



# CURTIS E. LEMAY CENTER

FOR DOCTRINE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION



## ANNEX 3-17 AIR MOBILITY OPERATIONS

### COMMAND AND CONTROL OF OTHER AIR MOBILITY OPERATIONS

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This section discusses command and control of other air mobility-related operations including tanker, homeland, and nuclear operations.

#### **Tanker Command and Control**

Normally, [operational control](#) (OPCON) of the continental US (CONUS)-based tanker force for operational missions remains with US Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM). However, tanker assets, when authorized by the Secretary of Defense (SecDef), are transferred to a geographic combatant commander (GCC) with specification of OPCON for intratheater operations. OPCON for US Air Forces in Europe (USAFE) and Pacific Air Forces (PACAF) assigned tanker assets rests with their parent GCC and can be provided in support to another combatant command. Typically, the [command and control](#) (C2) agency is the AOC for the respective combatant command (CCMD) (e.g., the 601st Air Operations Center (AOC) for [US Northern Command](#) [USNORTHCOM] missions).

#### **Homeland Operations**

The C2 of mobility air forces (MAF) during homeland operations is the same as the functional and geographic operations discussed earlier. During [homeland operations](#), USNORTHCOM is the geographic combatant command, except for Hawaii and other Pacific territories in the US Pacific Command area of responsibility. First Air Force (Air Forces North [AFNORTH]) supports USNORTHCOM, and uses its AOC for CONUS-based homeland operations, with air mobility expertise and operations obtained from a director of mobility forces and air mobility division, linked back to the 618 AOC (Tanker Airlift Control Center [TACC]).

Domestic emergencies often call for the use of air mobility assets to support civil authorities. The air mobility capabilities of the Department of Defense (DOD) far exceed that of state and local resources, and therefore are a crucial piece of the operational planning in response to civil crises. DOD can provide specialized skills and assets that can rapidly stabilize and improve a situation until civil authorities can effectively respond to the needs of the populace. The focus of [defense support to civil authorities](#) (DSCA) is to save lives, prevent human suffering, and mitigate property damage. GCCs prepare plans to support the employment of Title 10 DOD forces, providing DSCA, in accordance with the National Response Framework, a guide to how the nation conducts

all-hazards response. DSCA command structures and requirements are unique and call for specialized support from MAF. DSCA does not include ANG forces formally operating under C2 of the governors of their respective states. See Annex 3-27, [Homeland Operations](#).

## **Nuclear Operations**

For nuclear operations, Air Mobility Command, as USTRANSCOM's air mobility component, supports nuclear operations via change in OPCON of air refueling and airlift forces to the commander, [US Strategic Command](#) (CDRUSSTRATCOM). For theater nuclear operations, C2 of USTRANSCOM forces mimics conventional theater operations to the greatest extent possible. However, if political considerations warrant that all tanker support to theater nuclear operations must originate from CONUS, CDRUSTRANSCOM maintains OPCON of tankers and provides AR in a supporting role to CDRUSSTRATCOM.

USSTRATCOM provides C2 of air mobility support to nuclear operations via Task Force 294 (TF-294). TF-294 consists of KC-135 tankers, nuclear-certified tanker crews and nuclear-certified C2 personnel. Tankers provide the global reach aspect needed by nuclear bomber and airborne command center aircraft. Specially certified nuclear C2 personnel provide the critical linkage between CDRUSSTRATCOM and tasked KC-135 tanker crews. CDRUSSTRATCOM delegates [tactical control](#) to the commander, TF-294, of those tankers attached to USSTRATCOM. Specified airlift assets support critical aircraft regeneration team requirements following execution of strategic nuclear operations. See Annex 3-72, [Nuclear Operations](#).

Airlift missions executing [nuclear weapons](#) logistic operations are categorized as either [prime nuclear airlift force](#) (PNAF) or [emergency nuclear airlift operations](#) (ENAO). PNAF missions involve specially qualified and certified crews operating under additional restrictions. PNAF provides the critical air transportation component of the planned logistical movement of nuclear weapons and related material positioned around the world, and is necessary to facilitate international treaties and weapons life-cycle sustainment requirements. When directed, any airlift asset can augment this capability via ENAO to ensure DOD custody of nuclear weapons.

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