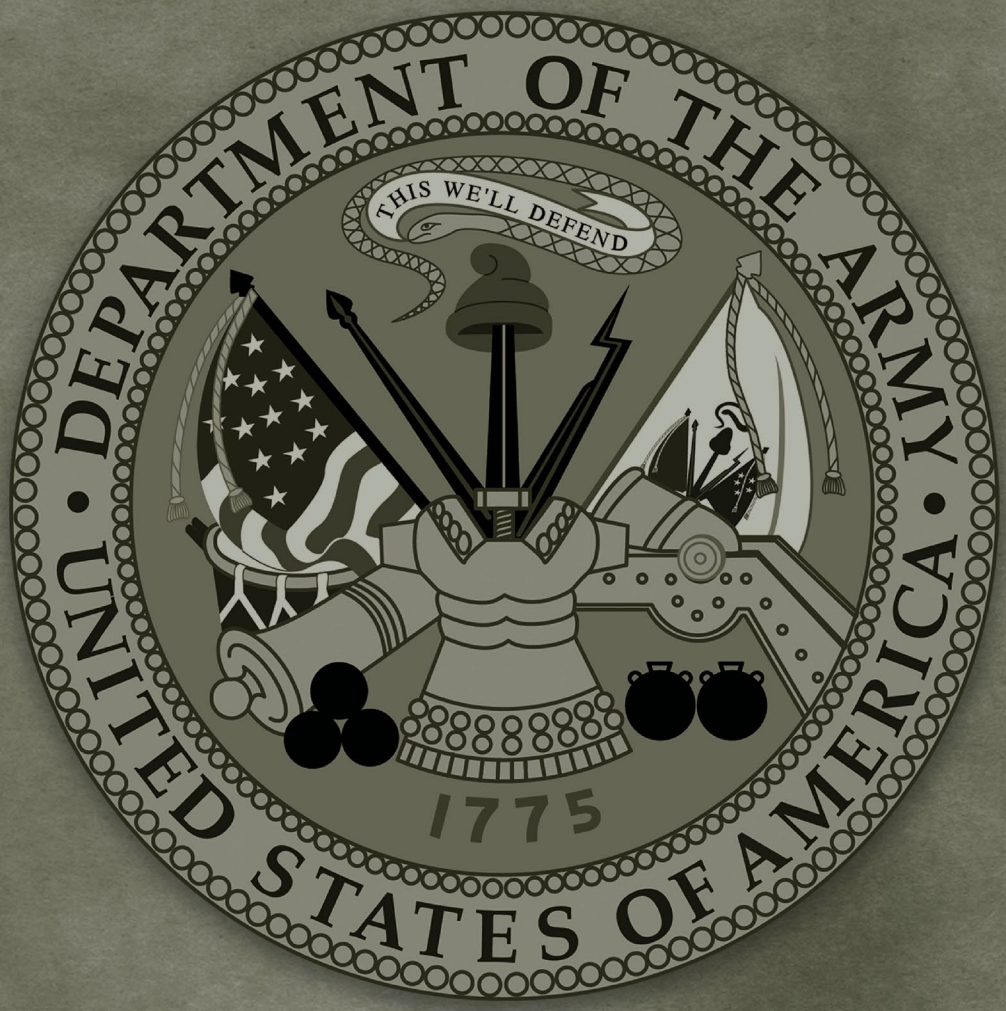
FM 3-05

ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS



JUNE 2025

DISTRIBUTION RESTRICTION:

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This publication supersedes FM 3-05, dated 9 January 2014.

HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

Foreword

Since the days of the Revolutionary War, Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) have been persistently irregular in their approach. Our organizations have always provided outsized impact to the larger Army and Joint Force.

While the adversaries, threats, and locations have changed, this impact has endured. However, we have not updated our doctrine since 2014. Now, as we face new threats and challenges, this doctrine will guide our transformation.

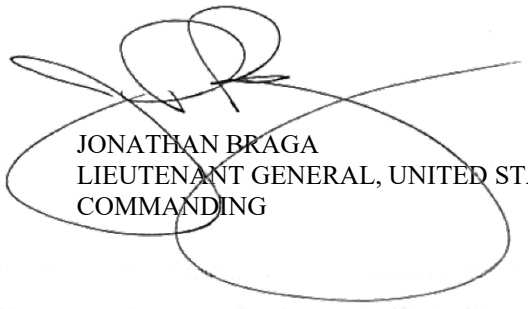
When we last updated our doctrine, ARSOF were in a generational fight against terrorism. During that time, we demonstrated our unique value to the Army and the Joint Force in the mountains of Afghanistan, the deserts of Iraq, and other austere and politically sensitive regions. We are now in a new generational fight, and it is time once again to transform our doctrine.

Our doctrine must describe how ARSOF contribute across the competition continuum—remaining threat informed, strategically driven, operationally focused, and tactically prepared. The character of warfare has changed and requires new tools and techniques to operate in all domains. Yet war's nature endures; it ultimately changes human behavior—it is a contest of wills. Special operations remain an Army core competency because ARSOF enhance the ability of the Army and the Joint Force to gain, maintain, and exploit advantage—from competition through crisis and conflict.

ARSOF provide the backbone of joint SOF's ability to conduct counterterrorism and crisis response missions vital to preserving policymakers' decision space and defending the Nation. In competition, ARSOF conduct irregular warfare to ensure the Joint Force has placement, access, influence, and partners in regions vital to our national interests—enabling our Nation to prevent high-end conflict while setting conditions to prevail when and if it occurs.

In conflict, ARSOF operate in the strategic deep and denied areas and along the enemy's strategic periphery to integrate effects between domains with joint, interagency, inter-governmental, and multinational partners. The SOF-Space-Cyber TRIAD enhances friendly, and degrades enemy, command and control, computing, communications, cyber, intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and targeting capabilities (C5ISRT). ARSOF are the eyes, ears, and teeth of the Army in the strategic deep area during large-scale combat operations. We create dilemmas for the enemy where they are weakest. Our persistent presence and transgenerational relationships generate whole-of-society resilience, enable resistance forces in protracted conflict, and ensure the Joint Force retains and exploits information advantage.

LTG (ret.) Don Holder, a lead author of the 1982 and 1986 versions of FM 100-5 (AirLand Battle), ultimately fought as the covering force commander for Third Army's main effort during the Persian Gulf War. Years later, he recalled the significance of that experience: "While writing doctrine, I had to deliberately think about the difference in the levels of war and what those meant for leadership and organization… [the experience] gave a good foundation for [higher-level] command." I challenge all of you to do the same. Without equal! Sine Pari.



JONATHAN BRAGA
LIEUTENANT GENERAL, UNITED STATES ARMY
COMMANDING

This publication is available at the Army Publishing Directorate site (https://armypubs.army.mil) and the Central Army Registry Site (https://atiam.train.army.mil/catalog/dashboard).

Field Manual
No. 3-05

Headquarters
Department of the Army
Washington, DC, 26 June 2025

ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS

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Preface

FM 3-05 provides U.S. Army planners and forces with the principles, tactics, and procedures to execute Army special operations and related activities. Subordinate Army techniques publications describe specific special operations activities. Army special operations forces include all personnel assigned to the United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) and its subordinate units: 1st Special Forces Command, 75th Ranger Regiment, United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, and United States Army Special Operations Aviation Command.

Note. USASOC and all its subordinate elements are designated as airborne and special operations units. These unit designations are intentionally omitted in text to facilitate readability. Army special operations forces, as used throughout FM 3-05, refers to more than one type of unit present or conducting operations. When the discussion is about 1st Special Forces Command units conducting operations, it is referring to Civil Affairs, Psychological Operations, or Special Forces.

The principal audience for FM 3-05 is Army commanders and staffs working with or employing Army special operations forces. This manual provides the foundation for training and Army education system curricula and future capabilities development across doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, facilities, and policy. This Service doctrine is consistent with joint doctrine.

Commanders, staffs, and subordinates ensure that their decisions and actions comply with applicable United States, international, and in some cases host-nation laws and regulations. Commanders at all levels ensure that their Service members operate in accordance with the law of armed conflict and the rules of engagement. (See FM 6-27 for legal compliance.)

FM 3-05 uses joint terms where applicable. Selected joint and Army terms and definitions appear in both the glossary and the text. Terms for which FM 3-05 is the proponent publication (the authority) are marked with an asterisk (*) in the glossary. When first defined in the text, terms for which FM 3-05 is the proponent publication are boldfaced and italicized, and definitions are boldfaced. When first defining other proponent definitions in the text, the term is italicized with the proponent publication designator and number at the end of the definition. Subsequent uses of the term are not italicized.

FM 3-05 applies to the Active Army, Army National Guard/Army National Guard of the United States, and United States Army Reserve unless otherwise stated.

The proponent of this publication is the United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, United States Army Special Operations Center of Excellence. The preparing agency is the Joint and Army Doctrine Integration Division; Directorate of Training, Doctrine, and Proponency; United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School. Send comments and recommended changes on DA Form 2028 (*Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms*) to Commander, United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, 3004 Ardennes Street, Stop A, Fort Bragg, NC 28310-9610.

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Introduction

As one of the Army's five core competencies, *special operations* are activities or actions requiring distinct modes of employment, tactical techniques, equipment, and training, often conducted in hostile, denied, or politically or diplomatically sensitive environments (JP 3-05).

Special Operations as an Army Core Competency

A *core competency* is an essential and enduring capability that a branch or organization provides to Army operations (ADP 1-01). Core competencies drive how the Army organizes, trains, mans, and equips the force. The Army's core competencies are:

- Prompt and sustained land combat.
- Combined arms operations.
- **Special operations.**
- Set and sustain the theater for the joint force.
- Integrate national, multinational, and joint power on land.

While Army special operations units can operate independently at the tactical level, they often work with conventional forces, other Service special operations units, interagency partners, and multinational partners. Most special operations support theater and global campaigns, highlighting the importance of coordination and cooperation.

Special operations are executed in all the Army's strategic contexts—competition, crisis, and armed conflict. During competition, special operations units develop enduring partner networks to enhance operations, extend operational reach, build partner resilience, capability, and capacity, and set the theater. Army special operations units support the combatant commander campaign plan priorities through theater security cooperation plans, component supporting plans, and multinational exercises.

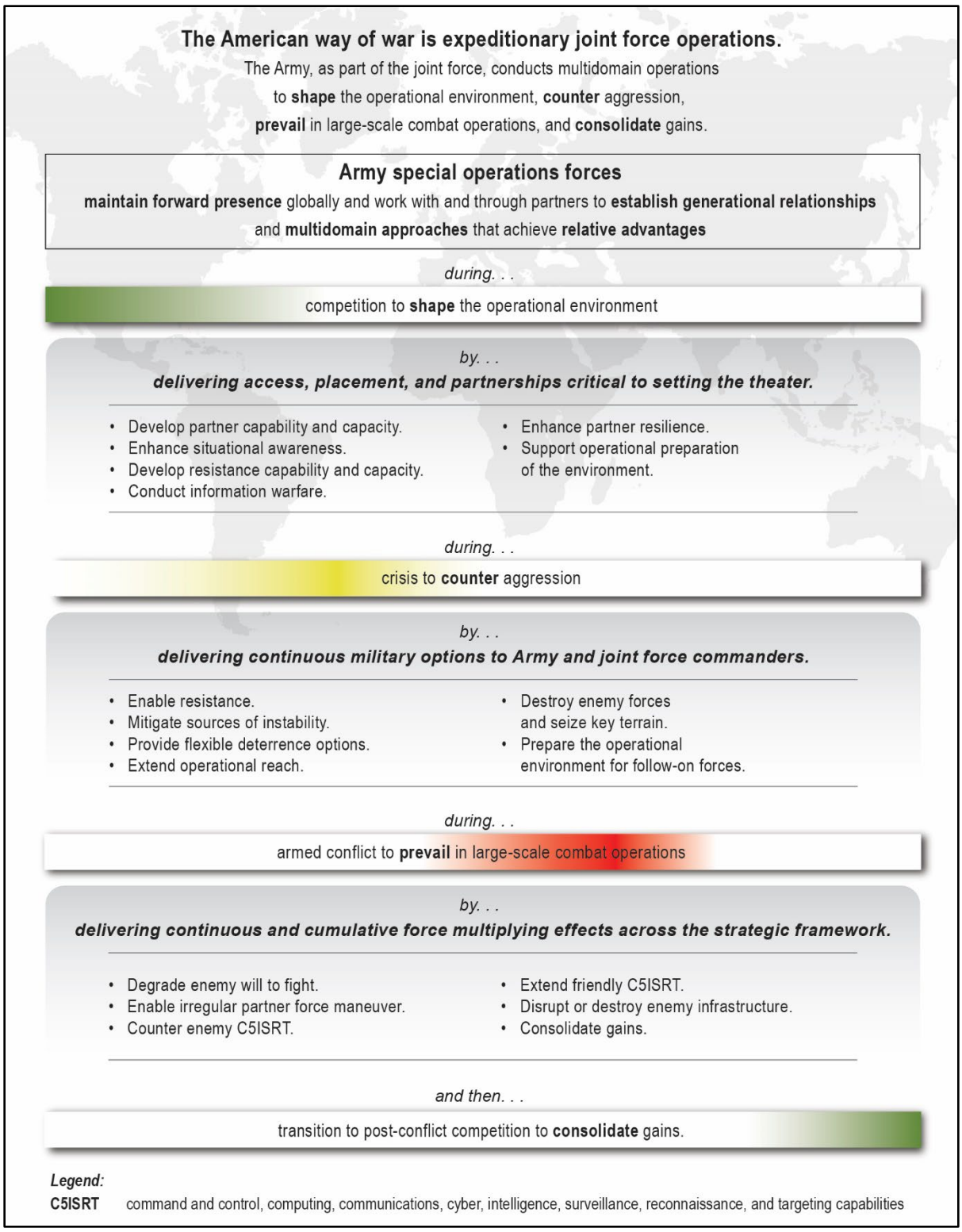
Note. This publication uses the term competition to describe competition below the threshold of armed conflict.

During crises, the forward presence of Army special operations forces and their ability to deploy across the globe allow them to address national security interests. Select units are organized, manned, trained, and equipped to infiltrate and operate in areas and locations where other forces do not. Their operational reach, access, and placement at the right place and time, deliver a lower-signature rapid response option to resolve the crisis and deter escalation.

Should a crisis escalate to armed conflict, special operations enable joint forcible entry and force projection of conventional follow-on forces. Regionally oriented and forward deployed special operations forces leverage generational relationships with partners who can help resolve the crisis with minimum U.S. involvement. They also provide physical placement, access to partner leaders, and situational awareness to the joint force commander. Army special operations forces work with and through partners to add operational depth and reach to the Army and joint force in the rear, close, and deep areas.

At the cessation of hostilities and armed conflict, special operations support the transition of the joint force land component commander and subordinate corps' assigned areas to partner nation forces and supporting government agencies to restore stability and local governance.

The introductory figure on page viii depicts this publication's logic chart. This graphic illustrates the role of Army special operations forces in conducting multidomain operations across the Army's strategic contexts. Army special operations forces conduct special operations activities to shape the operational environment, counter aggression, prevail in large-scale combat operations, and consolidate gains in the conduct of post-conflict transition to competition.



Introductory Figure 1. FM 3-05 logic chart

FM 3-05 is organized into five chapters:

Chapter 1 describes the units composing Army special operations forces.

Chapter 2 details special operations activities.

Chapter 3 discusses the unique considerations for Army special operations forces' command and control and rules of allocation.

Chapter 4 outlines the fundamentals of Army special operations.

Chapter 5 examines the employment of Army special operations forces and the conduct of special operations during the strategic contexts of competition, crisis, and armed conflict, as well as the return to competition. This includes contributions to the conventional force during large-scale combat operations.

Note. This publication uses the term *partner*, to describe allied, interagency, joint, indigenous, irregular, and host-nation partners.

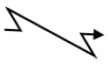
Introductory table 1 outlines changes to Army terminology and new symbols reflected in FM 3-05. (For more information on the military symbols and terms used within the figures of this FM, refer to FM 1-02.1 and FM 1-02.2.)

Introductory table 1. New, modified, and rescinded terms

Term	*Acronym*	*Reasoning*
Army special operations forces	ARSOF	New proponent of the term
command and control, computing, communications, cyber, intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and targeting capabilities	C5ISRT	New acronym
denied area		Army definition rescinded
special operations task force	SOTF	New proponent of the term
military information support operations	MISO	Provides Army definition for joint term

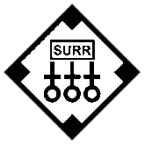
Introductory table 2 outlines new military symbols and modifiers.

Introductory table 2. New military symbols and modifiers

Name	*Symbol*
influence operations	
Name	***Modifier***
desertion	
diminished morale	
surrender	

Introductory table 3 provides usage examples of the new military symbols and modifiers reflected in FM 3-05.

Introductory table 3. Usage examples for new military symbols and modifiers

Example description	*Example of use*
Diminished morale and desertion enemy activity	
Diminished morale and surrender enemy activity	
Electronic delivered precision influence (EDPI) operation or activity using a black influence operation arrow with the EDPI modifier. This usage example depicts the arrow originating from a unit and ending at the influence target.	

Chapter 1
Army Special Operations Forces

Our forces, therefore, must fulfill a broader role as a complement to our diplomacy, as an arm of our diplomacy, as a deterrent to our adversaries, and as a symbol to our allies of our determination to support them.

President John. F. Kennedy
Remarks to the U.S. Military Academy Graduating Class
6 June 1962

Army special operations forces **are those Active and Reserve Component Army forces designated by the Secretary of Defense that are specifically organized, trained, and equipped to conduct and support special operations**. The Army has the largest number of special operations units in the Department of Defense and provides the preponderance of special operations forces to joint force commanders. These forces include subordinate units assigned to the United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC).

ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES CHARACTERISTICS

1-1. Understanding the characteristics of Army special operations forces allows combatant commanders to develop a greater appreciation of how to use special operations to achieve military objectives. The characteristics of Army special operations forces provide a wide range of options for joint force commanders. Army special operations forces attain their characteristics through a rigorous and demanding assessment, selection, and training process. Army special operations Soldiers develop and refine these characteristics through years of overseas deployments and practical experience in diverse operational environments. They are adaptable, highly skilled, regionally focused, and culturally aware military experts who operate as small, decentralized teams in complex environments. Army special operations characteristics include:

- Advanced technical and tactical expertise.
- Ability to operate with lower signatures.
- Regional expertise.
- Adaptability.

ADVANCED TECHNICAL AND TACTICAL EXPERTISE

1-2. Every Army special operations Soldier is an expert in their military occupational specialty. They are proficient in a wide range of individual and collective tasks. They train continuously to maintain military skills and expand their levels of expertise into an increasing number of special tools and skills. Army special operations Soldiers are masters of combined arms operations and can use any kind of conventional tool or technique in conventional or irregular ways. Their technical and tactical expertise allows them to operate with lower signatures in denied, high-risk, inhospitable, and politically sensitive areas. This expertise enables Army special operations Soldiers to increase the scale of their operations, work with and through partners, and maximize lethality against enemy forces.

ABILITY TO OPERATE WITH LOWER SIGNATURES

1-3. The ability to operate with lower signatures is a characteristic of all Army special operations formations, enabling rapid decision-making, minimizing footprint, and maximizing effectiveness. Army special operations forces typically operate in small teams and support combatant command campaigns. They gather information through civil reconnaissance and build strong relationships with local networks by enabling informed decision-making and the establishment of physical, information, and human networks to enable future operations. This operational approach is reinforced by Army special operations forces' training, which emphasizes mission command principles by empowering subordinate units to exercise disciplined initiative, decision-making authority, and independent action within the framework of the commander's intent and higher-level mission guidance.

REGIONAL EXPERTISE

1-4. The assessment, selection, and training of Army special operations forces focuses on interpersonal skills, emotional intelligence, and complex problem solving. The characteristics of being politically astute and culturally aware contribute to the force's ability build rapport and forge trusted long-term relationships with partners. An understanding of grievances in diverse environments is indispensable in stabilizing volatile situations and reaching a favorable resolution without further provocation. Special operations units often conduct missions in areas of heightened political sensitivity. Understanding these circumstances, Army special operations forces operate in ways that allow them to blend into the environment, limit public visibility, ensure engagements are precise and necessary, and limit or obfuscate electromagnetic and other signatures to manage risk of observation and exposure.

1-5. Units at the group and regiment level are regionally aligned to support the combatant commander and theater Army objectives. Regional expertise is cultivated through unit regional orientation, continuous overseas engagements, and deployments to a specific area of operation with unified action partners. This approach improves unit cultural awareness and acuity to regional activities at all levels. It creates a shared understanding and knowledge of the areas of operations or specific region that enables Soldiers as they advance in rank and take on more responsibilities while deepening their awareness of the operational environment. The integration of regional expertise with other Army special operations forces' capabilities provides commanders with regional and situational awareness to inform decision-making and mitigate risk to force and mission.

ADAPTABILITY

1-6. Adaptability complements the other characteristics discussed above. Adaptability addresses the special operations Soldier's flexibility in the face of uncertainty, to cope with the austerity of physical environment, to work with diverse cultures among unified action partners, to capitalize on rapid technological advances, and to overcome the ambiguity of a situation by the convergence and rapid processing of multiple data or information sources. Adaptability is first assessed in selection and refined throughout institutional unit and joint training and exercises. This allows a commander to place a team in a remote area with unfamiliar cultures and achieve desired results. Adaptability allows Army special operations forces to anticipate changes in the operational environment, reorient, and rapidly transition. Often, Army special operations forces lead the joint force in a transition between strategic contexts and set conditions for broader success.

1-7. The combination of assessment, selection, and training processes with unit cultural indoctrination accounts for an individual special operations Soldier's level of adaptability. These characteristics—together with their language, cultural, regional, and advanced technical and tactical skills—enable the special operations Soldier to assimilate, build relationships with partner populations and forces, and communicate and collect information more effectively.

UNITED STATES ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

1-8. USASOC serves as the Army component within United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM). As shown in figure 1-1, USASOC is organized around three key subordinate commands: the United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, 1st Special Forces Command, and the United States Army Special Operations Aviation Command. It also includes the 75th Ranger Regiment as a direct reporting unit.

MISSION

1-9. USASOC mans, trains, equips, educates, organizes, sustains, and supports forces to conduct special operations across the full range of military operations in support of joint force and Army commanders and joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational partners to meet national and theater objectives.



Figure 1-1. United States Army Special Operations Command organization

UNITED STATES ARMY JOHN F. KENNEDY SPECIAL WARFARE CENTER AND SCHOOL

1-10. The United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School is a two-star command that provides institutional training, doctrine, leader development and professional military education, and personnel policy to support Civil Affairs, Psychological Operations, and Special Forces. The Army has designated the United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School as the Army's Special Operations Center of Excellence and the specified proponent for the three aforementioned branches.

1-11. The United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School serves as the Army's specified proponent for irregular warfare focusing on doctrine, training, and leader development and professional military education.

ORGANIZATION

1-12. The United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School consists of the following:

- Special Warfare Center that includes the—
  - Special Forces Proponent.
  - Psychological Operations Proponent.
  - Civil Affairs Proponent.
  - Directorate of Training, Doctrine, and Proponency.
  - Combined Arms Center Special Operations Directorate.

- Special Warfare School that includes the—
  - 1st Special Warfare Training Group.
  - 2nd Special Warfare Training Group.
  - Joint Special Operations Medical Training Center.
  - Master Sergeant David K. Thuma Noncommissioned Officer Academy.
  - Special Forces Warrant Officer Institute.

MISSION

1-13. The United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School mission is to produce world-class Army special operations forces; it is the command's non-negotiable contract with the Army, the nation, and the American people. There is no second place in the Profession of Arms, and anything less than exceptional is unacceptable.

1-14. The unique capabilities of USASOC are a function of the quality of its Soldiers, the training and education of those Soldiers, and the missions the Soldiers must execute. The United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School provides specially recruited, assessed, selected, educated, and trained special operations Soldiers to the operational force.

1-15. Civil Affairs, Psychological Operations, and Special Forces candidates are assessed and selected for their character, physical and intellectual attributes and abilities to learn the specific military occupational specialties. The assessment and selection process produces a Soldier with the ability to operate autonomously, who is politically astute and culturally aware, has regional expertise, and is adaptable to changing conditions and environments.

1ST SPECIAL FORCES COMMAND

1-16. 1st Special Forces Command is a two-star headquarters that, when directed, can organize and deploy as the core of a special operations joint task force headquarters. Subordinate units of the 1st Special Forces Command deploy to conduct special operations activities in support of combatant, joint force, theater Army, and corps commanders. The regional alignment of 1st Special Forces Command subordinate units enables them to maintain long term generational relationships with unified action partners. These trusted relationships, when combined with the organizational structure and mission of 1st Special Forces Command, provide combatant commanders with access and placement sufficient to see, sense, and understand the domains and dimensions of the countries in the assigned regions.

ORGANIZATION

1-17. 1st Special Forces Command consists of five active-duty Army Special Forces groups, two Army National Guard Special Forces groups, two Psychological Operations groups, one Civil Affairs brigade, and one sustainment brigade (see figure 1-2). This diverse structure of subordinate commands has distinct capabilities, which allows them to enable special operations activities.

MISSION

1-18. 1st Special Forces Command mans, trains, equips, validates, and deploys Army special operations forces globally to conduct special operations in support of theater and national objectives. On order, 1st Special Forces Command serves as the Army core of a deployable special operations joint task force headquarters to command and control special operations and coalition forces supporting global crisis response and contingency operations.

1-19. To meet operational requirements, USASOC directs 1st Special Forces Command to fulfill theater combatant command and joint staff validated missions in support of global and combatant commander campaign plans. This includes plans to address emerging crises, limited contingency operations, and numbered operation plans. In support of these efforts, units within 1st Special Forces Command continuously conduct a variety of command, staff, and unit-level exercises and training events to enable the integration, interoperability, and interdependence of special operations units with conventional, joint, interagency, allied, and partner organizations.

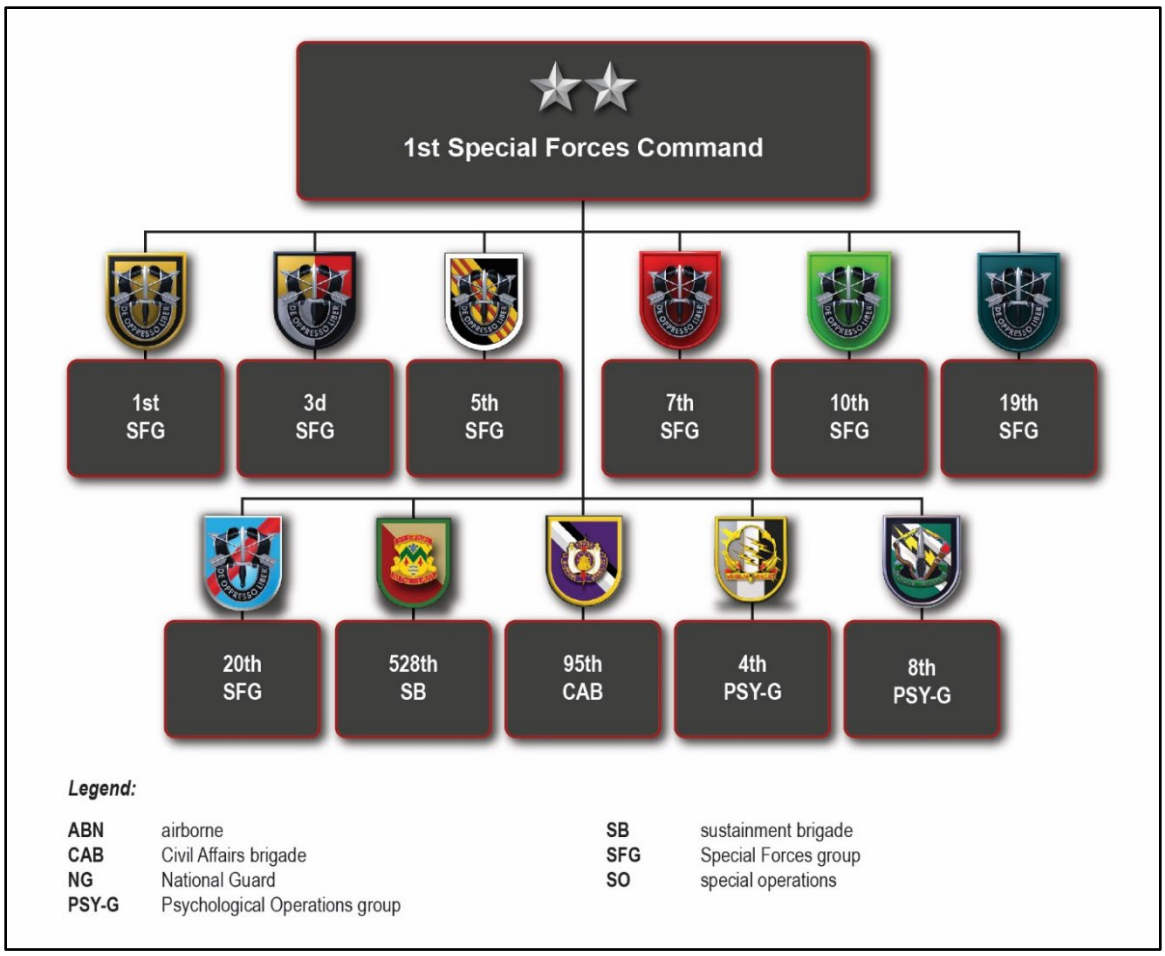


Figure 1-2. 1st Special Forces Command organization

1-20. The 1st Special Forces Command units' persistent forward presence and partnerships support combatant commander objectives. Forward-positioned units help to deter adversary aggression, thereby contributing to regional stability and reducing the likelihood of conflict. These regional partnerships increase interoperability while shaping the operational environment. These partnerships foster cooperation and trust among partner and neighboring nations to enable U.S. regional alliances.

