's intent. Subordinates aware of the commander's intent are far more likely to exercise initiative in unexpected situations. Under mission command, subordinates are required to use their initiative to make decisions that further their higher commander's intent. Subordinates use the commander's intent, together with the mission statement and concept of the operation, to accomplish the mission. Empowered with trust, authority, and a shared understanding, they can develop the situation, adapt, and act decisively under fluid, dynamic conditions.

EXERCISE DISCIPLINED INITIATIVE

2-16. Leaders and subordinates who exercise disciplined initiative create opportunity by taking action to develop the situation. Disciplined initiative is action in the absence of orders, when existing orders no longer fit the situation, or when unforeseen opportunities or threats arise. Commanders rely on subordinates to act. A subordinate's disciplined initiative may be the starting point for seizing the tactical initiative. This willingness to act helps develop and maintain operational initiative used by forces to set or dictate the terms of action throughout an operation.

2-17. The commander's intent defines the limits within which subordinates may exercise initiative. It gives subordinates the confidence to apply their judgment in ambiguous situations because they know the mission's purpose, key tasks, and desired end state. They can take actions they think will best accomplish the mission. Subordinate leaders may need to act quickly to seize, retain, or exploit the initiative, even as they report the situation to their commanders.

2-18. Encouraging disciplined initiative frees commanders to focus on higher-level tasks and decisions. Using disciplined initiative, subordinates strive to solve many unanticipated problems. Leaders and Soldiers do not need to be told exactly how to accomplish missions. They perform the necessary coordination and take appropriate action when existing orders no longer fit the situation.

2-19. Commanders and subordinates are obligated to follow lawful orders. Commanders deviate from orders only when they are unlawful, risk the lives of Soldiers, or when orders no longer fit the situation. Subordinates inform their superiors as soon as possible when they have deviated from orders. Adhering to applicable laws and regulations when exercising disciplined initiative builds credibility and legitimacy. Straying beyond legal boundaries undermines trust and jeopardizes tactical, operational, and strategic success; this must be avoided.

USE MISSION ORDERS

2-20. Commanders use mission orders to assign tasks, allocate resources, and issue broad guidance. *Mission orders* are directives that emphasize to subordinates the results to be attained, not how they are to achieve them (ADP 6-0). They provide subordinates the maximum freedom of action in determining how to best accomplish missions. Mission orders seek to maximize individual initiative, while relying on lateral coordination between units and vertical coordination up and down the chain of command. The effectiveness of this technique has stood the test of time. In 1939, FM 100-5 explained mission orders succinctly:

An order should not trespass upon the province of a subordinate. It should contain everything that the subordinate must know to carry out his mission, but nothing more. . . . Above all, it must be adapted to the circumstances under which it will be received and executed.

FM 100-5 (1939)

2-21. The mission orders technique does not mean commanders do not supervise subordinates in execution. Commanders provide direction and guidance required to focus the activities on the achievement of the main objective, set priorities, allocate resources, and influence the situation. However, they do not micromanage. They intervene during execution only to direct changes as necessary to the concept of operations.

2-22. Mission orders follow the five-paragraph operation order format (described in ATTP 5-0.1). Under mission command, orders and plans are as brief and simple as possible. Mission orders state the task organization, commander's intent and concept of operations, mission, tasks to subordinate units, and minimum essential coordinating instructions. Tasks to subordinate units include all the standard elements (who, what, when, where, and why), with particular emphasis on the purpose (why). The tasks, along with the commander's intent, guide subordinates' initiative. Effective mission orders limit the number tasks explicitly assigned to subordinates. They provide just enough detail to coordinate the activities of the force. They seldom detail exactly how subordinates must perform their tasks—unless the nature of the operation requires precise synchronization.

2-23. When delegating authority to subordinates in mission orders, commanders set the conditions for success, in part, by allocating subordinates the resources they need to accomplish assigned tasks. Examples of resources are people, units, supplies and services, equipment, networks, information, and time. Commanders allocate resources through task organization and establishing priority of support in mission orders.

ACCEPT PRUDENT RISK

2-24. Commanders accept prudent risk when making decisions because uncertainty exists in all military operations. *Prudent risk* is a deliberate exposure to potential injury or loss when the commander judges the outcome in terms of mission accomplishment as worth the cost (ADP 6-0). Opportunities come with risks. The willingness to accept prudent risk is often the key to exposing enemy weaknesses.

2-25. Commanders focus on creating opportunities rather than simply preventing defeat—even when preventing defeat appears safer. Reasonably estimating and intentionally accepting risk are not gambling. Gambling, in contrast to prudent risk taking, is staking the success of an entire action on a single event without considering the hazard to the force should the event not unfold as envisioned. Therefore, commanders avoid taking gambles. Commanders carefully determine risks, analyze and minimize as many hazards as possible, and then take prudent risks to exploit opportunities.

2-26. Commanders avoid inadequate planning and preparation. Successful commanders use risk assessment and risk management to help determine what level of risk exists and how to mitigate it. Additionally, they collaborate and dialogue with subordinates when deciding how much risk to accept and how to minimize the effects of that risk. Commanders also avoid delaying action while waiting for perfect intelligence and synchronization. Experienced commanders balance audacity and imagination with risk and uncertainty. They strike at a time and place and in a manner wholly unexpected by the enemy. They seize, retain, and exploit the initiative to achieve decisive results while accepting prudent risk.

ART OF COMMAND

2-27. *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).

2-28. The *art of command* is the creative and skillful exercise of authority through timely decisionmaking and leadership (ADP 6-0). As an art, command requires the use of judgment. Commanders constantly use their judgment for such things as delegating authority, making decisions, determining the appropriate degree of control, and allocating resources. Although certain facts like troop-to-task ratios may influence a commander, they do not account for the human aspects of command. A commander's experience and training also influence their decisionmaking. Proficiency in the art of command stems from years of schooling, self-development, and operational and training experiences.

2-29. Command is a human skill sharpened by experience, study, and observation. Commanding at any level is more than simply leading Soldiers and units and making decisions. Commanders use their authority with firmness and care. Commanders strive to understand all aspects of their operational environment. Effective commanders create a positive command climate that instills a sense of mutual trust throughout the command. They use their judgment to assess situations, draw feasible conclusions, and make decisions. Commanders guide operations without stifling individual initiative. The art of command comprises—

- Authority.
- Decisionmaking.
- Leadership.

AUTHORITY

2-30. *Authority* is the delegated power to judge, act, or command (ADP 6-0). Legal authority to enforce orders under the Uniform Code of Military Justice is a key aspect of command and distinguishes military commanders from civilian leaders and managers. Commanders understand that operations affect and are affected by human interactions. As such, they seek to establish personal authority. A commander's personal authority reinforces that commander's legal authority. Personal authority ultimately arises from the actions of the commander and the resulting trust and confidence generated by these actions. Commanders earn respect and trust by upholding laws and Army values, applying Army leadership principles, and demonstrating tactical and technical expertise. Their personal authority is often more powerful than legal authority.

2-31. With authority comes *responsibility*—the obligation to carry forward an assigned task to a successful conclusion. With responsibility goes authority to direct and take the necessary action to ensure success (JP 1-02). Commanders are legally responsible for their decisions and for the actions, accomplishments, and failures of their subordinates. Commanders may delegate authority, but delegation does not absolve commanders of their responsibilities to the higher commander. Command responsibilities fall into three major categories: mission accomplishment; the health, welfare, morale, and discipline of Soldiers; and the use and maintenance of resources. In most cases, these responsibilities do not conflict; however, the responsibility for mission accomplishment sometimes conflicts with the responsibility for Soldiers. In an irreconcilable conflict between the two, mission accomplishment must come first.

2-32. All commanders have a responsibility to act within their higher commander's intent to achieve the desired end state. However, humans sometimes make mistakes. Commanders realize that subordinates may not accomplish all tasks initially and that errors may occur. Successful commanders allow subordinates to learn through their mistakes and develop experience. With such acceptance in the command climate, subordinates gain the experience required to operate on their own. However, commanders do not continually underwrite subordinates' mistakes resulting from a critical lack of judgment. Nor do they tolerate repeated errors of omission, when subordinates fail to exercise initiative. The art of command lies in discriminating between mistakes to underwrite as teaching points and those that are unacceptable in a military leader.

2-33. Accountability is the requirement for commanders to answer to their superiors (and finally the American people) for mission accomplishment, for the lives and care of their Soldiers, and for effectively using Army resources. It also includes the obligation to answer for properly using delegated authority. In turn, subordinates are accountable to their commander for fulfilling their responsibilities.

2-34. Commanders delegate authority to subordinates to assist commanders in fulfilling their responsibilities. Subordinates are accountable to their commanders for the use of delegated authority, but commanders remain solely responsible and accountable for the actions of their subordinates. Delegation allows subordinates to decide and act for the commander in specified areas. Once they delegate authority, commanders supervise just enough to assure subordinates' success. While commanders can delegate authority, they cannot delegate their responsibility for the actions or omissions of their subordinates.

DECISIONMAKING

2-35. A commander's decisions ultimately guide the actions of the force. Decisionmaking requires knowing if, when, and what to decide and understanding the consequences of that decision. Commanders require more than information to make sound decisions. When making decisions, commanders strive to develop and maintain an understanding of the situation. With understanding, commanders can make effective decisions and regulate the actions of the force. By developing understanding, commanders and staffs prepare effective plans and assess operations accurately. Commanders use experience, training, and study to inform their decisions. They consider the impact of leadership, operational complexity, and human factors when determining how to best use available resources to accomplish the mission. Success in operations demands timely and effective decisions based on applying judgment to available information and knowledge.

Understanding

2-36. To achieve understanding, commanders and staffs process data to develop meaning. A cognitive hierarchy model (illustrated in figure 2-1) depicts how data are transformed into understanding. At the lowest level, processing transforms data into information. Analysis then refines information into knowledge. Commanders and staffs then apply judgment to transform knowledge into situational understanding.

