**REACHBACK/DISTRIBUTED/SPLIT OPERATIONS**

Last Updated: 22 Nov 2016

- **Reachback** is defined as “the process of obtaining products, services, and applications, or forces, or equipment, or material from organizations that are not forward deployed.” Reachback may be provided from a supporting/supported relationship or by Service retained forces. This relationship gives the commander, Air Force forces (COMAFFOR) the support necessary to conduct operations while maintaining a smaller deployed footprint.

- **Distributed operations** are defined as operations when independent or interdependent forces, some of which may be outside the joint operations area, participate in the operational planning and/or operational decision-making process to accomplish missions and objectives for commanders. While Service-retained forces may provide reachback, forces conducting distributed operations should be assigned or attached to a combatant command.

- **Split operations** is a type of distributed operation conducted by a single command and control (C2) entity separated between two or more geographic locations. A single commander must have oversight of all aspects of a split C2 operation.

- Note: The decision to establish distributed or split operations invokes several tradeoffs. For more detail see Annex 3-30, *Command and Control.*