1-21. The combination of forward deployed units and established networks enable a rapid effective response to an emerging crisis by Army special operations forces. This allows 1st Special Forces Command units to quickly conduct operations in support of national objectives and, if necessary, exploit adversary vulnerabilities during conflict. These partnerships facilitate effective coalition operations by allowing the Army to leverage the unique capabilities of international partners and achieve greater mission effectiveness.

SPECIAL FORCES GROUPS

Special Forces. United States Army forces organized, trained, and equipped to conduct special operations with an emphasis on unconventional warfare capabilities. (JP 3-05)

1-22. There are five active-duty and two National Guard Special Forces groups currently assigned to 1st Special Forces Command. When deployed, Special Forces groups are typically under the operational control of a theater special operations command, special operations joint task force, or joint task force. Special Forces groups consist of one headquarters and headquarters company, one group support battalion, and four Special Forces battalions. The Special Forces group headquarters commands and controls assigned and attached forces and plans, coordinates, and directs operations independently or as a part of a larger force (see figure 1-3, page 6).

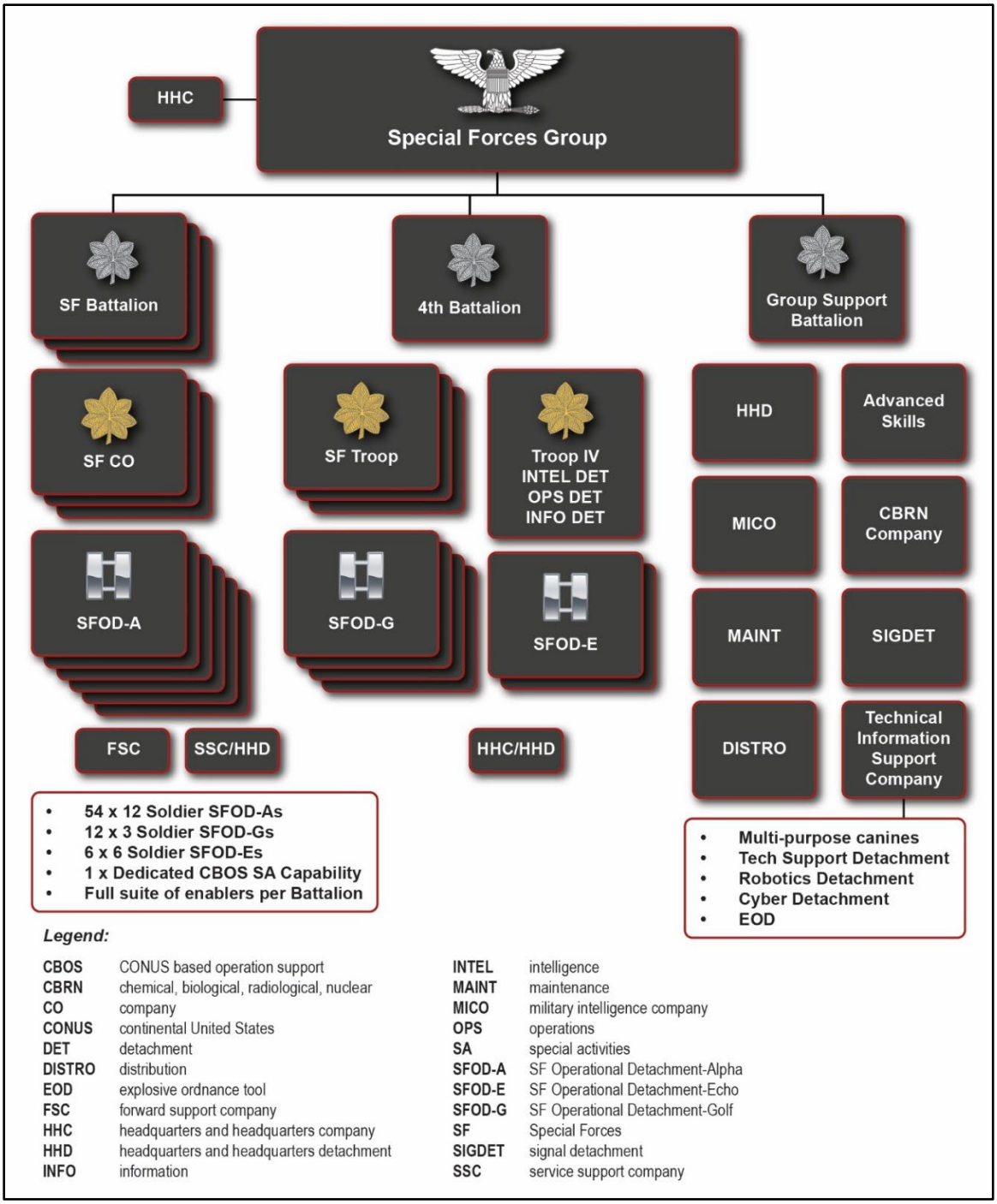


Figure 1-3. Special Forces group organization

Special Forces Battalion

1-23. The Special Forces battalion normally forms the nucleus of a special operations task force. Special Forces battalions consist of a headquarters and headquarters detachment, a battalion support company, a forward support company, and three Special Forces companies. The Special Forces battalion has a direct role in the command and control, support, and sustainment of its own organic or attached operational detachments–alpha and operational detachments–bravo. The battalion is directly responsible for preparing, deploying, and recovering its assigned or attached operational detachments–bravo and operational detachments–alpha.

Special Forces Company

1-24. The Special Forces company is composed of a company headquarters (Special Forces operational detachment–bravo) and six Special Forces operational detachments–alpha. The operational detachment–bravo is a command and control element and is typically employed to establish one of three elements:

- Advanced operations base. These are usually small, light, and tailored to perform specific missions, such as forward launch and recovery, logistics, and communications. From this location, the Special Forces operational detachment–bravo usually exercises command of up to six Special Forces operational detachments–alpha.
- Isolation facilities. The special operations task force facilitates isolation and preparation of operational detachments–alpha for infiltration, mission execution, and exfiltration.
- Special operations command and control element. Facilitates command relationships between the joint special operations task force and the battalion headquarters.

Note. A Special Forces operational detachment–bravo normally requires augmentation from the Special Forces group or battalion to perform any of these missions.

1-25. There are six operational detachments-alpha per Special Forces company, each with its own set of unique capabilities. All operational detachments–alpha are static-line airborne qualified and trained in overland infiltration techniques. Each company has one operational detachment–alpha trained in military free-fall operations, which enables them to conduct high-altitude, low-opening and high-altitude, high-opening operations for standoff airborne infiltration. One operational detachment–alpha per company is specialized in underwater dive operations, allowing for long-range infiltration either beneath or on the surface of the water. There are additional operational detachments–alpha that focus solely on surface infiltration, capable of small-boat, over-the-horizon, riverine, and surface swimming operations, the number of which varies across each regionally aligned Special Forces group.

Special Forces Operational Detachment–Alpha

1-26. The operational detachment–alpha, the primary Special Forces operational unit, has language and cultural expertise to enable effective cross-cultural communication to work with and through partner forces. The small size of a detachment (12 personnel) allows it to operate discreetly in denied areas, making it a key asset in uncertain and hostile environments.

1-27. Operational detachments–alpha are trained in a range of specialized skills. The versatility in the individual and collective capabilities of the unit includes—

- Planning and conducting the intelligence, targeting, and operations process at a small unit level.
- Network, human, and physical infrastructure development.
- Sniper techniques.
- U.S. and foreign weapons training.
- Demolitions and construction.
- Advanced medical, dental, and veterinary medicine.
- Advanced communications, techniques, and technology.
- Joint terminal attack control.
- Close quarters battle.
- Special reconnaissance.
- Personnel recovery.
- Infiltration and exfiltration operational areas by air, land, and sea.
- Developing, organizing, equipping, training, and advising or directing partner forces up to battalion size.
- Training, advising, and assisting other U.S. and multinational forces and agencies.

1-28. Special Forces units provide commanders a unique set of options to address crises and contingencies that fall between diplomatic initiatives and the overt use of a large conventional force. When employed appropriately, Special Forces units can shape the operational environment, set conditions for success, and conduct activities that enable conventional force operations. Their discreet, precise, and scalable operations make them ideal for situations where a large conventional force is unsuitable.

1-29. Like conventional units, Special Forces commanders can task-organize their teams to meet specific mission requirements. For example, an operational detachment–alpha is trained and qualified to operate independently or with partner forces in any environment.

CAPABILITIES

1-30. Special Forces units are organized to provide a combatant commander with an adaptable force capable of operating in ambiguous and swiftly changing scenarios. Among its capabilities, the Special Forces group can—

- Provide command and staff personnel to establish and operate a joint special operations task force when augmented by personnel and units from other Services.
- Infiltrate and exfiltrate Special Forces operational detachments into and from an operational area by air, land, or sea.
- Develop, organize, equip, train, and advise or direct partner forces.
- Synchronize and deconflict resistance activity with the joint force commander.
- Plan and conduct unilateral special operations.
- Train, advise, and assist other U.S. and coalition forces or agencies.

EMPLOYMENT CONSIDERATIONS

1-31. The following factors need to be considered when employing Special Forces:

- Special Forces not intended to replace conventional forces performing tactical reconnaissance.
- Special Forces are not a substitute for conventional forces.
- Special Forces do not have organic aviation assets.
- Special Forces cannot conduct conventional combined arms operations unilaterally.
- In established combat theaters, Special Forces will depend on the resources of the theater army to support and sustain long-term operations.

(Refer to FM 3-18 for more information on Special Forces.)

PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS GROUPS

1-32. The Army has four Psychological Operations groups—two Reserve Component groups assigned to the United States Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (under United States Army Reserve Command) and two Active Component groups assigned to the 1st Special Forces Command.

Note. Unless otherwise specified, Psychological Operations formations discussed throughout FM 3-05 refer to the 4th or 8th Psychological Operations Groups and their subordinate units.

1-33. A Psychological Operations group is the highest echelon within the Psychological Operations organizational structure. As such, it aligns with the highest military echelon conducting operations in the context of its deployment. Figure 1-4 shows the two Psychological Operations group's organization. The following sections list the tasks and activities for the group and subordinate units and elements.

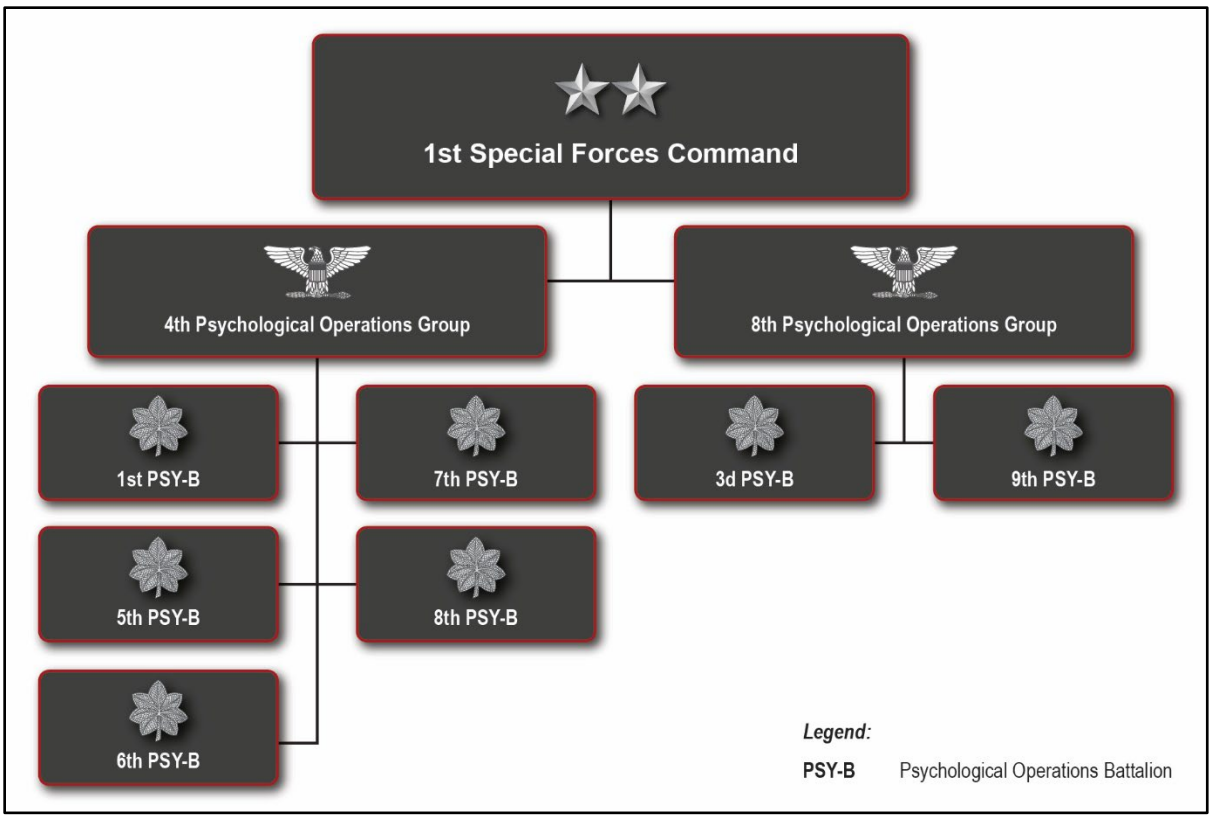


Figure 1-4. Psychological Operations group structure

1-34. The Psychological Operations group plans, prepares, executes, and assesses influence activities and operations in the information environment in support of combatant commander campaign and supporting plans and—

- Can establish a functional component command headquarters to conduct influence activities or operations in the information environment.
- Has the capacity to produce and distribute products and create theater or joint operational area–wide effects.
- Provides theater-echelon influence fires in support of a joint force commander or joint force component commander.
- May augment combatant commander component staffs and units to provide a robust influence capability (for example Fleet Information Warfare Command Pacific).
- Provides the commander and core staff or augment a combined influence command or task force (for example Combined Military Information Support Operations Component Command)
- Provides subordinate units on a rotational basis to provide enduring forward presence and capabilities.

PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS BATTALION

1-35. The Psychological Operations battalion plans, prepares, executes, and assesses influence activities and operations in the information environment with a focus on achieving operational level objectives and—

- Creates and leverages interdependent human, information, and physical advantages to achieve commanders' objectives as units execute combatant commander campaign plan subordinate operations, activities, and missions.
- Participates in planning efforts for these subordinate operations with a focus on integrating influence activities.
- Creates enduring conditions that directly support the achievement of combatant commander campaign plan objectives.

- Employs subordinate companies to create persistent presence and achieve strategic outcomes or end states.
- Establish a functional component command headquarters to conduct influence activities or operations in the information environment.
- Can augment division, corps, or theater Army staffs.

Psychological Operations Company

1-36. While organizationally not as flexible as its parent unit, the company conducts operations across a broader range of echelons and across the range of military operations. A company can conduct influence activities at the highest military echelon down to the battalion task force echelon. However, support at higher echelons is not typical for large-scale combat operations. Mission analysis will determine whether a company requires individual augmentation, external units of action, or both. Psychological Operations companies—

- Plan, prepare, execute, and assess influence activities.
- Plan, integrate, and conduct deception activities.
- Focus rotational deployments on achieving intermediate psychological objectives.
- Can augment brigade staffs.

Psychological Operations Detachment

1-37. The Psychological Operations detachment is the lowest echelon capable of planning, preparing, executing, and assessing influence activities. The detachment requires external support to produce, distribute, and disseminate some types of media. The detachment can execute a diverse range of missions to influence foreign audiences. Psychological Operations detachments—

- Conduct tactical deception activities in support of maneuver units.
- Conduct loudspeaker operations in support of direct action.
- Conduct aerial dissemination activities.
- Support noncombatant evacuation operations.
- Build influence capacity in foreign security forces and other partner governmental organizations.
- Execute the influence process in support of combatant commander military information support operations programs.
- Plan and execute Soldier and leader engagement.
- Integrate military operations with U.S. embassy communications activities.

(Refer to TC 53-03.1 for more information on the Psychological Operations detachment.)

CAPABILITIES

1-38. The role of the Psychological Operations branch is to create and reinforce desired behaviors in selected foreign individuals and groups to achieve military and U.S. national objectives across the range of military operations. Psychological Operations units accomplish this through two primary influence activities: Department of Defense deception activities and military information support operations. These influence activities are integrated into the global campaign plan, combatant command campaign plans, operations plans, and other U.S. Government agency and department efforts to create and leverage interdependent human, information, and physical advantages to affect foreign audience behavior.

Department of Defense deception activities. Activities, including those executed in support of perception management or influence operations, conducted by a Department of Defense component to deliberately mislead an adversary or potential adversary, or to conceal an activity from foreign intelligence collection, for the purpose of accomplishing the friendly mission. (DODI S-3604.01)

1-39. Psychological Operations units use the influence process to develop and produce visual, audio, audiovisual, multimedia, and face-to-face products, and psychological actions. These products and actions are planned as series and are disseminated through a diverse range of means including cyberspace, aircraft, munitions, face-to-face, loudspeaker, and the electromagnetic spectrum to effect foreign audience behavior.

EMPLOYMENT CONSIDERATIONS

1-40. Psychological Operations units may require significant intelligence, signal, and sustainment support from the supported unit, or the theater designated supporting command. Product development and production may be conducted from the garrison base, requiring robust communications infrastructure to move digital products from garrison to forward distribution and dissemination points. Likewise, print products may be produced in millions of copies from garrison or a forward-based capability. Locating print production near airfields is a best practice as it facilitates rapid movement onto distribution and dissemination platforms. Influence activities benefit from the integration of all seven intelligence disciplines. Psychological Operations unit intelligence sections and personnel are critical in communicating intelligence requirements to support the influence process. (For more information on Psychological Operations unit support and execution of Department of Defense deception activities, refer to FM 3-53 and ATP 3-53.5.)

CIVIL AFFAIRS BRIGADE

1-41. The Army has four Reserve Component Civil Affairs commands, nine Reserve Component Civil Affairs brigades, and one Active Component Civil Affairs brigade assigned to the 1st Special Forces Command.

Note. Unless otherwise specified, Civil Affairs forces discussed throughout FM 3-05 refer to the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade and its subordinate units.

1-42. The 95th Civil Affairs Brigade is the only active-duty Civil Affairs brigade in the Army. The headquarters is assigned to support special operations commanders typically at corps or special operations joint task force level. It is a deployable, expeditionary command and control node. The brigade provides global, regional, and country-focused Civil Affairs capabilities to the Army or joint commander's missions and areas of operations. Figure 1-5, page 12, shows the Civil Affairs brigade organization. The brigade headquarters can be organized or augmented to form a Civil Affairs task force or a joint civil-military operations task force to direct stability activities and coordinate, synchronize, and integrate nonmilitary partners within a designated area of operations.

1-43. The Civil Affairs brigade plans, synchronizes, and conducts civil affairs operations to—

- Develop and leverage regional civil networks.
- Anticipate and exploit changing conditions of the civil component in the operational environment.
- Set conditions for successful operations in support of joint force objectives.
- Provide an expeditionary and crisis-response capability for the Army and the joint force commander.
- Provide expeditionary Civil Affairs battalions with region-specific culture and language expertise to support USSOCOM and combatant command requirements.

CIVIL AFFAIRS BATTALION

1-44. The Civil Affairs battalion directly supports combatant command missions, focusing on persistent presence activities across all strategic contexts of competition, crisis, and armed conflict. It typically supports division or joint special operations task force commanders by:

- Analyzing and evaluating civil information from subordinate units.
- Integrating civil knowledge and information into staff integrating processes in support of the S/G/J9.
- Directing civil network development in line with commander's critical information requirements.
- Developing options to exploit changing civil considerations.
- Setting conditions for successful civil affairs operations.

1-45. The battalion can rapidly deploy as a command and control node to form the core of a Civil Affairs task force, a joint civil-military operation task force, or a civil-military operations center. The battalion maintains regionally focused medical assets that provide medical, dental, and veterinary support to civil affairs operations.

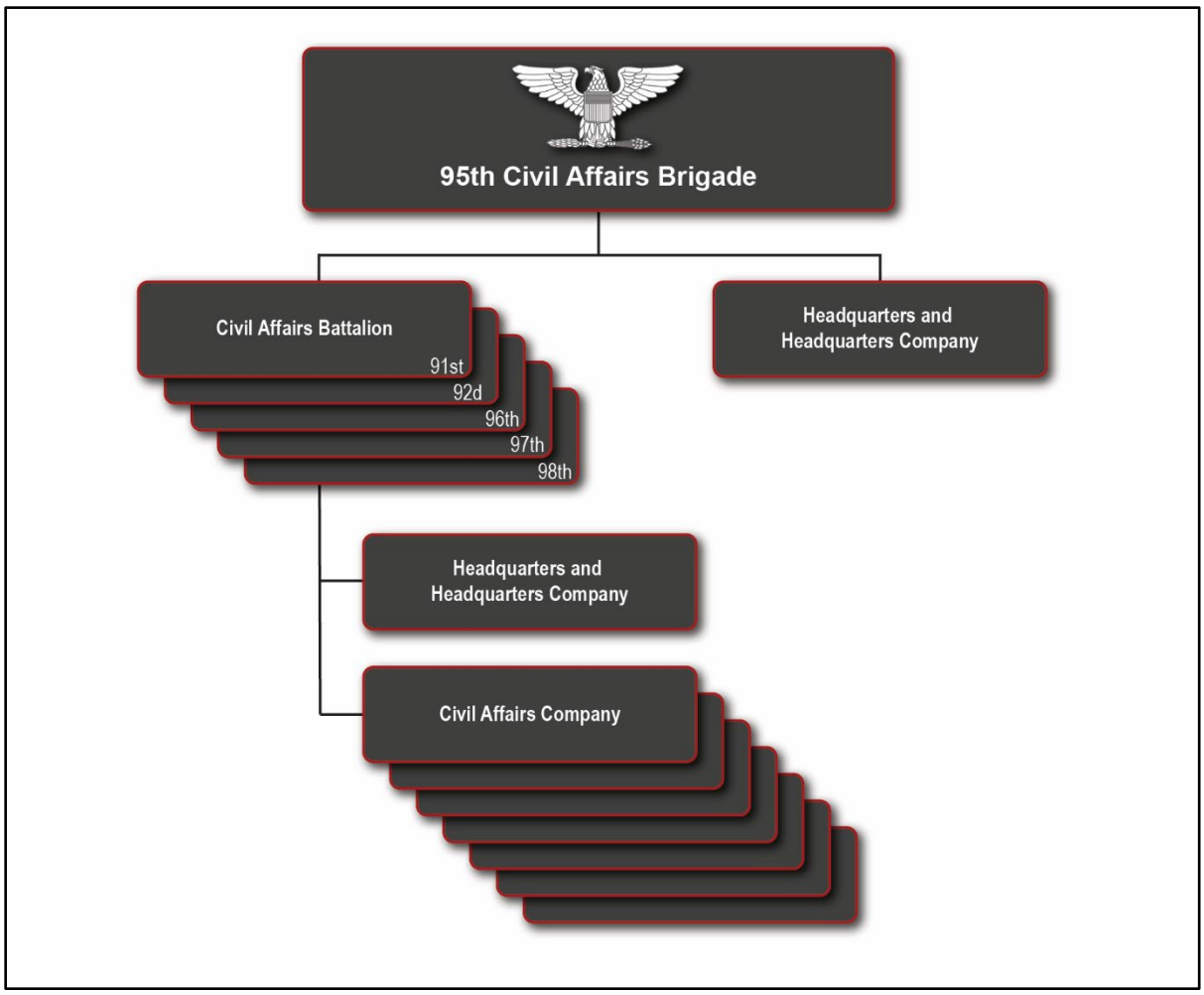


Figure 1-5. Civil Affairs brigade structure

Civil Affairs Company

1-46. The Civil Affairs company rapidly deploys to command and control up to six Civil Affairs teams typically in support of a brigade combat team or a special operations task force. Civil Affairs companies direct their organic Civil Affairs teams to collect civil information in line with the supported commander's information collection priorities. The company can support the integration of unified action partners into military operations. It processes and supports the analysis of civil information collected by Civil Affairs teams. Additionally, a company senior medical sergeant coordinates support for Civil Affairs team medics and identifies partner medical capabilities to extend operational reach.

Civil Affairs Team

1-47. The Civil Affairs team is the tactical unit of action that conducts civil affairs operations. It achieves desired effects through civil reconnaissance, civil engagement, and civil network development. The Civil Affairs team has an organic team medic who is the forward healthcare provider and medical subject-matter expert; this medic enhances team survivability in austere environments. Civil Affairs teams are capable of—

- Assessing and developing partner resilience.
- Developing and leveraging civil networks to support military operations.
- Coordinating foreign humanitarian assistance.
- Influencing local populations in support of U.S. military objectives.
- Enhancing situational awareness.

CAPABILITIES

1-48. Through civil reconnaissance and engagement, Civil Affairs forces gather critical information that directly supports the commander's information requirements and informs the operations process. As a result, they play a major role in shaping the operational environment, setting the theater, consolidating gains, and achieving operational and tactical objectives. In addition to their ability to gather critical information, Civil Affairs forces work with civil networks to preserve combat power, extend operational reach into areas that are difficult to access, consolidate gains, and facilitate transitions. To accomplish this, Civil Affairs forces engage with civil networks to build relationships with friendly elements, influence neutral parties, and disrupt or degrade threat actors operating within the population. By leveraging these civil networks, Civil Affairs forces enhance the effectiveness of military operations and promote stability in the area of operations.

1-49. The capabilities of Civil Affairs operations include the following:

- Civil network development and engagement.
- Civil knowledge integration.
- Civil-military integration.
- Military government operations.
- Civil-military engagement.
- Civil reconnaissance.

(For more detailed information on these capabilities, refer to the civil affairs operations section located in chapter 2 of this manual.)

EMPLOYMENT CONSIDERATIONS

1-50. Civil Affairs forces receive specialized training in addition to their institutional training, which includes small-unit tactics, trauma medicine, nonstandard logistics and communications, and survival techniques. This training enables them to conduct civil affairs operations in support of special operations commanders throughout competition, crisis, and armed conflict, as well as post-conflict transitions.

1-51. In competition, Civil Affairs teams usually have greater freedom of movement than conventional forces because of their relationships with civilians. However, Civil Affairs forces generally require external force protection and sustainment support during large-scale combat operations. (For additional information on Civil Affairs, refer to FM 3-57 and ATP 3-57.80.)

528TH SUSTAINMENT BRIGADE

1-52. The 528th Sustainment Brigade is unique when compared to other Army sustainment brigades in that it maintains global situational awareness of deployed Army special operations forces' logistics support structures. The brigade is multicomposition in structure, is focused on the operational level for logistics planning and synchronization, and is designed to deploy as small, task-organized teams. This brigade also trains, resources, and equips the Army's only special operations signal battalion (112th Signal Battalion) and contains four austere resuscitative surgical teams. These teams are mobile, scalable, and close combat–survivable Army special operations surgical teams that provide the continuum of trauma care, from point of injury to damage control resuscitation, damage control surgery, en route casualty care, and limited patient hold. These activities are conducted across the special operations activities in locations outside the range of conventional medical assets.

