

**USAF DOCTRINE UPDATE**  
on  
**AFDD 4-0, *Combat Support***

23 April 2013

The revision to AFDD 4-0, *Combat Support*, reflects the current Air Force combat support construct and capabilities. This construct dropped the term expeditionary combat support due to the increasing frequency of operational missions conducted from outside an operational area (e.g., remotely piloted aircraft, cyberspace operations). Key discussion points within AFDD 4-0 include the following:

**Combat Support (CS) (pages 1-2, 50)**

- The Air Force defines CS as **the foundational and crosscutting capability to field, base, protect, support, and sustain Air Force forces across the range of military operations**. This definition encapsulates the Service's mindset that CS goes far beyond the basics of logistics or maintenance.
- CS provides a structural overview for what is perceived as a wide variety of functional areas; understanding its core capabilities and processes gives a solid foundation of what support to the Service entails.
- The foundation of CS is a ready force, properly sized, organized, trained, and integrated. The structure comes from diverse functional communities that train and are equipped to provide a wide variety of capabilities. CS derives its capabilities from three overarching principles:
  - CS enables operations in peacetime and wartime with effects supporting US national interests at any time or place across the range of military operations.
  - CS provides essential support while minimizing the forward footprint and maximizing reachback, thus increasing effectiveness and responsiveness.
  - CS provides the ability to transition swiftly from home station to a deployed environment and between operational requirements.

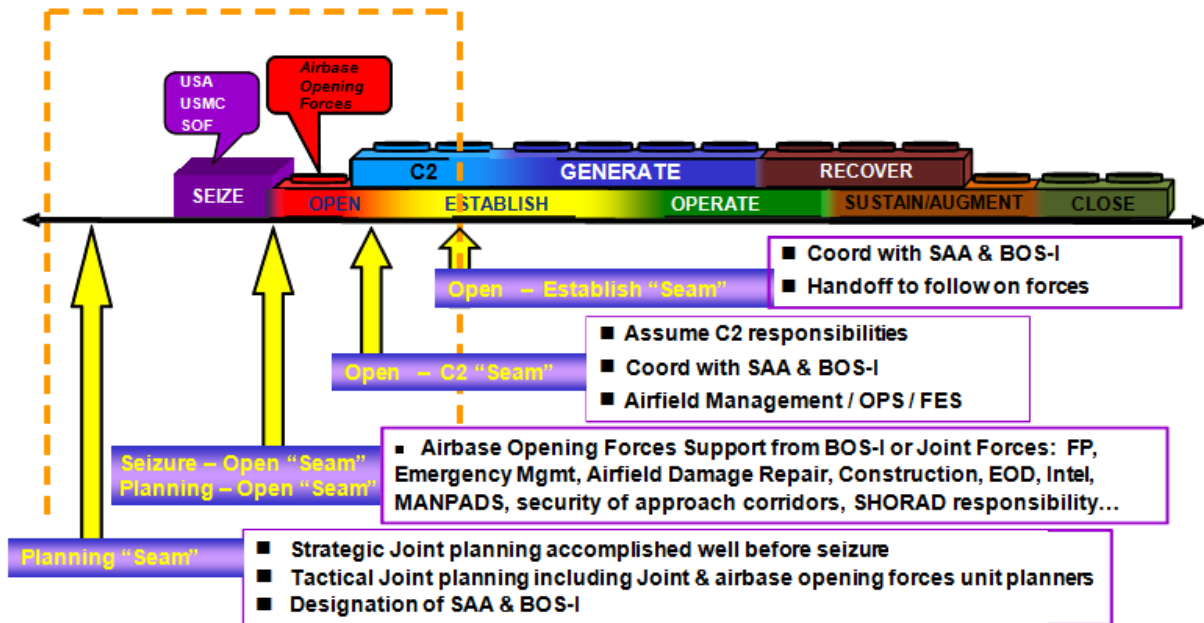
**CS Command and Control (pages 6-8)**

- Air Force C2 structures for CS enable a commander of Air Force forces (COMAFFOR) to execute the Service's Title 10, United States Code (U.S.C.) responsibility for logistical support while also supporting the combatant commander's (CCDR) exercise of directive authority for logistics (DAFL).
- The COMAFFOR is responsible for ensuring essential support to all assigned and attached Air Force personnel within a joint force.
- The COMAFFOR has responsibility for the C2 of the Air Force component's CS operations. The majority of CS forces operate within air expeditionary wings, but the COMAFFOR may choose to retain at theater level some CS support assets. In this case, selected CS personnel are aligned in squadrons or groups that report directly to the COMAFFOR or to an AETF-X commander if one is designated.

**Establishing Operating Locations (OL) (page 24)**

- The Airman's perspective encompasses the understanding that "supporting bases with their people, systems, and facilities are essential to launch, recovery, and sustainment of Air Force forces."

- One of the most important aspects of the Air Force has proved to be its ability to move anywhere in the world quickly and then rapidly begin operations. However, the need for mobility should be balanced against the need to operate at the deployment site.
- The availability and operability of suitable bases can be the dominant factor in employment planning and execution.
- Airbase opening is a critical task and requires significant attention during planning. The figure below illustrates the specific times during airbase opening when transitions between events may drive actions for which CS forces should be prepared.



### AETF Force Modules and Process Seams

- There are two key individuals involved with opening and sustaining an airbase.
  - The senior airfield authority (SAA) is responsible for the control, operation, and maintenance of the airfield. The Joint Force Commander should designate the Service component responsible for airbase operations and that component should appoint a SAA for airfield operations.
  - The base operating support-integrator (BOS-I) acts as the joint BOS provider, coordinates the efficient use of mission support resources, and provides master planning for facilities and real estate. The Service component with the preponderance of forces should normally provide the BOS-I. A CDR may designate an individual within a Service component or JTF as the BOS-I at each OL.
- The BOS-I and SAA have an important interaction with a significant seam.
  - In many cases the CDR will designate a BOS-I and a SAA from different services at the same location (a common practice is to designate the Army component with BOS-I responsibilities while designating the Air Force component with SAA responsibilities).
  - However, the SAA will perform many BOS functions on the facilities close to the airfield.
  - The BOS-I and SAA should closely coordinate along this seam during planning and execution of operations. A common solution is to form an agreed upon line around the airfield and give the SAA responsibility for the area inside the line and the BOS-I responsibility for the area outside the line.

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To view AFDD 4-0, *Combat Support*, [click here](#).