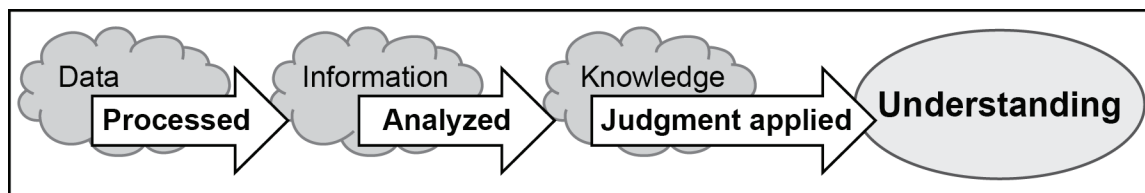


Figure 2-1. Achieving understanding

2-37. *Data* consist of unprocessed signals communicated between any nodes in an information system. It includes signals sensed from the environment, detected by a collector of any kind (human, mechanical, or electronic). Data can be quantified, stored, and organized in files and databases. However, to make data useful, people must process data into information.

2-38. *Information* is the meaning that a human assigns to data by means of the known conventions used in their representation (JP 3-13.1). Data become information, which also becomes a source of more data. Information alone rarely provides an adequate basis for deciding and acting. Effective mission command requires further developing information into knowledge so commanders can achieve understanding.

2-39. Knowledge is information analyzed to provide meaning and value or evaluated as to implications for an operation. Ultimately, knowledge is the result of individual cognition. Individuals learn through study, experience, practice, and human interaction, as they develop their expertise and skilled judgment. Individuals who develop knowledge determine how to preserve and share it for the benefit of others.

2-40. Understanding is knowledge that has been synthesized and had judgment applied to it to comprehend the situation's inner relationships. Judgment is based on experience, expertise, and intuition. Ideally, true understanding should be the basis for decisions. However, commanders and staffs realize that uncertainty and time preclude achieving perfect understanding before deciding and acting.

2-41. Commanders need knowledge and understanding to make effective decisions. Staffs use various information and knowledge management practices to assist commanders in processing information. They piece together data to make information. Then through analysis and evaluation of information, they produce knowledge. Staffs then provide their collective knowledge to the commander. Commanders apply the final judgment transforming knowledge into understanding.

2-42. To assist commanders in understanding and decisionmaking, commanders and staffs apply critical and creative thinking. Critical thinking examines a problem in depth from multiple points of view. It involves determining whether adequate justification exists to accept conclusions as true based on a given inference or argument. Critical thinkers are purposeful and reflective thinkers who apply judgment about

what to believe or what to do in response to known facts, observations, experience, oral or written information sources, or arguments.

2-43. Creative thinking involves thinking in new, innovative ways while capitalizing on imagination, insight and novel ideas. Often leaders face unfamiliar problems or old problems requiring new solutions. Even situations that appear similar require creative solutions, since an enemy will adapt to past approaches. Creative thinking leads to new insights, novel approaches, fresh perspectives, and new ways of understanding and conceiving things. Leaders look at different options to solve problems by using adaptive approaches, drawn from previous similar circumstances, or innovative approaches that come from completely new ideas. In both instances, leaders use creative thinking to apply imagination and depart from the old way of doing things.

2-44. Critical and creative thinking facilitate understanding and support decisionmaking. Decisions are how commanders translate their vision of the end state into action. They choose a decisionmaking approach appropriate for the situation. In certain situations, commanders may rely heavily on intuition. In other situations, commanders may take a more deliberate approach, using systematic analysis. Effective commanders consider their experience, the staff's experience, and the time and information available when making decisions.

Analytic Decisionmaking

2-45. Analytic decisionmaking generates several alternative solutions, compares these solutions to a set of criteria, and selects the best course of action. It aims to produce the optimal solution by comparing options. It emphasizes analytic reasoning guided by experience, and commanders use it when time is available. This approach offers several advantages. For example, analytic decisionmaking—

- Is methodical and allows the breakdown of tasks into recognizable elements.
- Ensures commanders consider, analyze, and evaluate relevant factors, employing techniques such as war-gaming.
- Provides a systematic approach when the decision involves processing large amounts of information.
- Helps resolve conflicts among courses of action.
- Gives inexperienced personnel a logically structured approach.

2-46. Analytic decisionmaking sometimes poses disadvantages. It is often time-consuming and relies on large amounts of information and clearly established evaluation criteria. While it is methodical, changes in conditions may require a complete reevaluation, which could delay decisions. When using this approach, effective commanders weigh the need for analysis against time considerations. Analytic decisionmaking is not appropriate for all situations, especially during execution, when forces must adapt to rapidly changing situations.

Intuitive Decisionmaking

2-47. Intuitive decisionmaking is reaching a conclusion through pattern recognition based on knowledge, judgment, experience, education, intelligence, boldness, perception, and character. Intuitive decisionmaking—

- Focuses on assessment of the situation more than on comparing multiple options.
- Is effective when time is short.
- Relies on a commander's experience and ability to recognize the key elements and implications of a particular problem or situation.
- Tends to focus on the larger picture more than individual components.

2-48. Intuitive decisionmaking is faster and more often done at the lowest levels of command. When using intuitive decisionmaking, leaders should be aware of their own biases and how their current operational environment differs from past environments.

2-49. Commanders blend intuitive and analytic decisionmaking to help them remain objective and make timely and effective decisions. Commanders avoid making decisions purely by intuition; they incorporate

some analysis into their intuitive decisions. Combining both approaches provides a holistic perspective on the many factors that affect decisions. Commanders understand that decisions should be neither rushed nor over-thought.

Judgment

2-50. Commanders use judgment to assess information, situations, or circumstances shrewdly and to draw feasible conclusions. Through good judgment, commanders form sound opinions and make sensible decisions. They select the critical time and place to act, assign missions, manage risk, prioritize effort, allocate resources, and lead Soldiers. Commanders make decisions using judgment developed from experience, training, study, and creative and critical thinking. Experience contributes to judgment by providing a basis for rapidly identifying practical courses of actions and dismissing impractical ones. Commanders apply their judgment to—

- Identify, accept, and mitigate risk.
- Prioritize resources.
- Delegate authority.

Identify, Accept, and Mitigate Risk

2-51. Commanders use judgment when identifying risk, deciding what risk to accept, and mitigating accepted risk. They accept risk to create opportunities. They reduce risk by foresight and careful planning. Commanders use risk assessment and risk management to identify and mitigate risk. Risk management is a tool commanders can use to identify risk, assess risk, and develop mitigation and control measures to help manage risk. (See FM 5-19 for more information on risk management.)

2-52. Consideration of risk begins during planning, as commanders and staffs complete a risk assessment for each course of action and propose control measures. They use collaboration and dialogue. They integrate input from subordinates, staff, and appropriate organizations and partners. They determine how to manage identified risks. This includes delegating management of certain risks to subordinate commanders who will develop appropriate mitigation measures. Commanders then allocate the resources they deem appropriate to mitigate risks. Subordinates must also trust their leaders to underwrite their prudent risk-taking and to reward their disciplined initiative. Successful commanders minimize risk and unify the effort by monitoring how well subordinates are using their authority and resources and exercising initiative.

2-53. Inculcating risk acceptance goes hand in hand with accepting errors. Commanders realize that subordinates may not accomplish all tasks initially and that errors may occur. With such acceptance in the command climate, subordinates gain the experience required to operate on their own. In addition, they learn to trust their commander to give them authority to act, knowing the commander will back their decisions. Commanders train subordinates to act within the commander's intent in uncertain situations. Commanders give subordinates the latitude to make mistakes and learn.

2-54. In training, commanders might allow subordinates to execute a too-risky tactical decision as a teaching point; they instruct subordinates afterward on how to determine a more appropriate level of tactical risk. This sort of coaching helps commanders gain trust in their subordinates' judgment and initiative, and it builds subordinates' trust in their commander. During operations, commanders may have to intervene, if the tactical risk is too great for the benefits expected.

2-55. Commanders cannot stop at underwriting mistakes. They must act to ensure subordinates learn from mistakes. However, commanders do not continually underwrite subordinates' mistakes resulting from a critical lack of judgment. Nor do they tolerate repeated errors of omission, when subordinates fail to exercise initiative. The art of command lies in discriminating between mistakes to underwrite as teaching points from those that are unacceptable in a military leader. Taking a too-punitive approach leads to a "zero-defects" climate, which hinders mission command. Taking a too-lenient approach results in lowered standards, a lack of confidence on all sides, and less effective forces.

Prioritize Resources

2-56. Commanders allocate resources to accomplish the mission. Allocating resources requires judgment because resources can be limited. Considerations for prioritizing resources include how to—

- Effectively accomplish the mission while conserving resources.
- Protect the lives of Soldiers.
- Apply the principles of mass and economy of force.
- Posture the force for subsequent operations.

2-57. The first and foremost consideration for allocating resources is how their use contributes to effective mission accomplishment. However, commanders have an obligation to conserve all resources. Commanders do not determine how to accomplish a mission based on conserving resources; they allocate resources efficiently to ensure effectiveness. The objective—to accomplish the mission—guides every element of operations. A plan that does not accomplish the mission, regardless of how well it conserves resources, is not effective.

2-58. The next priority is to protect the lives of Soldiers. Commanders determine how to protect the lives of Soldiers before considering how to conserve material resources. They use material resources generously to save lives. If there are different but equally effective ways to accomplish the mission, a commander considers which uses fewer resources.

2-59. The third aspect of resource allocation is based on two of the principles of war—mass and economy of force. The principle of mass means that commanders weight the decisive operation with the greatest possible combat power, to ensure mission accomplishment. Economy of force refers to allocating the minimum essential combat power to secondary efforts. Commanders determine the amount of combat power essential to each task and allocate sufficient resources to accomplish it. When allocating resources, commanders consider the cost to the force and the effects of the current operation on the ability to execute follow-on operations. They determine the minimum combat power essential to accomplish the mission. If subordinates believe they have not received enough resources, or believe accomplishing their mission would produce an unacceptable cost to the force, they inform the commander. The commander then decides whether to accept risk, allocate more resources to the shaping operation, or change the plan.