1-53. The brigade staff is organized to plan and synchronize Army-common logistics and sustainment requirements and support for deployed Army special operations forces through coordination with theater Army Service component commands. To this end, the sustainment brigade staff structure includes regionally focused, forward-stationed Army special operations forces' liaison elements, which reside with the Army Service component command and the theater special operations commands. Army special operations forces' liaison elements are small teams of multifunctional logisticians that serve in direct support of theater special operations command planning efforts, exercises, and operations to ensure proper sustainment for Army special operations forces. Using forward-stationed Army special operations forces' liaison elements and deployable Army special operations forces' support operations cells, the brigade ensures logistic requirements generated from operational plans and developed at the theater special operations command are integrated and synchronized with the Army Service component command support plan.

1-54. The 528th Sustainment Brigade is a table of organization and equipment-deployable logistics headquarters with subordinate table of organization and equipment units assigned to USASOC. They provide expeditionary communications support, mobile and survivable special operations forces (SOF) surgical care, and logistics plans, synchronization, and coordination support to Army special operations forces.

1-55. In addition to Service common-user logistics, special operations units have requirements for SOF-peculiar equipment that necessitates supply, sustainment, and maintenance mechanisms outside of the Army-common support structure. These SOF-peculiar sustainment requirements are the responsibility of USASOC and USSOCOM.

1-56. Army special operations forces typically operate under the command and control of theater special operations commands; therefore, operational-level logistics planning begins with the theater special operations command's joint concept of operations. Operational-level logistics planning is essential to mission success and the ability of regional Army Service component commands to be responsive to special operations sustainment requirements. The 528th Sustainment Brigade special operations forces liaison elements develop the corresponding operational-level concept of support and coordinate logistics requirements with theater of operations Army Service component command for resourcing SOF-peculiar requirements. These requirements are received by the 528th Sustainment Brigade and sent to USASOC for resourcing. Refinement of the concept of support for an operation is coordinated by the 528th Sustainment Brigade, special operations commands, and executing units. The 528th Sustainment Brigade focuses on operational-level logistics planning and synchronization and provides signal and intelligence support (see figure 1-6).

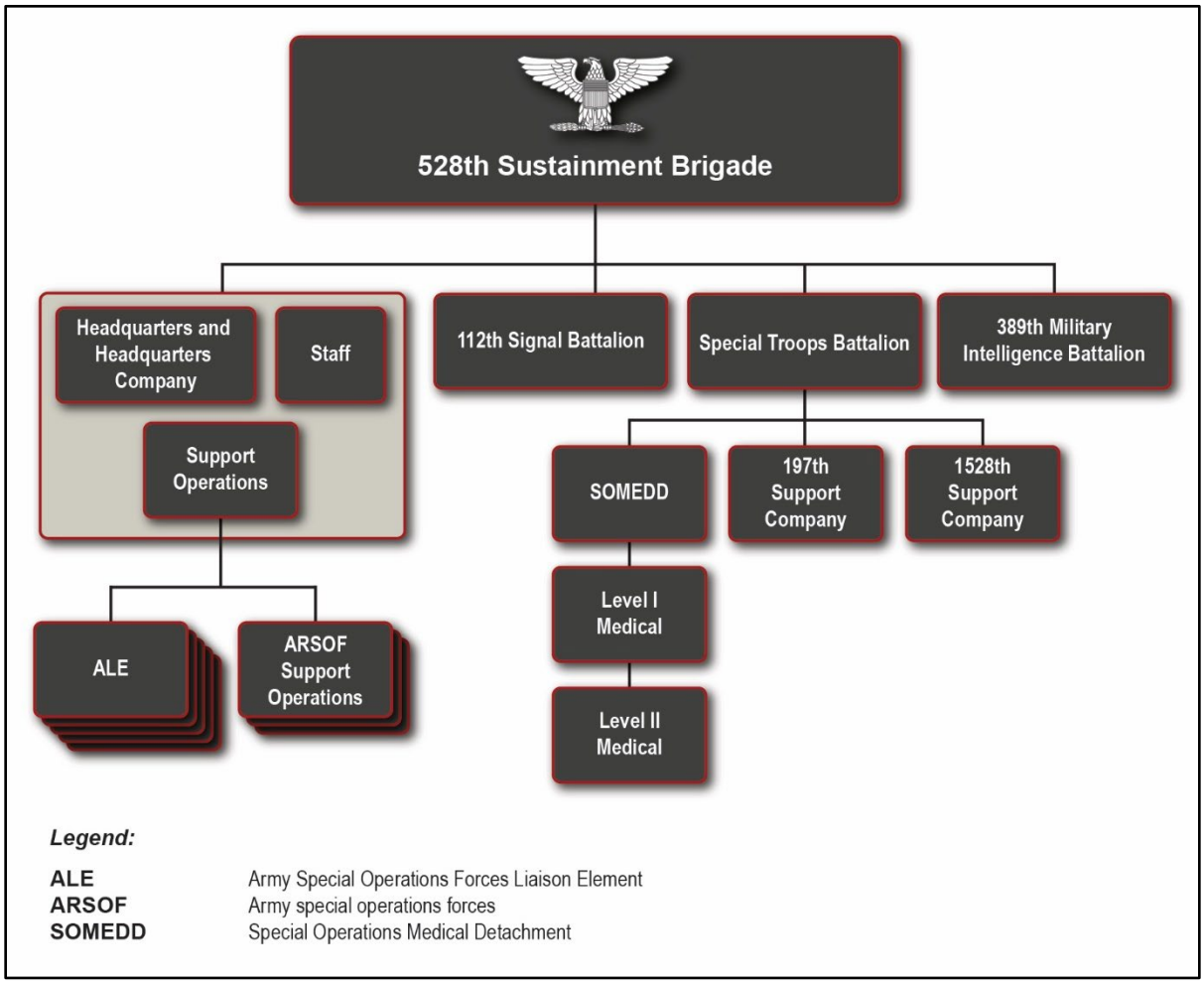


Figure 1-6. 528th Sustainment Brigade organization

112TH SIGNAL BATTALION

1-57. The 112th Signal Battalion provides worldwide, innovative, responsive, reliable, and assured airborne-capable communications systems to connect 1st Special Forces Command units to the Department of Defense Information Network, SOF Information Enterprise Network, and other headquarters, as directed. Specifically, the battalion supports simultaneous, dedicated theater-level signal support for two deployed groups and can respond to immediate crisis situations with deployable communication capabilities to support elements ranging from a liaison team to a joint task force headquarters. This capability enables the battalion to provide timely and effective support to special operations while enhancing their ability to conduct operations globally.

389TH MILITARY INTELLIGENCE BATTALION

1-58. As a subordinate unit of the 528th Sustainment Brigade, the 389th Military Intelligence Battalion plays a major role in supporting 1st Special Forces Command. Specifically, the battalion's primary mission is to provide timely and accurate intelligence to support special operations. This includes multidisciplined intelligence operations to enable global special operations by providing critical intelligence analysis and support to defeat adversaries.

CAPABILITIES

1-59. The 528th Sustainment Brigade provides command and control of tailored logistics, signal support, medical care, and military intelligence support to special operations worldwide. As a subordinate unit of 1st Special Forces Command, the 528th Sustainment Brigade plays an important role in setting the operational logistic conditions to enable special operations. In this capacity, the 528th provides essential support to 1st Special Forces Command, including Role II medical support, as well as deploying and providing battlefield logistics command and control. Moreover, the 528th sets the operational logistics condition to enable special operations, ensuring that special operations units have the necessary support to conduct their missions.

1-60. The Support Operations Section, a key component of the 528th Sustainment Brigade, exercises directive authority over subordinate sustainment brigade units during the performance of current sustainment and support operations. The Support Operations Section, using interoperable automation and communications, performs the daily management functions associated with tasking control for external support operations. It becomes a fusion information center to collect, analyze, and anticipate logistic requirements to support Army special operations forces. The section and assigned support operations teams, in coordination with the liaison elements and USASOC staff, provide the global logistical common operating picture of Army special operations forces' logistic and sustainment operations that enable synchronization of logistic, signal, health service, and personnel services support.

EMPLOYMENT CONSIDERATIONS

1-61. The Headquarters, 528th Sustainment Brigade, typically located in the vicinity of an Army Service component command, provides command and control for units organic to the brigade or operationally controlled units. The headquarters is also responsible for—

- Serving as the USASOC lead component for logistics with respect to conducting special operations sustainment.
- Setting the operational level logistics conditions to enable special operations.
- Deploying logistics synchronization capabilities in support of a special operations joint task force.
- Providing expeditionary, limited, and short-term Role II medical holding capabilities to deployed Army special operations forces.
- Deploying, when directed, a tailored brigade headquarters to command and control operational level logistics in support of special operations until relieved by Army Service component command logistics command and control capabilities.
- Training, resourcing, and equipping the 112th Signal Battalion and 389th Military Intelligence Battalion in support of special operations.

(Refer to ATP 3-05.40, FM 4-0, ATP 3-93, and ATP 4-93.1 for additional information on the 528th Sustainment Brigade and Army special operations forces sustainment.)

UNITED STATES ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS AVIATION COMMAND

1-62. The United States Army Special Operations Aviation Command (see figure 1-7) oversees a broad spectrum of functions that includes interfacing with other Services and components, developing and implementing training and doctrine, and serving as the proponent for Army special operations aviation. The command is responsible for system integration and fleet modernization, aviation resource management, materiel readiness, program management, and Army Service component command oversight. To support the distinctive needs of special operations aviation, the command's structure provides a comprehensive framework that encompasses training, doctrine, and operations, enabling it to effectively carry out its mission.

160TH SPECIAL OPERATIONS AVIATION REGIMENT

1-63. The 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment is a premier tactical unit that conducts worldwide, high-risk, and politically sensitive aviation operations. The regiment provides precision rotary-wing aviation and SOF-specific unmanned aerial vehicles, and its advisory support enhances the aviation capabilities of U.S. partners, promoting regional stability and security. Army special operations aviation elements organize, train, and equip aviation units to provide the joint force special operations component commander with the capability to conduct fires; perform intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; and infiltrate, resupply, and exfiltrate SOF elements engaging in all special operations activities.

1-64. The 160th provides dedicated, mission-configured, unmanned aircraft system support for 75th Ranger Regiment, other Army, and joint force units. The rotary- and fixed-wing assets of the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment are categorized as manned and unmanned.

Capabilities

1-65. The regiment's unique capabilities and support are essential to the success of special operations, enabling SOF units to conduct their missions effectively and safely. The range of specialized operations for 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment include—

- Tactical penetration into hostile or denied areas.
- Airborne suppression of point targets.
- Helicopter air-to-air refueling flight operations.
- Radar-assisted terrain-following flight.
- Close air support.
- Diving or running fire.

1-66. The task of special operations aviation is to plan, conduct, and support special air operations by clandestinely penetrating hostile and denied airspace. This serves as a critical role in supporting SOF operations with unified action partners and providing liaison and coordination in regional crises and major conflicts. By doing so, special operations aviation enables SOF to achieve their objectives in a variety of environments, from permissive to hostile.

Employment Considerations

1-67. The 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment uses the following planning factors in preparation for aviation support: assess required supporting assets, leverage joint and multinational capabilities, and use near real-time information and intelligence. To achieve surprise and increase effectiveness, the regiment often conducts flight operations during periods of darkness, leverages deception in support of operations security, and controls electromagnetic emissions, as well as employing such techniques as terrain-following flight and indirect approaches.

1-68. During extended operations, the regiment must adapt to evolving circumstances by regularly changing tactics and procedures to avoid predictability, anticipating enemy actions, and concentrating combat power on enemy vulnerabilities. This requires flexibility and clear designation of the main effort, as well as an understanding of the effects of battle on Soldiers, units, leaders, and equipment.

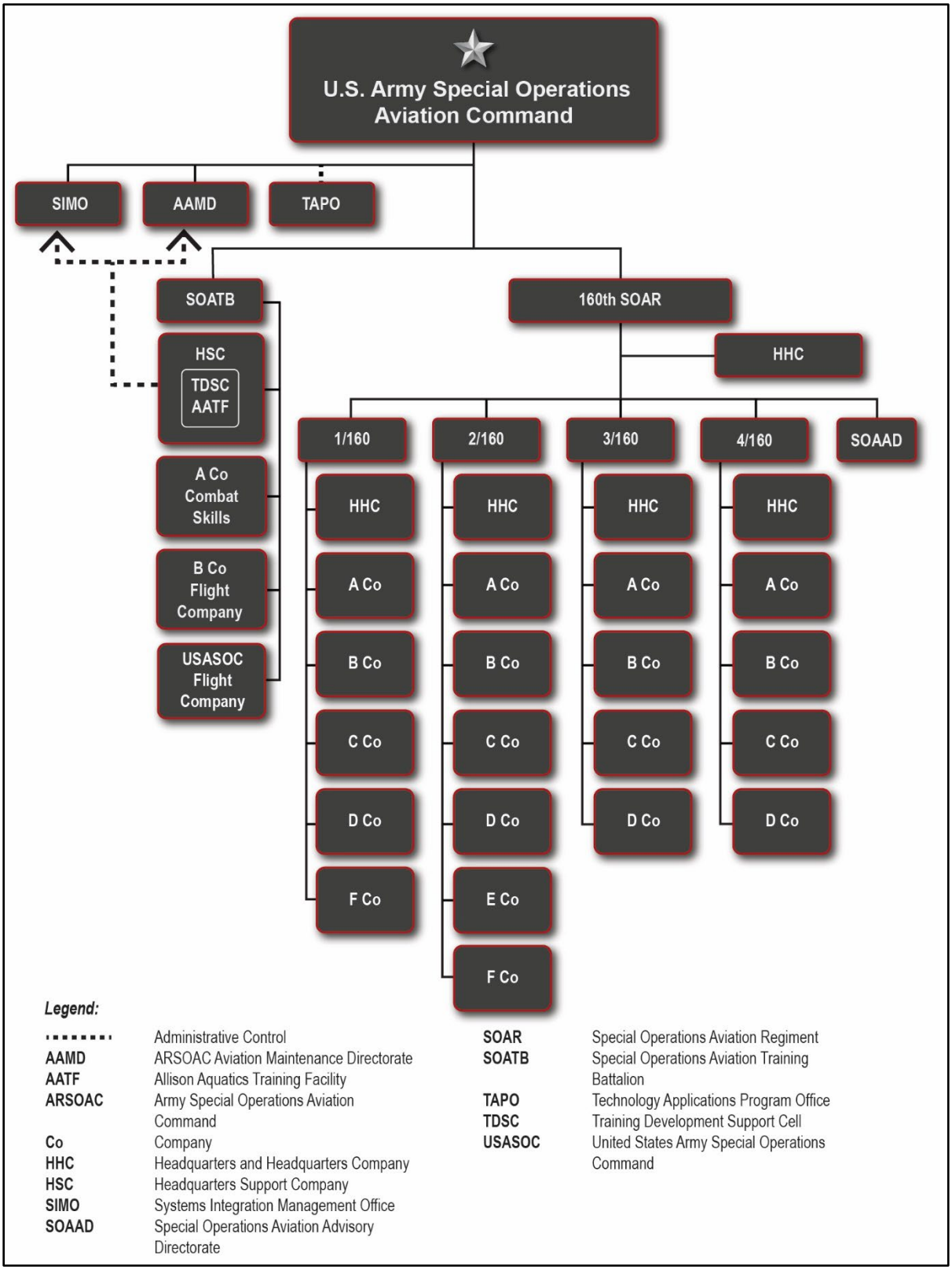


Figure 1-7. United States Army Special Operations Aviation Command organization

1-69. Special operations aviation units have specialized aircraft with sophisticated, state-of-the-art special mission equipment. Because of the training and equipment of special operations aviation units, they typically deploy against high-payoff targets that support the joint force commander's campaign plan.

1-70. Before deploying to an operational area, planners must consider several key factors. The formal command relationships with the regiment should be articulated and understood, and a liaison officer should be assigned to the controlling command structure to help with planning and operational integration. To ensure mission success, the liaison officer will coordinate communications and aviation mission requirements and act as the subject-matter expert on the regiment's capabilities and limitations. By addressing these factors, planners can ensure that the regiment is effectively employed to achieve the desired mission outcomes. (Refer to ATP 3-76 for more information on special operations aviation.)

75TH RANGER REGIMENT

1-71. The 75th Ranger Regiment provides a specially trained, rapidly deployable, flexible, and tailorable force to perform demanding and sensitive missions in support of national and theater operational objectives. The regiment conducts combat operations in hostile or denied environments, using both overt and clandestine means of infiltration. The regiment's competitive selection process, combined with advanced technological training and education, produces physically fit, adaptable, mature, and innovative Rangers.

1-72. The Ranger Regiment helps JFCs achieve joint forcible entry, establish a lodgment, and seize key terrain. Rangers are experts in airfield seizures, ambushes, direct action and deep-penetration raids. Ranger direct action operations involve seizing, destroying, or capturing enemy forces or facilities, performing special reconnaissance, and recovering designated personnel or equipment. Rangers conduct interdiction operations against operational and strategic targets, seize key facilities and conduct rescue and recovery operations. In support of deterrence, the regiment provides the President and Secretary of Defense with flexible deterrent or response options that demonstrate U.S. national resolve through the immediate commitment and rapid reaction of combat power.

CAPABILITIES

1-73. The 75th Ranger Regiment is a flexible and adaptable force that can operate from the platoon to the regimental level. Deployment options include direct from the home station to the target, to an intermediate staging base, or embarkation on a naval vessel. When accessing or assaulting the target location, Rangers can deploy using airborne or air assault as their primary means of insertion. These operations are typically launched from intermediate forward operating or staging bases, or from mission support sites.

1-74. As a rapidly deployable force, the 75th Ranger Regiment can launch a force within 18 hours of notification and deploy additional forces within 72 hours. The regiment is organized to conduct specific combat activities in a joint operations area, with a focus on infantry tactics and offensive and limited defensive operations. When deployed, the regimental headquarters works closely with mission partners to support the joint task force commander and, on occasion, operates in clandestine or low-visibility environments that require national-level oversight. Figure 1-8 depicts the organizational structure of the Ranger Regiment.

1-75. To achieve success, Ranger direct action operations rely on multiple insertion means, signature management, information advantages, and rapid assault on an enemy target, and to do so with surprise and shock. The regiment operates under a wide range of operational authorities, unified action partnerships, and conditions, and it extends operational reach for the joint force commander.

1-76. To support its operations, the regimental headquarters has three standing mission command packages: the Joint Special Operations Task Force Package, the Regimental Tactical Assault Command Post Package, and the Rear Tactical Operations Center Package. These packages provide the necessary structure and capability for the regiment to command and control its operations as well as to coordinate with supported commanders and ensure the accurate and timely exchange of intelligence. The Ranger Regiment can provide liaison teams with secure communications to supported commanders' headquarters, and intelligence liaison officers can be placed at theater joint information centers or supported units' analytical control elements to ensure the exchange of accurate and timely intelligence.

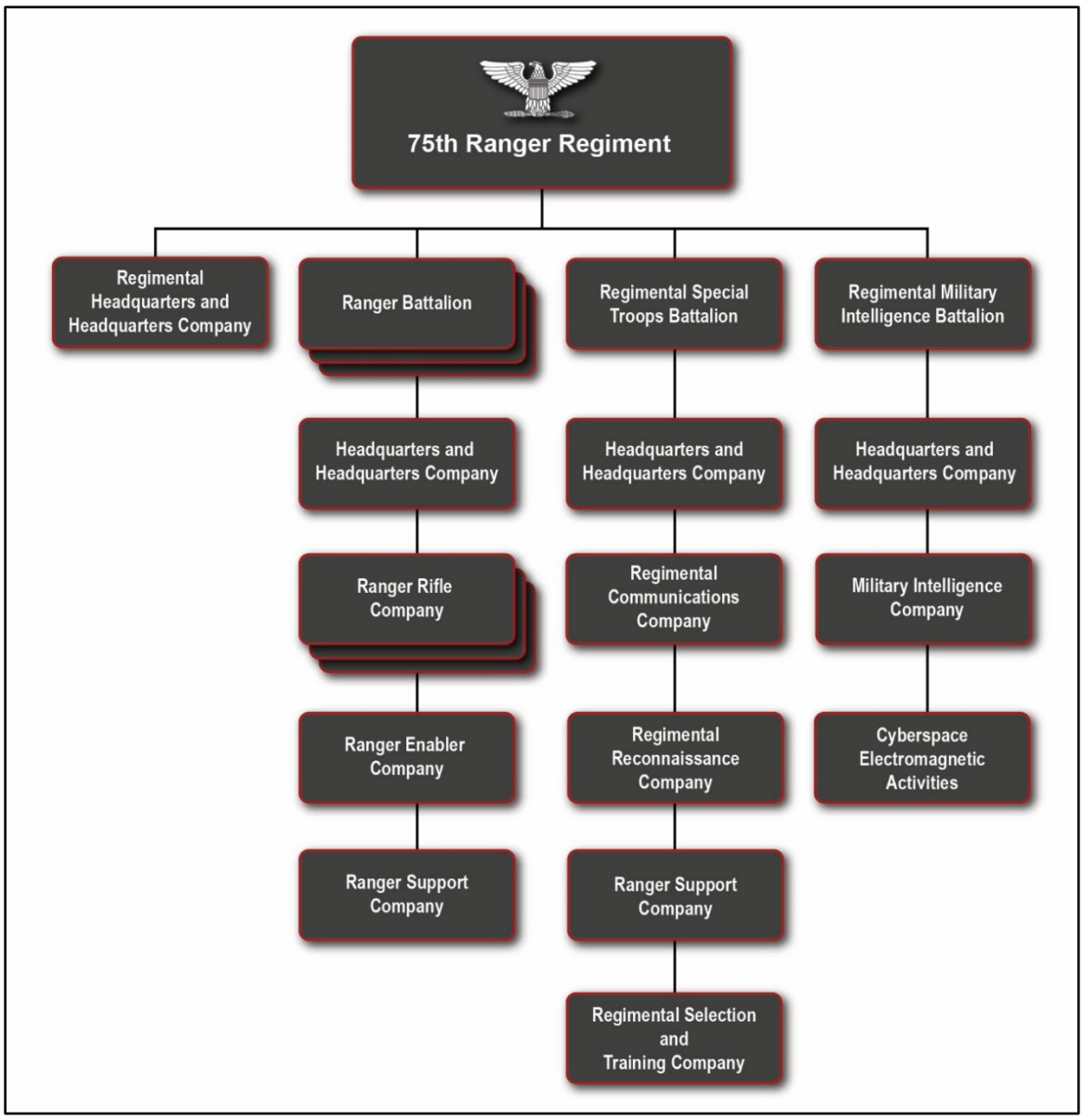


Figure 1-8. 75th Ranger Regiment organization

1-77. The 75th Ranger Regiment is a self-sustaining force for up to 96 hours; however, it requires external support for extended operations. Commanders should assign missions to the regiment that conventional infantry units cannot perform—Rangers specialize in complex offensive operations. The regiment has a robust reconnaissance capability, with specialized units that can conduct special reconnaissance, direct action, and surveillance missions. (For more information on Ranger Regiment operations, refer to ATP 3-75.) The vignette on page 21 demonstrates an operation in which multiple special operations units had roles in the joint task force mission accomplishment.

SPECIAL OPERATIONS DETACHMENT

1-78. The USASOC special operations detachments provide unique colonel (O-6) level special operations force packages capable of supporting subordinate unified command theater special operations commands. These Army National Guard special operations detachments (see figure 1-9, page 20) play a critical role in command and control, staff integration, and synchronization with other joint special operations forces. Table 1-1, page 20, outlines the organization of the ten special operations detachments within USASOC.

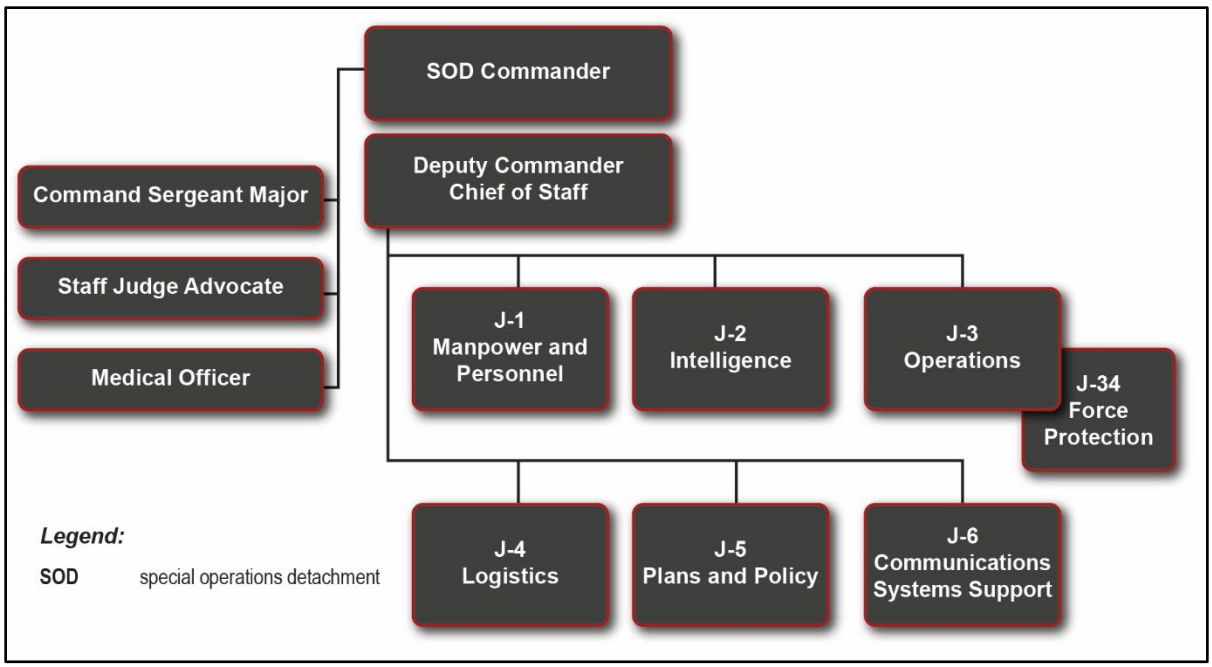


Figure 1-9. Special operations detachment organization

Table 1-1. Special operations detachments within United States Army Special Operations Command

Special Operations Detachment (SOD)	*State Army National Guard*	*Special Operations Command Alignment*
SOD-Africa	Texas	Special Operations Command Africa (SOCAFRICA)
SOD-Central	Florida	Special Operations Command Central (SOCCENT)
SOD-Europe	West Virginia	Special Operations Command Europe (SOCEUR)
SOD-Global	Rhode Island	United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC)
SOD-JSOC	North Carolina	Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC)
SOD-Korea	Colorado	Special Operations Command Korea (SOCKOR)
SOD-North	California	Special Operations Command North (SOCNORTH)
SOD-NATO	Maryland	Allied Special Operations Forces Command (SOFCOM)
SOD-Pacific	Washington	Special Operations Command Pacific (SOCPAC)
SOD-South	Mississippi	Special Operations Command South (SOCSOUTH)

Legend:

ARNG Army National Guard
JSOC Joint Special Operations Command
NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organization

1-79. The composition of special operations detachments is an important feature of their effectiveness. As shown in figure 1-9, a special operations detachment typically consists of a commander, command sergeant major, deputy commander, and staff directorates J-1 through J-6, as well as a staff judge advocate, and a medical staff. These detachments provide a range of capabilities across warfighting functions that include command and control, information, intelligence, cyber, fires, movement and maneuver, protection, and sustainment. In addition to the special operations detachments' functional capabilities, the command and staff organize and train to support and augment each theater special operations command or similarly affiliated special operations command.

CAPABILITIES

1-80. A special operations detachment has a dual mission encompassing both Federal and State responsibilities. At the federal level (10 USC), the detachment's primary mission is to conduct command and control, staff integration, and synchronization functions in support of joint special operations forces, either as a unit or as individual augmentees, as determined by the commander of USASOC.

