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FOR DOCTRINE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION



ANNEX 3-60 TARGETING

TARGET PLANNING

Last Updated: 10 Jan 14

From guidance to assessment, [targeting](#) is a critical component in activities across the [range of military operations](#). Air Force targeting principles may be applied to all instances in which military force is planned and executed. Air Force targeting personnel are involved in activities in all levels of command and operations. Targeteers and other planners should keep [effects-based](#) concepts in mind while building formal plans and conducting ongoing deliberate targeting once operations begin.

Planning encompasses all the means through which strategies and [courses of action](#) (COA) are developed, such as [operational design](#), [deliberate planning](#) and [crisis action planning](#). As a Service and as part of a joint or combined force, the Air Force uses the [joint operations planning process for air](#) (JOPPA). This process is the air component's equivalent of the [joint for commanders'](#) (JFC) [joint operation planning process](#) (JOPP) and is often performed in sequence or parallel with it. The JOPPA produces the [joint air operations plan](#) (JAOP) and the [air operations directive](#) (AOD), which guides the tasking cycle through its iterative execution as part of an ongoing [battle rhythm](#). Since it sets the stage for all other actions, planning is where effects-based principles have the largest play and may have the greatest impact on operations. Plans should tie objectives, actions, and effects at all levels together into a logical, coherent whole [strategy](#).

Targeting supports operational-level planning and validates that operational plans can be accomplished within the time and resources available. This support also helps create the detailed tactical-level products, usually appended to operational-level plans, for the opening phases of action. The objectives, guidance, and intent derived during planning guide all efforts, including targeting, throughout employment and assessment. This serves to inextricably tie planning, employment, and assessment together. Further, planning continues once operations commence and the battle rhythm is under way. Operational planning continues as adversary actions are evaluated or anticipated through revision of strategy and implementation of branches and sequels.

Targeting planning is divided into two categories, deliberate and dynamic. Deliberate targeting normally supports the future plans effort which is focused on all planning activities from 72/96 hours out to, but not including, the current [air tasking order](#) (ATO)

execution day; whereas, dynamic targeting normally supports the current ATO execution with immediate targeting responsiveness to the active environment created by ongoing weapons employment and real-time, all-source identification of emerging and [time sensitive targets](#) (TSTs) (i.e., unplanned and unanticipated targets).

Targeting support to formal operational planning, and the deliberate targeting conducted once operations begin, are both accomplished through the [deliberate targeting](#) process described in this chapter. Deliberate targeting is the procedure for prosecuting targets that are detected, identified, and developed in sufficient time to schedule actions against them in [tasking cycle](#) products such as the ATO. Deliberate targeting handles targets in one of two ways: 1) plans and schedules specific actions against specific targets and 2) creates on-call packages or missions that deal with targets through pre-determined [concept of operations](#) (CONOPS). Preplanned missions are typically used against fixed targets or targets that are transportable, but operate in fixed locations. However, deliberate targeting can be used against mobile targets. On-call missions can be used against fixed, transportable, and mobile targets. For instance, a fixed building may be watched, but does not become a target until some critical person, group, or equipment arrives, at which time the on-call mission is scheduled on the tasking order if intelligence arrives in sufficient time. Other potential targets that are detected or become significant during the current execution period (once all formal products of the planning and tasking processes are issued), including the JFC's TSTs, are dealt with using dynamic targeting.

Target nomination processes remain unchanged when addressing offensive, nonlethal operations and should be leveraged appropriately by planners. That is, target development and selection are based on what the commander wants to achieve rather than on the available ways and means to achieve them. Therefore, nonlethal targets should be nominated, vetted, and validated within the established targeting processes.

The effects-based principles set forth in [Annex 3-0](#) should guide all planning efforts, including targeting. An effects-based approach is even more critical for success in stability operations such as counterinsurgency and peace enforcement, because they may rely more on nonlethal means and less on types of effects for which cause and effect are well understood. [Effects-based approach to operations](#) (EBAO), and in particular targeting, ensures that every effect delivered can be linked to the JFC's end state, objectives, and plans. Within targeting, EBAO focuses on why we are taking an action rather than what action we are taking. To exploit the full range of possible effects in a given situation, planners should understand what effects are, how they relate to actions and objectives, how to measure different effects, and how various types of effects can be exploited to yield desired outcomes.
