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FOR DOCTRINE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION



ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

THE COMMANDER, AIR FORCE FORCES

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The title of Commander, Air Force Forces (COMAFFOR) is reserved exclusively to the single Air Force commander of an Air Force Service component command assigned or attached to a joint force commander (JFC) at the unified combatant command, subordinate unified command, or joint task force (JTF) level. At the unified combatant command level, the combatant commander's (CCDR's) Air Force Service component is specified in the Secretary of Defense's (SecDef's) "Forces for Unified Commands" memorandum. The SecDef/CCDR may elect to permanently establish a subordinate unified command (subunified command) or temporarily establish a subordinate JTF as part of his/her organizational structure. The commanders of these subordinate joint forces are, by joint and Air Force doctrine, JFCs at a lower level than the CCDR. If Air Force forces are assigned or attached to these subordinate JFCs, that action creates an Air Force Service component with a separate COMAFFOR directly responsible to the appropriate JFC.

If Air Force forces are attached to a JFC, they should be presented as an air expeditionary task force (AETF). The AETF becomes the Air Force Service component to the JTF, and the AETF commander is the COMAFFOR to the JTF commander. **Thus, depending on the scenario, the position of COMAFFOR may exist simultaneously at different levels within a given theater as long as each COMAFFOR is separately assigned or attached to a different JFC.** In the case where Air Force forces are operating in support of a JTF but are not attached to it, they do not constitute a separate JTF-level Service component under a separate COMAFFOR. In this instance, there remains a single COMAFFOR at the theater level.

The COMAFFOR provides unity of command. To a JFC, a COMAFFOR provides a single face for all Air Force issues. Within the Air Force Service component, the COMAFFOR is the single commander who conveys commander's intent and is responsible for operating and supporting all Air Force forces assigned or attached to that joint force. Thus, the COMAFFOR commands forces through two separate branches of the chain of command: the operational branch and the administrative branch. The operational branch flows through joint channels from the SecDef, through the CCDR, to subordinate JFCs and component commanders, and is expressed in terms such as operational control (OPCON), tactical control (TACON), and support. The administrative branch runs from the SecDef, through the Secretary of the Air Force and the Air Force Chief of Staff to subordinate Air Force commanders through Service channels only. This authority is expressed as administrative control (ADCON). Command authorities are explained in more detail in Appendix A.

The COMAFFOR should normally be designated at a command level above the operating forces and should not be dual-hatted as commander of one of the subordinate operating units. This allows the COMAFFOR to focus at the [operational level of war](#), while subordinate commanders lead their units at the [tactical level of war](#).

OPERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMAFFOR

When Air Force forces are assigned or attached to a JFC, the JFC normally receives OPCON of these forces. This authority is best exercised through subordinate JFCs and Service component commanders and thus is normally delegated accordingly. **If not delegated OPCON, or if the stated command authorities are not clear, the COMAFFOR should request delegation of OPCON.** When the CDR delegates OPCON of the Air Force component forces to the COMAFFOR, the COMAFFOR has the following responsibilities: (Note: if the COMAFFOR is also designated as the [joint force air component commander](#) [JFACC], he/she carries out many of these responsibilities through that authority. Refer to JP 3-30, [Command and Control of Joint Air Operations](#), for more discussion of the JFACC.)

- ★ Make recommendations to the JFC on proper employment of forces in the Air Force component.
- ★ Accomplish assigned tasks for operational missions.
- ★ Develop and recommend [courses of action](#) (COAs) to the JFC.
- ★ Develop a [strategy](#) and [operation plan](#) that states how the COMAFFOR plans to exploit Air Force capabilities to support the JFC's objectives.
- ★ Develop a [joint air operations plan](#) (JAOP) and air operations directive to support the JFC's objectives.
- ★ Recommend and/or implement, when passed down by the JFC, theater [rules of engagement](#) (ROE) for all assigned and



[General MacArthur] had finished his talk, when one of the correspondents said, "General, what is the Air Force doing today?" General MacArthur said, "Oh, I don't know. Go ask General Kenney." The newspaperman said, "General, do you mean to say you don't know where the bombs are falling?" MacArthur turned to him, grinned, and said, "Of course I know where they are falling. They are falling in the right place. Go ask General Kenney where it is."

– George C. Kenney, *General Kenney Reports: A Personal History of the Pacific War*

attached forces. For those Service or functional components that operate organic air assets, it should be clearly defined when the air component ROE also apply to their operations (this would normally be recommended).

