CHAPTER FOUR: THE AIR FORCE COMPONENT WITHIN THE JOINT FORCE

When a crisis requires a military response, the geographic combatant commander (CCDR) will usually form a tailored joint task force (JTF). If Air Force forces are attached to the JTF, they stand up as an air expeditionary task force (AETF) within the JTF. The AETF commander, as the commander, Air Force forces (COMAFFOR), provides the single Air Force face to the JTF commander.

Other Services may also provide forces, and normally stand up as separate Army, Navy, and Marine forces, each with their respective commander (Commander, Army forces [COMARFOR]; Commander, Navy forces [COMNAVFOR]; and Commander, Marine Corps forces [COMMARFOR]).

The designation of joint force air, land, maritime and special operations component commanders (JFACC, joint force land component commander [JFLCC], joint force maritime component commander [JFMCC], and joint force special operations component commander [JFSOCC] respectively) is at the discretion of the joint force commander (JFC).

The JFC normally assigns broad missions to the component commanders; with each mission comes a specification of supported commander for that mission. As an example, the JFC may designate the COMAFFOR as the supported commander for strategic attack, air interdiction, and theater airborne intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (among other missions).

The COMAFFOR should establish a close working relationship with the JFC to ensure the best representation of airpower's potential.

The commander responsible for a mission should be given the requisite authority to carry out that mission.

For more on Joint Force Organizational Basics see Annex 3-30, Air Component Relationships within a Joint Force.