



CURTIS E. LEMAY CENTER

FOR DOCTRINE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION



ANNEX 3-60 TARGETING

DYNAMIC TARGETING ENGAGEMENT AUTHORITY

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The authority to engage should be delegated to the C2 node that has the best information or situational awareness to execute the mission and direct communications to the operators and crews of the weapon systems involved. If the COMAFFOR is delegated TST engagement authority by the JFC, that commander may delegate his engagement authority to a lower level (e.g., AOC director or chief of the combat operations division). The COMAFFOR has the authority to redirect those forces over which he has operational or tactical control. For all others, the affected component commander should approve all requests for redirection of apportioned air assets. Components execute the ATO as tasked and recommend changes to the AOC as appropriate, given emerging JFC and component requirements.

Functional commands like US Cyber Command (USCYBERCOM) and Joint Functional Component Command-Space (JFCC-Space) may have operational and tactical control of some functional capabilities. In such cases, coordinating authorities at the JFC and/or component level should be authorized to plan, coordinate, integrate, and execute their respective functional capabilities within the operational area. Coordination requirements associated with these functional capabilities may result in long-lead times that should be considered within the AOC planning and execution processes.

At the tactical level, engagement authority normally resides with the “shooter” (aircrew, system operator, etc.) for those planned events on the current tasking order being executed; this follows the tenet of decentralized execution. The fact that planned missions on an ATO have been approved for release by the COMAFFOR passes engagement authority to the “shooters” personally executing those ATO missions, who should adhere to all guidance included in the ATO [special instructions (SPINS), airspace control order (ACO), ROE, etc.]. In dynamic targeting situations, where the target is not specified in the ATO prior to takeoff or execution, engagement may require that the “shooter” be “cleared to target” from a C2 entity outside the AOC like JSTARS, AWACS, tactical air control party (TACP), and forward air controllers (ground or airborne) due to identification or other restrictions required prior to attack.

Engagement authority for those events that the AOC maintains control over may be passed to crews, via the Theater Air Control System (TACS), with required criteria to be met for weapon release, when appropriate. Engagement authority for certain sensitive

targets may reside at a higher level than the JFC and should be passed appropriately through the component commander when the situation dictates.

Placing the appropriate level of battle space awareness at subordinate C2 nodes can streamline the C2 cycle and allow timely engagement during dynamic targeting. Decentralized C2 nodes will exchange target information (type, classification identification, location, etc.) through common data links (e.g., Link 16, UHF, wide area networks, etc.) with a fidelity that permits them to operate as a single, integrated C2 entity in order to effectively perform decentralized, coordinated execution of time-sensitive attacks.