2-60. The fourth aspect of applying judgment to resource allocation concerns posturing the force for subsequent operations. Commanders balance immediate mission accomplishment with resource requirements for subsequent operations. Commanders accomplish their missions at least cost to the force, so they do not impair its ability to conduct follow-on operations. They visualize short-term and long-term effects of their resource usage and determine priorities. At lower echelons, commanders focus more on the immediate operation—the short term. At progressively higher echelons, commanders give more consideration to the long term.

Delegate Authority

2-61. Commanders use judgment when determining what authority to delegate. Commanders delegate authority verbally, in writing, or both. Examples of delegated authority are authority over an area of expertise or technical specialty, a geographic area, or specific kinds of actions. Commanders may limit delegated authority in time, or they may use a standing delegation.

2-62. Commanders delegate authority and set the level of their personal involvement in delegated tasks based on their assessment of the skill and experience of their subordinates. When delegating authority to subordinates, commanders do everything in their power to set the conditions for success. They allocate enough resources to subordinates so they can accomplish their missions. Resources include people, units, services, supplies, equipment, networks, information, and time. Delegation not only applies to subordinate commanders but also to members of the staff. Commanders rely on and expect initiative from staff officers as much as from subordinate commanders.

2-63. Commanders determine when to intervene and participate personally in operations. Commanders avoid trying to do everything themselves or making every decision; such behavior does not give subordinates the experience they need. Effective commanders participate as necessary to guide operations.

LEADERSHIP

2-64. Army leaders motivate people both inside and outside the chain of command to pursue actions, focus thinking, and make decisions that accomplish missions. Successful mission command relies on leaders who act decisively, within the intent and purpose of superior leaders, and in the best interest of the organization. Commanders recognize organizations that are built on mutual trust and confidence successfully accomplish missions. (See the Army leadership publication for details on the leadership principles.)

2-65. Being a responsible subordinate is part of being a good leader. All Soldiers must act as both leaders and followers. Being a responsible subordinate implies supporting the chain of command and making sure that the team supports the larger organization and its purpose. Successful commanders recognize that the Army is a team, and all team members have responsibilities inherent in belonging to that team.

2-66. Military operations are dynamic. As people take action within an operational environment, it changes. Unpredictability and changing circumstances tax even the best of units. Commanders recognize that military operations take a toll on the moral, physical, and mental stamina of Soldiers. They understand that factors such as cultural background, interpersonal relationships, and stressors also impact operations.

2-67. Cultural competence underlies a Soldier's ability to understand, communicate, and coordinate effectively with diverse groups of people. Leaders and Soldiers interact with friendly forces, enemy forces, adversaries, supporters, and neutral parties. They strive to understand and appreciate different cultures using such considerations as history, social and cultural distinctions, economics, and demographics. The art of command includes exploiting these dynamics to the advantage of friendly forces and to the disadvantage of an enemy.

2-68. Commanders know the status of their forces. During operations, the quality and condition of Soldiers and the cohesion of units are critical to mission accomplishment. Commanders are aware that circumstances may prevent friendly forces from performing to their full potential. For example, some units may have recently received inexperienced replacements or conducted an extended period of operations.

2-69. Commanders do not take the readiness of friendly forces for granted. They recognize the limits of human endurance. They manage human risk, so they can press the fight tenaciously. They act aggressively to prevent mission failure. Military operations take a toll on the moral, physical, and mental stamina of Soldiers. Commanders and leaders help their Soldiers manage negative emotions, discouragement, or fatigue. Effective commanders recognize when to push Soldiers to their limits and when to let them rest to prevent individual and collective collapse. Even the most successful combat actions can render Soldiers incapable of further operations.

2-70. Stress is an integral part of military service. Leaders must learn to mitigate this for their subordinates and cope with it themselves. Effective leaders develop mechanisms to manage stress in training as well as during and after operations. Commanders must understand that leadership is an important component to mitigating the effects of stress. (See FM 6-22.5 for more information on combat and operational stress control.)

Command Presence

2-71. Command presence is creating a favorable impression in carriage, appearance, and professional and personal conduct. Commanders use their presence to gather and communicate information and knowledge and assess operations. Establishing command presence makes the commander's knowledge and experience available to subordinates. It does not require giving subordinates detailed instructions, nor does it include second-guessing subordinates' performance. Skilled commanders communicate tactical and technical knowledge that goes beyond plans and procedures. Command presence establishes a background for all plans and procedures so that subordinates can understand how and when to adapt them to achieve the commander's intent. Commanders can establish command presence in a variety of ways, including—

- Briefings.
- Back-briefs.
- Rehearsals.
- Leader's reconnaissance.

- On-site visits and battlefield circulation.
- Commander's intent.
- After action reviews.
- Commander's guidance.
- Personal example.

2-72. Directly engaging subordinates and staffs allows commanders to motivate Soldiers, build trust and confidence, exchange information, and assess operations. Commanders understand and use human relationships to overcome uncertainty and chaos and maintain the focus of their forces. They communicate in a variety of ways, adjusting their communication style to fit the situation and the audience. They communicate both formally and informally, through questions, discussions, conversations, and other direct or indirect communication.

2-73. In many instances, a leader's physical presence is necessary to lead effectively. Commanders position themselves where they can best command without losing the ability to respond to changing situations. Commanders carefully consider where they need to be, balancing the need to inspire Soldiers with maintaining an overall perspective of the entire operation. The commander's forward presence demonstrates a willingness to share danger and hardship. It also allows commanders to appraise for themselves a subordinate unit's condition, including its leaders' and Soldiers' morale. Forward presence allows commanders to sense the human dimension of conflict, particularly when fear and fatigue reduce effectiveness. Commanders cannot let the perceived advantages of improved information technology compromise their obligation to lead by example, face-to-face with Soldiers.

Command Climate

2-74. Commanders create their organization's tone—the characteristic atmosphere in which people work. This is known as the command climate. It is directly attributable to the leader's values, skills, and actions. A positive climate facilitates team building, encourages initiative, and fosters collaboration, dialogue, mutual trust, and shared understanding. Commanders shape the climate of the organization, no matter what the size.

2-75. Successful commanders recognize that all Soldiers can contribute to mission accomplishment. Commanders establish clear and realistic goals and communicate their goals openly. They establish and maintain communication between subordinates and leaders. They encourage subordinates to bring creative and innovative ideas to the forefront. They also seek feedback from subordinates. The result is a command climate that encourages initiative and supports operational adaptability.

2-76. A positive command climate instills a sense of mutual trust among Soldiers. It facilitates a strong sense of discipline, comradeship, self-respect, and morale. It helps Soldiers develop a desire to do their fair share and to help in the event of need. Soldiers know their leaders will guard them from unnecessary risk.

2-77. Effective commanders demonstrate a sincere concern for their subordinates' welfare. This contributes to a positive command climate more than anything else a commander does. Sincere concern is a product of empathy. Effective commanders believe in and act for the welfare of individuals and the group to which they belong. When commanders demonstrate their concern for human beings as well as the mission, Soldiers perceive their shared humanity. Soldiers know their commander has their best interests in mind. The result is a climate that fosters mutual trust and understanding.

SCIENCE OF CONTROL

2-78. *Control* is the regulation of forces and warfighting functions to accomplish the mission in accordance with the commander's intent (ADP 6-0). Aided by staffs, commanders exercise control over assigned forces in their area of operations. Staffs coordinate, synchronize, and integrate actions, inform the commander, and exercise control for the commander. Control permits commanders to adjust operations to account for changing circumstances and direct the changes necessary to address the new situation. Commanders impose enough control to mass the effect of combat power at the decisive point in time while allowing subordinates the maximum freedom of action to accomplish assigned tasks.

2-79. The *science of control* consists of systems and procedures used to improve the commander's understanding and support accomplishing missions (ADP 6-0). The science of control supports the art of command. In contrast to the art of command, the science of control is based on objectivity, facts, empirical methods, and analysis. Commanders and staffs use the science of control to overcome the physical and procedural constraints under which units operate. Units are bound by such factors as movement rates, fuel consumption, weapons effects, rules of engagement, and legal considerations. Commanders and staffs strive to understand aspects of operations they can analyze and measure, such as the physical capabilities and limitations of friendly and enemy organizations. Control requires a realistic appreciation for time and distance factors, including the time required to initiate certain actions.

2-80. The commander's mission command system, especially the staff, assists the commander with control (see chapter 3). However, the commander remains the central figure. The science of control comprises—

- Information.
- Communication.
- Structure.
- Degree of control.

INFORMATION

2-81. Commanders use the science of control to manage information. Information fuels understanding and decisionmaking. Commanders establish information requirements to set priorities for collecting relevant information. An **information requirement is any information element the commander and staff require to successfully conduct operations**. Relevant information that answers information requirements is—

- Accurate: it conveys the true situation.
- Timely: it is available in time to make decisions.
- Usable: it is portrayed in common, easily understood formats and displays.
- Complete: it provides all information necessary.
- Precise: it contains sufficient detail.
- Reliable: it is trustworthy and dependable.

Commanders balance the art of command with the science of control as they assess information against these criteria. For example, in some situations, relevant information that is somewhat incomplete or imprecise may be better than no information at all, especially when time for execution is limited. However, effective commanders use the science of control to reduce the likelihood of receiving inaccurate, late, or unreliable information, which is of no value to the exercise of mission command.

2-82. Information can come in many forms, such as feedback and electronic means. Feedback comes from subordinates, higher headquarters, or adjacent, supporting, and supported forces and unified action partners. For feedback to be effective, a commander's mission command system must process it into knowledge, identifying any differences between the desired end state and the situation that exists. Commanders and staffs interpret information received to gain situational understanding and to exploit fleeting opportunities, respond to developing threats, modify plans, or reallocate resources.

