



## THE NAVY COMPOSITE WARFARE COMMANDER

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Naval units are deployed in task group organizations that can be tailored to the intended employment of the force. The commander of each task group is responsible for all aspects of operations and for carrying out the missions assigned by the [joint force commander](#). The force is organized according to the composite warfare doctrine described in Navy Warfare Publication 3-56, [Composite Warfare: Maritime Operations at the Tactical Level of War](#). **Composite warfare doctrine represents the Navy's implementation of centralized control and decentralized execution.** This type of planning, control, and execution allows subordinates flexibility and initiative in executing the commander's intent by telling them how their respective warfare areas contribute to overall mission success without specifically telling them how their tasks are to be accomplished. Naval doctrine makes decentralized execution and power projection tasks possible through subordinate warfare commanders who are focused on air (air defense commander), strike (strike warfare commander), sea (sea combat commander [SCC]), and surface information (information warfare commander) environments. Air Force forces should view this organizational construct as similar to how the Air Force organizes an [air expeditionary task force](#).

**Detailed coordination is required when operating Air Force forces in close proximity to US Navy forces or when Air Force forces are placed under tactical control or in support of the Navy Composite Warfare Commander (e.g., coordinated air defense, SCC, or strike warfare operations with a carrier strike group).**

Coordinating, synchronizing, and integrating land-based air operations with maritime air and sea operations are challenging, but necessary. In a joint context, maritime operations are distributed operations that stress communications capabilities. The [joint force air component commander's](#) staff, as well as land-based air units, should establish communication channels and points of contact well in advance of integrated joint air operations. For example, normal Air Force mission planning timelines may not be adequate for operations with strike warfare crew mission planning on an aircraft carrier.

The criteria for either joint force or service component application are determined by the overall effectiveness and availability of appropriate forces for the task at hand. In most instances, joint operations dominate a campaign; however, in selected instances, this should not preclude the effectiveness, command, control, and economy of force considerations of single Service operations.

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