1-81. Special operations detachments have a State-level mission (32 USC). In this capacity, the detachment augments the National Guard joint force headquarters-state to conduct joint operations and provide defense support to civil authorities as determined by the governor. The 32 USC mission of Army National Guard special operations detachments makes them uniquely suited to orchestrate and synchronize Department of Defense support to civil authorities as required in response to a crisis. This mission allows special operations detachments to seamlessly transition between Federal and State-level operations with the appropriate authorities and permissions to provide much needed support to both military and civilian authorities.

EMPLOYMENT CONSIDERATIONS

1-82. When employed as a unit, special operations detachments can supplement a joint special operations task force command and control architecture. More specifically, they offer a solution to supported headquarters with the necessary command and staff expertise to integrate SOF effects at the corps and theater level.

Operation JUST CAUSE

On 20 December 1989, the United States initiated Operation JUST CAUSE to remove and arrest Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega, neutralize his Panama Defense Forces (PDF), protect American lives and property, and safeguard the Panama Canal. More than 27,000 U.S. military personnel participated in the operation, including 3,600 special operations Soldiers from the newly activated USASOC.

At 0100 on 20 December (H-hour), three battalions of the 75th Ranger Regiment, numbering 1,300 Rangers, conducted airborne assaults on two key PDF targets. Flying directly from Hunter Army Airfield, Georgia, 1st Battalion dropped onto the Torrijos-Tocumen Airport, quickly seizing the civilian and military portions of the facility. Accompanying the Rangers were seven 96th Civil Affairs Battalion Soldiers whose Spanish language skills and negotiating training proved invaluable to identify PDF soldiers hiding among civilian airline passengers. 1st Psychological Operations Battalion Soldiers also jumped into Torrijos-Tocumen with the Rangers to provide tactical loudspeaker support to dissuade resistance.

Concurrently, 2d and 3d Ranger Battalions, also supported with small Psychological Operations and Civil Affairs elements, descended onto the PDF garrison at Rio Hato, enduring withering anti-aircraft fire. Despite determined resistance from two PDF companies, the Rangers secured the critical base and airstrip in less than two hours. The two Ranger-led airborne operations during JUST CAUSE were supported by 2,700 paratroopers from the 82nd Airborne Division.

(continued on next page)

Operation JUST CAUSE (continued)

Fifteen minutes prior to H-hour, twenty-four 7th Special Forces Group Soldiers had seized the Pacora River Bridge, which lay between the PDF garrison at Fort Cimmaron and the Torrijos-Tocumen Airfield. With fire support from a U.S. Air Force AC-130 gunship, the 7th Special Forces Group element ambushed PDF attempting to reinforce Torrijos-Tocumen Airfield. Other support to JUST CAUSE by Army special operations forces included hostage rescue, seizure and disabling of radio and TV stations, multimedia Psychological Operations messaging, and Civil Affairs intervention in an urgent civilian population crisis that threatened to create negative publicity in the world press.

In its first combat employment, the 528th Special Operations Support Battalion supported Army special operations forces aviation with a forward arming and refueling point at Howard Air Force Base, and later deployed an ad hoc logistics support element to address the most pressing combat service support needs of Army special operations forces. The 112th Signal Battalion deployed numerous special operations communications assemblage teams to support Special Operations Command–South headquarters and Special Forces detachments operating throughout Panama.

Although JUST CAUSE lasted from 20 December 1989 to 12 January 1990, Army special operations forces personnel remained in Panama supporting Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY stability operations.

Chapter 2
Army Special Operations Activities

Great power conflict does require changes—strategically, operationally, tactically, technologically—particularly direct conflict. But great power direct conflict shouldn't dominate the force…the main competition [is] where SOF lives.

Dr. Michael Vickers
Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence (2016-2021)

This chapter provides an overview of special operations activities that Army special operations forces plan and execute to support global, regional, and combatant command campaign plans. These activities are broken into assigned activities and directed activities. They help promote regional stability and support setting the theater for potential combat operations if stability and deterrence fail.

Special operations activities of USASOC are codified in Section 167, Title 10, United States Code (10 USC 167); DODD 5100.01; and USSOCOM Directive 10-1.

Special operations activities are conducted either as a U.S.-only force or in conjunction with unified action partners to maintain stability, deter violence, respond to crises, and set conditions to *win the first fight*. By describing the scope and scale of these activities, this chapter outlines how special operations activities shape the operational environment and support achievement of national security objectives.

OVERVIEW

2-1. USASOC mans, trains, equips, educates, organizes, sustains, and supports forces to conduct special operations across the range of military operations in support of Army and joint force commanders to achieve national and theater objectives. 10 USC 167 identifies the assigned special operations activities and the option for the President of the United States or the Secretary of Defense to approve directed special operations activities. The assigned special operations activities are—

- Civil affairs operations.
- Counterterrorism.
- Direct action.
- Foreign humanitarian assistance.
- Foreign internal defense.
- Military information support operations.
- Special reconnaissance.
- Unconventional warfare.

2-2. The directed special operations activities are—

- Countering weapons of mass destruction.
- Counter threat finance.
- Hostage rescue and recovery.
- Operational preparation of the environment.
- Security cooperation.
- Security force assistance.
- Special operations force personnel recovery.

2-3. In addition to the special operations activities, the USSOCOM commander designates USASOC as the lead special operations component for the following skills and additional activities as they pertain to special operations:

- Airborne operations (military free-fall and static line).
- Advanced special operations techniques.
- Counter threat finance.
- Identity intelligence activities.
- Joint special operations medical training.
- Military information support operations.
- Mountain operations.
- Multipurpose canine operations.
- Nonconventional assisted recovery and unconventional assisted recovery.
- Rotary-wing fires, infiltration, and exfiltration techniques.
- Robotics and unmanned systems.
- Sensitive site exploitation.
- Sniper operations.
- Special operations urban combat.

2-4. Many special operations activities overlap with irregular warfare activities (see figure 2-1). Army special operations forces can perform most special operations activities as part of joint campaigns that weave conventional and irregular warfare together over the course of the operations or activity. Irregular warfare activities are not unique to special operations forces. While irregular warfare activities may overlap with special operations activities, conventional forces conduct irregular warfare activities as part of a joint force or whole of government effort.

irregular warfare. The overt, clandestine, and covert employment of military and nonmilitary capabilities by state and non-state actors to achieve policy objectives other than military domination of an enemy, either as the primary approach or in concert with conventional warfare (ADP 3-0).

2-5. The main objective of irregular warfare varies with the political context. It can be employed below the threshold of armed conflict or in concert with conventional warfare. While it often focuses on establishing influence over a population, irregular warfare can also focus on eroding an enemy's ability and political will for aggressive action. Irregular warfare has historically been an economy of force effort to fix enemy forces in secondary theaters of conflict or to cause enemy leaders to commit significant forces away from the main battle area. The following characteristics can distinguish irregular warfare from conventional warfare:

- The intent is to erode a political authority's legitimacy and influence or to exhaust its resources—not to defeat its armed forces—while supporting the legitimacy, influence, and will of the local populace.
- The nonmilitary instruments of power are more prominent at the tactical level because the military instrument of power alone is insufficient to achieve desired objectives.

2-6. Army special operations forces are designed and organized for irregular warfare and can conduct irregular warfare independently or as part of conventional operations. Figure 2-1 highlights the overlap between irregular warfare activities and special operations activities. (Refer to ADP 3-0 for more information on irregular warfare.)

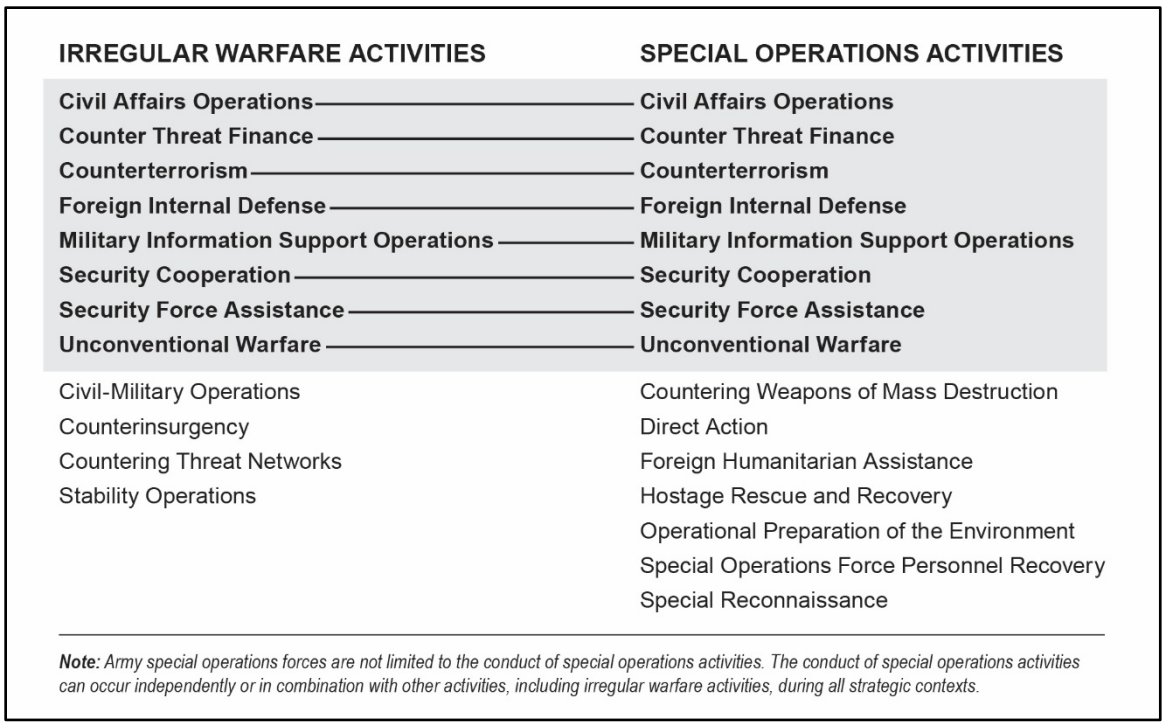


Figure 2-1. Irregular warfare and special operations activities

SPECIAL OPERATIONS ASSIGNED ACTIVITIES

2-7. The following assigned activities reflect the collective capabilities of all special operations forces rather than those of any one specific unit. Many of the assigned special operations activities include activities that SOF conduct unilaterally or with partners and conventional forces. Some SOF activities are continuous, while other activities occur in response to contingencies or during operations.

CIVIL AFFAIRS OPERATIONS

2-8. Civil affairs operations are executed through the four core competencies of civil knowledge integration, civil network development and engagement, civil-military integration, and military government operations. These competencies are detailed in the following paragraphs.

Civil Knowledge Integration

2-9. Civil Affairs forces, physically and virtually through partner networks, collect civil information through civil reconnaissance, civil engagement, and civil network development. S/G/J-9 staff officers and supporting Civil Affairs units at echelon, process and analyze this information to generate civil knowledge. S/G/J-9 then integrate this knowledge to enhance the commander's situational understanding, refine information requirements, and inform operational planning. For example, information regarding critical infrastructure and civilian movements that impact maneuver are critical to operational planning during conflict. (For more information on civil knowledge integration, see ATP 3-57.50.)

civil knowledge integration. The actions taken to analyze, evaluate, and organize collected civil information for operational relevance and informing the warfighting function. (FM 3-57)

Civil Network Development and Engagement

2-10. Civil networks provide commanders greater situational understanding and options to shape operational outcomes. Civil networks developed by Civil Affairs forces influence local populations and disrupt enemy influence in

civil network development and engagement. The activity by which the civil network capabilities and resources are engaged, evaluated, developed, and integrated into operations. (FM 3-57)

each strategic context. During crisis, civil networks can set conditions for follow-on forces and provide early warning of irregular threats operating within the population. During conflict, civil networks can preserve military sustainment, medical, and protection assets through redundant and dispersed civilian capabilities across the area of operations. Civil Affairs forces work with civil networks to restore civil control and support the return to competition. (For more information on civil network development and engagement refer to ATP 3-57.30.)

Civil-Military Integration

2-11. Civil-military integration extends the operational reach of the commander by enabling coordination with civilian partners to achieve operational effects. Civil Affairs forces can establish the core of a civil-military operations center or another civil-military integration mechanism to coordinate activities and share information during competition, crises, armed conflict, and post-conflict transitions. These mechanisms facilitate coordination with nonmilitary partners including partner populations and institutions.

civil-military integration. The actions taken to establish, maintain, influence, or leverage relations between military forces and indigenous populations and institutions to synchronize, coordinate, and enable interorganizational cooperation and to achieve unified action. (FM 3-57)

Military Government Operations

2-12. Military government operations consolidate gains for the supported commander by establishing interim governance in areas where civilian capacity is limited, thereby denying opportunities for enemy exploitation. During competition, Civil Affairs forces execute Department of State-led foreign assistance activities to improve partner force interoperability and partner nation resilience against crises. During crises, Civil Affairs forces provide support to humanitarian assistance and advise the partner government in governance functions when directed. During armed conflict, Civil Affairs forces advise the supported commander in executing military government operations to restore order when civilian government is absent from seized territory and facilitate rapid transition to appropriate civilian authorities.

military government operations. Operations executed by Civil Affairs to provide expertise in the civil sector functions in order to establish transitional military authority or conduct support to civil administration. (FM 1-02.1)

2-13. Civil affairs operations conducted in support of special operations commanders includes the authority to execute USSOCOM's Civil-Military Engagement Program of Record. Civil-military engagement supports the combatant command's theater objectives and campaigns through persistent engagement, advice, and support to military forces, institutions, and local populations to increase resilience to malign influence or crisis. Civil Affairs forces employed by the theater special operations commands execute civil-military engagement to support irregular warfare, operational preparation of the environment, and other related activities. Civil-military engagement activities are coordinated with U.S. Government departments and agencies, U.S. embassy country teams, local government institutions, civil society, and private organizations. (Refer to FM 3-57 for more information about the integration of Civil Affairs capabilities in support of operations and the conduct of civil affairs operations in support of civil-military operations.)

COUNTERTERRORISM

2-14. Special operations units support the coordinated counterterrorism efforts of U.S. government agencies, other U.S. government departments, combatant commanders, and partner nations.

counterterrorism. Activities and operations taken to neutralize terrorists and their organizations and networks to render them incapable of using violence to instill fear and coerce governments or societies to achieve their goals. (JP 3-26)

2-15. Partner-nation law, legal and political restrictions of the Department of Justice and Department of State, lead agency authority, and Department of Defense directives limit Army involvement in counterterrorism. Army special operations forces conduct the following activities:

- Civil affairs operations.
- Direct action.
- Foreign internal defense.

- Hostage rescue and recovery.
- Intelligence operations.
- Military information support operations.
- Security force assistance.
- Sensitive material recovery.
- Sensitive site exploitation.

DIRECT ACTION

2-16. Direct action operations are high-risk, low-visibility missions requiring meticulous planning, advanced tactical training, and seamless execution to ensure success. Normally limited in scope and duration, direct action operations often incorporate an immediate withdrawal from the planned objective area. These critically significant operations can provide specific, well-defined, and time-sensitive results.

direct action. Short-duration strikes and other small-scale offensive actions conducted as a special operation to seize, destroy, capture, exploit, recover, or damage designated targets. (JP 3-05)

2-17. Direct action differs from conventional offensive actions, such as raids, in the level of physical and political risk, operational techniques, and the degree of discriminate and precise use of force to achieve specific objectives. In the conduct of these operations, Special Forces and Ranger units—

- Employ infantry tactics and close quarters battle techniques.
- Emplace mines and other munitions.
- Attack by fire from air, ground, or maritime platforms.
- Provide terminal guidance for precision-guided munitions.
- Conduct sabotage.
- Conduct anti-ship operations.

2-18. Direct action may occur independently or as part of larger conventional operations. While normally considered close combat-type operations, direct action operations include sniping and other standoff attacks by fire delivered or directed by Special Forces or Ranger units. Standoff attacks are the preferred route when the target can be damaged or destroyed without risking close combat or the escalation to force-on-force direct fire engagements. Special Forces and Ranger units employ close combat tactics and techniques when the mission dictates the following:

- Precise or discriminate use of force.
- Recovery or capture of personnel or materiel.
- Employment of raid, ambush, or direct assault tactics (including close quarters battle).
- Emplacement of mines and other munitions.
- Independent sabotage.
- Anti-ship operations.

FOREIGN HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

2-19. Foreign humanitarian assistance provided by U.S. forces is limited in scope and duration. The foreign humanitarian assistance is designed to supplement or complement the efforts of the host nation civil authorities or agencies that may have the primary responsibility for providing the assistance.

foreign humanitarian assistance. Department of Defense activities conducted outside the United States and its territories to directly relieve or reduce human suffering, disease, hunger, or privation. (JP 3-29)

2-20. To support foreign humanitarian assistance efforts, Civil Affairs units can establish a civil-military operations center to coordinate partner institutions. The civil-military operations center can gather information from these partners to inform the supported commander about crisis area threats, vulnerabilities, and capabilities. The civil-military operations center uses this information to prioritize efforts to restore basic services (such as healthcare, public utilities, emergency services, public safety, and rule of law) in the areas most vulnerable to adversary exploitation.

2-21. Special Forces units and the 528th Sustainment Brigade can also provide temporary support to the deployment of larger conventional force humanitarian assistance efforts and enable the arrival of international

organizations by conducting, among other activities, air traffic and airspace control for the landing zones and storage facilities. Their actions mitigate breakdowns in civil control and deny adversaries opportunities to sow chaos or influence populations until the host nation can resume provision of essential services.

FOREIGN INTERNAL DEFENSE

2-22. Foreign internal defense can include a broad range of activities. Its purpose is to assist a partner government to address internal threats and their underlying causes. Commensurate with U.S. policy goals, the focus of all U.S. foreign internal defense efforts is to support the host nation program of internal defense and development.

foreign internal defense. Participation by civilian agencies and military forces of a government or international organizations in any of the programs and activities undertaken by a host nation government to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, insurgency, terrorism, and other threats to its security. (JP 3-22)

2-23. Foreign internal defense operations promote and protect U.S. national interests by influencing the political, military, and information operational variables. It does so through a series of activities to improve the host-nation's capabilities to address crisis or internal threats.

2-24. Army special operations forces assess, train, advise, and assist host-nation security forces and institutions to counter internal threats to stability and security. The goal is to enable host-nation forces to maintain the internal stability, counter subversion, change conditions, and eliminate sources of violence in their country. (ATP 3-05.2 provides details on how Army forces enable the forces of a host nation to maintain internal stability; to counter subversion, lawlessness, insurgency, terrorism, and other threats to security and stability in their country; and to address the causes of instability to avert conditions characteristic of a failing state.)

Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines

The Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines (JSOTF-P) was established in 2002 as part of the broader U.S. Global War on Terror. Its mission was to advise and assist the Armed Forces of the Philippines in combating Al-Qaeda-linked terrorist groups, primarily Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyah.

The task force's special operations activities, executed with and through the Armed Forces of the Philippines, included civil affairs operations, direct action, foreign humanitarian assistance, hostage rescue, military information support operations, security force assistance, and special reconnaissance as part of a holistic approach to foreign internal defense, counterinsurgency, and counterterrorism. Employing 10 of the 12 special operations activities, Special Forces, Civil Affairs, and Psychological Operations units lived and worked with their partners, from the cities to the jungles of the Philippines, building generational relationships and making improvements to local governance and stability.

The actions of JSOTF-P contributed to a lasting peace across the Philippine archipelago that was reinforced in 2014 when the Government of the Philippines signed the Comprehensive Agreement on Bangsamoro. This agreement officially recognized and included resistance group members in the government of Mindanao, defusing the desire to destabilize, and undermining support to terrorism. The persistent presence of Army special operations forces set the theater by building relationships, resilience, and partner capabilities for over a decade.

(continued on next page)

Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines (continued)

Although the task force officially deactivated in 2015, the relationships persist, providing the United States a capable partner and a forward presence in Southeast Asia. This partnership and presence are deterrents to conflict, and valuable contributions to the Indo-Pacific Command campaign plan. JSOTF-P no longer exists, but Army special operations forces continue to support the Philippines with exercises like Balikatan, and operationally to destabilize forces like Islamic State-Philippines (ISIS-P).

MILITARY INFORMATION SUPPORT OPERATIONS

2-25. ***Military information support operations*** **are operations to influence the behavior of targeted foreign audiences in support of a commander's objectives.** These operations are a primary influence activity to achieve information advantages. These operations support diverse military objectives including, gaining support for U.S. operations, denying malign influence, promoting stability and security, and preserving human life during armed conflict or natural disasters. It is a requirement to report all activities conducted under military information support operations authorities to the Secretary of Defense and Congress. (Refer to DODI O-3607.02, CJCSI 3110.05G, and JP 3-53 for the requirements to obtain authority and permission to execute military information support operations.)

2-26. Psychological Operations units are the lead element for military information support operations. Individual Psychological Operations Soldiers assigned to the staffs of other Army and joint force commanders create conditions for commanders to employ Psychological Operations units. They provide subject-matter expertise for the planning and command and control of operations conducted by Psychological Operations units and other Army units conducting influence activities. Psychological Operations units conduct military information support operations and Department of Defense deception activities as Army influence activities.

SPECIAL RECONNAISSANCE

2-27. Special reconnaissance is a type of military operation that involves the collection of strategic or operational information to inform planning, decision making, and operations. These actions provide an additional capability for commanders and supplement conventional reconnaissance and surveillance actions. Special reconnaissance may include—

- Information on activities of an actual or potential enemy or data on the meteorological, hydrographic, or geographic characteristics of a particular area.
- Assessment of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear or environmental hazards in the extended deep or denied area.
- Target acquisition, area assessment, and post-strike reconnaissance.

special reconnaissance. Reconnaissance and surveillance actions conducted as a special operation in hostile, denied, or diplomatically and/or politically sensitive environments to collect or verify information of strategic or operational significance, employing military capabilities not normally found in conventional forces. (JP 3-05)

2-28. Special reconnaissance provides unique and critical information to support strategic and operational decision-making by gathering specific, time-sensitive, and high-value intelligence that is not accessible through conventional human or machine collection systems. Essential intelligence support to special reconnaissance includes national intelligence-collection assets and systems, and human intelligence, cyberspace and space capabilities. Special reconnaissance involves information gathering, site exploitation, civil network development, and target audience analysis.

UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE

> **unconventional warfare.** Activities conducted to enable a resistance movement or insurgency to coerce, disrupt, or overthrow a government or occupying power by operating through or with an underground, auxiliary, and guerrilla force in a denied area. (JP 3-05)

2-29. The United States conducts two distinct types of unconventional warfare. One type consists of unconventional warfare as a supporting line of operation within a larger military campaign. For example, during large-scale combat operations, support to resistances in World War II was used to create security dilemmas in enemy rear areas and erode enemy power and will to fight. The second type of unconventional warfare is employed as the strategic main effort—either as an initiative or as a response to aggression. For example, the support of the Northern Alliance against Taliban-controlled Afghan government forces following the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks were a strategic main effort that later transitioned to major combat operations.

Note. Support to resistance is a U.S. Government policy option to support foreign resistance actors that offers an alternative to a direct U.S. military intervention or formal political engagement in a conflict. Unconventional warfare is one type of support to resistance. All support to resistance is not a type of unconventional warfare. (For more information on support to resistance see ATP 3-18.1.)

2-30. With proper integration and synchronization, unconventional warfare can complement other U.S. Government operations by giving the United States and partners the opportunity to shape foreign environments in a way that may preclude further military action. If additional military action is required, the United States and its partners can seize the initiative through preemptive (covert or clandestine), small-scale offensive actions to deescalate an overt commitment of conventional forces.

2-31. The objective of unconventional warfare is to coerce, disrupt, or overthrow the state or occupying power, causing a change in political control or perceived regime legitimacy. Therefore, unconventional warfare has the potential to alter the balance of power between sovereign states. Such high stakes military operations carry significant political risk in the international and domestic political landscape and require sensitive execution and oversight. The need to operate with a mix of clandestine and covert ends, ways, and means places a premium on credible intelligence in the unconventional warfare operations area. In unconventional warfare, as in all conflict scenarios that risk escalation to conventional conflict, U.S. military forces must closely coordinate their activities with mission partners to enable shared understanding and safeguard sensitive operations.

2-32. U.S.-sponsored unconventional warfare has seven identified phases. These phases of unconventional warfare are the classic conceptual template that planners use to aid understanding of an unconventional warfare campaign effort. The seven phases are—

- Preparation.
- Initial contact.
- Infiltration.
- Organization.
- Buildup.
- Employment.
- Transition.

2-33. These phases may occur sequentially or simultaneously. In other situations, some phases may be omitted given the maturity of later phases or other practical reasons. One example of this is when members of an irregular force or resistance element move to another country to be trained, organized, and equipped before being reinserted or infiltrated back into the unconventional warfare scheme of maneuver, whether accompanied by SOF or not. In that case, the typical order of the phases would change. (For additional information regarding unconventional warfare refer to ATP 3-05.1 and ATP 3-18.1.)

SPECIAL OPERATIONS DIRECTED ACTIVITIES

2-34. The President and Secretary of Defense direct special operations activities to provide combatant commanders with a crisis and emergency option or capability to enhance global and theater contingencies and responses. The following special operations directed activities fill operational gaps with conventional force capabilities or expand special operations forces capabilities to counter evolving adversary methods.

COUNTERING WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

2-35. USSOCOM is the lead combatant command and coordinating authority for all Department of Defense countering weapons of mass destruction planning efforts and works in coordination with other combatant commands and Services, and other appropriate U.S. Government departments and agencies as directed. (See DODD 2060.02.) This role is separate and distinct from those combatant command and special operations duties and responsibilities defined in 10 USC 164 and 10 USC 167.

countering weapons of mass destruction. Efforts against actors of concern to curtail the conceptualization, development, possession, proliferation, use, and effects of weapons of mass destruction, related expertise, materials, technologies, and means of delivery. (JP 3-40)

counterproliferation. Those actions taken to reduce the risks posed by extant weapons of mass destruction to the United States, allies, and partners. (JP 3-40)

2-36. The Department of Defense establishes a counterproliferation policy with several major objectives that include—

- Preventing the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction and delivery systems.
- Rolling back proliferation where it has occurred.
- Deterring the use of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.
- Adapting U.S. military forces and planning to operate against the threats posed by weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

2-37. Weapons of mass destruction defeat refers to operations aimed at neutralizing or destroying existing weapons of mass destruction and means of delivery to deny possession and prevent transfer or employment. The priority objectives of these efforts are to—

- Reduce incentives to pursue, possess, and employ weapons of mass destruction.
- Increase barriers to their acquisition, proliferation, and use.
- Manage risks emanating from hostile, fragile, or failed states and safe havens.
- Deny the effects of current and emerging threats through layered, integrated defenses.

2-38. To achieve these objectives, countering weapons of mass destruction includes a range of activities. By leveraging these activities, the Department of Defense can effectively counter the threats posed by weapons of mass destruction and support national security objectives. Countering weapons of mass destruction range of activities include—

- Providing expertise, material, and teams to supported combatant commands to locate, identify, tag, and track weapons of mass destruction, as required.
- Conducting direct action operations in limited access areas, as required.
- Building partnership capacity for conducting counterproliferation activities.
- Conducting special reconnaissance.
- Conducting counterterrorism operations.

The Department of Defense Strategy for Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction provides further guidance on activities associated with countering weapons of mass destruction. Two key activities outlined in this strategy are weapons of mass destruction pathway defeat and weapons of mass destruction defeat. Weapons of mass destruction pathway defeat is an operational approach that involves deliberate actions against actors of concern and their networks to dissuade, destroy, or otherwise complicate the conceptualization, development, possession, and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, related expertise, materials, technologies, and means of delivery.

- Employing military information support operations in conjunction with national and regional level influence efforts to dissuade adversary reliance or use of weapons of mass destruction.
- Conducting counter threat network and finance activities.
- Providing other specialized means or methods for countering weapons of mass destruction.

Note. Specific counterproliferation activities are classified. Further discussion of counter-proliferation is beyond the scope of this publication.

COUNTER THREAT FINANCE

counter threat finance. Activities conducted to deny, disrupt, destroy, or defeat the generation, storage, movement, and use of assets to fund activities that support a threat's ability to impact United States interests. (JP 3-25)

2-39. Counter threat finance provides Army special operations forces' leaders with an offensive tool (lethal or non-lethal) to support operations and help commanders achieve their objectives. Counter threat finance is not a distinct type of military operation. It is a military activity against a specific capability of an adversary. The goal is to identify, target, and disrupt the financial infrastructure that adversaries use to finance their activities. U.S. Army counter threat finance activities are a critical component of broader efforts to counter terrorism, transnational organized crime, and other security threats by understanding and targeting their financial resources and networks.

