



CURTIS E. LEMAY CENTER

FOR DOCTRINE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION



AIR FORCE DOCTRINE PUBLICATION (AFDP) 3-0 OPERATIONS AND PLANNING

TERMINATION AND TRANSITION OF OPERATIONS

Last Updated: 04 November 2016

Planning for [termination](#), transition, and [redeployment](#) from operations can be just as critical as planning to engage in an operation in the first place. Air Force commanders should focus on creating the proper airpower effects to help meet the operational commander's military objectives and achieve the desired end state. Once the [joint force commander's objectives](#) are met and the proper conditions for terminating the operation exist, commanders should be prepared to execute their disengagement [strategy](#). The commander's strategy should be coordinated with other agencies and organizations involved in the operation, and will likely include the State Department, other coalition forces, the host nation, nongovernmental organizations, and international organizations. In some cases, Air Force forces may disengage when appropriate [effects](#) have been created and the commander's objectives are met. In some cases, Air Force forces may disengage from smaller [contingencies](#) and redeploy to larger conflicts.

CONFLICT TERMINATION

Conflict termination is a vital aspect of tying military actions to [strategic](#) objectives, establishing an [end state](#) that provides a "better state of peace," and ensuring that the United States and its strategic partners achieve continuing advantage in the strategic environment. Cessation of major hostilities usually follows one of three patterns. The first is one (or more) imposing its (or their) will on another combatant by force of arms. The unconditional surrender of the Axis powers ending WW II is an example. Another method may be through a mutual, negotiated settlement between the parties involved, such as the Paris Peace Accords that ended US involvement in the Vietnam War. Finally, a settlement may be imposed or brought about by a third power. For example, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's intervention in the Bosnian civil war resulted in the Dayton Accords, which effectively ended that conflict. The end of conflict is rarely predictable and even a seemingly final end state often leads to new, emergent conditions within the operational environment that the United States and its partners may need to respond to.

Termination planning should establish the conditions and detail the actions needed to achieve the military portion of the desired end state and create enduring advantage. Also, the way a conflict is conducted may have a great effect on the actual end state(s) achieved. For example, unnecessarily destructive operations may foster ill feelings among a host-nation's populace, may aggravate refugee problems, and may increase collateral civilian damage or destroy so much infrastructure that enabling civil authority is more difficult, expensive, and time consuming. In contrast, campaigns that effectively reduce an adversary's military capacity to commit aggression while minimizing collateral

damage to the civilian populace can contribute to regional stability and discourage other potential aggressors from military action.

Planning for termination should begin as early as possible, preferably prior to the beginning of major operations. Termination planning is extremely difficult, as conflicts can evolve in many directions, forcing revision of the original termination plans. The greatest difficulty at the operational level is translating national goals into measurable military objectives that create the conditions needed to achieve an end state conveying continued strategic advantage.

Regardless of how the end state is brought about, operational concerns should be addressed early in the termination effort to avoid resumption of combat. Provision for the security of remaining forces, responsibilities toward the civilian population, prisoner of war accounting, and repatriation are all issues that should be addressed. Providing for the security of former adversaries and other basic human needs may significantly enhance peaceful resolution of a conflict, as may restoring elements of vital public infrastructure that may have been damaged or destroyed by combat or other violence. Establishing [rules of engagement](#); targeting criteria; [intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance](#) and [information operations](#) requirements; relations with the media; funding and force structure requirements; along with plans for medical care and coordination with nonmilitary organizations are key considerations for friendly forces to better understand their role. These considerations may lead to expanded or increasingly constrained postures to preclude the resurgence of hostilities, enhance public support, and ensure the security of military operations and enable or legitimize civil authority. The influence of nonmilitary [instruments of national power](#) (IOPs) may increase as termination approaches and the end state is achieved. Consideration of the requirements for the other IOPs will significantly support achieving the desired end state.

Whether conflict termination is imposed by decisive military action or through a negotiated settlement, [airpower](#) may play a critical role in any post-hostility transition. Airpower offers national leaders a potent force to support political and economic IOPs during post-hostilities. Component commanders should therefore clearly and explicitly define the capabilities of their respective forces to meet the objectives of conflict termination.

TRANSITION TO FOLLOW-ON OPERATIONS

Transition occurs when control of the ongoing mission is transferred to another organization or when a change of mission is brought about by changing circumstances or objectives. As with planning for conflict termination, planning for transition should extend throughout the planning process and into operations and redeployment. [Joint task force](#) operations may be transferred to another military force, a regional organization, an international agency such as the United Nations, or civilian organizations. The process of transferring control of an operation to another military force or organization is situation-dependent; often, high-level [interagency](#) approval is required, with long lead times. After a conflict, regeneration of force capabilities may be a primary consideration in the transition plan. Key transition decisions may involve the following considerations:

- ★ Requirements for a residual force or response capability.

- ✦ Follow-on civil support, nation-building, or humanitarian missions.
- ✦ [Force protection](#).
- ✦ Alliance and coalition force considerations.
- ✦ Availability of intertheater and intratheater air mobility assets.
- ✦ Applicable host nation environmental standards.

REDEPLOYMENT

Redeployment activities concern the transfer of individuals, units, and materiel and can begin at any point during operations. Planners should begin redeployment planning early so operations reflect exit or transition strategy developed during mission analysis and support both the operation's desired end state and the steady-state strategy for the operational area. Redeployment is not just reversing the deployment process; it is a mission-based operation within the overall context of the joint mission. Redeployment may include movement of individuals, units, and materiel deployed in one area to another location within the same area, to locations for the purpose of further employment, or to their home bases.
