

The Value of Air Force Doctrine

We Produce the Future



The Role of Doctrine



Develop America's Airmen Today ... for Tomorrow

*At the very heart of warfare lies doctrine. It represents the central beliefs for waging war in order to achieve victory. **Doctrine is of the mind, a network of faith and knowledge reinforced by experience** which lays the pattern for the utilization of men, equipment, and tactics. It is the **building material for strategy**. It is fundamental to sound judgment.*



~ General Curtis Emerson LeMay, 1968

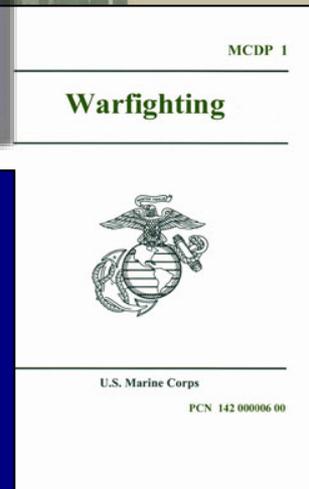
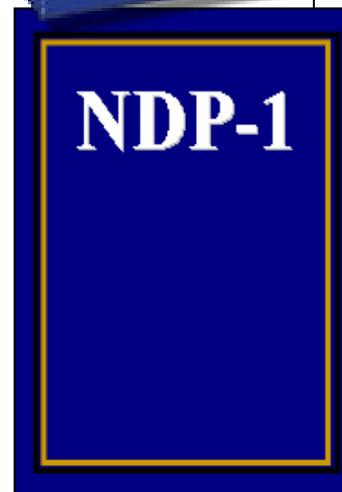


Doctrine is ...



Develop America's Airmen Today ... for Tomorrow

- How you **organize** and **employ**
- The **agreed upon**, operationally relevant body of **best practices and principles**
- Supported by:
 - History
 - Debate and analysis
 - Exercises, wargames, contingencies
- **Authoritative, but not directive**





Value of Doctrine

Develop America's Airmen Today ... for Tomorrow

- **Guides how to organize, present, deploy and employ**
 - Organize based on doctrine, not ad hoc arrangements
- **The two key pillars of our doctrine are:**
 - Principle of War: **Unity of Command**
 - Tenet of Airpower: **Centralized Control/Decentralized Execution**
- **Airmen work for Airmen and the senior Airman works for the Joint Force Commander**
- **Normally, doctrine is the best way to proceed**
 - If we must deviate, there should be a clear and compelling operational reason



Why Learn Doctrine?



Develop America's Airmen Today ... for Tomorrow

- **Provides common language and frame of reference for discussion**
 - **Essential for communication**
- **How best to organize and employ within the air and space environment: operational suitability**
- **Impacts emerging / future capabilities**
- **Provides consistent and “teachable” approach to warfighting: first step to “think outside the box”**



Doctrine is about...



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- **Warfighting...not physics**
- **Effects...not weapon systems or platforms**
- **Using mediums...not owning mediums**
- **How to organize...not organizations**
- **Synergy...not segregation**
- **Integration... not just synchronization**
- **The right force ... not equal shares of the force**



Terminology



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- **Military operations are guided by the interplay of**
 - **Policy**
 - **Strategy**
 - **Doctrine**
- **Important to understand their differences**



Policy



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- **Directive guidance stating what is to be accomplished**
- **Sets overall priorities/direction**
 - Defines national interest
 - States political direction/guiding principles
- **Sets political limits**
 - Bounds the response
- **Directive guidance**
 - Determined by senior national and military leadership
 - Mandatory compliance
- **Policy sets the boundaries for doctrine and strategy**



Strategy



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- **Is about how to apply available capabilities**
 - To gain desired ends
 - Using approved means
 - Within the existing environment
- **Considers:**
 - Objectives
 - Threat, politics, personalities, public opinion
 - Alliances, nongovernmental organizations, government agencies
 - Current capabilities/doctrine