HOSTAGE RESCUE AND RECOVERY

hostage rescue. A personnel recovery method used to recover isolated personnel who are specifically designated as hostages. (JP 3-50)

2-40. Hostage rescue operations are sensitive crisis-response operations typically conducted against terrorist threats or in response to hostage incidents. Offensive operations in support of hostage rescue and recovery include the overseas recapture of U.S. persons, property, facilities, installations, and sensitive materiel. (See JP 3-05.)

2-41. Hostage rescue missions may involve locating, recovering, and restoring to friendly custody, selected persons, or materiel that are isolated and threatened in sensitive, denied, or contested areas. Hostage rescue operations use dedicated ground combat elements, unconventional techniques, precise intelligence, and partner assistance.

2-42. Army special operations forces require the ability to penetrate enemy antiaccess and area denial systems to conduct hostage rescue by air, ground, or sea infiltration methods. They leverage the full potential of partner capabilities to effectively execute hostage rescue operations.

Note. Hostage rescue is a type of personnel recovery activity; only select units conduct hostage rescue operations.

OPERATIONAL PREPARATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

operational preparation of the environment. The conduct of activities in likely or potential operational areas to set conditions for mission execution. (JP 3-05)

2-43. Operational preparation of the environment are the actions of SOF to conduct activities in likely or potential operational areas to set conditions for mission execution. It sets the conditions during competition for success by cultivating relationships, establishing networks of partners, and laying the groundwork that facilitates the conduct and sustainment of future operations. Combatant commander's direct operational preparation of the environment to develop knowledge of the operational environment; to establish human, physical, or virtual infrastructure; for operational planning; and for target and operations development. Operational preparation of the environment supports combatant commanders campaign plans, theater war plans, and operation orders to alter or shape the operational environment and create conditions conducive to future mission success.

SECURITY COOPERATION

2-44. Security cooperations are all department of defense interactions with foreign security establishments to build relationships that promote U.S. security interests, develop partner capabilities for self-defense and multinational operations. Security cooperations provide U.S. forces with peacetime and contingency collaboration with partners and support U.S. foreign policy and achieving national security objectives.

2-45. Security cooperations efforts around the world are how the U.S. demonstrates commitment to partner nations and builds relationships to counter adversaries and major global powers. It directly supports campaign plans, putting the U.S. national strategy into action. Army special operations forces are heavily involved in security cooperation. This includes providing training opportunities to include sending foreign security force personnel to U.S. special operations forces schools, conducting joint exercises with partner nations, sharing expertise, and facilitating the sale of specialized equipment. Special operations forces work to strengthen the skills, abilities, and overall capacity of partner nations' security forces, helping them work alongside U.S. forces and independently address their own security concerns.

SECURITY FORCE ASSISTANCE

2-46. Security force assistance refers to all efforts to assess, assist, generate, employ, and sustain an operational capability in the target host nation or designated regional security force. These operations are a Department of Defense contribution to an integrated application of diplomatic, informational, military, and economic instruments of national power.

security force assistance. The Department of Defense activities that support the development of the capability and capacity of foreign security forces and their supporting institutions. (JP 3-20)

2-47. Security force assistance helps the joint force to produce competent, capable, sustainable, committed, and confident foreign security forces to support the security of the mission partner nation and regional stability. Foreign security forces can include the following:

- Military.
- Police.
- Border police, coast guard, and customs officials.
- Paramilitary forces.
- Forces specific to certain nations, states, tribes, or ethnic groups.
- Prison, correctional, and penal services.
- Infrastructure protection forces.
- Governmental ministries and departments responsible for foreign security forces.

2-48. Security force assistance and foreign internal defense overlap without being subsets of each other. Foreign internal defense may include security force assistance to build host-nation capacity to anticipate, preclude, and counter existing or potential threats, particularly when the host nation has not attained self-sufficiency and is facing military threats exceeding its capabilities.

2-49. When organizing, planning, and executing security force assistance during foreign internal defense, it is important to emphasize the organization and maintenance of the internal defense and development program of the host nation. This helps the host nation address the root causes of instability in a preventive manner, rather than reactive.

2-50. Security force assistance and foreign internal defense focus on developing the internal capacity and capability of partner nations. Security force assistance prepares foreign security forces to defend against external threats as part of a multinational force. Foreign internal defense and security force assistance are similar at the tactical level where advisory skills apply to both activities. When conducting security force assistance, units must first assess the capabilities and needs of the foreign security forces with which they will be working. This initial assessment informs the development of a collaborative and ongoing evaluation and development process, enabling continuous assessment and refinement of assistance efforts to ensure that the operational capacity of the foreign security forces improves. Security force assistance encompasses a range of activities, including organizing, training, equipping, rebuilding, and advising various components of the security forces with the goal of enhancing their overall effectiveness, interoperability, and sustainability. (Refer to FM 3-22 for a more detailed discussion of support to security cooperation.)

SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES PERSONNEL RECOVERY

2-51. The conduct of many special operations activities requires a personnel recovery capability to plan, prepare, and conduct recovery of personnel or sensitive equipment. Special operations forces train and prepare personnel recovery forces to support their respective forces. All Army special operations forces personnel are trained in personnel recovery and survival, escape, and evasion methods. Additionally, select Army special operations forces are trained, and equip for search and rescue, and unconventional assisted recovery. All special operations activities, actions, and missions have personnel recovery plans associated with concepts of operations and contingencies, often with forces on standby.

Chapter 3

Special Operations Forces Command and Control Structure

In all classes of conflict, it is highly desirable to design special operations so that they turn enemy strength into weakness.

Colin S. Gray

This chapter begins with an overview of the necessary command and control structure for the effective coordination and employment of Army special operations. To achieve success, special operations units require a command and control system that is adaptable, resilient, and able to facilitate communication and coordination between units, as well as with other military and civilian government agencies. Army special operations forces can be successfully task organized under Army or joint headquarters. This section explores the command and control structures that enable special operations.

The chapter concludes with an examination of the rules of allocation that guide how Army special operations forces are assigned in support of Army and joint commanders.

SECTION I – COMMAND AND CONTROL

3-1. Effective command and control is critical to the success of military operations as it enables commanders to make informed decisions, allocate resources, and direct actions in a timely and coordinated manner.

command and control. The exercise of authority and direction by a properly designated commander over assigned and attached forces in the accomplishment of the mission. (JP 1, Volume 2)

UNITED STATES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

3-2. USSOCOM, depicted in figure 3-1, page 36, supports the joint force and the nation across the range of military operations. On a global level, USSOCOM forces cultivate relationships with joint, interagency, and international allies and partners. These forces shape the environment to reduce risk, prevent crises, and set conditions for success in competition, crisis, and conflict.

THEATER SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

3-3. Theater special operations commanders have a dual responsibility to exercise operational control of assigned or attached SOF and to provide the combatant commander with principal special operations advice. The theater special operations command is the subordinate unified special operation command within the combatant command. As the primary theater special operations organization, it can perform broad, continuous special operations missions and other activities.

theater special operations command. A subordinate unified command established by Commander, United States Special Operations Command, under the operational control of a designated combatant commander to command and control, plan, coordinate, conduct, and support joint special operations. (JP 3-05)

3-4. The commander of the theater special operations command is a joint force commander with the authority to plan and conduct joint special operations as directed by the combatant commander. The theater special operations command operates at the operational and tactical levels to achieve objectives. Regionally apportioned forces support the combatant commander theater campaign plans and the theater security cooperation plan.



Figure 3-1. United States Special Operations Command components

3-5. The theater special operations command facilitates the development and continuity of strong regional partnerships and ensures the operational access required for mission success. The theater special operations command facilitates integration, interoperability, and interdependence with partners and conventional forces. It also establishes SOF sustainment requirements to maintain a persistent presence.

3-6. At the direction of a combatant command, the theater special operations command may be assigned a geographic area known as the joint special operations area. A joint special operations area may be established within or adjacent to a joint force land component area of operations.

joint special operations area. An area of land, sea, and airspace assigned by a joint force commander to the commander of a joint special operations force to conduct special operations activities. (JP 3-0)

3-7. During competition, theater special operations commands exercise operational control of apportioned SOF to support the combatant command theater and country-level security cooperation programs and activities, as well as other special operations activities until the establishment of a special operations joint task force or a joint special operations task force—each explained in greater detail below. Theater special operations commands coordinate with the combatant commands' plans directorate in all campaigns and operations to ensure special operations integration and Service component support for the list of special operations activities. (See chapter 2 of this manual.)

Note. SOF are under operational control of the theater special operations command, but the chief of mission or other designated U.S. Government lead is the ultimate approval authority for activities in their assigned country or locations in times other than armed conflict.

3-8. In conflict, all organizations must coordinate with the joint SOF commander responsible for the joint special operations area before conducting any actions within that area to prevent fratricide or disruption of ongoing operations. In addition to U.S. SOF, other U.S. or partner military and partner organizations may have elements operating in the joint special operations area. Liaison elements are key to the effectiveness of the established command and support relationships and proper degree of coordination and cooperation.

JOINT TASK FORCE

3-9. Combatant commanders may establish joint task forces for a geographic area or on a functional basis. Combatant commanders can establish joint task forces based on an operational requirement spanning the area of responsibility boundaries or multiple noncontiguous geographic areas.

joint task force. A joint force that is constituted and so designated by the Secretary of Defense, a combatant commander, a subunified commander, or an existing joint task force commander to accomplish a specific mission. (JP 1, Volume 1)

3-10. When a combatant command establishes and employs subordinate joint task forces, the combatant commander or joint force commander may establish and employ a special operations joint task force, a joint force special operations component command, or a theater special operations command–forward to control SOF assets and integrate special operations requirements. The combatant commander or joint force commander establishes command and support relationships between SOF commanders and other joint task force commanders.

JOINT FORCE SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMPONENT COMMANDER

3-11. The joint force special operations component commander is the senior SOF representative in the operation or within the theater. The joint force special operations component commander is responsible for recommending the proper employment of assigned and attached SOF.

SPECIAL OPERATIONS JOINT TASK FORCE

3-12. A combatant commander may request the employment of a special operations joint task force from USSOCOM to support unified action for special operations conducted in support of a campaign or major operation. The special operations joint task force may have U.S. and partner nation conventional force units assigned or attached to support or enable execution of specific missions.

special operations joint task force. An organization from two or more Military Departments organized to provide command and control of joint special operations forces commanded by a flag or general officer. (JP 3-05)

3-13. An O-7 or O-8 general officer leads a special operations joint task force. This flag officer is tasked to meet all special operations requirements in major operations or campaigns. This task force provides integrated, fully capable, and enabled joint SOF to combatant commanders based on the operational and tactical requirements. This enhances the integration, interoperability, and interdependence between the conventional force and SOF by—

- Employing SOF and conventional force command and control, communications, and intelligence systems to share and integrate information across the joint force.
- Providing joint force commanders greater situational awareness and understanding as a mechanism to preempt enemy plans and actions.
- Enabling operations in the close (main battle area) while simultaneously conducting special operations in the corps' deep and extended deep areas.
- Planning and executing lethal and nonlethal actions to create windows of opportunity and relative advantages that support a joint force commander's effort to shape the close and deep fights.
- Achieving complementary effects that support brigade combat team, division, and corps freedom of action and maneuver in the close areas.
- Creating dilemmas and setting conditions to enable joint forcible entry operations.

3-14. The special operations joint task force enables the joint task force with intelligence and targeting capabilities to—

- Determine enemy disposition and intent according to planning horizons (J-33, J-35, and J-5), with emphasis on the future to develop desired battlefield effects.
- Set conditions for its subordinate elements to conduct the tactical fight by providing protection, situational awareness, and required resources.
- Allocate forces to the main effort and supporting commands based on joint task force priorities.
- Consolidate gains and manage operational level transitions between phases.
- Exercise agility and adjust force alignments to reflect changes in the joint task force priorities.
- Detect and defeat enemy command and control, computing, communications, cyber, intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and targeting capabilities (C5ISRT).

3-15. During escalation from crisis to conflict—as well as during the early stages of armed conflict—the theater special operations command will likely serve as a command and control bridge as the joint force special operations component command, preceding the establishment of a special operations joint task force headquarters. With its primary role to provide operational-level command and control, the SOF task force conducts planning nested with the joint task force commander's operations. This planning provides operational and tactical options while being inclusive of other components and mission partners. The planning also provides the plans and coordination required to access critical resources, such as the air tasking order and target deconfliction, to ensure processes are sufficiently interoperable to ensure mission success.

3-16. A special operations joint task force is composed of four elements:

- **Headquarters.** The headquarters provides command and control of all forces in the task force. It may augment an existing capability or provide the theater capability, as required. Service and partner nation representatives should be integrated into the special operations joint task force headquarters. The command may designate key positions of responsibility to be filled from an element with significant representation in the task force.
- **SOF units.** SOF units may include air, ground, maritime, and specially designated SOF capabilities.

- **Support forces.** The SOF organic support capabilities may include aviation, fires, intelligence, logistics, communications, cyber, space, and other related capabilities.
- **Service-provided capabilities.** Because SOF are limited in size and capability, their Service-provided capabilities are augmented from the conventional force.

3-17. The adaptability of the special operations joint task force allows for it to scale relative to the multinational force and combatant command requirement. Situation dependent, the special operations task force configuration varies from component to battalion level to ensure proper mission command and operational outcomes. In support of those task forces are liaison teams to coordinate effects that support joint force commander priority objectives at the component command level. A joint special operations task force or Special Forces group headquarters generally coordinates SOF effects at the corps level. Figure 3-2, page 40, shows special operations forces command and control and liaison options. (The following vignette describes an example of a joint special operations task force.)

Security Assistance Group–Ukraine (SAG-U)

After the Russian invasion of Crimea in 2014, Army special operations forces built capability and capacity for the Armed Forces of Ukraine and the Ukrainian special operations forces. Between 2014 and 2022, Army special operations forces assisted Ukraine with the development of new national resistance laws, strategic messaging, foreign internal defense, and helped evolve the Armed Forces of Ukraine and the Ukrainian special operations forces from a legacy Soviet model to a more North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-compliant model. Throughout these seven years, Army special operations forces developed generational relationships and trust that would prove critical to the coalition approach to support Ukraine during a large-scale combat operation after the February 2022 Russian invasion.

During the large-scale combat operation, the ability of Army special operations forces to communicate and collaborate with Ukrainian partners provided the SAG-U with a critical and timely ability to achieve situational awareness of the battlefield in a denied (Russian-controlled) area. Additionally, Army special operations forces—through Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-10 and 10th Special Forces Group—provided support to Ukrainians across all warfighting functions and domains. Through the task force's remote advise and assist cell, SAG-U had an open, two-way, communication capability with the Armed Forces of Ukraine and the Ukrainian special operations forces units along the forward line of troops. This facilitated and enhanced SAG-U's ability to coordinate a coalition approach to supporting Ukrainian partners engaged in large-scale combat operations against Russian Armed Forces.

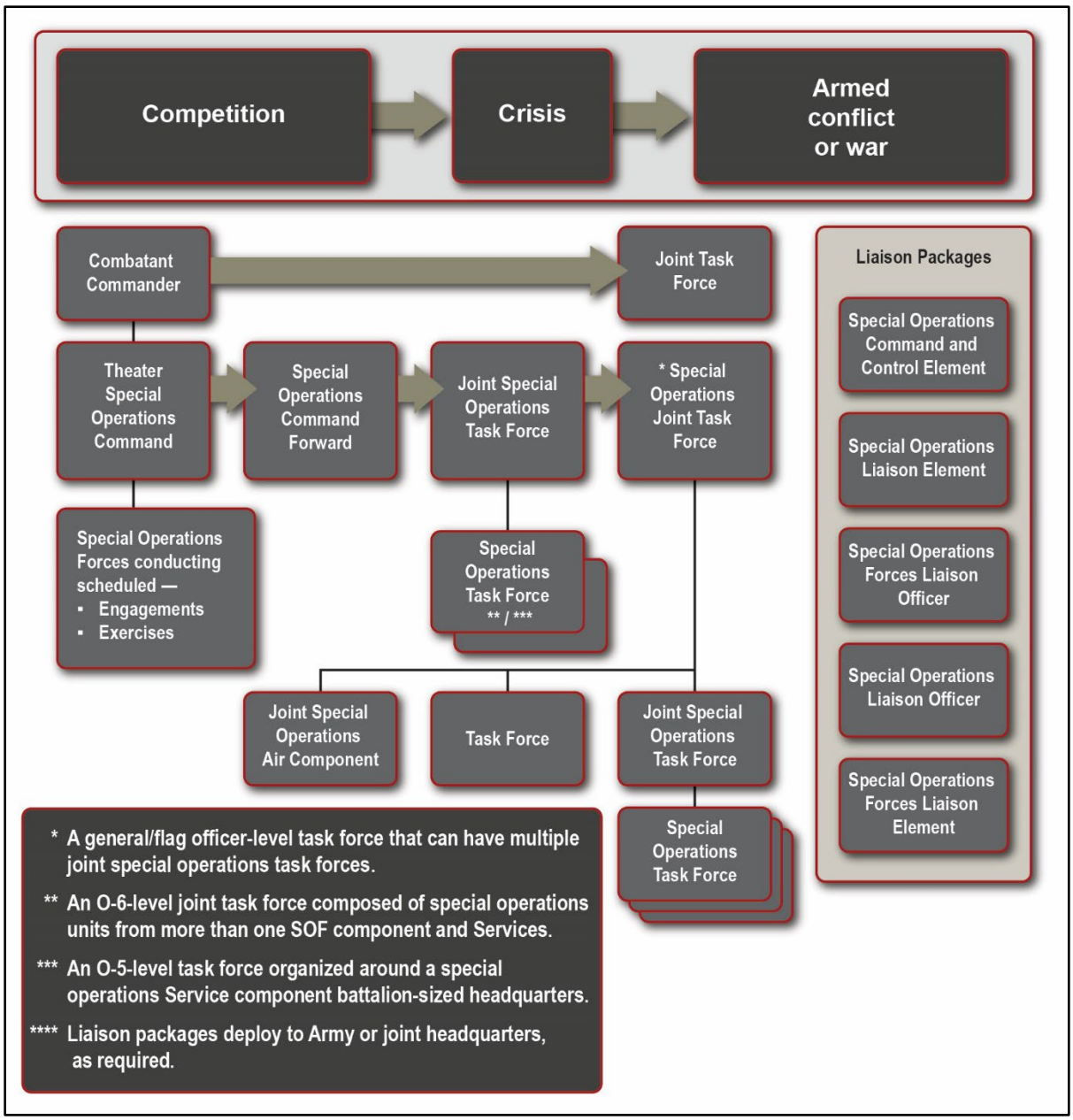


Figure 3-2. Command and control of special operations forces in theater

JOINT SPECIAL OPERATIONS TASK FORCE

3-18. The joint special operations task force consists of the command team and staff from an existing O-6 level headquarters of the Service components with augmentation from SOF, conventional force enablers, or mission partners. When the joint special operations task force combines with multinational SOF, it becomes a combined joint special operations task force. The joint special operations task force commander may establish one or more subordinate special operations task forces from SOF Service components under the overarching joint special operations task force.

joint special operations task force. A task force composed of special operations forces from one or more Services or personnel from other United States Government departments and agencies formed to conduct special operations. (JP 3-05)

3-19. The joint force commander uses the joint special operations task force to plan and conduct special operations. When fully organized, the joint special operations task force consists of functionally aligned staff members, various subject-matter experts, and capability integrators in key positions of responsibility from their partner organization or SOF component command.

3-20. Special operations maneuver unit commanders can and frequently form the core of a joint special operations task force by providing the commander and portions of the staff. A Special Forces group headquarters usually provides the commander and core staff for a joint special operations task force needed to form the nucleus of an enduring task force formation. The 75th Ranger Regiment headquarters can be the command of choice for joint special operations task force operations that primarily focus on short-duration offensive action, assaults, and strikes. Such an endeavor requires joint SOF and conventional forces staff augmentation to sustain this capability for more than six months.

3-21. A component of a joint special operations task force may be designated as a special operations task force. Naming conventions for all task forces or functional component commands may vary, for example, a Psychological Operations task force for military information support operations or operations in the information environment and a Civil Affairs task force for civil affairs operations. A Special Forces battalion or Ranger battalion commander, staff, and respective units normally establish the special operations task force or joint special operations task force.

SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND–FORWARD

3-22. The theater special operations command may deploy a special operations command–forward, which is a smaller command element located elsewhere in the theater of operation. A special operations command–forward is a tailored major (O-4) to O-6, operational-level headquarters that provides a forward-deployed, persistent presence and command and control capability. The special operations command-forward is tasked to provide command and control of SOF and synchronize efforts among the country team, host-nation forces, multinational forces, and agencies as required. The command is scalable and tailored to the appropriate level of command and control for the situation.

3-23. The theater special operations command commander has multiple rapid command and control options to establish a special operations task force, joint special operations task force, combined joint special operations task force, or special operations joint task force. Two of those options are:

- Establishing a special operations command–forward element.
- Designating a deploying force, based on the scope of response.

3-24. The methodology makes available the appropriate command and control functions to meet the demands from the supporting force. The goal is to establish the appropriate command and control architecture for the responding force (including coalition partners) to support intergovernmental priorities and to synchronize operations and support.

SPECIAL OPERATIONS TASK FORCE

3-25. A ***special operations task force*** **is a scalable unit, normally of battalion size, in charge of the special operations element, organized around the nucleus of special operations forces and support elements.** The special operations task force provides command and control, sustainment, and intelligence support for special operations activities. Special operations task forces operate under the operational control of a higher-echelon Army or joint force commander.

3-26. Special operations task forces are temporarily task-organized formations sourced from Service-designated special operations units assigned to USSOCOM. When operating in the land domain, Army special operations forces normally establish the core of a special operations task force by providing the commander and staff and their respective subordinate units. Figure 3-3, page 42, depicts a notional special operations task force for a Special Forces battalion. The special operations task force augmentation may include a communication element, conventional forces, sustainment units, and other functions.

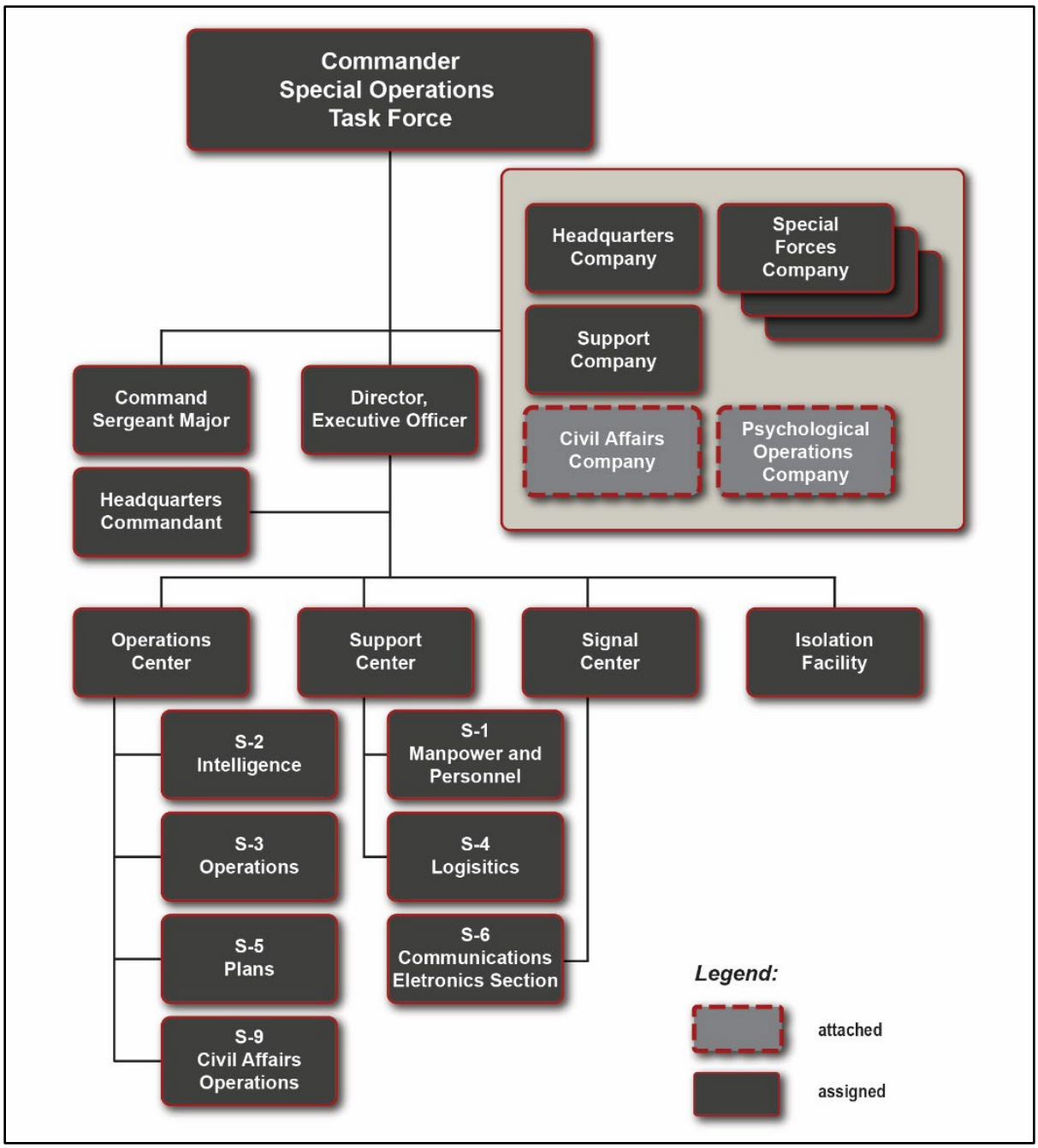


Figure 3-3. Notional special operations task force

Advanced Operations Base

3-27. Special operations are normally decentralized; therefore, a Special Forces company may establish a small temporary base within a joint operational area to command and control and support special operations training or tactical operations. The Special Forces company establishing the advanced operations base operates under the operational control of a higher echelon special operations task force and provides a secure location for conducting training, support, and mission preparation.

advanced operations base. A small, temporary base established near or within a joint operations area to command, control, and support special operations training or tactical operations. (ADP 3-05)

3-28. The base may be ashore or afloat. If ashore, the base may include an airfield or unimproved airstrip, a pier, or an anchorage. In competition, an advanced operations base is normally fixed; however, the base may have to displace. In armed conflict, like any command post, the company must be prepared to routinely relocate and disperse to ensure its survivability.

3-29. An advanced operations base is normally controlled and supported by a special operations task force at a main operation base or a forward operations base. A scalable element organized around a Special Forces operational detachment–bravo establishes the advanced operations base. The advanced operations base extends the functionality of a special operations task force by preparing SOF for deployment and sustaining them once deployed; enabling extraction and debriefing of SOF elements; and providing operational, administrative, and logistical support. The units in the advanced operations base serve to advise, assist, and act as a liaison to host-nation and resistance forces.

3-30. Normally under the command of a major, the Special Forces operational detachment–bravo, when forward deployed, operates an advanced operations base. When an operational detachment–bravo forms an advanced operations base, it normally requires augmentation from either special operations task force or joint special operations task force assets to perform these missions. Therefore, for a specific mission set, the advanced operations base organization includes—

- Operational detachment–bravo organic personnel.
- Individual augmentees to support the warfighting functions that fall under the responsibility of the advanced operations base.
- Staff personnel.

JOINT SPECIAL OPERATIONS AIR COMPONENT

3-31. A joint special operations air component may be a standing organization, or it may be formed in response to a crisis, a major operation, or a campaign. In most cases, the joint special operations air component is the only SOF functional component under a theater special operations command, joint forces special operations component command, or joint special operations task force—the other components are Service components.

> **joint special operations air component.** A task-organized unit that provides command and control functions for all special operations forces aviation units under the operational command of the joint special operations air component commander. (JP 3-05)

3-32. The commander of a theater special operations command, joint forces special operations component command, or joint special operations task force may designate a joint special operations air component commander to plan and execute joint special operations air activities and coordinate conventional air support for SOF with the joint force air component commander, if designated. The joint special operations air component commander is normally the commander with the preponderance of SOF air assets or the greatest capacity to plan, coordinate, allocate, task, control, and support the assigned and supporting air assets. The joint special operations air component commander may come from either the Air Force special operations forces or Army special operations aviation. These assets can include Army special operations aviation, Air Force special operations forces, or other air assets.