2-83. Electronic means of communication have increased the access to and speed of finding information. However, they also have increased the volume of information and the potential for misinformation. Successful commanders are mindful of this when they configure their mission command system. Commanders determine information requirements and set information priorities. They avoid requesting too much information, which decreases the staff's chances of obtaining the right information. The quest for information is time-consuming; commanders who demand complete information place unreasonable burdens upon subordinates. Subordinates pressured to worry over every detail rarely have the desire to exercise initiative. At worst, excessive information demands corrupt the trust required for mission command.

2-84. Staffs provide commanders and subordinates information relevant to their operational environment and the progress of operations. They use the operational variables (political, military, economic, social, information, infrastructure, physical environment, and time—known as PMESII-PT) and the mission variables (mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops and support available, time available and civil

considerations—known as METT–TC) as major subject categories to group relevant information. Commanders and staffs develop a *common operational picture* (known as a COP), **a single display of relevant information within a commander’s area of interest tailored to the user’s requirements and based on common data and information shared by more than one command.** They choose any appropriate technique to develop and display the COP, such as graphical representations, verbal narratives, or written reports. Development of the COP is ongoing throughout operations. This tool supports developing knowledge and understanding.

COMMUNICATION

2-85. Commanders and staffs disseminate and share information among people, elements, and places. Communication is more than the simple transmission of information. It is a means to exercise control over forces. Communication links information to decisions and decisions to action. No decision during operations can be executed without clear communication between commanders and subordinates. Communication among the parts of a command supports their coordinated action. Effective commanders do not take the importance of communication for granted. They use multidirectional communication and suitable communication media to achieve objectives. Commanders choose appropriate times, places, and means to communicate. They use face-to-face talks, written and verbal orders, estimates and plans, published memos, electronic mail, Web sites, social media, and newsletters.

2-86. The traditional view of communication within military organizations is that subordinates send commanders information, and commanders provide subordinates with decisions and instructions. This linear form of communication is inadequate for mission command. Communication has an importance far beyond exchanging information. Commanders and staffs communicate to learn, exchange ideas, and create and sustain shared understanding. Information needs to flow up and down the chain of command as well as laterally to adjacent units and organizations. Separate from the quality or meaning of information exchanged, communication strengthens bonds within a command. It is an important factor in building trust, cooperation, cohesion, and mutual understanding.

2-87. Effective commanders conduct face-to-face talks with their subordinates to ensure subordinates fully understand them. Humans communicate by what they say and do and by their manner of speaking and behaving. Nonverbal communication may include gestures, sighs, and body language. Commanders pay attention to verbal and nonverbal feedback to ascertain the effectiveness of their communication. Commanders and staffs should communicate face-to-face whenever possible. This does not mean they do not keep records of information communicated or follow-up with written documentation. Records are important as a means of affirming understanding and for later study and critique. Records support understanding over time, whereas memory may distort or even omit elements of the information required or passed. (See DA Pam 25-403 for recordkeeping guidance.)

Channels

2-88. Information normally moves throughout a force along various transmission paths, or channels. Commanders and staffs transfer information horizontally as well as vertically. Establishing command and support relationships helps create channels that streamline information dissemination by ensuring the right information passes promptly to the right people. Three common channels are known as command, staff, and technical channels.

2-89. Command channels are direct chain-of-command transmission paths. Commanders and authorized staff officers use command channels for command-related activities.

2-90. Staff channels are staff-to-staff transmission paths between headquarters and are used for control-related activities. Staff channels transmit planning information, status reports, controlling instructions, and other information to support mission command. The intelligence and sustainment nets are examples of staff channels.

2-91. Technical channels are the transmission paths between two technically similar units or offices that perform a specialized technical function, requiring special expertise or control the performance of technical functions. Technical channels are typically used to control performance of technical functions. They are not used for conducting operations or supporting another unit’s mission. An example is network control.

Feedback

2-92. Commanders use feedback to compare the actual situation to their visualization, and decide whether to adjust operations, and direct actions. Feedback takes many forms, including information, knowledge, experience, and wisdom. Feedback comes from many sources: subordinates, higher headquarters, or adjacent, supporting, and supported forces. It can arrive any time: before, during, or after operations. Feedback helps commanders and staffs gain understanding. For feedback to be effective, it must be processed it into knowledge, identifying any differences between the desired end state and the current situation. New information that conflicts with the expectations established during planning requires commanders and staffs to validate those expectations or revise them to reflect reality. This contributes to an accurate understanding that allows commanders to exploit fleeting opportunities, respond to developing situations, modify plans, or reallocate resources.

STRUCTURE

2-93. Organizational structure helps commanders exercise control. Structure refers to a defined organization that establishes relationships and guides interactions among elements. It also includes procedures for coordinating among an organization's groups and activities. The commander establishes control with a defined organization. Structure is both internal (such as a command post) and external (such as command and support relationships among subordinate forces). Commanders apply the doctrinal guidance provided in ATTP 5-0.1 for organizing Army command post operations and command and support relationships. The most basic organization in control is a hierarchy. In military terms, this relationship is between the commander and staff, and subordinate forces.

DEGREE OF CONTROL

2-94. A key aspect of mission command is determining the appropriate degree of control to impose on subordinates. The appropriate degree of control varies with each situation and is not easy to determine. Different operations and phases of operations require tighter or more relaxed control over subordinate elements than other phases require. An air assault's air movement and landing phases, for example, require precise control and synchronization. Its ground maneuver plan may require less detail. Successful commanders understand that swift action may be necessary to capitalize on fleeting opportunities. They centralize or decentralize control of operations as needed to ensure that units can adapt to changing situations.

2-95. As a rule, commanders use the mission orders technique, described in paragraphs 2-21 to 2-24, for plans and orders. They limit information in a base plan or order to the minimum needed to synchronize combat power at the decisive time and place and allow subordinates as much freedom of action as possible. Commanders rely on subordinates to act within the commander's intent and concept of operations. The attachments to the plan or order contain details regarding the situation and instructions necessary for synchronization.

2-96. Commanders concentrate and synchronize many units to mass effects, and they centralize or decentralize control of operations as needed to ensure that units can adapt to changing situations. Commanders ensure they maintain enough control: the higher headquarters imposes enough control to maximize total combat power, while delegating appropriate authorities and resources to subordinates. Commanders and subordinates understand what risks the higher commander will accept and what risks will remain with the subordinate commander. This affords subordinates sufficient latitude to exploit opportunities to seize, retain, and exploit the initiative.

2-97. Considerations for determining degree of control include—

- Level of acceptable risk.
- Delegation of authority and resources.
- Ability to sustain the force.
- Span of control.
- Forms of control.

Level of Acceptable Risk

2-98. Although some risk is inherent in all operations, commanders consider the impact of centralizing or decentralizing control of authority and resources. Commanders must be aware of how much flexibility a higher commander will allow for subordinate initiative in decisionmaking and execution. They weigh the benefit of decentralizing control against the risk that the higher headquarter may not be able to respond immediately to a subordinate unit's request for assistance. Commanders avoid over-control of authority and resources that may leave subordinate units lacking the ability to respond rapidly to emerging situations.

Delegation of Authority and Resources

2-99. The experience of subordinate commanders, their ability to make decisions, and the impact of subordinate decisions on the higher headquarters mission factor into any decision to delegate decisionmaking authority. The degree of trust and confidence a commander has in subordinate commanders, as well as confidence in one's own abilities, weighs heavily in deciding delegation of authority. Additionally, the commander should be confident in subordinate commanders' training, education, experience, and staff expertise to be able to use effectively any resources allocated to them.

Ability to Sustain the Force

2-100. Sustaining the force involves equipping it with materiel (for individuals and units), maintaining Soldier readiness, and sustaining readiness for unified land operations. Commanders analyze their operational environment to understand what is needed and allocate resources. Commanders and staffs consider availability and adequacy of resources when deciding how and when to allocate assets to subordinate units. Effective commanders are prepared to request additional assets, as necessary, from higher headquarters and then task-organize to best utilize those assets.

Span of Control

2-101. Unit organization should ensure reasonable span of control—the number of subordinates or activities under a single commander. Generally, commanders can effectively command and effectively control two to five subordinate headquarters. A commander's span of control should not exceed that commander's capability to command effectively. The optimal number of subordinates depends on the situation.

2-102. Narrowing the span of control—that is, lessening the number of immediate subordinates—deepens the organization by adding layers of command. Conversely, eliminating echelons of command or "flattening" an organization widens the span of control. The aim is to flatten the organization to the extent compatible with reasonable spans of control. Commanders balance width and depth, so that the structure fits the situation. For example, higher-tempo operations, such as offensive operations, tend to favor wider spans of control.

2-103. An effective task organization enables the commander and subordinate commanders to command effectively. The commander establishes the span of control and an organizational structure that best fits the situation and supports mission command while maintaining operational adaptability.

Forms of Control

2-104. Two techniques for control are positive and procedural. Although commonly associated with air-space control, positive and procedural controls also apply to land operations. All military operations require both forms to offset the weaknesses of each. They complement each other and enhance operations.

2-105. Positive control is a technique for actively regulating forces that requires explicit coordination between commanders and subordinate leaders. Positive control requires active command participation.

2-106. Procedural control is a technique of regulating forces where actions are governed by written and oral instructions which do not require authorization to execute. Examples of procedural control include orders, regulations, policies, and doctrine. Once established, procedural control requires no intervention by

the higher headquarters. Forces share a common understanding of the procedures and how to apply them in operations.

2-107. Control measures provide procedural control without requiring detailed explanations. A ***control measure is a means of regulating forces or warfighting functions.*** Control measures can be permissive (which allows something to happen) or restrictive (which limits how something is done). Some control measures are graphic. A ***graphic control measure is a symbol used on maps and displays to regulate forces and warfighting functions.*** (See FM 1-02 for illustrations of graphic control measures and rules for their use.)