Doctrine



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- **Is about how you organize and employ**
 - **Presentation of forces**
 - **Command and control**
 - **Command relationships**
- **The Air Force's agreed upon, operationally relevant body of best practices and principles supported by:**
 - **History**
 - **Debate and analysis**
 - **Exercises, contingencies**
- **Doctrine is not dogma**



Interplay Between Policy, Strategy, and Doctrine



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- **Policy governs the use of force**
 - Shapes strategy
 - May affect application of doctrine (e.g., rules of engagement)
 - Commanders should advise policy makers on the potential impacts of deviating from doctrine
- **Doctrine provides a knowledge base for making strategy decisions**
 - How best to apply and organize forces for a given scenario
- **Success or failure of strategy may affect policy and doctrine**



Basic Doctrine



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- Foundation of airpower doctrine
- Elemental properties of airpower
- Discussion on the nature of war and introduction to the range of military operations
- **Slow to change** compared to other levels



Operational Doctrine



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- **Applies principles of basic doctrine to military action**
- **Guides proper organization and employment in the context of....**
 - **Distinct objectives**
 - **Force capabilities**
 - **Broad functional areas**
 - **Operational environments**
- **Provides focus for mission and task development executed at the tactical level of war**
- **Changes after deliberate internal debate**



Tactical Doctrine



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- **Describes proper employment of specific assets**
- **Considers:**
 - Objectives
 - Conditions
- **Closely associated with equipment and therefore changes more rapidly**



Doctrine Provides...



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- **Describes AF operations across all domains to achieve effects throughout the range of military operations**
 - Informs the **commander of Air Force forces (COMAFFOR) and staff** on the best ways to organize, plan, support, and *fight* with Airpower
 - Must provide guidance from peace through major ops
- **Should express Airman's perspective in terms best suited to Airmen and airpower**
 - Airmen have a different view of operations that complements, but does not replace, other military instruments of national power
 - Should integrate with joint team and sister Services without compromising basic tenets of Airpower

Focusing on the COMAFFOR keeps the discussion at the operational level



Who is it For?



Develop America's Airmen Today ... for Tomorrow

- Air Force doctrine should be “**COMAFFOR-centric**”
 - Focused at the **operational** level
 - Defines **functions** and **tasks** (common terminology)
 - Defines **COMAFFOR’s roles and responsibilities**
 - Explains roles and responsibilities of the COMAFFOR’s **staff**
 - Explains **command relationships**
 - Provides **organizational templates**
- **Because of this operational-level warfighting focus, not everything the Air Force does will be visible in doctrine**
 - Not written to highlight the relevancy of career fields or specific organizations
 - Not written to justify programmatics
 - Not written to capture buzzwords or catch-phrases of the moment



The Value of Doctrine: Volume 1



Develop America's Airmen Today ... for Tomorrow

“In the current turbulent environment . . . , **doctrine provides an informed starting point** for the many decisions Airmen make. Airmen no longer face the challenge of starting with a blank sheet of paper; **with doctrine, Airmen now have a good outline that helps answer several basic questions:**

- What is my **mission**? How should I **approach** it?
- What should my **organization** look like, and why?
- What are my **lines of authority** within my organization and within the joint force?
- What degrees of **control** do I have over my forces?
- How am I **supported**? Who do I call for more support?
- How should I articulate **what the Air Force provides** to the joint force?”



Sources of Doctrine: Volume 1



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“Doctrine should be based on critical analysis and the lessons of operations rather than driven by rapidly changing policies, promising technologies, individual personalities, budget battles, and politically trendy catch-phrases. **Doctrine should not be written to backwards-justify a policy position or codify a uniquely-tailored organization.** As such, doctrine reflects what has worked best with full consideration of what has worked poorly. In those instances in which experience is lacking or difficult to acquire, doctrine may be developed through analysis of exercises, wargames, and experiments. The military experience of other nations and non-defense organizations should also be considered.” [*Bolded in original*]