



ANNEX 3-30 COMMAND AND CONTROL

**ORGANIZING AIR FORCE FORCES**

Last Updated: 7 Nov 2014

Organization is critically important to effective and efficient operations. Service and joint force organization and **command relationships**—literally, who owns what, and who can do what with whom, and when—easily create the most friction within any operation. Therefore, it is absolutely essential that Airmen understand the fundamentals of Air Force and joint organization, command relationships, and responsibilities of the senior Air Force commander.

Air Force organization and preferred command arrangements are designed to address **unity of command**, a key **principle of war**. **Clear lines of authority, with clearly identified commanders at appropriate echelons exercising appropriate control, are essential to achieving unity of effort, reducing confusion, and maintaining priorities.** During numerous deployments in the last decade, the Air Force has learned a great deal about the nuances of commanding Service operations afield.

The key to successful employment of Air Force forces as part of a joint force effort is providing a single Air Force commander with the responsibility and authority to properly organize, train, equip and employ Air Force forces to accomplish assigned functions and tasks. The title of this commander is **Commander, Air Force Forces (COMAFFOR)**. Operationally, the COMAFFOR should be prepared to employ Air Force forces as directed by the **joint force commander (JFC)**, and if directed be prepared to employ joint air forces as the **joint force air component commander**. In either event, the COMAFFOR should also ensure that Air Force forces are prepared to execute the missions assigned by the JFC.

The **air expeditionary task force (AETF)** is the preferred organization for Air Force forces afield. Even if an AETF is not formally formed (perhaps due to the size of the contingent or the nature of the operation), the AETF model can still be used as a template to answer some basic questions:

- ✦ What is the operational branch of the **chain of command**? Who is in charge of the operational mission and to whom does the Air Force contingent report?
- ✦ What is the Service administrative branch of the chain of command? Who is in charge of the Air Force contingent and to whom does that senior Airman look for Service support (which Air Force command, installation, or unit)?

- ✦ What [command and control mechanisms](#) does the contingent need? A fully formed and staffed [air operations center](#) and [AFFOR staff](#)? A small planning cell? A slice of a squadron or wing operations center? Or just a cell phone or radio link back to the home station?
- ✦ What formal orders are required to attach the contingent or personnel to another agency? [Deployment orders](#), G-series orders, or simple temporary duty orders?
- ✦ What additional Service and joint training may be required to enable the deploying Airmen to properly accomplish the mission?

This section presents discussion on the following topics:

- ✦ The differences between [regionally and functionally organized Air Force forces](#).
  - ✦ An overview of the [Air Expeditionary Force](#) concept.
  - ✦ A detailed review of the [air expeditionary task force](#), including [internal organization](#) and [examples](#).
  - ✦ A discussion of [how regional and functional Air Force forces may be integrated](#) through the use of liaisons.
  - ✦ A brief summary of [nuclear support to regional commands](#).
  - ✦ Some [organizational considerations for operations in the homeland](#).
  - ✦ An overview of [how the Air Reserve Components are integrated](#) into Air Force operations.
  - ✦ A review of the responsibilities of a [senior/host installation commander](#), dealing with mixes of forces on a single installation.
-