2-108. Commanders use the minimum number of control measures necessary to control their forces. Commanders tailor their use of control measures to conform to the higher commander's intent. They also consider the mission, terrain, and amount of authority delegated to subordinates. Effectively employing control measures requires commanders and staffs to understand their purposes and ramifications, including the permissions or limitations imposed on subordinates' freedom of action and initiative. Each measure should have a specific purpose: mass the effects of combat power, synchronize subordinate forces' operations, or minimize the possibility of fratricide.

APPLICATION OF THE MISSION COMMAND PHILOSOPHY

2-109. In mission command, the commander is the central figure. Guided by the principles of mission command, commanders skillfully balance of the art of command with the science of control. They exploit and enhance uniquely human skills while systematically regulating forces and warfighting functions. They understand and use human relationships to overcome uncertainty and chaos and maintain the focus of their forces. Collaboration and dialogue help commanders build mutual trust, create a shared understanding and purpose, and receive human information not collected by their mission command system. They consider the impact of leadership, operational complexity, and human factors when determining how to best use available resources to accomplish the mission. Applying the mission command philosophy helps commanders exercise authority skillfully and master the systems and procedures that help forces accomplish missions. They use the mission command warfighting function to help them integrate and synchronize operations.

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Chapter 3

The Mission Command Warfighting Function

This chapter expands on the mission command warfighting function. First, it defines the mission command warfighting function and describes its purpose. Next, it describes the mission command warfighting function tasks. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the mission command system.

DEFINITION AND PURPOSE

3-1. Commanders, assisted by their staffs, conceptualize and apply capabilities in terms of combat power to accomplish the mission. Combat power consists of eight elements: leadership, information, and the six warfighting functions—mission command, movement and maneuver, intelligence, fires, sustainment, and protection. Each warfighting function consists of related tasks and a system, united by a common purpose that commanders use to achieve objectives and accomplish missions. (See ADP 3-0 for a summary of the warfighting functions.)

3-2. The *mission command warfighting function* is the related tasks and systems that develop and integrate those activities enabling a commander to balance the art of command and the science of control in order to integrate the other warfighting functions (ADRP 3-0). It consists of the related tasks and a mission command system that support the exercise of authority and direction by the commander. Through the mission command warfighting function, commanders integrate the other warfighting functions into a coherent whole to mass the effects of combat power at the decisive place and time. Figure 3-1 illustrates the mission command warfighting function in relation to the other warfighting functions.

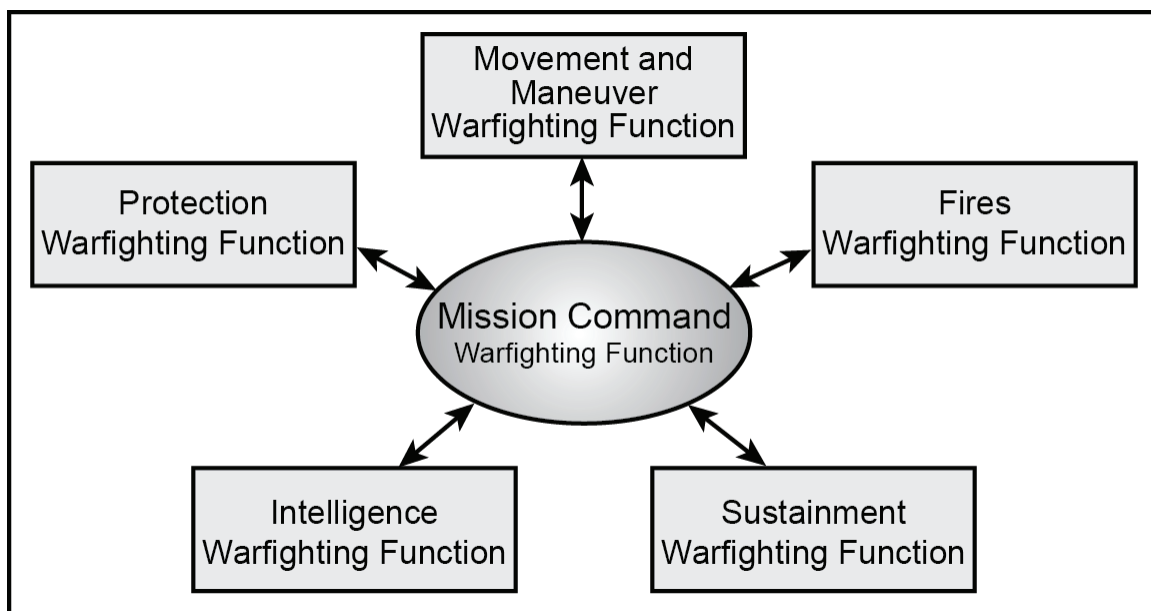


Figure 3-1. Integration through the mission command warfighting function

MISSION COMMAND WARFIGHTING FUNCTION TASKS

3-3. The mission command warfighting function tasks (illustrated in figure 3-2) define what commanders and staffs do to integrate the other warfighting functions. They include mutually supporting commander, staff, and additional tasks. The commander leads the staff tasks, and the staff tasks fully support the commander in executing the commander tasks. Commanders, assisted by their staffs, integrate numerous processes and activities within the headquarters and across the force as they exercise mission command.

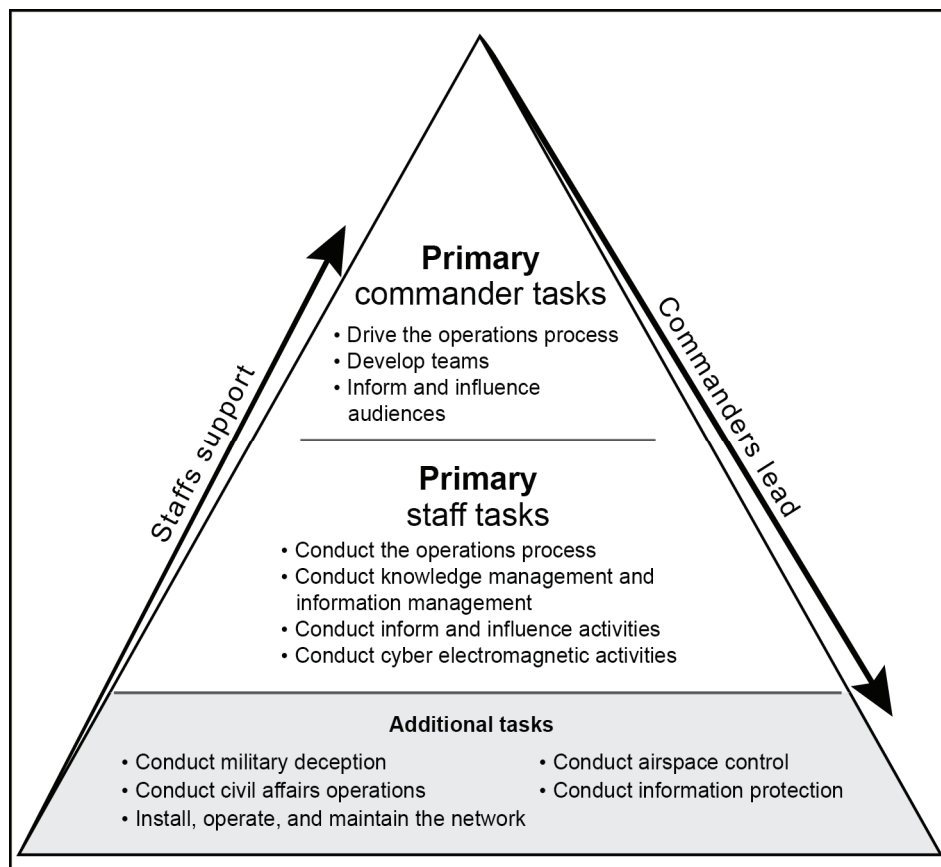


Figure 3-2. Mission command warfighting function tasks

COMMANDER TASKS

3-4. Commanders are the central figures in mission command. Throughout operations, commanders balance their time between leading their staffs through the operations process and providing purpose, direction, and motivation to subordinate commanders and Soldiers. Commanders encourage disciplined initiative through a clear commander's intent while providing enough direction to integrate and synchronize the actions of the force at the decisive place and time. Commanders create positive command climates that foster mutual trust and shared understanding within their command and with unified action partners. The commander tasks are—

- Drive the operations process through their activities of understanding, visualizing, describing, directing, leading, and assessing operations.
- Develop teams, both within their own organizations and with joint, interagency, and multinational partners.
- Inform and influence audiences, inside and outside their organizations.

Drive the Operations Process through Understanding, Visualizing, Describing, Directing, Leading and Assessing

3-5. The Army's overarching framework for exercising mission command is the *operations process*—the major mission command activities performed during operations: planning, preparing, executing, and continuously assessing the operation (ADP 5-0). Commanders, assisted by their staffs, integrate activities within the headquarters and across the force, as they exercise mission command. Commanders drive the operations process through the activities of understanding, visualizing, describing, directing, leading, and assessing operations. Throughout the operations process, commanders apply leadership to translate decisions into action. They do this by synchronizing forces and warfighting functions in time, space, and purpose, to accomplish the mission (see figure 3-3).