- ★ Make [air apportionment](#) recommendations to the JFC.
- ★ Plan, coordinate, allocate, and task Service forces and joint forces made available.
- ★ Normally serve as the [supported commander](#) for the following operations as directed by the JFC. As the supported commander, the COMAFFOR has the authority to designate the target priority, [effects](#), and timing of these operations and attack targets across the entire [joint operations area](#) (JOA) in accordance with JFC guidance, to include coordinated targets within land and maritime [areas of operations](#) (AOs).
 - ★ ★ [Strategic attack](#)
 - ★ ★ [Counterair](#) (to include [integrated air and missile defense](#))
 - ★ ★ [Counterland](#)
 - ★ ★ [Countersea](#)
 - ★ ★ [Space control](#)
 - ★ ★ [Air mobility](#)
 - ★ ★ [Information operations](#)
 - ★ ★ Theater airborne [intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance](#).
- ★ Normally serve as [supporting commander](#), as directed by the JFC, for operations such as [close air support](#) (CAS), [air interdiction](#) within other components' AOs, and maritime support.
- ★ If so designated, act as [airspace control authority](#) (ACA), [area air defense commander](#) (AADC), [space coordinating authority](#) (SCA), and [electronic warfare control authority](#), and develop plans and products associated with these responsibilities.
- ★ Coordinate [personnel recovery](#) operations, including [combat search and rescue](#) (CSAR).
- ★ Direct [intratheater air mobility](#) operations and coordinate them with [intertheater](#) air mobility operations.
- ★ Coordinate support for [special operations](#) requirements with the [joint force special operations component commander](#) or the [joint special operations task force](#) commander.

- ✦ Perform [assessments](#) of air component operations at the operational (component) and tactical levels.
- ✦ Conduct joint training, including the training, as directed, of components of other Services in joint operations for which the COMAFFOR has or may be assigned primary responsibility, or for which the Air Force component's facilities and capabilities are suitable.

ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMAFFOR

Commanders of Air Force components have responsibilities and authorities that derive from their roles in fulfilling the Service's ADCON function. Within the administrative branch, the COMAFFOR has complete ADCON of all assigned Air Force component forces and specified ADCON of all attached Air Force component forces. The specified responsibilities listed below apply to all attached forces, regardless of MAJCOM or Air Force component (regular, Guard, or Reserve). The COMAFFOR also has some ADCON responsibilities for Air Force elements and personnel assigned to other joint force components (such as liaisons). The Air National Guard (ANG) and Air Force Reserve Command retain all other ADCON responsibilities, such as Reserve Component activation, inactivation, partial [mobilization](#), and length of tour. Additionally, intertheater forces, such as [intertheater airlift](#) and forces transiting another COMAFFOR's area of interest, are subject to the ADCON authority of the respective COMAFFOR while transiting that COMAFFOR's area for administrative reporting and for TACON for [force protection](#) requirements derived from the geographic CCDR.

As the Service component commander to a JFC at any level, the COMAFFOR has the following responsibilities:

- ✦ Organize, train, and sustain assigned and attached Air Force forces for CCDR-assigned missions.
 - ✦ ✦ Prescribe the chain of command within the Air Force Service component.
 - ✦ ✦ Maintain [reachback](#) between the Air Force component and other supporting Air Force elements. Delineate responsibilities between forward and rear elements.
 - ✦ ✦ Provide training in Service-unique doctrine, tactical methods, and techniques.
 - ✦ ✦ Provide for logistics and mission support functions normal to the command.
- ✦ Inform the JFC (and the CCDR, if affected) of planning for changes in logistics support that would significantly affect operational capability or sustainability sufficiently early in the planning process for the JFC to evaluate the proposals prior to final decision or implementation.

- ✦ Provide lateral liaisons with Army, Navy, Marines, and special operations components, and [coalition](#) partners.
- ✦ Maintain internal administration and discipline, including application of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ).
- ✦ Establish [force protection](#) and other local defense requirements.
- ✦ Provide Service [intelligence](#) matters and oversight of intelligence activities to ensure compliance with laws, executive orders, policies, and directives.

The COMAFFOR is responsible for overseeing the morale, welfare, safety, and security of assigned and attached forces. Subordinate commanders issue orders and direct actions in support of those responsibilities and ensure these orders and directives are consistent with the policies, directives, and intent of the COMAFFOR exercising ADCON of those forces. The responsibilities of lead commands are to organize, train, equip, and provide forces; the responsibility of the COMAFFOR is to ensure specialized training is conducted based on mission needs. The COMAFFOR and properly designated subordinate commanders exercise disciplinary authority in accordance with the UCMJ and relevant Air Force Instructions. These commanders advise parent MAJCOMs of any disciplinary action taken against deployed personnel. Overlapping and interconnecting areas of ADCON shared among the various commanders make it essential that appropriate written orders clearly state which elements of ADCON authority and responsibility are executed by which commander.

ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES AS THE SERVICE COMPONENT COMMANDER TO A COMBATANT COMMANDER

When the COMAFFOR is the CCDR's Air Force Service component commander, he/she also has the following additional operational and administrative responsibilities:

- ✦ Develop program and budget requests that comply with CCDR guidance on war-fighting requirements and priorities.
- ✦ Inform the CCDR (and any intermediate JFCs) of program and budget decisions that may affect joint operation planning.
- ✦ Support the CCDR's theater campaign plans through development of appropriate supporting Service plans.
 - ✦ ✦ Develop steady-state strategy to support the CCDR's strategy.
 - ✦ ✦ Contribute to the development of CCDR steady-state campaign plans and security cooperation country plans.
 - ✦ ✦ Develop campaign support plans in support of CCDR campaign plans.

- ✦ ✦ Develop security cooperation country plans in support of CCDR security cooperation country plans.
 - ✦ ✦ Recommend and/or implement policy and rules of engagement for the conduct of steady-state operations, including planning, execution, and assessment.
 - ✦ ✦ Provide commander's intent to inform tactical-level planning, execution, and assessment.
 - ✦ ✦ Execute and assess steady-state operations.
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