3-33. SOF commanders may place selected special operations aviation assets under the control of conventional forces. Collocating SOF aviation and sharing resources with conventional force aviation is a key part of interdependency. A joint special operations air component commander may support multiple joint special operations task forces in one or more operational areas in a theater of operations.

3-34. Units of the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment can conduct and support special operations missions for the SOF commander, the theater special operations command, and other USSOCOM organizations. The regiment can be task-organized based on expected missions, the requirements of the units being supported, the environmental conditions in the theater of operations, and sustainment requirements.

3-35. The 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment task-organizes missions around one of the special operations aviation battalions. With proper personnel and equipment augmentation, the battalion commander and staff could serve as joint special operations air component commander. When two or more battalions are required in the theater, the regimental commander could serve as the joint special operations air component commander.

COORDINATING ELEMENTS

3-36. A liaison officer acts as the commander's representative at another unit, other governmental agency, nongovernmental organization, or private sector. This officer effects coordination and cooperation between organizations. (Refer to JP 3-05 and FM 6-05 for more information on liaison officers.)

3-37. The commander uses a liaison officer to transmit critical information while bypassing layers of staff and headquarters. A trained, competent, trusted, and informed representative is the key to effective liaison. The liaison officer must have the proper rank and experience for the mission and have the commander's confidence. When interfacing with joint and multinational forces, a certain level of rank may be needed to enhance accessibility and influence.

> **liaison.** That contact or intercommunication maintained between elements of military forces or other agencies to ensure mutual understanding and unity of purpose and action. (FM 6-0)

3-38. Employing a single liaison officer conserves manpower while guaranteeing the consistent, accurate flow of information; however, continuous operations require a liaison team. The size and structure of the liaison element depends on the mission requirements directed by the establishing commander.

3-39. Liaison officers should be established early to assist during the planning process, mission analysis, and course of action development. Liaison officers ensure the consideration of all capabilities and limitations during the process. In addition, they ensure that their commanders are informed of the activities, plans, and intentions of the supported commander.

3-40. Liaison officers advise staffs on capabilities and keep the command informed about courses of action for consideration and potential operational requirements. These liaison officers can—

- Improve the flow of information.
- Facilitate concurrent planning.
- Enhance mission planning and targeting processes.
- Request and leverage supporting assets.
- Communicate conventional force capabilities and intent to SOF and vice versa.

LIAISON SUPPORT TO MILITARY COMMANDERS

3-41. Special operations liaison elements are broken into two categories, support to military commanders and support to country teams and host nations. The first category, liaison support to military commanders, is broken down in the following paragraphs and includes the following:

- Special operations command and control element.
- Special operations liaison element.
- Special operations forces liaison officer.

Special Operations Command and Control Element

3-42. SOF operations often require synchronization with conventional military operations. When possible, liaison elements are reciprocal between higher, lower, supporting, supported, and adjacent organizations. To enable this synchronization across the joint operations area, the special operations joint task force commander may employ a special operations command and control element or other liaison elements. (See FM 6-05 for more information on conventional force and SOF integration, interoperability, and interdependence.)

> **special operations command and control element.** A special operations element for the command and control of special operations forces and coordination with conventional forces activities. (JP 3-05)

3-43. A special operations command and control element is task organized for integration into corps or higher-echelon operations (though it can be attached to the highest military echelon conducting operations) and targeting planning cycles. It also integrates special operations effects into joint force maneuver.

3-44. The joint special operations task force or special operations task force commander may elect to employ special operations command and control elements to coordinate unilateral special operations with conventional ground force headquarters or, if a supporting commander, facilitate the supported commander's

responsibilities. The special operations command and control element performs command and control or liaison functions according to the mission requirements and as directed by the establishing senior SOF commander.

Special Operations Liaison Element

3-45. A special operations liaison element is a team of SOF personnel deployed to work directly with the Air Force (or another Service's) air component. They are normally stationed at the joint air operations center or a similar command center and are provided by the joint special operations task force. Their primary purpose is to integrate special operations—those involving air, land, and maritime assets—with broader military air operations. They do not have command authority; their role is to advise, coordinate, and facilitate collaboration.

3-46. The special operations liaison element communicates between the joint air operations center and the headquarters responsible for directing special operations. The special operations liaison element coordinates special operations requests into the air tasking order and airspace control order. The special operations liaison element is tailored to the specific mission requirements of the commander being supported.

Special Operations Forces Liaison Officer

3-47. SOF liaison officers integrate at the joint task force level to help different military groups work together effectively. They report directly to their SOF commanders. Their main job is to share information that helps missions succeed. This includes reducing duplication of efforts preventing friendly fire, protecting sensitive sources, and disrupting of ongoing operations.

3-48. SOF liaison officers help coordinate air support, targeting, and information operations. In addition, SOF liaison officers help commanders combine conventional forces and SOF to make the best use of available resources.

Liaison Support to Country Team and Host Nation

3-49. The second of the two categories of special operations liaison elements is liaison support to country teams and host nations. The following paragraphs expand on the types of liaison support to country teams and host nations and include the following:

- Special operations liaison officer.
- Special operations forces liaison element.

Special Operations Liaison Officer

3-50. A special operations liaison officer has culture and language expertise and joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational staff experience. They are assigned to a partner-nations national SOF headquarters to maintaining a consistent U.S. SOF presence. Acting as a direct representative of USSOCOM and a key advisor, the special operations liaison officer works under the authority of the chief of mission. They advise the senior U.S. defense official or defense attaché, the entire country team, and the partner nation's SOF leadership.

3-51. The special operations liaison officer's focus is on strengthening the partner nation's SOF capabilities and building strong relationships between their SOF command and key government ministries. They monitor all SOF activities within the country and coordinate efforts across the country, the theater, and globally, supporting both U.S. and partner nation SOF objectives at a strategic level. Special operations liaison officers build strong partnerships ensuring effective cooperation with partner nations.

Special Operations Forces Liaison Element

3-52. A special operations forces liaison element is a small, temporary team of experienced SOF personnel deployed to a specific country or embedded with conventional forces. Their primary job is to build relationships and coordinate activities with partner forces. They can help identify opportunities for training, provide equipment recommendations, and ensure smooth cooperation between different forces—including expeditionary forces.

3-53. The special operations forces liaison elements are often sent to countries without a permanent SOF liaison officer. They are typically based at the U.S. embassy, with a partner nation, or alongside conventional forces. The special operations forces liaison elements are strategically placed to support security cooperation

objectives. They can operate individually or as a team and conduct special operations activities while fulfilling their liaison duties.

SECTION II – RULES OF ALLOCATION

3-54. Rules of allocation represent a quantitative statement for doctrinal employment for each type of unit. However, they do not account for the capability demand from units outside of the Army. Rules of allocation are used to model Army force composition in wargaming scenarios to determine if the quantity of units is sufficient to support war plans. The following vignette demonstrates how employment of Army special operations forces, as an economy of force, can produce asymmetric results.

Detachment 101 in Burma

Never numbering more than a few hundred men, Detachment 101 of the Office of Strategic Services had the task of raising guerrilla forces among ethnic tribes, primarily the Kachin, in northern Burma during World War II. At its peak in late 1944, Detachment 101 had nearly 10,000 guerrillas under arms supported by 500 detachment personnel. From 1942 to 1945, with very meager resources, Detachment 101, working with and through its partner force, inflicted nearly 16,000 casualties on the Japanese Imperial Army. Detachment 101 supplied approximately 90 percent of the intelligence furnished to the U.S.-led Northern Combat Area Command. This included designating 65 percent of targets for air attack, which led to another 12,000 enemy casualties. An economy of force effort, Detachment 101 played a decisive role in the Allied liberation of North Burma.

SPECIAL FORCES

3-55. Special Forces Soldiers are manned, trained, organized, and equipped to execute the core activities of unconventional warfare, foreign internal defense, security force assistance, counterinsurgency, direct action, special reconnaissance, counterterrorism, counterproliferation, and operational preparation of the environment. Special Forces units conduct these core activities across the range of military operations and throughout competition, crisis, armed conflict, and post-conflict transitions. Special Forces units can operate unilaterally or with host-nation, partner, coalition, resistance, or guerrilla forces.

3-56. During crisis or in conflict, there should be at least one Special Forces battalion for every conventional force division allocated to an area of operations. When working with either a host-nation, partner, or coalition division, a Special Forces battalion should be aligned with those forces.

Note. When working with a resistance or guerrilla force, a single Special Forces operational detachment–alpha can generate or operate with 300 to 500 personnel. Extrapolating these figures, a Special Forces battalion (a total of 18 operational detachments–alpha) can generate or operate with 4,200 to 7,000 personnel.

3-57. If conducting foreign internal defense, security force assistance, or remote advise and assist, at least one Special Forces battalion may be allocated in an adjacent country to perform those missions. A minimum of one Special Forces battalion should be aligned with a corps-level joint task force for the conduct of special reconnaissance and direct-action missions.

3-58. A Special Forces group has the capacity to effectively command and control two to five Special Forces battalions. To ensure optimal operational success for operations of this size, it is essential to include a group headquarters and a group support battalion to meet the unique sustainment needs of a Special Forces group. When isolation operations are required, each battalion will use three to four operational detachments–alpha to support the isolation of the other operational detachments–alpha.

PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS

3-59. Psychological Operations units lead influence efforts for USASOC, whether those efforts are the main line of effort or a supporting line of effort. The application of informational power expands commanders' range of options for action during competition, crisis, armed conflict, and post-conflict transitions. The application of informational power may be the primary option available to a joint force commander during long-duration cooperation and competition short of armed conflict, where the use of physical force is inappropriate or restricted. Psychological Operations units at the group and battalion echelons are uniquely positioned to lead operations in the information environment for Army and joint force commanders.

3-60. Psychological Operations units execute supporting efforts for the enable, protect, inform, and attack information activities and can lead influence activities during combat operations in direct support of a joint force commander or in direct support of an Army maneuver commander. For every corps or corps-equivalent joint task force headquarters, there should be no fewer than one Psychological Operations group with mission-specific command and control, product design, product development, product distribution, and product dissemination capabilities.

3-61. Two or more Psychological Operations companies require a battalion headquarters to ensure effective command and control, and five is the maximum number of companies a Psychological Operations battalion headquarters can command and control. More than one Psychological Operations battalion headquarters necessitates a group headquarters for command and control. A requirement for more than five battalions will necessitate the addition of another group headquarters. More than one group will require a command, with up to five groups per command. Once there are more than two commands, an additional level of coordinating command must exist to conduct command and control.

CIVIL AFFAIRS

3-62. Civil Affairs forces are the primary force to engage and leverage the civil component of the operational environment. These forces inform the common operating picture and provide options to achieve effects in the operational environment. Civil Affairs forces engage and leverage civil networks to disrupt adversary influence during competition; support joint reception, staging, onward movement, and integration during crisis; preserve combat power during conflict; and consolidate gains for a rapid return to competition.

3-63. During combat operations, Civil Affairs forces operate at all echelons and in the rear and close areas unilaterally or via civil networks in deep areas to execute military operations that support achievement of the commanders' desired end state. Civil Affairs forces function best at the ratio of no fewer than one company per 500,000 civilians in the area of operations. Planners should include the total population in the area considered for military operations when calculating requirements for Civil Affairs forces. The ratio should be applied regardless of standard of development of a given country as during wartime large-scale destruction, disruption, or neutralization of friendly civil-oriented capabilities should be assumed.

3-64. Two or more Civil Affairs companies require a battalion headquarters to ensure effective command and control, and five is the maximum number of companies a Civil Affairs battalion headquarters can command and control. More than one Civil Affairs battalion headquarters necessitates a brigade headquarters for command and control. A requirement for more than five battalions will necessitate the addition of another brigade headquarters. More than one brigade will require a command, with up to five brigades per command. Once there are more than two commands, an additional level of coordinating command must exist to conduct command and control.

SPECIAL OPERATIONS AVIATION REGIMENT

3-65. The Army's special operations aviation unit is the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment. This regiment supports special operations by conducting low-visibility rotary-wing operations to penetrate hostile and denied airspace. Regimental units can operate in harsh environments and across the range of military operations. The 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment consists of a regimental headquarters and headquarters company, four special operations aviation battalions, and a table of distribution and allowances unit called the Special Operations Aviation Advisory Directorate.

3-66. During combat operations, the lift capacity of one regiment can provide mobility, close air support, logistics support, and evacuation to one Special Forces group. For every additional Special Forces group, an additional special operations aviation regiment must be generated. Each regiment requires four special operations aviation capable battalions, plus at least one Gray Eagle company or equivalent.

RANGER REGIMENT

3-67. The 75th Ranger Regiment is the Army's premier special operations infantry force. The regiment is specifically organized, trained, and equipped to deploy rapidly to anywhere in the world to eliminate a threat and source of instability in support of U.S. interests. The regiment's mission profile differs from conventional infantry units in degree of risk associated with its mission sets of forceable entry, direct action raids, seizure of key terrain or facilities, and unique abilities to eliminate or capture high-profile targets. The Ranger Regiment must be proficient with all forms of infiltration from ground, rotary, and fixed-wing aviation insertion to airborne assaults. The 75th Ranger Regiment can select a means of accessing the target that will lead to the least risk to the force and highest potential for operational success.

3-68. During combat operations, the 75th Ranger Regiment will likely operate as the combined joint task forces rapid response force subordinate to a joint special operations task force with the mission to conduct forcible entry and direct actions to seize key terrain and eliminate imminent threats to ongoing operations. The Rangers may seize and secure key facilities that offer strategic value. In the event the area of operations demands more than two battalions, there will be an accompanying regimental headquarters for command and control. The regimental headquarters supports the Ranger battalion as the unit of action for a multidomain convergence headquarters with the Regimental Special Troops Battalion and the Regimental Military Intelligence Battalion.

Chapter 4
Fundamentals

We used the smallest force, in the quickest time, in the farthest place.

T.E. Lawrence
"The Evolution of a Revolt"
Army Quarterly 1920

This chapter explores the fundamental principles, imperatives, and limitations used to plan and execute special operations. The Army tenets of operations and principles of war provide a foundation for Army special operations forces to plan, conduct, and support Army operations. (Refer to ADP 3-0 for more information on Army tenets of operations and principles of war.) The Army special operations principles of partnership, integration, and persistence serve as the foundation for special operations. Additionally, the imperatives of special operations, such as recognizing the political implications of operations, operating with and through other forces, and creating and exploiting relative advantages, guide the design, planning, and execution of special operations. By understanding and applying these principles and imperatives, commanders can achieve objectives and defeat adversary forces in a rapidly changing operational environment.

ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS PRINCIPLES

4-1. Principles are enduring. They provide a foundation for understanding and applying doctrine in a variety of contexts. The Army's organizational approach for multidomain operations and joint operations follows the principles of war. Together, these principles serve as a common reference point to guide conventional and special operations approaches to modern warfare.

principle. A comprehensive and fundamental rule or an assumption of central importance that guides how an organization approaches and thinks about the conduct of operations. (ADP 1-01)

4-2. Partnership, integration, and persistence serve as the basis for the design and planning of special operations activities in permissive, uncertain, and hostile environments. These principles enable the force to conduct a wide range of missions, facilitate achievement of objectives, and underscore the requirement to operate with or through partner forces and populations.

PARTNERSHIP

4-3. When planning special operations, commanders and staffs should consider a partner's operational availability, network reach, equipment, gaps in capabilities, and limitations. Army special operations forces' planners must select partners based on the military commander's intent and end state.

4-4. Army special operations forces' planners must identify, assess, and employ partners who possess the motivation, access, and placement to achieve the military commander's objective and enhance U.S. national security. These partnerships, built on trust and mutual benefit, are critical for deterring adversaries, enabling access and influence within the operational environment, understanding, and influencing key populations. Army special operations forces continuously evaluate the partner's capabilities, available resources, and willingness to support operations.

INTEGRATION

4-5. Army operations necessitate the deliberate integration of Army special operations forces with conventional forces, multinational partners, partner nation security forces, governmental and non-governmental organizations, and relevant state and non-state actors. Each element contributes distinct capabilities that, when synchronized, enhance operational effectiveness and achieve synergistic effects.

Army special operations forces' command and control elements employ established Army integrating processes to facilitate this interoperability and ensure unity of effort.

4-6. Mission planning demands a holistic approach that leverages the unique strengths of all available resources. Integration is not merely coordination, but a proactive and continuous effort to build and maintain relationships, beginning in pre-mission training and extending throughout the range of military operations. Commanders will prioritize the development of partner capacity and incorporate their capabilities into all phases of planning and execution to maximize collective impact.

4-7. Effective integration fosters legitimacy, trust, and accountability—critical components for achieving sustainable security outcomes. By incorporating diverse perspectives and capabilities, operations become more representative of the operational environment and contribute to long-term stability. This approach recognizes that complex challenges require comprehensive solutions encompassing military, political, economic, and social considerations, and encourages innovative problem solving through a broader pool of expertise. (For more on conventional force and SOF integration, interoperability, and interdependence, refer to FM 6-05.)

PERSISTENCE

4-8. Planners recognize the requirement for persistence, patience, and continuity of effort when planning to achieve long-term enduring outcomes. They understand that access and placement come from strong relationships and that those relationships require consistent maintenance. The ability of the Army to quickly respond to and mitigate crises and to win decisively in armed conflict begins by persistently executing operations during competition. The planning for consistent military engagement occurs at all echelons.

4-9. For example, a Special Forces group may be the lead unit tasked by 1st Special Forces Command to develop a supporting plan for specific campaign plan objectives. The group integrates planners from the 528th Sustainment Brigade and the regionally aligned Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations battalions as well as a subordinate Special Forces battalion. Capitalizing on the unique capabilities of each unit, the group planning team creates a support plan that leverages interdependence to achieve objectives and phases the operation over time to create the persistence required to achieve enduring outcomes. At each echelon, these operations are guided by a persistent approach; recognizing that enduring outcomes require persistence and persistence requires Soldiers to have patience when achieving operational and theater strategic objectives.

IMPERATIVES

4-10. Imperatives are actions Army forces must take to defeat peer enemy forces and succeed in the multidomain environment. They are based on the principles of war, but they are specific to the contemporary battlefield.

ARMY IMPERATIVES

4-11. Army imperatives represent overarching priorities for achieving combatant commander objectives. Established to address the evolving complexities of multidomain operations, these imperatives are not merely aspirational goals. They serve as unifying themes for the Army, ensuring that all efforts are aligned towards enhancing and maintaining a decisive advantage over potential adversaries.

4-12. Army imperatives are primarily enemy-focused fundamental rules that guide how to design, plan, and conduct operations during conflict. The Army imperatives include—

- See yourself, see the enemy, and understand the operational environment.
- Protect against constant observation and all forms of enemy contact.
- Own the electromagnetic spectrum.
- Create and exploit positions of physical, information, and human advantage.
- Make initial contact with sensors, unmanned systems, or the smallest element possible.
- Impose multiple dilemmas on the enemy.
- Anticipate, plan, and execute transitions.
- Designate, weight, and sustain the main effort.

- Consolidate gains continuously.
- Understand and manage the effects of operations on units and Soldiers.

4-13. Commanders develop their operations with the imperatives of multidomain operations in mind, which are essential considerations for the planning, preparation, execution, and assessment of operations. (See ADP 3-0 for more on the imperatives of Army operations.)

SPECIAL OPERATIONS IMPERATIVES

4-14. The special operations imperatives are additive to the Army imperatives. While the Army imperatives "are actions Army forces must take to defeat enemy forces and achieve objectives at acceptable cost," the special operations imperatives provide the basis for planning, preparing, executing, and assessing missions. The imperatives guide how Army special operations forces think about their tasks and missions in support of Army and joint force operations.

4-15. The special operations imperatives include—

- Recognize political implications.
- Engage the threat discriminately.
- Anticipate psychological effects and the impact of information.
- Operate with and through others.
- Ensure long-term engagement.

Recognize Political Implications

4-16. Army special operations are more than just military engagements; they are linked to achieving broader political and strategic objectives. Soldiers in these roles must understand that their actions have international consequences and often prioritize the advancement of political goals, even if it means foregoing immediate military gains. This requires a long-term perspective, a commitment to ethical conduct to build trust with partner forces and local populations, and close coordination with governmental and international organizations. Ultimately, special operations aim to create conditions for positive change within partner nations—fostering stability and enabling non-military assistance—making them a crucial tool of statecraft where military force supports wider diplomatic and political efforts.

Engage the Threat Discriminately

4-17. To effectively engage threats, commanders must carefully select when, where, and how to employ force. Army special operations forces execute missions with precision and accuracy, minimizing collateral effects through concealed or clandestine operations—often leveraging partners so that only the intended effects are detectable. They develop operational flexibility by maintaining a broad range of options and contingency plans. This enables them to shift seamlessly from one option to another before and during mission execution, or even apply multiple approaches simultaneously, providing flexible options. Operational flexibility requires informed decision-making. Therefore, these forces actively access theater and national intelligence systems to address information gaps, and provide intelligence through area assessments, special reconnaissance, and post-operation debriefs. Intelligence operations mitigate uncertainties associated with threats and environments, allowing Army special operations forces to engage the threat discriminately.

Anticipate Psychological Effects and the Impact of Information

4-18. SOF anticipate the psychological effects as well as the inherent informational effects of operations on the populations and other relevant actors that observe the operations or are otherwise affected by them. Regional and cultural expertise facilitate understanding the potential effects of operations; however, formal analyses are what generate shared understanding. Examples of formal analyses that provide the required understanding to anticipate and account for psychological and inherent informational effects include—

- Civil information analyses and civil knowledge products.
- Target audience analyses.
- Center of gravity analyses.
- Issues, goals, influence, vulnerabilities and opportunities analyses.
- Operational variable analyses.
- Irregular warfare strategic estimate analyses.

Operate With and Through Others

4-19. Most special operations occur within a complex interorganizational environment, involving U.S. Government departments and agencies, multinational partners, and international organizations, all working towards mutual security objectives. Army special operations forces operate with and through a network of partners to achieve these objectives, actively coordinating with U.S. and foreign military and non-military organizations to ensure resource efficiency and unity of effort. Army special operations forces build partner capacity through advising, training, and assistance, leveraging these relationships as force multipliers to pursue shared security goals with minimized U.S. visibility, risk, and cost. This approach shapes the operational environment by reinforcing the capacity, effectiveness, legitimacy, credibility, and trust of partner governments.

Ensure Long-Term Engagement

4-20. Army special operations forces operate with a comprehensive understanding of the interconnected factors influencing the environment, accounting for the operational variables—political, military, economic, social, information, infrastructure, physical environment, and time. They avoid pursuing immediate gains that could undermine broader national and combatant command objectives, deliberately aligning all policies, plans, and operations with established national and theater priorities. Deviations can erode legitimacy and credibility both domestically and internationally, ultimately jeopardizing long-term strategic outcomes. Considering the wider implications of their actions ensures that tactical achievements contribute to sustainable, positive effects that support enduring national interests. Reflecting this long-term perspective, special operations Soldiers view their tasks and missions with an eye toward future relationships, fostering patience, professionalism, and alignment with the Army's professional ethics as they build strong, generational partnerships and engagements.

LIMITATIONS

4-21. A key aspect of understanding the entirety of Army special operations forces' capabilities is recognizing their inherent limitations. Army special operations forces do not deploy in mass sufficient to achieve effects associated with conventional operations. A special operations unit is not a blunt force instrument; it is a tool built for more precise employment. Attempting to utilize Army special operations forces as the former diminishes their effectiveness and risks overextension. This requires judicious mission planning and a clear understanding of realistic, achievable objectives.

4-22. Army special operations forces' capabilities are often dependent on extensive enabling factors. Successful operations require significant pre-mission intelligence gathering, robust logistical support (often tailored and complex), and the cultivation of strong relationships with local populations or partner forces. Unlike conventional forces who can often overcome obstacles through sheer firepower and mass, Army special operations forces must carefully navigate the complex challenges of operating in a hostile, denied, or politically sensitive environments. This reliance introduces vulnerabilities and necessitates a longer, more deliberate planning horizon. When employing Army special operations forces, planners should account for the limitations in mobility and medical combat support.

4-23. Army special operations forces' elements generally lack mobility or have limited mobility assets when operating in extended deep areas. Forward deployed forces may have limited access to logistical and maintenance support or may have to rely on support U.S. and allied of conventional force assets. Mounted elements or mechanized forces operating remotely will require a greater level of logistical support for fuel and repair parts. A lack of access to adequate mobility assets limits the weight and weapon systems an element can transport. Due to a lack of heavy weapons and indirect fire assets above 120 mm, Army special operations forces rely on conventional forces or partner nations for indirect fire support and air support.

4-24. Role 1 medical treatment is organic to most Army special operations forces and is provided by special operations combat medics, Special Forces medical sergeants, Civil Affairs medical sergeants, or physicians and physician assistants. Special Forces groups and the 528th Sustainment Brigade are the only Army special operations forces' elements capable of providing Role 2 level care and this is on a limited basis.

4-25. Army special operations forces do not have an organic Role 3 capability. They must rely on the theater of operations hospitalization system for their patients. In an underdeveloped operational environment, Army special operations forces may rely on the partner nation to provide hospitalization. Army special operations forces also lack organic medical evacuation capability. Army special operations forces' planners must ensure the transporting tracking, and treating of patients is integrated into the conventional force plan. (The following vignette demonstrates the outcomes of ignoring Army special operations forces' limitations.)

The U.S. Army's medical care system is organized into four roles, or echelons, to provide a tiered approach to medical support. These roles are: Role 1 (unit-level care), Role 2 (advanced trauma management and emergency surgery), Role 3 (emergency and specialty surgery, intensive care), and Role 4 (full range of preventive, acute, restorative, and rehabilitative care). (FM 4-02)

Ranger Company in Korean War

After North Korean troops launched a surprise invasion of South Korea in June 1950, South Korean and United Nations forces defended the shrinking Pusan perimeter. This prompted the Far East Command to create an ad-hoc Ranger company under the Eighth Army to interdict enemy supply lines in the hopes of reducing the North Korean war-fighting capability. However, with the breakout of Allied forces from Pusan following the 15 September 1950 amphibious landings at Inch'on, the Eighth Army Ranger Company was attached to the 25th Infantry Division to aid in the drive north.

As Allied forces drove farther into North Korea, Chinese Communist Party forces intervened. In the ensuing chaos, the 25th Infantry Division treated the Eighth Army Ranger Company as if they were a conventional infantry company. As elements of the 25th Infantry Division moved to secure a defensive position, they assigned the fifty-one Rangers present for duty to a tank company to capture Hill 205. This task was better suited for a full-sized infantry company with more men and assets. Nevertheless, the hill was taken, and the Rangers established a 360-degree perimeter, sited automatic weapons on likely avenues of approach, and dug in for the night.

At about 2200 hours on 25 November 1950, swarms of Chinese beating drums and blowing whistles and bugles, began a frontal assault. Heavy small arms fire from the entrenched Rangers and pre-planned artillery concentrations halted this and the next four attacks. Then, with ammunition almost gone and the enemy in grenade range, the Rangers fixed bayonets. When the Chinese launched a sixth and final attack, and with no artillery support, the Ranger company commander, Captain Ralph Puckett, Jr, who was already several times wounded, sent a radio message saying they were being overwhelmed. The Chinese swarmed over Hill 205, bayoneting and shooting the Rangers who fought from their foxholes. Some wounded managed to retreat to a collection point at the base of the hill, dragging Puckett with them when he refused to leave. On 21 May 2021, Colonel (ret.) Ralph Puckett, Jr., received the Medal of Honor for his actions with the Eighth Army Ranger Company.

The action at Hill 205 rendered the Eighth Army Ranger Company combat ineffective, as most of its men were either killed, wounded, or missing. It was eventually disbanded on 31 March 1951. The small, hard-hitting unit had been misused. Instead of being utilized to attack enemy supply lines, it was ordered to seize and hold ground against an overwhelming enemy force.

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Chapter 5

Army Special Operations Forces During Competition, Crisis, and Armed Conflict

This is another type of warfare, new in its intensity, ancient in its origins, war by guerrillas, subversives, insurgents, assassins, war by ambush instead of by combat; by infiltration instead of aggression, seeking victory by eroding and exhausting the enemy instead of engaging him.