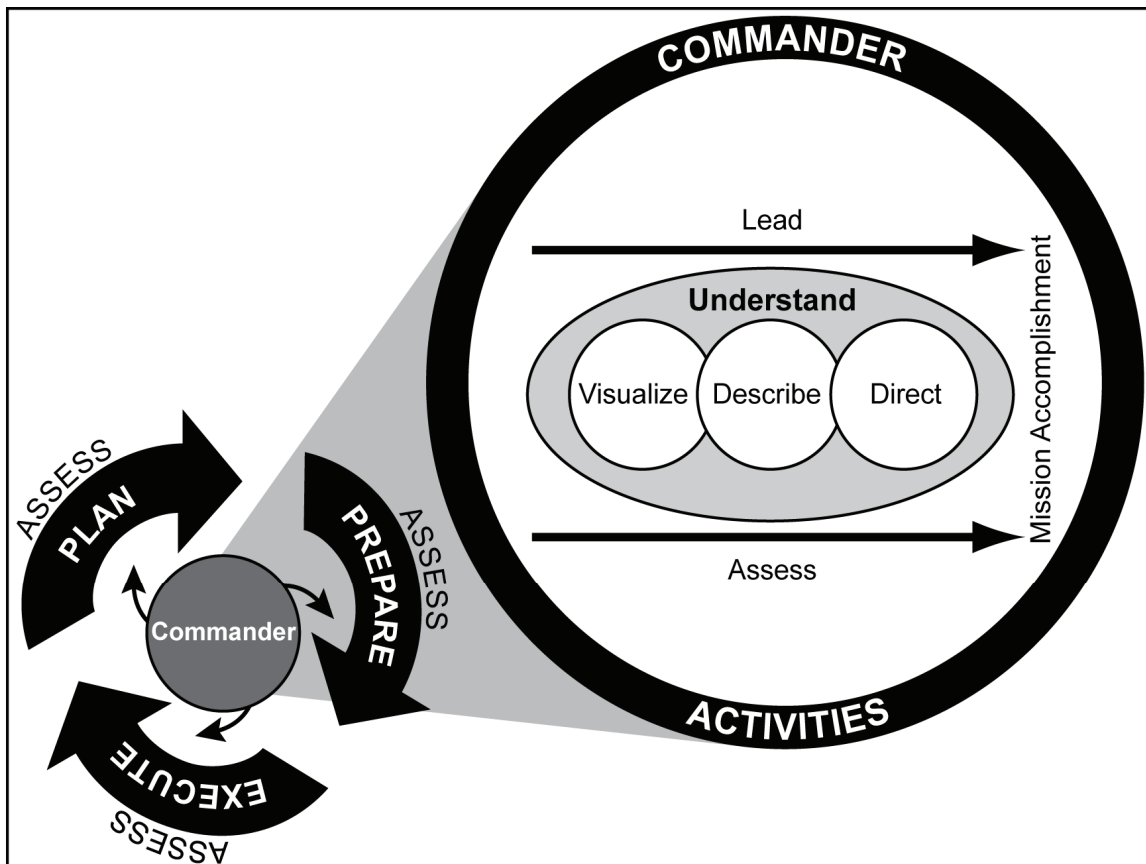


Figure 3-3. The operations process

3-6. Commanders understand, visualize, describe, direct, lead, and assess throughout operations. Commanders continuously develop, test, and update their understanding throughout the conduct of operations. They actively collaborate with other commanders, the staff, and unified action partners, to create a shared understanding. As commanders begin to develop an understanding of the operational environment, they start visualizing the operation's end state and potential solutions to solve problems. After commanders visualize an operation, they describe it to their staffs and subordinates. This description facilitates shared understanding of the situation, mission, and intent. Based on this understanding, commanders make decisions and direct action throughout the operations process. Commanders use the operations process to lead Soldiers and forces by providing direction and guidance. Commanders assess operations continuously to better understand current conditions and determine how operations are progressing. Commanders incorporate the assessments of the staff, subordinate commanders, and unified

action partners into their personal assessment of the situation. Based on their assessment, commanders modify plans and orders to better accomplish the mission. If their assessment reveals a significant variance from their original commander's visualization, commanders reframe the problem and develop a new operational approach.

3-7. The commander's focus on understanding, visualizing, describing, directing, leading, or assessing throughout operations varies during different operations process activities. For example, during planning commanders focus more on understanding, visualizing, and describing while directing, leading, and assessing. During execution, commanders often focus more on directing, leading, and assessing—while improving their understanding and modifying their visualization as needed. (See ADRP 5-0 for a detailed discussion of the operations process.)

Develop Teams within Their Own Organizations and with Joint, Interagency, and Multinational Partners

3-8. Successful mission command relies on teams and teamwork. A team is a group of individuals or organizations that work together toward a common goal. Teams range from informal groups of peers to structured, hierarchical groups. Teams may form in advance or gradually as the situation develops.

3-9. Commanders cannot always rely on habitual or pre-established relationships, and they must be able to build teams. In some cases, commanders must overcome biases that inhibit trust and cooperation. Commanders use their teambuilding skills to form effective teams and foster unity of effort. Successful team builders establish mutual trust, shared understanding, and cohesion. They instill a supportive attitude and a sense of responsibility among the team, and they appropriately distribute authority. Additionally, commanders expect to join pre-existing teams as host-nation and civilian organizations often are present before military forces arrive and remain long after forces leave. Overall, team building is a worthwhile investment because good teams complete missions on time with given resources and a minimum of wasted effort.

3-10. Effective teams synchronize individual efforts toward a common goal. They promote the exchange of ideas, creativity, and the development of collective solutions. They collaborate across the team to develop and improve processes. The variety of knowledge, talent, expertise, and resources in a team can produce better understanding and alternative options faster than one individual can achieve alone. Successful mission command fosters a greater understanding of the operational environment and solution development through teamwork. This results in teams that—

- Are adaptive and anticipate transitions.
- Accept risks to create opportunities.
- Influence friendly, neutrals, adversaries, enemies, and unified action partners.

The ultimate team outcome is successful mission accomplishment.

Inform and Influence Audiences, Inside and Outside Their Organizations

3-11. Commanders use inform and influence activities to ensure actions, themes, and messages compliment and reinforce each other to accomplish objectives. *Inform and influence activities* are the integration of designated information-related capabilities in order to synchronize themes, messages, and actions with operations to inform United States and global audiences, influence foreign audiences, and affect adversary and enemy decisionmaking (ADRP 3-0). An information theme is a unifying or dominant idea or image that expresses the purposes for an action. A message is a verbal, written, or electronic communication that supports an information theme focused on an audience. It supports a specific action or objective.

3-12. Actions, themes, and messages are inextricably linked. Commanders use inform and influence activities to ensure actions, themes, and messages compliment and reinforce each other and support operational objectives. They keep in mind that every action implies a message, and they avoid apparently contradictory actions, themes, or messages.

3-13. Throughout operations, commanders inform and influence audiences, both inside and outside of their organizations. Some commanders inform and influence through Soldier and leader engagements,

conducting radio programs, command information programs, operations briefs, and unit Web site posts. Inform and influence activities assist commanders in creating shared understanding and purpose both inside and outside their organizations and among all affected audiences. This supports the commander's operational goals by synchronizing words and actions. (See Army doctrine on inform and influence activities for more information.)

STAFF TASKS

3-14. The staff supports the commander and subordinate commanders in understanding situations, decisionmaking, and implementing decisions throughout the conduct of operations. The staff does this through the four staff tasks—

- Conduct the operations process: plan, prepare, execute, and assess.
- Conduct knowledge management and information management.
- Conduct inform and influence activities.
- Conduct cyber electromagnetic activities.

Conduct the Operations Process: Plan, Prepare, Execute, and Assess

3-15. The operations process consists of the major activities of mission command conducted during operations: planning, preparing, executing and assessing operations. Commanders drive the operations process, while remaining focused on the major aspects of operations. Staffs conduct the operations process; they assist commanders in the details of planning, preparing, executing, and assessing.

3-16. Upon receipt of a mission, planning starts a cycle of the operations process that results in a plan or operation order to guide the force during execution. After the completion of the initial order, however, the commander and staff revise the plan based on changing circumstances. While units and Soldiers always prepare for potential operations, preparing for a specific operation begins during planning and continues through execution. Execution puts plans into action. During execution, staffs focus on concerted action to seize and retain operational initiative, build and maintain momentum, and exploit success. As the unit executes the current operation, the commander and staff are planning future operations based on assessments of progress. Assessment is continuous and affects the other three activities. Subordinate units of the same command may be conducting different operations process activities.

3-17. The continuous nature of the operations process allows commanders and staffs to make adjustments enabling agile and adaptive forces. Commanders, assisted by their staffs, integrate activities within the headquarters and across the force as they exercise mission command. Throughout the operations process, they develop an understanding and appreciation of their operational environment. They formulate a plan and provide purpose, direction, and guidance to the entire force. Commanders then adjust operations as changes to the operational environment occur. It is this cycle that enables commanders and forces to seize, retain, and exploit the initiative to gain a position of relative advantage over the enemy. (See ADRP 5-0 for a detailed explanation of the operations process.)

Conduct Knowledge Management and Information Management

3-18. **Knowledge management is the process of enabling knowledge flow to enhance shared understanding, learning, and decisionmaking.** Knowledge management facilitates the transfer of knowledge between staffs, commanders, and forces. Knowledge management aligns people, processes, and tools within an organization to distribute knowledge and promote understanding. Commanders apply judgment to the information and knowledge provided to understand their operational environment and discern operational advantages. (See Army doctrine on knowledge management for more information.)

3-19. Commanders are constantly seeking to understand their operational environment in order to facilitate decisionmaking. The staff uses information management to assist the commander in building and maintaining understanding. **Information management is the science of using procedures and information systems to collect, process, store, display, disseminate, and protect data, information, and knowledge products.** The staff studies the operational environment, identifies information gaps, and helps the commander develop and answer information requirements. Collected data are then organized and

processed into information for development into and use as knowledge. Information becomes knowledge, and that knowledge also becomes a source of information. As this happens, new knowledge is created, shared, and acted upon. During the course of operations, knowledge constantly flows between individuals and organizations. Staffs help manage this constant cycle of exchange. (See Army doctrine on information management for more information.)

3-20. Staffs use information and knowledge management to provide commanders the information they need to create and maintain their understanding and make effective decisions. Information is disseminated, stored, and retrieved according to established information management practices. Information management practices allow all involved to build on each other's knowledge to further develop a shared understanding across the force. Knowledge management practices enable the transfer of knowledge between individuals and organizations. Knowledge transfer occurs both formally—through established processes and procedures—and informally—through collaboration and dialogue. Participants exchange perspectives along with information. They question each other's assumptions and exchange ideas. In this way, they create and maintain shared understanding and develop new approaches. Teams benefit, and forces enhance integration and synchronization.

