



REGIONAL versus FUNCTIONAL ORGANIZATION

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- It is important to understand that airpower is flexible in organization and presentation. Because it encompasses a wide range of capabilities and operating environments, it defies a single, general model for organization, planning, and employment.
 - ✦ Some assets and capabilities provide relatively localized effects and generally are more easily deployable, and thus may organize and operate within a regional model.
 - ✦ Other assets and capabilities transcend geographic areas of responsibility simultaneously, and thus have global responsibilities. Such forces may be better organized and controlled through a functional model.
- **However, at the focus of operations within any region, it is possible to place the collective capabilities of [airpower](#) in the hands of a single Airman through skillful arrangement of [command relationships](#), focused expeditionary organization, reachback, and forward deployment of specialized talent.**
- **There will usually be tension between regionally-organized forces and functionally-organized forces. The former seek effectiveness at the point of their operation, while the latter seek effectiveness and efficiency across several regions. At critical times, the requirement for effectiveness may trump efficiency, and additional functional forces may be transferred to the regional command and organized accordingly (see related discussion later in this chapter on “Transfer of Functional Forces to a Geographic Command” and the complete discussion in [Annex 3-30, Command and Control](#)). These situations require careful and continuing dialogue between competing senior commanders and their common superior commander.**

Regional Organization and Control

- **All military missions are ultimately under the authority of a [joint force commander](#) (JFC) at the appropriate level. If the entire theater is engaged, the [combatant commander](#) (CCDR) may be the JFC. If the situation is less than theater-wide, the CCDR may establish a subordinate [joint task force](#) (JTF) commanded by a subordinate JFC. In either case, the CCDR should first look to assigned, in-theater forces. If augmentation is required, the JFC should request**

additional forces through the Secretary of Defense (SecDef). Upon SecDef approval, additional forces transfer into the theater and are attached to the gaining CCDR. The degree of control gained over those forces (i.e., [operational control](#) [OPCON] or [tactical control](#) [TACON]) should be specified in the [deployment orders](#). The gaining CCDR then normally delegates OPCON of these forces downward to the JTF commander who should, in turn, delegate OPCON to the Service [component](#) commanders within the gaining JTF. All Air Force forces should be organized and presented as an [air expeditionary task force](#) (AETF).

- ✦ Within a joint force, the JFC may organize forces in a mix of Service and functional components. **All joint forces contain Service components**, because administrative and logistics support are provided through Service components. Therefore, **every joint force containing assigned or attached Air Force forces will have an Air Force Service component in the form of an AETF with a designated [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR)**.
- ✦ The JFC may also establish [functional component commands](#) when forces from two or more military Services operate in the same dimension or domain or there is a need to accomplish a distinct aspect of the assigned mission. Functional component commanders, such as the [joint force air component commander](#) (JFACC), are established at the discretion of the JFC.
- ✦ If functional component commands are established, the Service component commander with the preponderance of forces to be tasked, and with the requisite ability to provide [command and control](#), will normally be designated as that functional component commander. Functional component commanders normally exercise TACON of forces made available for tasking. Through the Air Force component, the Air Force provides a COMAFFOR who is trained, equipped, and prepared to also be the JFACC if so designated by the JFC to whom he/she is assigned or attached.

Functional Organization and Control

- Not all Air Force forces employed in an operation may be attached forward to a geographic CCDR. Several aspects of [airpower](#) are capable of serving more than one geographic CCDR at a time. Such forces are organized under functional CCDRs to facilitate cross-[area of operations](#) (AOR) optimization of those functional forces.
- ✦ When such forces are deployed in a geographic CCDR's AOR, they may remain under the OPCON of their respective functional CCDR and operate in [support](#) of the geographic CCDR. Within a theater, this support relationship is facilitated through specially designated representatives attached to regional AETFs.
- ✦ In some circumstances, after coordination with the owning commander and upon SecDef approval, control of such functional forces may be transferred to a geographic commander and attached with specification of OPCON or TACON.

- *For more complete discussion of regional and functional organization, see [Annex 3-30](#).*
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