



ANNEX 3-04 COUNTERSEA OPERATIONS

ORGANIZATION, COMMAND AND CONTROL-GENERAL

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Countersea operations require maximum flexibility in organization, command, and control. Since Air Force forces may be directed to accomplish these operations in supported or supporting roles in a joint or multinational environment, adaptability is paramount. Command relationships should be tailored to account for supported and supporting roles in joint or multinational actions.

Supported vs. Supporting Relationships

A commander, such as the joint force commander (JFC), establishes support relationships when he identifies subordinate command organizations to aid, protect, complement, or sustain another force. The designation of support relationships is important as it conveys priorities to commanders and staffs planning or executing joint operations. For air operations in the maritime domain where airpower is providing the joint force commander's intended effect or is the primary combat arm, the joint force air component commander (JFACC) should be the supported commander. While capable of serving as a supporting commander to the joint force maritime component commander (JFMCC), this command relationship dilutes the disproportionate effects airpower can have for the JFC. No matter where the air operations center (AOC) location, the JFACC may serve in a supporting and/or supported role in the maritime domain. **Regardless of the support relationship, Air Force forces are best utilized when employed by a single air component commander exercising centralized control and decentralized execution of joint air operations.**

An example would be the JFACC providing air and space support to the JFMCC in the planning and execution of an amphibious operation. Supporting the landing force can range from aircraft conducting close air support to an increase in communication satellite priority and utilization. The JFMCC would generally provide requirements in terms of the effects desired to meet his objectives, and possibly the specific maritime targets or target sets. The JFACC should determine how best to achieve those effects to meet JFMCC objectives and recommend the necessary apportionment of forces to the JFC. Employing those apportioned forces, the JFACC can provide the optimum support to JFMCC objectives.

Refer to Air Force Doctrine Annex 3-30, Command and Control; Air Force Doctrine Annex 3-0, Operations and Planning; joint publication (JP) 1, Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States; and/or JP 3-0, Joint Operations for specifics relating to organizational structure and command relationships.