

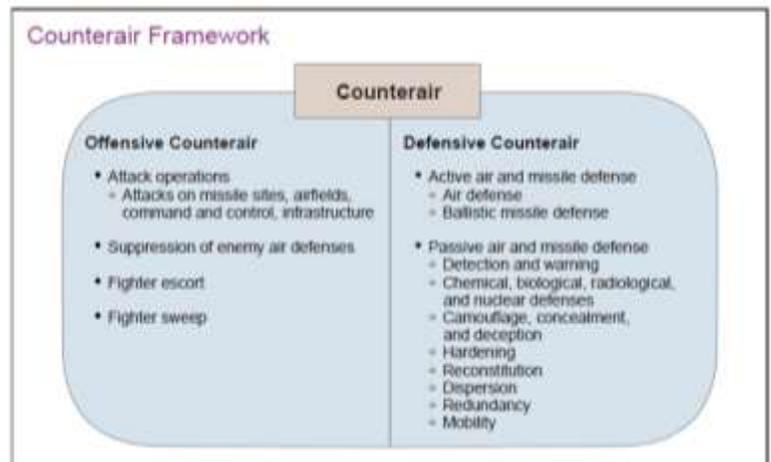


Doctrine Advisory On Counterair and Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD)

There is a hazard when Airmen equate counterair with IAMD or, in some cases, call for IAMD replacing counterair entirely. Counterair is about defeating all threats, before and after launch, that travel through the air. Counterair integrates offensive and defensive operations to gain air superiority while IAMD is “an evolving approach” concerned only about operations that contribute to the defense of friendly territory and in practice is overwhelmingly focused on ballistic missiles. The concern is that not fully understanding these two terms will lead to the creation of C2 arrangements that result in a loss of unity of command and unity of effort during joint operations. The loss of these two key C2 concepts impacts the proper integration of joint offensive and defensive capabilities needed to defeat air and missile threats. This Doctrine Advisory equips Airmen to better understand counterair and IAMD and their proper place in theater operations.

Counterair in joint doctrine

- Counterair is “a **mission** that integrates offensive and defensive operations to attain and maintain a desired degree of air superiority and protection by neutralizing or destroying enemy aircraft and missiles, both before and after launch.”¹
 - Air superiority enables a joint force to operate “without prohibitive interference” by providing protection to the joint force and the ability to attack throughout the joint operations area.
 - **Counterair enables the wider air effort as well as a joint force’s decisive offensive effort to defeat the enemy.**

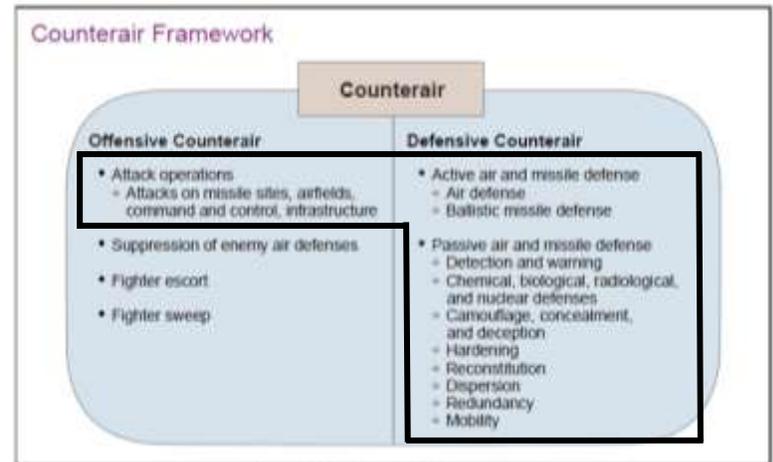


2004 IAMD Joint Integrating Concept (JIC)

- **IAMD is focused only on defense.** The JIC defined IAMD as “[1] **The integration of capabilities** and overlapping operations to defend the homeland and United States national interests, [2] protect the joint force, and [3] enable freedom of action by negating an adversary’s ability to create adverse effects from their air and missile capabilities.”
 - The JIC called for capabilities to address global, theater, and tactical threats.
 - The definition’s three focus areas reflect the JIC’s requirement to develop capabilities to defeat all threats larger than small arms that attack the joint force through the air. This includes mortars, artillery and warheads re-entering the atmosphere from space.
 - Since 2004 IAMD-driven projects have been almost entirely focused on missile defense.

The IAMD approach to operations is a subset of counterair operations

- IAMD is an evolving approach that uses the counterair framework at the theater level.²
- IAMD emphasizes the integration of:
 - OCA attack operations
 - DCA operations
 - Other capabilities as required to create JFC desired effects³ (see the “Oklahoma Chart” to the right outlining the IAMD mission area)
 - At the theater level, The Air Force position is that IAMD is part of the counterair framework to include the C2 structure of the latter. **It is not a separate mission from counterair.**



Potential unity of command/unity of effort Issues

- Joint doctrine allows the JFC to select different commanders as the JFACC, AADC, and Airspace Control Authority (ACA). However, current and preferred practice is for one individual to hold all of those positions to ensure a holistic and balanced approach to the conduct of joint air operations and gaining air superiority.
- The following is likely if IAMD becomes a separate mission from counterair, **and** a commander other than the JFACC is the AADC - with the responsibility for DCA⁴ as well as OCA attack operations.
 - The AADC's OCA attack operations would be planned in isolation from other offensive air operations directed by the JFACC.
 - Two commanders would be planning separate operations while vying to use the same assets, and then would have to synchronize or integrate their operations.
 - These two commanders would have to arrange how to plan, control, and dynamically direct multi-mission platforms that can strike a combination of OCA, strategic attack, or interdiction targets on a single sortie.
 - This scenario will result in the suboptimal application of airpower.
- From the Airman's perspective, adopting the IAMD approach to operations could mean that...
 - A separate commander other than the JFACC with control over air assets violates the unity of command over airpower that allows us to maximize its potential.
 - With two commanders and staffs planning and conducting attack operations, the current unity of effort in the overall joint air operations effort would suffer.
- Today, under the counterair construct, OCA attack operations are integrated with the wider joint air operations offensive effort against a variety of enemy targets.
 - The Joint Air Operations Center (JAOC) plans, integrates, and directs the four OCA mission components to enable other offensive operations as well as the AADC's DCA effort.
 - All missions entering contested airspace require the protection provided by the integrated application of OCA's SEAD, fighter escort, fighter sweep operations, and attack operations.
 - Key AADC staff elements are now embedded in the JAOC to help the JFACC/AADC achieve the needed balance between offensive and defensive operations.

Bottomline:

- The counterair framework encompasses a broader mission set than IAMD.
 - When compared to counterair's broad objectives, IAMD's defensive objective is limited.
 - However, IAMD's emphasis on the integration of offensive and defensive actions makes it a natural fit to blend into the existing counterair construct.

- IAMD uses the Counterair framework at the theater level.

- Classifying IAMD as a separate mission rather than as an addition to the counterair construct, allows for the possibility this new mission may split the C2, planning, and execution of overall counterair offensive and defensive missions--to the joint force's detriment.

- The present counterair construct best allows one commander...
 - To balance the weight of offensive and defensive operations.
 - To focus on meeting the JFCs all-encompassing "big picture" objectives.

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¹ JP 3-01, *Countering Air and Missile Threats*, 23 March 2012, GL-10.

² JP 3 01, p. ix.

³ JP 3 01, I-1.

⁴ JP 3-30, *Command and Control of Joint Air Operations*, 10 February 2014, II-2 and 3.