President John. F. Kennedy
Remarks to the U.S. Military Academy Graduating Class
6 June 1962

Army forces must remain adaptable and flexible to respond to changing circumstances and emerging opportunities. In competition, Army units often conduct operations simultaneously and in more than one strategic context. Through forward presence, partner engagement, and integration with other Army and joint forces, Army special operations forces shape conditions, generate options, and create advantages for combatant commanders below the threshold of armed conflict. During crisis, Army special operations forces provide response options, increase situational awareness, and help inform decisions for combatant commanders. Army special operations forces conduct special operations activities to achieve policy goals without having to resort to more large-scale and costly conventional options. During armed conflict, Army special operations forces provide windows of opportunity and exploitable options that contribute to large-scale combat operations. Concurrent with support to combat operations in one theater, special operations activities in other theaters may complement and reinforce conventional force operations by creating dilemmas for enemy forces along the periphery, areas of interest, and areas of influence.

OVERVIEW

5-1. Many special operations activities extend across all strategic contexts, supporting a campaign plan and its branches and, when required, transition to armed conflict. Special operations activities provide joint force commanders with flexible response and flexible deterrence options to accomplish objectives in the strategic contexts of competition, crisis, and armed conflict. Army special operations forces rarely deploy as a battalion or company formation with a common mission; instead, they deploy as distributed teams or detachments across multiple locations that involve diverse tasks and purposes. At the battalion and above, Army special operations forces integrate their activities to support the country team plans and combatant commander's campaign plans.

COMPETITION

5-2. Competition occurs when state or non-state actors seek relative advantages with respect to a set of specific policy aims without resorting to armed conflict. During competition, diplomatic, informational, and economic instruments of national power play the main role in achieving policy aims. Military power—and the threat of military power—play complementary and reinforcing roles to the other elements of national power.

relative advantage. A location or condition, in any domain, relative to an adversary or enemy that provides an opportunity to progress towards or achieve an objective. (ADP 3-0)

5-3. Success in competition means preserving freedom of action to pursue national interests at acceptable risk and sustainable cost. Special operations activities create, enhance, and exploit physical, information, and human advantages. Combatant commanders may use Army special operations forces to create these advantages to support deterrence and protect national interests.

5-4. During competition, Army special operations forces can:

- Develop partner capability and capacity.
- Enhance partner resilience.
- Enhance situational awareness.
- Develop resistance capability and capacity.
- Conduct information warfare.
- Support operational preparation of the environment.

5-5. Army special operations forces' persistent presence in forward locations enables execution and effectiveness of their ability to perform special operations activities. They develop strong relationships with partner nation forces and leaders, regional and cultural expertise, and a deep understanding of the operational environment to support the combatant command's situational awareness. Army special operations forces' strong rapport with partner forces facilitate more effective security cooperation. They can understand how to make populations and governments more resilient against extant and potential threats. Persistent forward presence and military engagements during competition can:

- Prepare the operational environments.
- Inform decision making at higher echelons
- Enable operations through partner and civil networks in areas made normally inaccessible by adversary systems. This includes C5ISRT.
- Establish civil preparedness and resilience.
- Increase military capability and capacity.
- Create human, physical, and information networks and infrastructure.
- Develop targets.

5-6. Figure 5-1 is a notional framework depicting special operations during competition. It provides a visualization of how Army special operations forces may be employed to help set the theater and generate relative advantages. Special operations during competition deter malign adversary activities, set conditions for armed conflict on favorable terms (if deterrence fails), shape the operational environment, and generate relative advantages.

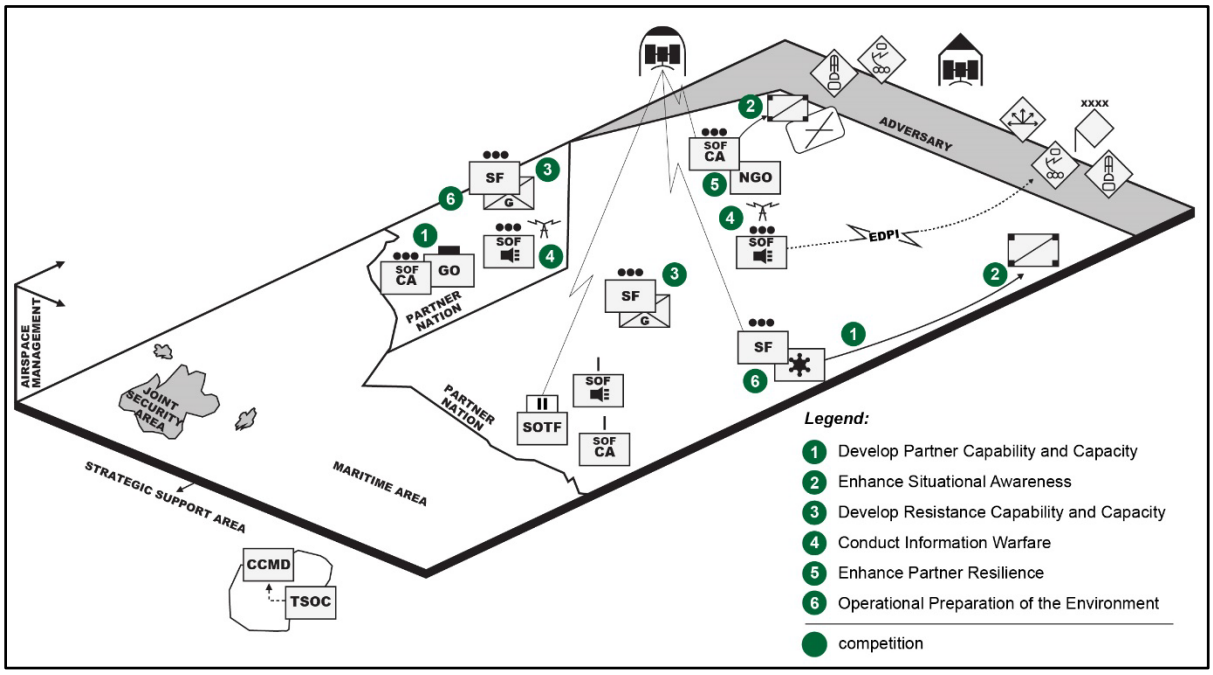


Figure 5-1. Notional framework of special operations during competition

SPECIAL OPERATIONS DURING COMPETITION

5-7. Special operations are essential to the joint force's efforts to shape the theater and enable a rapid transition to crisis and conflict. Army special operations forces develop enduring partnerships with foreign militaries, governments, international organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and private sector entities to support commander objectives. These relationships enhance multinational operations, build partner nation security force capabilities, improve interoperability, and increase the legitimacy of partner forces and governments. The following section discusses the application of special operations activities to achieve various outcomes to maintain stability and deter conflict in competition, respond rapidly and decisively in crisis, and if deterrence fails, transitions effectively to prevail in large-scale combat operations.

Note. Figure 5-1 aligns with the discussion of special operations described in paragraphs 5-8 through 5-15. For a discussion of command and control and task organization refer to chapter 2 of this manual.

Develop Partner Capability and Capacity

5-8. Special operations develop partner capability and capacity to counter internal and external sources of instability, while addressing the underlying factors that account for the origin of that threat. Single special operations activities rarely provide complete solutions to problems. Instead, a combination of special operations activities and conventional force operations are required to achieve enduring outcomes. For example, security force assistance may be the primary line of effort to achieve an objective to increase the security force capability and capacity of a partner country. Security force assistance activities may be supported by a military information support operations program, civil affairs operations, law enforcement, counter threat finance, and sensitive site exploitation. The results of a comprehensive approach to develop partner capability and capacity include—

- Enabling the partner force to deter and neutralize internal and external threats.
- Strengthening relationships.
- Increasing U.S. and partner credibility.
- Preparation of the operational environment for future operations.
- Extending operational reach.
- Improving situational understanding.
- Reinforcing regional stability.

(The following vignette demonstrates foreign internal defense efforts in competition.)

Foreign Internal Defense: Army Special Operations Forces in Ukraine

Between 2014 and 2022, Army special operations forces played a crucial role in helping Ukraine transform its special operations and resistance capabilities, significantly contributing to its ability to counter the Russian invasion in 2022. Following Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 and its control of the Donbas region in Eastern Ukraine, the U.S., and NATO, initiated substantial military assistance and security cooperation programs for Ukraine, including Army special operations forces.

Special Forces, largely from the 10th Special Forces Group, helped advance the tactical capabilities of Ukrainian special operations forces through specialized training in unconventional warfare, counterinsurgency, intelligence operations, and advanced combat tactics.

(continued on next page)

Foreign Internal Defense: Army Special Operations Forces in Ukraine (continued)

This included instruction in sniper techniques, battlefield medicine, and night operations. They also contributed to the development of military doctrine and resistance tactics, including support to the National Resistance Course. Special Forces units also conducted resistance training based on NATO's Resistance Operating Concept at the Yavoriv military base, which aimed to prepare Ukraine to resist foreign aggression and occupation.

Meanwhile, the 6th Psychological Operations Battalion and the Psychological Operations Proponent from the United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, worked to modernize Ukraine's information and influence capabilities, focusing on countering Russian propaganda. This occurred through military-to-military engagements and conferences held in Kyiv, led by U.S., NATO, and Ukrainian experts.

The 92nd Civil Affairs Battalion worked to enhance Ukrainian whole-of-society resilience by integrating Ukrainian border guard, emergency services, other government agencies, and non-government organizations into broader resistance planning. The Civil Affairs Proponent and deployed Civil Affairs elements advised Ukrainian special operations forces in the development of a Civil Affairs capability. By the fall of 2021, Ukrainian Army General Staff had a functioning Ukrainian special operations forces civil-military cooperation unit, nascent Civil Affairs doctrine and training, and a geospatial civil information system that remains in use today.

Through large-scale combined exercises and organizations such as the Joint Multinational Training Group-Ukraine, Army special operations forces, alongside their conventional and multinational partners, provided extensive training and assistance to Ukraine. Persistent SOF engagement helped transform Ukraine's legacy Russian-influenced Spetsnaz units into modernized special operations forces aligned with NATO standards in terms of organization, equipment, and interoperability. This included the establishment of dedicated Ukrainian special operations forces training centers.

As a result of U.S. and NATO SOF and conventional military support Ukraine developed an assortment of resistance capabilities and networks by early 2022. Ukrainian special operations forces mapped key infrastructure, identified targets, established relationships with local civilian networks, and developed protocols for rapid information sharing. The passage of National Resistance Laws in 2021 formalized this strategy and led to the establishment of the Ukrainian Territorial Defense Forces. The *Resistance Operating Concept*, developed with U.S. assistance, provided a blueprint for national resilience and resistance.

By 2022, the Ukrainian military, including its special operations forces, was more effective, NATO-compatible, and prepared, due largely to U.S. and NATO SOF assistance in the preceding years. The relationships built during that period continued to prove relevant, as U.S. personnel provided remote advisory support after the invasion. The successes of Ukrainian special operations forces and widespread Ukrainian resistance demonstrated the effectiveness of years of U.S. foreign internal defense efforts, which focused on training, equipping, and developing the capabilities and resilience of Ukrainian forces and society.

Enhance Situational Awareness

5-9. Army special operations forces continuously monitor the operational environment to maintain situational awareness. Army special operations forces leverage partner networks to identify information of tactical and operational significance. Access to these networks supports operational preparation of the environment and efforts to set the theater. During competition, Civil Affairs, Psychological Operations, and Special Forces units obtain situational awareness about the operational environment through the conduct of civil network development, military information support operations, and foreign internal defense activities.

Develop Resistance Capability and Capacity

5-10. Army special operations forces develop resistance capability and capacity by conducting foreign internal defense, security force assistance, civil affairs operations, military information support operations, and other special operations. While resistance capability and capacity align with partner resilience, resistance is distinct because it places an emphasis on the partner's ability to conduct operations against an aggressor. If a conflict worsens, resistance groups can help military leaders in several ways: they can allow access to enemy territory, disrupt the enemy's plans, sway key leaders, keep a government and its people determined to fight, and weaken the enemy's ability to wage war.

resistance partner. A partner conducting resistance with whom the United States Government mutually establishes agreements to cooperate for some specified time in pursuit of mutually supporting specific objectives. A resistance partner is influenced; he is not an employee or subordinate to be commanded and controlled. (ATP 3-18.1)

Conduct Information Warfare

5-11. Army special operations forces, in cooperation or in conjunction with other information forces conduct information warfare to support operational and tactical objectives. Information warfare activities set the theater for the joint force to gain and maintain information advantages over peer competitors and other relevant actors. Information warfare activities are used to enhance command and control, secure data, information and networks, maintain trust and confidence, affect behavior of foreign relevant actors, and affect theater command and control.

information warfare. The integrated employment of lethal and nonlethal capabilities to disrupt, degrade, deceive, or destroy enemy command and control systems while protecting friendly forces from the same. (FM 3-13)

Enhance Partner Resilience

5-12. Partner resilience can be described as the population's will to resist foreign malign influence, other destabilizing activities, or occupation of their sovereign territory. Army special operations forces enhance partner resilience through civil affairs operations, military information support operations, security force assistance, and foreign internal defense activities. These activities increase the expected costs of occupation and can help to deter adversary escalation to crisis or conflict. Resilience can include a combination of civil, military, and government institutional preparedness to address sources of instability and threats to host nation security. Army special operations forces advise and assist partner nations and their institutions by developing resilience that reflect more credible military formations capable of competing, responding to crisis, and fighting decisively in armed conflict. Characteristics of partner resilience include:

- A strong national identity.
- Society-wide psychological strength.
- Physical capacity to resist adversary aggression.
- Reduction of internal social vulnerabilities.
- Early mitigation of adversary influence efforts.

Conduct Operational Preparation of the Environment

5-13. Operational preparation of the environment provides essential support for network and target development by creating mechanisms to enhance situational awareness, that will prove invaluable during crisis and armed conflict. In addition, operational preparation of the environment facilitates the establishment of the human and physical infrastructure critical to shaping the theater for future operations.

5-14. During competition, Army special operations forces conduct operational preparation of the environment to prepare for crisis response and armed conflict, reinforcing deterrence by influencing an adversary's cost-benefit analysis and decision-making processes. Operational preparation of the environment activities include:

- Active and passive observation.
- Reconnaissance and surveillance.
- Area and network familiarization.
- Site surveys.
- Developing operational capability.
- Prepositioning logistics.
- Mapping the information environment.

TRANSITION TO CRISIS OR CONFLICT

5-15. Combatant commander campaign and supporting plans integrate special operations activities to establish forward presence and deter adversaries. In conditions where there is a transition from competition to crisis, or straight to conflict, commanders often use Army special operations forces' forward presence and their partner networks to deter enemy action, disguise friendly intentions, create dilemmas for the adversary, and improve commanders' decision making and windows of opportunity. This allows the combatant commander to assume prudent risk, seize the initiative, and spoil threat plans and decision cycles.

Most Army special operations activities conducted during competition continue during crisis and armed conflict.

5-16. Preparing the operational environment during competition supports operations during crisis or conflict. Army special operations forces are often the first to transition between strategic contexts, conducting flexible response or flexible deterrence operations under expanded authorities to generate advantages for joint force commanders.

CRISIS

5-17. Crises emerge unexpectedly, escalate rapidly, and pose significant risks to national security and regional stability. Their causes are diverse, ranging from deteriorating diplomatic relations and insurgencies to transnational criminal activity, armed aggression, natural disasters, or political instability. Adversaries may exploit the uncertainty of a crisis to influence and mobilize populations, undermine partner resolve, or create dilemmas for U.S. forces. Due to their global posture, overseas deployments, and persistent forward presence, Army special operations forces may already be positioned at the location of the emerging crisis or can be redirected to contribute to a shared understanding, inform response options, develop the situation, and provide crisis response.

crisis. An emerging incident or situation involving a possible threat to the United States, its citizens, military forces, or vital interests that develops rapidly and creates a condition of such diplomatic, economic, or military importance that commitment of military forces and resources is contemplated to achieve national and/or strategic objectives. (JP 3-0)

5-18. Army special operations forces expand the range of military options available to combatant commanders through the application of special operations activities. The specific activities of Army special operations forces depend on the crisis scenario, threat capabilities, and other related factors in the operational environment. For example, a crisis in a permissive environment may include civil affairs support, humanitarian assistance, operations in the information environment, or search and rescue. In a hostile environment the execution of special operations missions may expand to include direct action, hostage rescue, and special reconnaissance. The small footprint of Army special operations forces combined with remote advise and assist capabilities provide options to reduce the risk of escalation while enabling a rapid response. Army special operations forces can set conditions for the employment of conventional forces. (The following vignette demonstrates Army special operations forces' contributions in a crisis that transitioned to conflict.)

Task Force Viking

During Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003, the U.S.-led coalition carried out operations in northern Iraq aimed at disrupting and fixing a numerically superior enemy force. These operations produced decisive results and showcased the operational synergy between conventional and special operations forces. This synergy was evident at both tactical and strategic levels, demonstrating how the combination of conventional and special operations forces' capabilities can lead to exponential outcomes. Army special operations forces partnered with a 70,000-man force to engage a larger enemy.

The 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne), serving as the core of the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force—North (CJSOTF-N), was tasked with leading efforts to disrupt and fix 13 Iraqi divisions along the "Green Line," which separated the Kurdish autonomous zone from Iraq to its south.

By fixing these divisions, the task force aimed to prevent them from displacing and maneuvering against the main coalition effort. To fulfill the coalition forces land component commander's (CFLCC) intent, CJSOTF-North, now known as Task Force Viking, needed four key elements: deception operations, the Peshmerga force, airpower, and conventional forces to secure liberated cities and oil production facilities.

Task Force Viking comprised approximately 5,200 personnel, while the Peshmerga represented a substantial 70,000-man fighting force of Kurds. The Peshmerga would serve as the backbone of Task Force Viking's assaults. Air support would rely heavily on the U.S. Air Force and Navy, with conventional force contributions from the 173rd Airborne Brigade and the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU).

The battles for Kirkuk and Mosul were crucial in holding the Iraqi divisions in place. During these engagements, Task Force Viking's Special Forces operational detachments-alpha utilized airpower against the Iraqi divisions to either force their withdrawal or set conditions for the Peshmerga force to attack and overrun Iraqi positions. A NATO partner requested that no Kurdish forces entered either city. To meet this requirement, Task Force Viking employed the 173rd Airborne Brigade and the 26th MEU to secure the cities, allowing the conventional forces to occupy them while the CFLCC's main effort continued its advance north. The operational detachments-alpha ensured the withdraw of all Peshmerga forces across the Green Line. These tactical victories contributed to the operational objectives in support of the conventional force's main advance and were strategically important in preventing an international incident with NATO allies.

The collaboration between Special Forces, irregular partner forces, and conventional forces in liberating and securing cities was crucial in denying the 13 Iraqi divisions from effectively maneuvering against the CFLCC's main effort.

5-19. Figure 5-2 is a notional framework depicting special operations effects during a crisis. This notional framework is not all inclusive but provides a visualization of how Army special operations forces may be employed when responding to a crisis with the goal of countering further provocation and deterring escalation of an already deteriorating security situation. Army special operations forces may establish an O-5 (special operations task force) or O-6 (combined joint special operations task force) command, or a special operations joint task force as the lead element of a crisis response force, depending on the situation. Alternatively, Army special operations forces may align in a supported-supporting relationship with another Army, joint force, or partner-led task force.

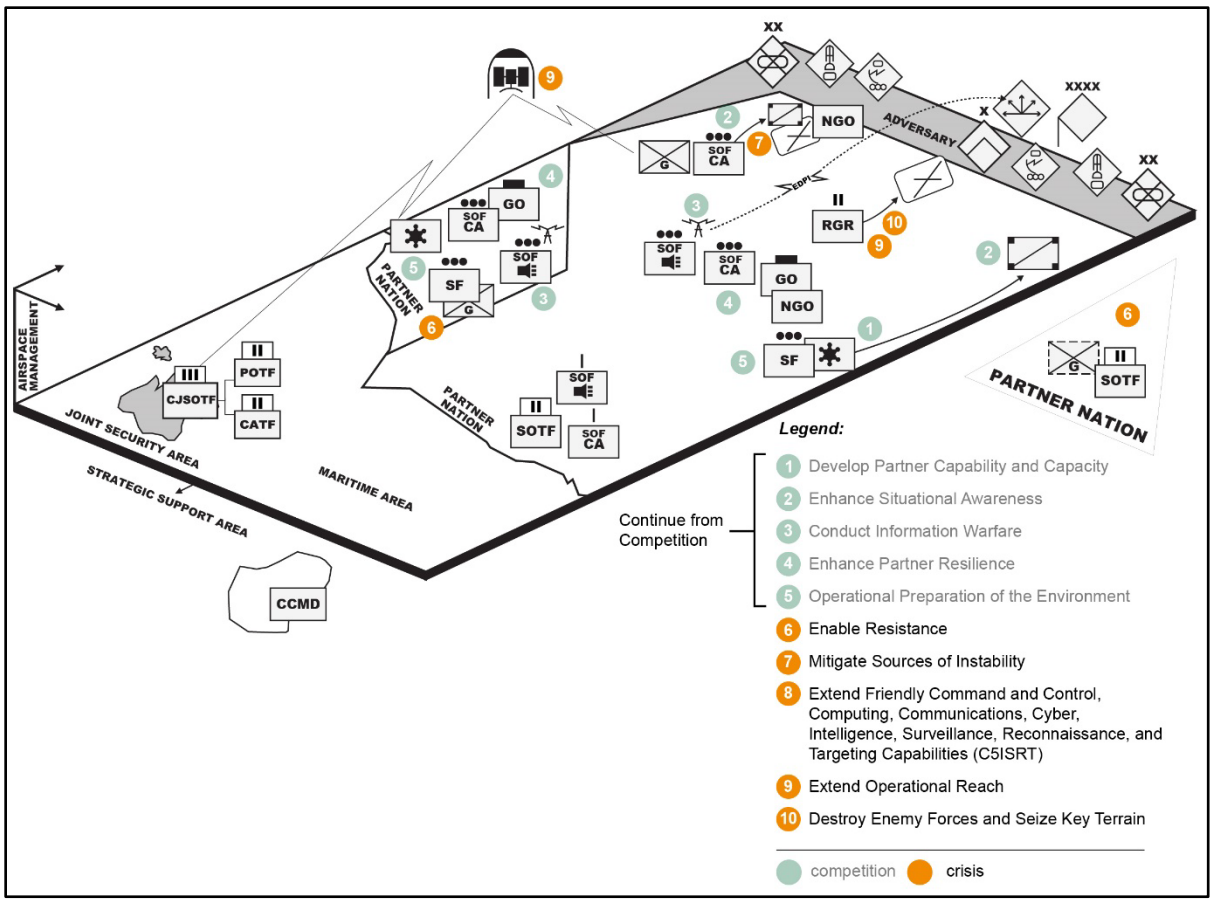


Figure 5-2. Notional framework of special operations during crisis

SPECIAL OPERATIONS DURING CRISIS

5-20. Army special operations forces continue to conduct special operations activities to develop partner capability and capacity, enhance partner resilience, conduct information warfare, enhance situational awareness, and conduct operational preparation of the environment. During crisis, special operations support combatant commanders and partners by working to mitigate and resolve threats, either to restore stability or transition to conflict. Army special operations forces provide options for the combatant commander to resolve the crisis in a way that maintains the initiative or improves U.S. relative advantages.

Note. The elements in figure 5-2 align with the discussion of effects described in paragraphs 5-22 through 5-28.

Enable Resistance

5-21. During crisis, the security situation may require a U.S. policy decision to enable a resistance movement to counter or defeat an internal or external threat. Depending on the type of support authorized, Army special operations forces can leverage resistance forces skills and abilities developed during competition to address the source of the crisis. When partner resistance forces and U.S. objectives align, Army special operations forces can provide support to resistance forces to improve situational awareness, restore local security and public safety, prevent further acts of aggression, deter adversary escalation, address the source of instability, and prevent further deterioration of the crisis.

Mitigate Sources of Instability

5-22. To mitigate instability created by a crisis, Army special operations forces assist in the planning, coordination, and distribution of humanitarian assistance by deploying to support response and recovery efforts in conjunction with lead federal agencies. During crisis, foreign humanitarian assistance addresses and mitigates sources of instability by supporting stabilization of the environment, eliminate the sources of instability, and a return to competition. To respond to a crisis, Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations units conduct several concurrent actions.

5-23. Through civil affairs operations and military information support operations, Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations units—

- Leverage civilian capabilities to support the partner government's ability to respond to crisis.
- Reinforce civilian preparedness capabilities.
- Support partner government recovery and restoration of essential services.

5-24. Civil Affairs units, supported by other Army special operations forces, supplement partner government efforts to stabilize the environment and return to competition. Civil Affairs units may establish a joint civil-military operations task force to synchronize crisis response efforts.

Note. Army special operations forces respond to crises involving disaster response, humanitarian assistance, and defense support to civil authorities when tasked. These mission sets are addressed in additional doctrinal references, including JP 3-28, JP 3-29, ADP 3-07, ADP 3-28, FM 3-07, ATP 3-05.68, ATP 3-53.4, and ATP 3-57.20.

Extend Friendly C5ISRT

5-25. Army special operations forces enhance C5ISRT capabilities through the execution of special operations, integrating cyber, electromagnetic, and space-based assets. This proactive approach generates critical time and space for conventional forces to effectively maneuver against enemy forces, contributing to overall mission success. By disrupting enemy networks and exploiting vulnerabilities, Army special operations forces create conditions that limit adversary freedom of action, increase friendly situational awareness, facilitate data informed decision dominance, and execute decisive operations. This integrated capability ensures a synergistic effect, maximizing the force multiplying impact of both special and conventional forces across the range of military operations.

Extend Operational Reach

5-26. When direct deployment is not feasible, Army special operations forces can employ remote advise and assist operations to extend operational reach and enhance irregular partner force maneuver. Enabled by digital communications and established networks, Army special operations forces provide partners with operational advice, planning and intelligence support, and access to enablers. This preserves U.S. combat power and force posture while enabling partners to operate independently in response to the crisis. Remote advising enhances understanding of partner capabilities and decision-making while extending the Army's influence across the operational environment. When threat conditions or political sensitivity prevent the physical presence of forces in the region, as a low-risk option, Army special operations forces may conduct remote advise and assist operations to extend C5ISRT.

Destroy Enemy Forces and Seize Key Terrain

5-27. Army special operations forces conduct direct action and small-scale offensive and defensive actions to destroy enemy forces, seize key terrain, and safeguard critical infrastructure. They employ specialized military capabilities to achieve these effects unilaterally or with partners. These operations enhance Army, joint force, or partner freedom of maneuver and create advantages, while threatening positional advantage and denying enemy sanctuary. (See chapter 2 of this publication for more information on hostage rescue operations.)

TRANSITION TO COMPETITION OR ARMED CONFLICT

5-28. In most cases U.S. policy seeks to resolve a crisis without resorting to armed conflict. Army special operations forces effects may take time to develop so early integration of Army special operations forces into joint campaigns is critical. Army special operations forces' generational relationships and understanding of the operational environment inform combatant commander options to de-escalate the crisis and return to competition. Civil engagement helps coopt nonmilitary agencies and populations that can also provide alternatives to military action. Psychological operations units provide options to influence threat leaders, populations, and their will to persist in their hostile actions. Army special operations forces actions during crisis help build stronger bonds with allies and other partners.

5-29. When conflict is imminent, Army special operations forces conduct flexible deterrence options to signal U.S. resolve, demonstrate support to partners, and prepare the operational environment for follow-on forces. Forward presence provides the combatant commander with flexible response options. Army special operations forces can support conventional forcible entry operations through the following:

- Deception and influence activities.
- Direct action, airfield seizure, and interdiction.
- Seizure and security of key personnel, terrain, systems, and facilities.
- Facilitating the destruction of threat C5ISRT systems.
- Intelligence and early warning indicators.

5-30. This context includes a shift in lead federal agency from the Department of State to the Department of Defense; establishment of a joint operations area or joint special operations area; deployment and integration of conventional forces; and the establishment of forward staging and operating bases.

ARMED CONFLICT

large-scale combat operations. Extensive joint combat operations in terms of scope and size of forces committed, conducted as a campaign aimed at achieving operational and strategic objectives. (ADP 3-0)

5-31. The complexity of armed conflict continually sees increases in battlefield transparency, lethality, range, speed, and dispersal of forces operating within confines of the main battle area or continents apart. Army special operations forces support conventional operations by providing intelligence, influencing decisions, disrupting enemy operations, and shaping the battlefield by continuously consolidating gains. Army special operations forces help the joint force commander achieve operational success by enabling targeting capabilities.