Conduct Inform and Influence Activities

3-21. Throughout the operations process, staffs assist commanders in developing themes and messages to inform domestic audiences and influence foreign friendly, neutral, adversary, and enemy populations. They coordinate the activities and operations of information-related capabilities to integrate and synchronize all actions and messages into a cohesive effort. Staffs assist the commander in employing those capabilities to inform and influence foreign target audiences to shape the operational environment, exploit success, and protect friendly vulnerabilities. (See Army doctrine on inform and influence activities for more information.)

3-22. All assets and capabilities at a commander's disposal have the capacity to inform and influence to varying degrees. Some examples of resources commanders may use include combat camera, counter intelligence, maneuver and fires, and network operations. The primary information-related capabilities of inform and influence activities are—

- Public affairs.
- Military information support operations.
- Soldier and leader engagement.

Conduct Cyber Electromagnetic Activities

3-23. *Cyber electromagnetic activities* are activities leveraged to seize, retain, and exploit an advantage over adversaries and enemies in both cyberspace and the electromagnetic spectrum, while simultaneously denying and degrading adversary and enemy use of the same and protecting the mission command system (ADRP 3-0).

3-24. To succeed in unified land operations, cyber electromagnetic activities must be integrated and synchronized across all command echelons and warfighting functions. Commanders, supported by their staff, integrate cyberspace operations, electromagnetic spectrum operations and electronic warfare. The electronic warfare working group or similar staff organization coordinates cyber electromagnetic activities. These activities may employ the same technologies, capabilities, and enablers to accomplish assigned tasks. Cyber electromagnetic activities also enable inform and influence activities, signals intelligence, and network operations. (See Army doctrine on cyber electromagnetic activities for more information.)

ADDITIONAL TASKS

3-25. Commanders, assisted by their staffs, integrate five additional mission command warfighting function tasks. These are—

- Conduct military deception.
- Conduct civil affairs operations.
- Install, operate, and maintain the network.
- Conduct airspace control.
- Conduct information protection.

Conduct Military Deception

3-26. Commanders may use military deception to establish conditions favorable to success. *Military deception* is actions executed to deliberately mislead adversary military decision makers as to friendly military capabilities, intentions, and operations, thereby causing the adversary to take specific actions (or inactions) that will contribute to the accomplishment of the friendly mission (JP 3-13.4). Commanders use military deception to confuse an adversary, to deter hostile actions, and to increase the potential of successful friendly actions. It targets adversary decision makers and affects their decisionmaking process. Military deception can enhance the likelihood of success by causing an adversary to take (or not to take) specific actions, not just to believe certain things.

Conduct Civil Affairs Operations

3-27. Commanders use civil affairs operations to engage the civil component of the operational environment. Military forces interact with the civilian populace during operations. A supportive civilian population can provide resources and information that facilitate friendly operations. A hostile civilian population can threaten the operations of deployed friendly forces. Commanders use civil affairs operations to enhance the relationship between military forces and civil authorities in areas where military forces are present. Civil affairs operations are usually conducted by civil affairs forces due to the complexities and demands for specialized capabilities. (See Army doctrine on civil affairs for more information.)

Install, Operate, and Maintain the Network

3-28. Commanders rely on technical networks to communicate information and control forces. Technical networks facilitate information flow by connecting information users and information producers and enable effective and efficient information flow. Technical networks help shape and influence operations by getting information to decisionmakers, with adequate context, enabling them to make better decisions. They also assist commanders in projecting their decisions across the force. (See Army doctrine on network operations for more information.)

Conduct Airspace Control

3-29. Commanders conduct airspace control to increase combat effectiveness. Airspace control promotes the safe, efficient, and flexible use of airspace with minimum restraint on airspace users, and includes the coordination, integration, and regulation of airspace to increase operational effectiveness. Effective airspace control reduces the risk of fratricide, enhances air defense operations, and permits greater flexibility of operations. (See Army doctrine on airspace control for more information.)

Conduct Information Protection

3-30. **Information protection is active or passive measures used to safeguard and defend friendly information and information systems.** It denies enemies, adversaries, and others the opportunity to exploit friendly information and information systems for their own purposes. It is accomplished through active and passive means designed to help protect the force and preserve combat power.

MISSION COMMAND SYSTEM

3-31. Commanders cannot exercise mission command alone. The mission command system enhances the commander's ability to conduct operations. Commanders organize a mission command system to—

- Support the commander's decisionmaking.
- Collect, create, and maintain relevant information and prepare knowledge products to support the commander's and leaders' understanding and visualization.
- Prepare and communicate directives.
- Establish the means by which commanders and leaders communicate, collaborate, and facilitate the functioning of teams.

To provide these four overlapping functions, commanders arrange the five components of their mission command system (depicted in figure 3-4): personnel, networks, information systems, processes and procedures, and facilities and equipment.

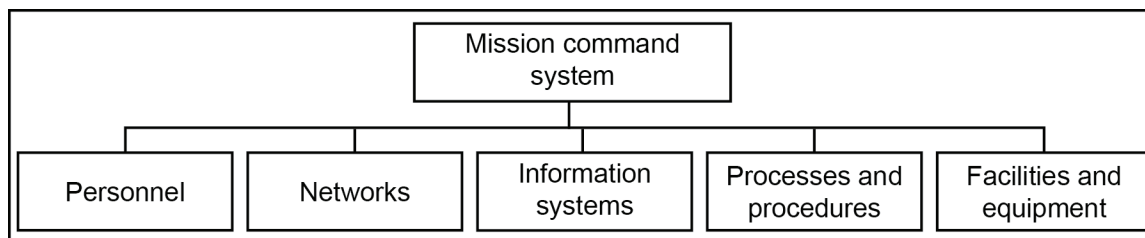


Figure 3-4. Components of a mission command system

PERSONNEL

3-32. A commander's mission command system begins with people. Soldiers and leaders exercise disciplined initiative and accomplish assigned missions in accordance with the commander's intent, not technology. Therefore, commanders base their mission command system on human skills, knowledge, and abilities more than on equipment and procedures. Trained Soldiers and leaders form the basis of an effective mission command system; commanders must not underestimate the importance of providing training. Key personnel dedicated to mission command include seconds in command, command sergeants major, and staffs.

Seconds in Command

3-33. The second in command is the commander's principal assistant. The second in command may be a deputy commander, an assistant commander, or an executive officer. A deputy commander is assigned to regiments, functional and support brigades, brigade combat teams, corps, and theater armies. Army divisions have two deputy commanders—a deputy commanding general for maneuver and a deputy commanding general for support. The division commander designates which deputy is second in command. At battalion and lower echelons, the executive officer is usually the second in command.

3-34. Commanders delegate authority to their seconds in command. Delegating authority to the seconds in command reduces the burden on commanders and allows them to focus on particular areas or concerns, while their seconds in command concentrate on others. Normally, commanders delegate authority to seconds in command to act in their name for specific functions and responsibilities.

3-35. The relationship between the deputy or assistant commanders and the staff is unique to each command. Staff members do not work for the deputy or assistant commanders unless the commander directs it. Commanders describe the roles and responsibilities of their deputy or assistant commanders and their relationships with respect to the chief of staff, staff, and subordinate commanders.

3-36. If a commander is removed from command suddenly for any reason, the second in command normally assumes command. At battalion and lower echelons, executive officers normally assume command. At higher echelons, deputy or assistant commanders sometimes are not senior to subordinate

unit commanders. In this case, the operations order specifies succession of command, and the second in command exercises command until the designated successor assumes command. However, commanders may designate a second in command who is junior to subordinate commanders as their successor in command (see AR 600-20).

3-37. Because seconds in command must be able to assume command at any time, they must keep abreast of the situation. Commanders inform their second in command of any changes in the commander's visualization or intent. The chief of staff keeps the second in command informed of staff actions. Further, commanders continually train their seconds in command as early as possible for command at their level.

Command Sergeants Major

3-38. The command sergeant major is the senior noncommissioned officer of the command at battalion and higher levels. Command sergeants major carry out policies and enforce standards for the performance, individual training, and conduct of enlisted Soldiers. They give advice and initiate recommendations to the commander and staff in matters pertaining to enlisted Soldiers. In operations, commanders employ their command sergeant major throughout the area of operations to extend command influence, assess morale of the force, and assist during critical events. Company first sergeants and platoon sergeants perform similar functions at company and platoon level.

Staff

3-39. The staff is an essential component of the mission command system. Led by the chief of staff or executive officer, the staff supports the commander in understanding situations, decisionmaking, and implementing decisions throughout the operations process. (See ATTP 5-0.1 for the duties and responsibilities of individual staff officers.)

3-40. A staff undertakes all its activities on behalf of the commander. A staff has no authority by itself; it derives authority from the commander and exercises it only in the commander's name. Commanders systematically arrange their staffs, as part of their mission command system, to perform three functions—

- Supporting the commander.
- Assisting subordinate units.
- Informing units and organizations outside the headquarters.

Supporting the Commander

3-41. A staff's most important function is to support and advise the commander throughout planning, preparation, execution, and assessment. Staffs do this by assisting the commander within their area of expertise (such as intelligence, resource management, or safety). The primary staff products are information and analysis. Staffs use knowledge management to extract relevant information from the vast amount of available information. They provide relevant information to commanders in the form of running estimates to help commanders build and maintain their situational understanding.

3-42. Staffs also prepare and disseminate information to subordinates for execution to assist commanders in controlling operations. While commanders often personally disseminate their commander's intent and planning guidance, they rely on their staffs to communicate the majority of their guidance in the form of plans and orders. Staffs must communicate the commander's decisions, and the intent behind them, efficiently and effectively throughout the force.

3-43. Finally, each staff section provides control over its area of expertise within the commander's intent. While commanders make key decisions, they are not the only decisionmakers. Trained and trusted staff members can be given decisionmaking authority based on the commander's intent. This frees commanders from routine decisions, enabling them to focus on key aspects of operations.

