



CURTIS E. LEMAY CENTER

FOR DOCTRINE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION



VOLUME 1 BASIC DOCTRINE

PERSISTENCE

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Air, space, and cyberspace operations may be conducted continuously against a broad spectrum of targets. **Airpower's exceptional speed and range allow its forces to visit and revisit wide ranges of targets nearly at will.** Airpower does not have to occupy terrain or remain constantly in proximity to areas of operation to bring force upon targets. Space forces in particular hold the ultimate high ground, and as space systems continue to advance and proliferate, they offer the potential for persistent overhead access; unmanned aircraft systems offer similar possibilities from the atmosphere.

Examples of persistent operations might be maintaining a continuous flow of materiel to peacetime distressed areas; Air Force intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities monitoring adversaries to ensure they cannot conduct actions counter to those agreed upon; assuring that targets are kept continually out of commission; or ensuring that resources and facilities are denied an enemy or provided to an ally during a specified time. The end result would be to deny the opponent an opportunity to seize the initiative and to directly accomplish assigned tasks.

Factors such as enemy resilience, effective defenses, or environmental concerns may prevent commanders from quickly attaining their objectives. However, for many situations, airpower provides the most efficient and effective means to attain national objectives. Commanders must persist in the conduct of operations and resist pressures to divert resources to other efforts unless such diversions are vital to attaining theater goals or to survival of an element of the joint force. Given sufficient time, even the most devastating strategic effects can be circumvented by resourceful enemies; the goal is to keep pressure on and not allow the enemy that time.