



COMMAND AND CONTROL

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Specific [command and control](#) (C2) systems and processes for indirect and direct support vary according to the conflict situation, [host nation](#) (HN) requirements, US objectives, and the level of US involvement. C2 systems and processes for security assistance and most forms of direct support (not involving combat) contain civilian as well as military elements. [Nongovernmental organizations](#) and commercial consortia can provide much of the C2 infrastructure that enables [foreign internal defense](#) (FID) operations. Air Force security assistance activities overseas are organized under a military command structure within security assistance offices, but both civilian and military elements control and supervise aspects of these activities. Military authorities command, control, and supervise tactical operations in the field.

[Security cooperation organizations](#) (SCOs) respond to two channels: one through the US diplomatic mission and the other through the geographic combatant commander (GCC). All US government personnel performing security assistance duties in a foreign country are under the policy direction and supervision of the US chief of mission. Commanders and senior officers assigned to SCO positions in foreign countries should be given special training that defines the limits of “policy direction and supervision” and appropriate reporting instructions in military channels when guidance may not be consistent with Department of Defense (DOD) policy.

C2 INDIRECT SUPPORT

The Air Force conducts indirect support in accordance with the guidance contained in statutory authorities and executive orders, as well as directives, regulations, and manuals issued by the Department of State (DOS) and the DOD. Military personnel temporarily assigned within a foreign nation serve under the policy direction, coordination, and supervision of the chief of mission, unless deployed to perform duties directed by the GCC. Forces temporarily deployed overseas to accomplish security assistance functions within a combatant commander’s AOR should normally be attached to that commander. The supported GCC normally exercises [operational control](#) of these forces.

Security assistance-funded mobile training teams (MTT) accomplish tasks and

objectives established in security assistance case letters of offer and acceptance by the DOS, the Secretary of the Air Force, and the security assistance community, rather than a GCC or special operations command. MTTs fall under security assistance case management and oversight of the security cooperation organization, or US Military Group, in the American Embassy. The MTT carries out contractual functions with a training “product” at the end. Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) MTT deployments, however, should be coordinated with the theater special operations component (TSOC) personnel to advise them of the team's presence in the area of responsibility (AOR). Air Force teams deployed temporarily for training events and exercises with HN forces normally fall under the policy supervision and oversight of the American Embassy, generally through the SCO. Temporarily deployed teams should be supported by the SCO for in-country administrative functions (including appropriate technical, legal, and administrative status in the HN). The combatant commander and the US chief of mission provide procedural guidance.

C2 DIRECT SUPPORT (NOT INVOLVING COMBAT)

Direct FID support (not involving combat) is authorized and directed on a case-by-case basis by the President or Secretary of Defense. Direct FID support is classified as a military mission with respect to command and control responsibilities of the combatant commander in whose AOR the operation is conducted.

Deployed Air Force special operations trainers and advisors are normally assigned to the TSOC commander. The joint force air component commander, through the GCC and the US Special Operations Command, can also request and employ Air Force SOF trainers and advisors. Title 10, U.S. Code, *Armed Forces*, §322, “[Special operations forces: training with friendly foreign forces](#),” allows such units as AFSOC’s [combat aviation advisors](#) (CAA) to expend unit operation and maintenance funds to train (and train with) foreign forces. This legal provision gives Air Force special operations forces greater flexibility than other FID and military coalition support activities. Their inherent flexibility makes CAA forces a very attractive and cost-effective way for the US to establish important foreign relationships.

The US chief of mission can request certain forms of indirect and direct support, and it is generally subject to his or her approval. Coordination of mission requirements, operational constraints, and tasking should take place with the joint force commander or other designated agencies of the joint command. The ambassador normally exercises in-country policy supervision and oversight of these activities.

C2 DIRECT SUPPORT (COMBAT OPERATIONS)

Air Force forces employed in combat FID operations should be organized, commanded, and controlled on the basis of guidance established in joint and Air Force doctrine and directives. C2 structures may require tailoring to fit specific operational environments, force allocations, and US-HN agreements on command of multinational forces.

When deployed, Air Force special operations forces are normally attached to a joint task force as part of a subordinate joint special operations task force (JSOTF) commanded by a joint force special operations component commander. However, AFSOC personnel performing FID missions may be attached directly to a conventional air expeditionary task force (AETF) under a commander, Air Force forces (COMAFFOR). If FID operations expand into larger combat operations, these AFSOC forces may either remain part of the AETF or be reorganized as part of the JSOTF. COMAFFORs and participants should be prepared for either command relationship.

UNIFIED ACTION

Where the responsibilities of military, governmental and nongovernmental entities overlap, planning and execution of FID initiatives require emphasis on close, continuous coordination rather than on command and control as defined in purely military terms. In many cases, the relationship between agencies is one of interdependence. Combatant commanders, for instance, have functions and responsibilities that go beyond security assistance.

SCOs and country teams, with their knowledge of security assistance activities and other foreign aid efforts, serve the combatant commander as important sources of information on HN [internal defense and development](#) planning and military preparedness. In addition, combatant commanders have contingency plans and intelligence at their disposal that may be relevant to security assistance planning and crisis response. These commanders also have assigned forces, TDY personnel, strategic expertise, and materiel resources that can be used in HN relations, security assistance, joint-multinational exercises, and certain forms of direct support. Combatant commanders can also promote interoperability and standardization for multinational operations involving US and HN forces.

Coordination tailored to specific locations and missions benefits not only US diplomatic mission objectives but also the combatant commander's security assistance mission. For example, Air Force elements assigned to combatant commands and SCOs (or other country team components) support joint-interagency coordination of airpower requirements and capabilities for security assistance planning, administration, logistics support, and direct support operations. To accomplish such coordination, Air Force representatives may choose to use an appropriate channel of communication that may extend outside formal coordination procedures. These channels can be used to support combatant commander efforts to help SCOs develop realistic air defense requirements in host countries. They can also be used to keep US diplomatic missions informed about airpower resources and capabilities available for direct support and crisis response.

Joint and Interagency Operations

FID operations frequently involve joint and interagency efforts supporting unified action.

Success of these operations depends on effective communications for tasking, coordinating, monitoring, and reporting among the various US civilian and military agencies. Air Force C2 structures should be tailored to specific environments, missions, and joint force compositions and should be adaptable to varying scenarios. These structures should connect in-country, joint, and interagency elements and should establish links between in-country elements, the combatant commander, and US command and supervisory elements. Deployed Air Force teams may function as elements attached to other Service units or attached, under special arrangements, to interagency organizations.

Multinational Operations

Air Force elements play a key FID role by helping to develop and support multinational C2 capabilities for airpower operations. Multinational (combined) activity is inherent in all forms of military FID assistance, and all these forms require links between US and HN C2 elements. Command relationships and responsibilities for multinational exercises and contingency operations are established in accordance with US-HN agreements.

Connectivity is essential, particularly when US and HN forces function in mutual support during combat operations. Interoperability issues should also be considered in light of the Air Force's need for information assurance.

Significant C2 interoperability challenges in multinational operations typically involve incompatible equipment and standards, language barriers, differing C2 procedures, lack of HN experience, and inadequate HN logistics infrastructures to maintain modern communications equipment. Equipment modernization provided under security assistance can alleviate some of these deficiencies, but commanders should also consider the use of Air Force trainers and advisors to improve HN C2 doctrine, coordinate combined C2 procedures, and facilitate interoperability.