Assisting Subordinate Units

3-44. The staff assists subordinate units by coordinating resources, representing subordinates' concerns to the commander, clarifying orders and directives, and passing relevant information quickly. Effective staffs establish and maintain a high degree of coordination and cooperation with staffs of higher, lower, supporting, supported, and adjacent units. They do this by actively collaborating with commanders and staffs of other units to solve problems.

Informing Units and Organizations Outside the Headquarters

3-45. Staffs quickly pass all relevant information to outside headquarters, as they determine the information's value to the recipient. They also keep unified action partners informed with relevant information within security classification guidelines. The key to informing units and organizations outside the headquarters is relevance, not volume. Effective knowledge management helps identify the information the commander and each staff section need, and its relative importance.

3-46. Information should reach recipients based on their need for it. Sending incomplete information sooner is better than sending complete information too late. When forwarding information, senders highlight key information for each recipient and clarify the commander's intent. Senders may pass information directly, include their own analysis, or add context to it. Common, distributed databases can accelerate the passage of information; however, they cannot replace personal contact which adds context.

NETWORKS

3-47. Generally, a network is a grouping of things that are interconnected for a purpose. Networks enable commanders to communicate information and control forces whether mounted or dismounted. Networks are key enablers to successful operations. Commanders systematically establish networks to connect people. These connections can be established socially through the introduction of two personnel to perform a task, or technically through information systems. Commanders develop and leverage various social networks—individuals and organizations interconnected by a common interest—to exchange information and ideas, build teams, and promote unity of effort.

3-48. Technical networks also connect people and allow sharing of resources and information. For example, LandWarNet is a technical network. Its backbone is the Army Enterprise Network infrastructure and encompasses all Army information management systems and information systems that collect, process, store, display, disseminate, and protect information worldwide. It enables the execution of mission command and supports operations through wide dissemination of data and relevant information. (See Army doctrine on LandWarNet and network operations for more information.). Successful commanders understand that networks may be degraded during operations. They develop methods and measures to mitigate the impact of degraded networks. This may be through exploiting the potential of technology or through establishing trust, creating shared understanding, or providing a clear intent using mission orders.

INFORMATION SYSTEMS

3-49. Commanders determine their information requirements and focus their staffs and organizations on using information systems to meet these requirements. An *information system* consists of equipment that collect, process, store, display, and disseminate information. This includes computers—hardware and software—and communications, as well as policies and procedures for their use (ADP 6-0). Staffs use information systems to process, store, and disseminate information according to the commander's information priorities. These capabilities relieve the staff of handling routine data. Information systems—especially when integrated into a coherent, reliable network—enable extensive information sharing, collaborative planning, execution, and assessment that promote shared understanding.

PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES

3-50. Commanders establish and use systematic processes and procedures to organize the activities within the headquarters and throughout the force. Processes are a series of actions directed to an end state, such as the military decisionmaking process. Procedures are standard, detailed steps, often used by staffs, which

describe how to perform specific tasks to achieve the desired end state. For example, the military decisionmaking process provides the commander, staffs, and subordinate commanders an orderly method for planning. Procedures govern actions within the mission command system to make it more effective and efficient. For example, standard operating procedures often provide detailed unit instructions on how to configure common operational picture displays. Adhering to processes and procedures minimizes confusion, misunderstanding, and hesitation as commanders make frequent, rapid decisions to meet operational requirements.

3-51. Processes and procedures can increase organizational competence, for example, by improving a staff's efficiency or by increasing the tempo. Processes and procedures can be especially useful in improving the coordination of Soldiers who must cooperate to accomplish repetitive tasks, such as the internal functioning of a command post. Units avoid applying procedures blindly to the wrong tasks or the wrong situations, which can lead to ineffective, even counterproductive, performance.

FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

3-52. Commanders systematically arrange facilities and equipment, including command posts, platforms, operation centers, signal nodes, and all mission command support equipment. A facility is a structure or location that provides a work environment and shelter for the other components of the mission command system. Facilities range from a command post composed of vehicles and tentage, to platforms, to hardened buildings. Examples of equipment needed to sustain a mission command system include vehicles, radio or signal equipment, generators, and lighting. (See ATTP 5-01.1 for a detailed discussion of command posts.) Facilities and equipment do not include information systems.

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Source Notes

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- 2-4 FM 100-5, *Tentative Field Service Regulations, Operations*, (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1939). (obsolete)
- 2-3 Grant, Ulysses S., *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant, Volume 10: January 1 – May 31, 1864*, edited by John Y. Simon. (Ulysses S. Grant Association, 1982).

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Glossary

The glossary lists acronyms and terms with Army or joint definitions. Where Army and joint definitions differ, (Army) precedes the definition. Terms for which ADRP 6-0 is the proponent are marked with an asterisk (*). The proponent publication for other terms is listed in parentheses after the definition.

SECTION I – ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADP	Army doctrine publication
ADRP	Army doctrine reference publication
ATTP	Army tactics, techniques, and procedures publication
COP	common operational picture
DA	Department of the Army
DA pam	Department of the Army pamphlet
FM	field manual
JP	joint publication
METT-TC	mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops and support available, time available and civil considerations
PMESII-PT	political, military, economic, social, information, infrastructure, physical environment, and time

SECTION II – TERMS

art of command

The creative and skillful exercise of authority through timely decisionmaking and leadership. (ADP 6-0)

authority

The delegated power to judge, act, or command. (ADP 6-0)

command

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)

commander's intent

A clear and concise expression of the purpose of the operation and the desired military end state that supports mission command, provides focus to the staff, and helps subordinate and supporting commanders act to achieve the commander's desired results without further orders, even when the operation does not unfold as planned. (JP 3-0)

***common operational picture**

(Army) A single display of relevant information within a commander's area of interest tailored to the user's requirements and based on common data and information shared by more than one command.

control

(Army) The regulation of forces and warfighting functions to accomplish the mission in accordance with the commander's intent. (ADP 6-0)

***control measure**

A means of regulating forces or warfighting functions. (ADRP 6-0)

cyber electromagnetic activities

Activities leveraged to seize, retain, and exploit an advantage over adversaries and enemies in both cyberspace and the electromagnetic spectrum, while simultaneously denying and degrading adversary and enemy use of the same and protecting the mission command system. (ADRP 3-0)

***data**

(Army) Unprocessed signals communicated between any nodes in an information system, or sensing from the environment detected by a collector of any kind (human, mechanical, or electronic). (ADRP 6-0)

***graphic control measure**

A symbol used on maps and displays to regulate forces and warfighting functions.

inform and influence activities

The integration of designated information-related capabilities in order to synchronize themes, messages, and actions with operations to inform United States and global audiences, influence foreign audiences, and affect adversary and enemy decisionmaking. (ADRP 3-0)

information

The meaning that a human assigns to data by means of the known conventions used in their representation. (JP 3-13.1)

***information management**

The science of using procedures and information systems to collect, process, store, display, disseminate, and protect data, information, and knowledge products. (ADRP 6-0)

***information protection**

Active or passive measures used to safeguard and defend friendly information and information systems. (ADRP 6-0)

***information requirement**

Any information element the commander and staff require to successfully conduct operations. (ADRP 6-0)

information system

(Army) Equipment that collects, processes, stores, displays, and disseminates information. This includes computers—hardware and software—and communications, as well as policies and procedures for their use. (ADP 6-0)

***knowledge management**

The process of enabling knowledge flow to enhance shared understanding, learning, and decisionmaking. (ADRP 6-0)

military deception

Actions executed to deliberately mislead adversary military decision makers as to friendly military capabilities, intentions, and operations, thereby causing the adversary to take specific actions (or inactions) that will contribute to the accomplishment of the friendly mission. (JP 3-13.4)

mission command

(Army) The exercise of authority and direction by the commander using mission orders to enable disciplined initiative within the commander's intent to empower agile and adaptive leaders in the conduct of unified land operations. (ADP 6-0)

mission command system

The arrangement of personnel, networks, information systems, processes and procedures, and facilities and equipment that enable commanders to conduct operations. (ADP 6-0)

mission command warfighting function

The related tasks and systems that develop and integrate those activities enabling a commander to balance the art of command and the science of control in order to integrate the other warfighting functions. (ADRP 3-0)

mission orders

Directives that emphasize to subordinates the results to be attained, not how they are to achieve them. (ADP 6-0)

operational environment

A composite of the conditions, circumstances, and influences that affect the employment of capabilities and bear on the decisions of the commander. (JP 3-0)

operations process

The major mission command activities performed during operations: planning, preparing, executing, and continuously assessing the operation. (ADP 5-0)

prudent risk

A deliberate exposure to potential injury or loss when the commander judges the outcome in terms of mission accomplishment as worth the cost. (ADP 6-0)

responsibility

The obligation to carry forward an assigned task to a successful conclusion. With responsibility goes authority to direct and take the necessary action to ensure success. (JP 1-02)

science of control

Systems and procedures used to improve the commander's understanding and support accomplishing missions. (ADP 6-0)

unified action

The synchronization, coordination, and/or integration of the activities of governmental and nongovernmental entities with military operations to achieve unity of effort. (JP 1)

unified action partners

Those military forces, governmental and nongovernmental organizations, and elements of the private sector with whom Army forces plan, coordinate, synchronize, and integrate during the conduct of operations. (ADRP 3-0)

unified land operations

How the Army seizes, retains, and exploits the initiative to gain and maintain a position of relative advantage in sustained land operations through simultaneous offensive, defensive, and stability operations in order to prevent or deter conflict, prevail in war, and create the conditions for favorable conflict resolution. (ADP 3-0)

unity of effort

The coordination and cooperation toward common objectives, even if the participants are not necessarily part of the same command or organization—the product of successful unified action. (JP 1)

warfighting function

A group of tasks and systems (people, organizations, information, and processes) united by a common purpose that commanders use to accomplish missions and training objectives. (ADRP 3-0)

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