5-32. Army special operations forces work with and through partners to add operational depth and reach to Army and the joint force by operating in the rear and close areas of the operational framework, and in the extended deep area of the strategic framework. The execution of special operations activities leverages partner capability, access, and placement to disrupt enemy decision making and freedom of action. These relationships extend irregular partner force maneuver into the extended deep area by conducting operations and activities to shape or influence the operational area. These operations and activities can penetrate enemy defenses creating unforeseen dilemmas and complicating their operations.

5-33. In armed conflict, Army special operations forces continue to conduct special operations activities that develop partner capability and capacity, enhance situational awareness, conduct information warfare, enhance partner resilience, enable resistance forces, extend friendly C5ISRT, extend operational reach, destroy enemy forces, and seize key terrain.

5-34. Army special operations forces' economy of force (as compared to conventional warfare) preserves combat power, reduces risk to forces, can reduce political risk, and promotes stability and prosperity. Joint force commanders balance the opportunities and advantages Army special operations forces provide with the potential risk that small-scale operations may not always have relative combat power to overcome a numerically superior threat force and may risk escalation that draws other nations and groups into the conflict. The following vignette highlights Army special operations forces' support to conventional force maneuver.

Rangers in Normandy

After France fell to Nazi Germany in mid-1940, Great Britain stood alone in Western Europe until the U.S. entered the war in December 1941. With the West firmly in Nazi control, the Soviet Union and Germany fought a bloody contest on the Eastern Front. Seeking relief for his beleaguered forces, Soviet leader Joseph Stalin pressured his Western Allies to open a Second Front in France as soon as possible. The British and Americans, remembering the failed raid on the French port of Dieppe in August 1942, opted instead for offensives in Sicily and Italy in 1943.

The Nazis continued to improve their “Atlantic Wall” coastal defenses, stretching from the French border with Spain to the northern tip of Norway. This system of reinforced bunkers, fighting positions, and defensive obstacles presented an incredible planning challenge to the Allies, who searched for suitable landing areas on the seemingly impenetrable French coast. Following months of deliberation and meticulous planning, the Allies finally opened the long-awaited Second Front on 6 June 1944, in Normandy, France. There, the U.S. Army had the task of seizing and holding the beached code-named UTAH and OMAHA.

Between the two beaches was Pointe du Hoc, a promontory upon which it was believed the Germans had emplaced large guns capable of firing on the approaches and landing zones of both beaches. If these guns interdicted either beach, they could imperil the landing, or even prevent the consolidation of the two beachheads into one. Given their training, esprit de corps, and reputation as hard-hitting elite infantry, U.S. Army Rangers received the daunting mission of seizing and holding Pointe du Hoc.

Organized into a Provisional Ranger Force, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel James E. Rudder, the Rangers of the 2nd and 5th Ranger Battalions were split into three groups, dubbed Force A, Force B, and Force C, which planned to work in conjunction to take Pointe du Hoc. Rudder led Force A, composed of Companies D, E, and F, 2nd Rangers, which scaled the cliffs at Pointe du Hoc. After seizing the Pointe, and learning that the guns were not emplaced, Rudder’s Rangers withstood heavy German resistance and awaited reinforcement by the other two Ranger elements.

Force B, consisting of Company C, 2nd Battalion, landed at CHARLIE Sector on OMAHA Beach. It was to destroy German defensive positions on Point de la Percée then fight to Pointe du Hoc. However, Force B Rangers saw Company A, 116th Infantry Regiment, 29th Infantry Division, land to their left at DOG GREEN sector. These infantrymen walked into a storm of enemy fire and were stopped at the water’s edge. In a testament to their intensive training and sheer will, about half of Company C managed to cross the beach and climb the steep cliffs where they eliminated German fighting positions. This helped succeeding waves of American troops get ashore.

Force C, composed of Companies A and B, 2nd Rangers, and the 5th Rangers, under LTC Max F. Schneider, came ashore at the DOG WHITE sector. The Ranger unit made it mostly intact to the seawall. While huddled there with troops from the 116th Infantry, Brigadier General Norman D. Cota, Assistant Division Commander, 29th Infantry Division, ordered the 5th Rangers to get over the seawall and “lead the way”.

The Rangers scrambled over the wall, blew gaps in the protective wire, and eliminated German defensive positions to clear the way for troops at DOG WHITE to get off the beach. The Rangers then assisted the 29th Infantry Division with securing Vierville-sur-Mer, before the combined force relieved Ranger Force A on 8 June. U.S. Army Rangers working with conventional infantry was critical to the successful seizure of OMAHA Beach and provides an important example of how Rangers support conventional forces in large-scale combat operations.

SPECIAL OPERATIONS DURING ARMED CONFLICT

5-35. Army special operations forces conduct operations throughout the depth, breadth, and width of the operational framework. These operations may be conducted within the land component commander's area of operations, or within the joint operations or a joint special operations area in the extended deep area. The location of Army special operations forces in armed conflict is important from a command and control perspective, as these operations may require coordination between multiple echelons of Army and joint force commands. Actions within the extended deep area directly support friendly axis of advance in the offense, defense in depth, as well as maneuver and fires advantages in the close fight.

5-36. Army special operations forces may conduct special operations activities in the land area of operations to advance joint force fires and maneuver in the extended deep area. Conventional force-special operations integration, interoperability, and interdependence is essential in conducting special operations regardless of the command relationship and nesting of tactical and operational tasks and purposes. SOF, either unilaterally or combined with partner forces, can attack vulnerable targets, influence populations, and motivate or support established networks, such as local militias and resistance groups, to gather valuable information, oppose enemy forces, and weaken popular support to enemy offensive operations. Friendly backed partner forces, or guerilla forces, can also damage or degrade critical infrastructure to disrupt enemy sustainment activities.

SPECIAL OPERATIONS IN THE REAR, CLOSE, AND DEEP AREAS

5-37. During armed conflict Army special operations forces and their partners influence, delay, disorient, disrupt, degrade, deceive, and destroy enemy capabilities across the operational framework. These effects increase Army and joint force commanders' capacity to seize and maintain the initiative, impose dilemmas on the enemy, and retain relative advantage. Army special operations forces' capabilities enable effects in the operational and strategic deep areas. Army special operations forces' capabilities also enable conventional forces operating in rear and close areas.

Rear Area

5-38. The land component commander is responsible for area security and control, including rear area protection. Rear area protection poses unique challenges due to the increased range of precision fires, ballistic missiles, cyber effects, and weapons of mass destruction. Enemy forces may attempt to disrupt operations by affecting vulnerable targets in rear areas. Forces responsible for rear area security are organized and equipped to counter the enemy's capabilities.

5-39. As large-scale combat operations advance, maneuver forces may bypass population centers and isolated enemy units, leaving behind a complex security environment. Army special operations forces operating in the rear area focus on identifying and defeating enemy bypassed units and other threats concealed within the bypassed population to consolidate gains.

5-40. Civil Affairs units work with civilian authorities and other Army protection units in rear and bypassed areas to reestablish civil control and essential services. Through these stability operations tasks, Civil Affairs units deny the enemy opportunities to reconstitute or to foment resistance that threatens vital rear area command and control or sustainment nodes. Civil Affairs units leverage civil networks with sustainment and protection capabilities in rear areas to preserve military combat power for the close fight. Psychological Operations units message rear area populations to communicate populace and resources control measures, maintain morale to continue the fight, and support partner legitimacy.

populace and resources control. Operations which provide security for the populace, deny personnel and materiel to the enemy, mobilize population and materiel resources, and detect and reduce the effectiveness of enemy agents. populace control measures include curfews, movement restrictions, travel permits, registration cards, and resettlement of civilians. Resource control measures include licensing, regulations or guidelines, checkpoints (for example, roadblocks), ration controls, amnesty programs, and inspection of facilities. Most military operations employ some type of populace and resources control measures. (FM 1-02.1)

Close Area

> **close area.** The portion of a commander's area of operations assigned to subordinate maneuver forces. (ADP 3-0)

5-41. Although Army special operations forces primarily operate in deep areas, some Army special operations forces play a crucial role in supporting the Army and joint force in the close fight. They conduct special operations to reinforce and support the tactical and operational maneuver of U.S. and partner forces. To support the main effort of the joint task force, commanders apply special operations activities as necessary, utilizing both organic and partner forces.

5-42. Army special operations forces integrate human, information, and physical effects to support conventional maneuver operations in the close area. They may accompany coalition or mission partner forces to facilitate command and control, separate combatants from noncombatants, and promote unity of effort.

5-43. Psychological Operations teams employ messaging techniques to influence enemy decision-making and force disposition. Civil Affairs personnel advise maneuver commanders on the protection of civilian infrastructure essential to preserving relative advantage in the close areas. Civil Affairs units may also plan and coordinate populace and resources control measures with partner authorities, Army protection units, and the supported maneuver units.

5-44. Army special operations forces support Army and partner force combined-arms maneuver against critical nodes to disrupt adversary electromagnetic and C5ISRT capabilities, creating time and space for friendly freedom of action. Special operations help shape the close fight by disrupting enemy long-range fires, sabotaging critical infrastructure, and disrupting enemy maneuver forces.

5-45. To ensure their operations align with the corps and division areas of operation, Army special operations forces coordinate elements with applicable headquarters. (See chapter 3 of this manual for more information on liaisons.)

5-46. Figure 5-3, page 68, provides a notional framework depicting Army special operations forces in the rear and close areas during armed conflict. It provides a visualization of how Army special operations forces may be employed to contribute to large-scale combat operations in support of the land component commander. In this framework, up to an O-6 (joint special operations task force) may be directly attached to or employed in a supported-supporting command relationship to the land component commander.

Deep Area

> **deep area.** Where the commander sets conditions for future success in close combat. (ADP 3-0)
>
> **deep operations.** Tactical actions against enemy forces, typically out of direct contact with friendly forces, intended to shape future close operations and protect rear operations. (ADP 3-0)
>
> **denied area.** is an area under enemy or unfriendly control in which friendly forces cannot expect to operate within existing operational constraints and force capabilities. (JP 3-05)

5-47. The deep area is a part of the operational framework, and where operations focus on the enemy's freedom of action and help shape future operations in the close area. It contains enemy supporting formations and capabilities that enable their main forces to operate. Special Forces units conduct operations to disrupt the enemy, gather intelligence, and support conventional forces. Special Forces units target enemy critical vulnerabilities, disrupt command and control, interdict long range fires, and degrade sustainment capabilities in support of the close fight and to shape the operational environment.

Extended Deep Area

5-48. The extended deep area is comprised of the operational and strategic deep areas. The extended deep area refers to regions beyond the reach of conventional ground forces or where their operations may be prohibited by policy. Army special operations forces' access and placement enables space and cyber assets to see, sense, understand, target, and attack enemy activities and infrastructure in the extended deep area. The conduct of special reconnaissance in the extended deep area reinforces Army and joint force commanders' ability to locate and interdict enemy antiaccess and area denial, command and control networks, and long-range fires capabilities.

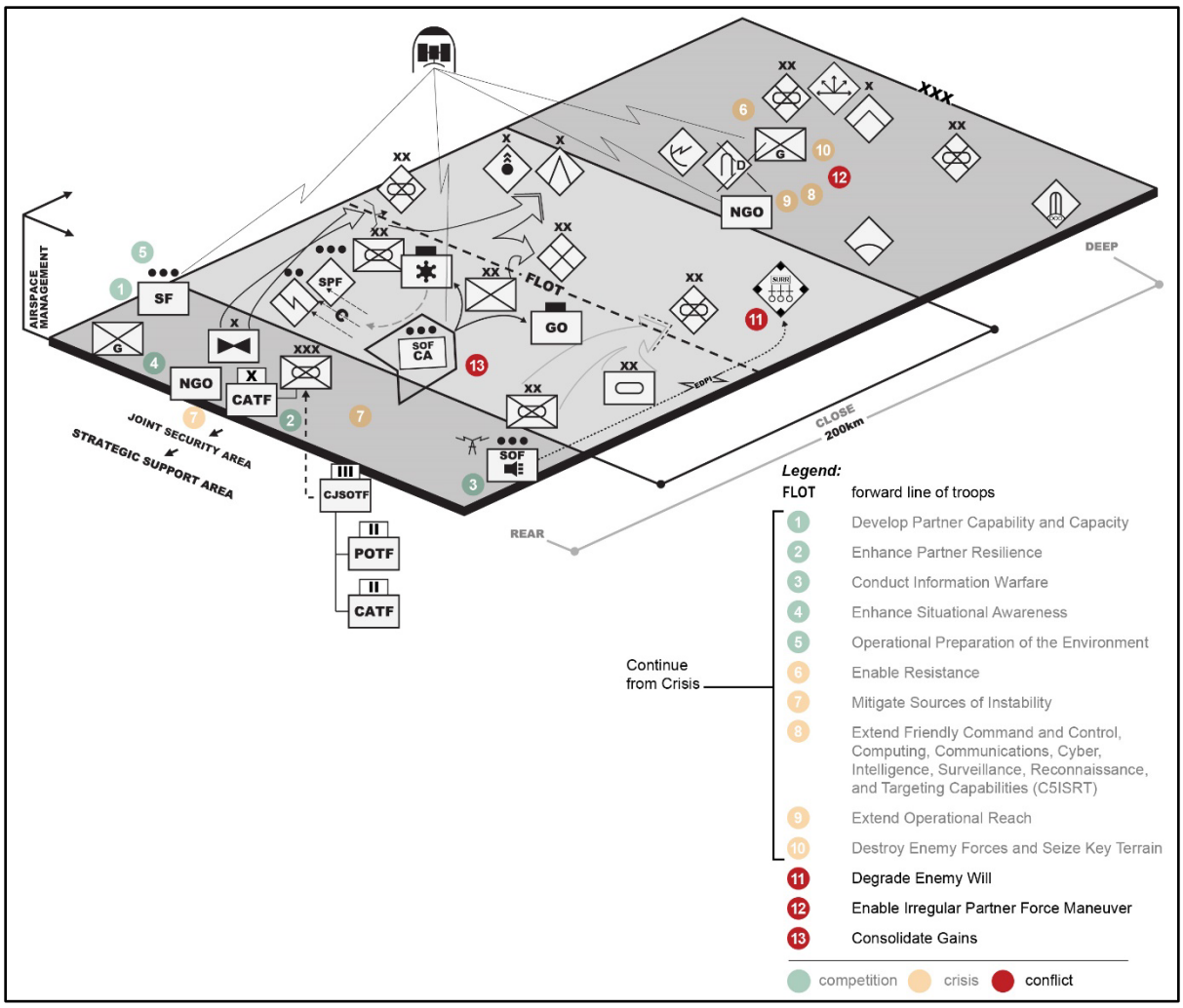


Figure 5-3. Notional framework of special operations in the rear and close areas during armed conflict

5-49. Army special operations forces employ specialized intelligence and targeting capabilities to provide Army and joint force commanders with a comprehensive understanding of the enemy's composition, disposition, and potential courses of action by operating in and reporting from the extended deep area. This requires a spectrum of intelligence operations with full integration into all facets of unified action partner and special operations activities to enhance situational awareness, decision-making, targeting, and defeat of the enemy forces.

5-50. Special Forces units use advanced infiltration techniques to conduct special operations activities with and through partner forces to find, delay, disorient, deceive, and disrupt enemy operations throughout the extended deep. Special Forces units leverage partners to gain access and placement in denied areas to achieve physical, information, and human advantages.

5-51. Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations forces conduct operations that generate effects in the deep area. Civil Affairs forces support resistance in the deep area by integrating civil networks with relevant access and capabilities into resistance planning. Psychological Operations forces conduct influence activities by messaging specific individuals or groups.

Operational Deep Area

5-52. The operational deep area is typically within the area of interest but outside of the land component commander's area of responsibility. This precludes conventional force operations without support from the joint

force. Army special operations forces conduct operations in the deep area to enable friendly maneuver in the close area by disrupting the enemy's ability to command and control, maneuver, supply, and communicate with forces in contact and enemy follow-on echelons.

Strategic Deep Area

5-53. The strategic deep area is where the combatant commander, other combatant commands, and national agencies can employ strategic intelligence capabilities, joint fires, SOF, and space and cyberspace capabilities. Many enemy space, cyberspace, and information warfare capabilities that reside in strategic deep areas are beyond international boundaries and outside the joint operations area. These may continue to impact or influence the joint operations area, despite being non-contiguous and distant from the main battle area. Army special operations forces utilize unconventional warfare, direct action, and special reconnaissance to disrupt or destroy these capabilities. This engagement of the enemy force in their rear area and sanctuaries enables conventional force maneuver and the exploitation of weaknesses in the enemy's defenses and regional alliances.

5-54. Figure 5-4 provides a notional framework depicting Army special operations forces within the extended deep area. Again, this framework is not all inclusive but provides a visualization of how Army special operations forces fight in support of the land component or joint force commander's objectives. In this framework, an O-8 led special operations joint task force will likely provide command and control of special operations forces operating in a joint special operations area within the larger area of operations of the joint task force commander.

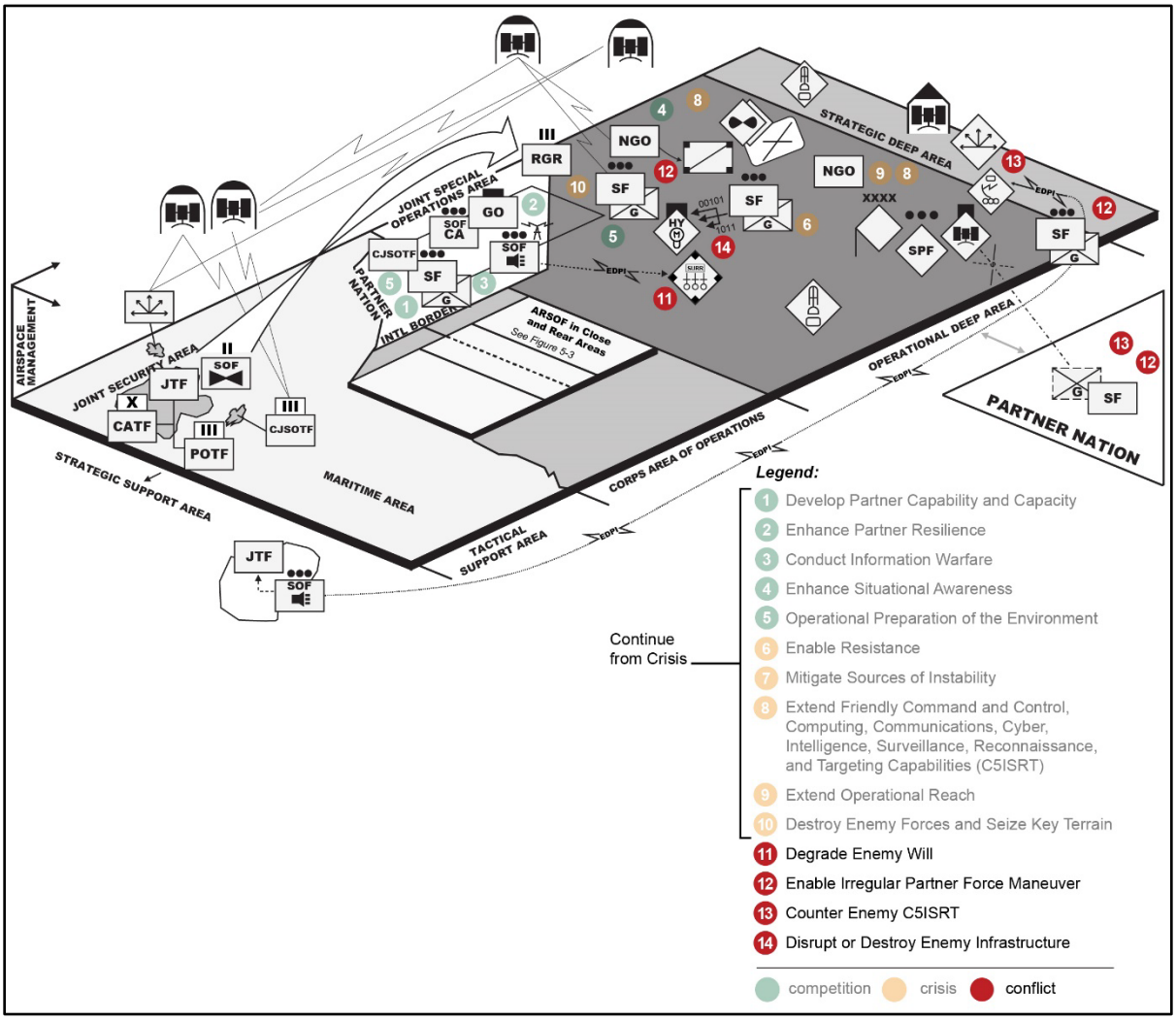


Figure 5-4. Notional framework of special operations in the extended deep area during armed conflict

Degrade Enemy Will

5-55. Psychological Operations forces conduct military information support operations by amplifying friendly successes and exploiting enemy failures on the battlefield to degrade enemy will. Civil Affairs forces mobilize civil networks to influence support for U.S. interests and disrupt adversary influence. These operations dislocate and discourage enemy forces while creating human and information advantages for the Army and joint force's offensive and defensive operations. The result of these operations can—

- Undermine enemy confidence and unit integrity.
- Decrease the enemy's ability to fight.
- Encourage enemy personnel to surrender and abandon the fight.
- Impair enemy leadership's ability to make informed decisions and sound judgments.
- Weaken the enemy's will and determination to continue fighting.

Enable Irregular Partner Force Maneuver

5-56. Army special operations forces enable irregular partner force maneuver in the extended deep area by generating dilemmas and imposing costs on enemy forces that create opportunities for partner freedom of action and tactical success. Special Forces and Ranger units conduct reconnaissance, targeting, and direct action to degrade enemy command and control, isolate key terrain, and disrupt critical logistics creating vulnerabilities for partner force exploitation in enemy formations. These operations expose gaps in enemy defenses and reduce freedom of movement to enable opportunities for irregular partner force maneuver.

5-57. Army special operations forces disrupt enemy cohesion by targeting the systems that enable enemy situational awareness and coordinated action. Strikes against command nodes, communication networks, and critical logistics hubs fragment formations, isolate units, and disrupt resupply. This reduces the enemy's ability to mass combat power, respond effectively, and maintain operational coherence. This forces the enemy to defend in multiple directions and weakens their overall effectiveness. These efforts synchronize conventional and partner force maneuver and fires to maximize pressure on the enemy formations across the depth and breadth of the operational framework.

Counter Enemy C5ISRT

5-58. Army special operations forces conduct operations in the extended deep area to degrade, dislocate, or defeat enemy antiaccess and area denial systems. These operations, either combined with or independent from irregular partner forces, extend the operational reach of corps and divisions. Special Forces units, unilaterally or through an irregular partner force maneuver, conduct strikes, sabotage, surveillance, and reconnaissance to extend operational reach of corps and division air, space, and close fires against antiaccess and area denial systems to protect friendly forces in the close fight and clear axes of advance in the corps' deep area. Psychological Operations and Special Forces units in cooperation with space, cyberspace, and electromagnetic spectrum forces conduct operations targeting enemy C5ISRT systems to further disrupt and degrade enemy warfighting functions. For example, Army special operations forces can counter C5ISRT activities and open-air corridors to enable conventional envelopment or joint forcible entry.

> **sabotage**. An act or acts with intent to injure, interfere with, or obstruct the national defense of a country by willfully injuring or destroying, or attempting to injure or destroy, any national defense or war materiel, premises, or utilities, to include human and natural resources. (ATP 3-05.1)

Disrupt or Destroy Enemy Infrastructure

5-59. Army and joint force commanders may request Special Forces units to affect high priority or high payoff components of the enemy's logistics, communications, or economic infrastructure. Sabotage may be the most effective, and sometimes the only way, of attacking specific targets. Successful sabotage operations force the enemy to allocate more resources to protect perceived vulnerabilities in their rear area. These operations are designed to create dilemmas for enemy formations and generate advantages that can be exploited by the joint force.

5-60. Special Forces units within the enemy's tactical support area disrupt enemy battlefield geography by generating dilemmas through disruption and destruction operations. These operations disrupt logistics,

command and control, long-range fires, and air defense systems by placing critical elements of the enemy's warfighting functions at risk. This includes impairing enemy mobility and ability to re-supply forces, which undermines the enemy warfighting potential and long-term sustainment.

Consolidate Gains

5-61. Army special operations forces continuously support consolidation of gains as part of offensive and defensive operations. The consolidation of gains enables unified action partners to secure tactical successes, preserve combat power, build endurance, and enhance resilience. These efforts mitigate the risk of a resurgent enemy force in the corps area of operations by enhancing protection and friendly force freedom of maneuver.

5-62. Civil Affairs units partner with critical civil networks to rapidly reconstitute partner governance capacity in support of the land component commander's objectives. Civil networks can directly contribute to commander's capacity to see and sense the enemy's intention within the operational framework, influence local populations, and preserve combat power for the conduct of offensive and defensive operations. As the forward line of troops advance and consolidate gains, the partner networks transfer to conventional force Civil Affairs for long-term consolidation and preparation for cessation of hostilities. (The vignette below highlights the special operations economy of force advantages in the extended deep.)

The Marauders in Burma

The U.S. goal in the China-Burma-India (CBI) theater during World War II was to provide Chinese nationalists with the supplies and assistance needed to keep it as a strategic partner fighting Japanese forces on mainland Asia. Keeping substantial Japanese forces engaged on the continent prevented greater enemy reinforcement against the main Allied thrust across the Pacific Island chains. However, providing supplies to China was a herculean task. Japan occupied the Chinese coast, and in 1942, had overrun the Burma Road, the last overland supply route. The U.S. was forced to rely on transport aircraft flying over the Himalayas, a perilous route known as "The Hump." The dangerous air route was made even more difficult by Japanese fighter aircraft based out of Myitkyina, in northern Burma.

Because of the difficulty of the terrain, environment, and long expanses of trackless jungle, it was clear a specially formed and trained U.S. ground force was necessary to secure northern Burma. In response, the U.S. Army formed an all-volunteer provisional force, mostly from jungle-trained Soldiers or those with combat experience in the Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands, or New Guinea campaigns. The new unit was officially designated the 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional) but was more commonly known as Merrill's Marauders after their force commander, Brigadier General Frank D. Merrill. Modeled after the British Chindits, the Marauders served as a long-range penetration group. Merrill's Marauders, operating in conjunction with Chinese Army elements, had the mission of working deep in enemy-occupied Burma to seize and hold Myitkyina and its all-important airfield.

Fortunately, this combined force had the assistance of Detachment 101 of the Office of Strategic Services and its Kachin guerrillas. Detachment 101 began operating in occupied Burma in late 1942. By the time the Marauders set out in February 1944, the OSS had more than a year on the ground to prepare the operating environment. By employing capabilities resembling those of future Civil Affairs and Special Forces units, Detachment 101 teams integrated with the local Kachin ethnic group and grew a nascent guerrilla nucleus into a highly effective force that stood ready to assist Allied forces as they moved to retake northern Burma.

(continued on next page)

The Marauders in Burma (continued)

The Marauders and irregular partner forces operated in an extremely austere environment. Because they had to take an overland route to Myitkyina, they had to rely upon aerial resupply due to a lack of ground transport. Aided by intelligence and guides supplied by the Kachin guerrillas, Merrill's Marauders executed a flank envelopment march through the dense Burmese jungle, to advance deep into enemy territory and outmaneuver the Japanese. To support these efforts, the British air-landed the Chindits south of Myitkyina, with the goal of distracting the Japanese and tying up elements of the Japanese 18th Division, which was holding the area.

The combined efforts led to the successful seizure of the Myitkyina airfield on 17 May 1944. Although the Japanese were able to reinforce Myitkyina itself, leading to a nearly three-month long siege, the airfield and the threat it posed to the "Hump" fliers was over. U.S. transport planes could then fly a quicker and more direct path to China, which enabled heavier cargos and shorter turnaround times. Despite being severely outnumbered and undersupplied, the Marauders' deep operations and irregular force partnerships made a significant strategic impact by diverting thousands of Japanese troops from the defense of the Pacific islands.

TRANSITION TO RETURN TO COMPETITION

5-63. As conflict transitions to competition, responsibility for stability transfers to the partner nation or to a transitional authority. Army special operations forces disarm, demobilize, and reintegrate their irregular partner forces. Civil Affairs forces, the Department of State, and humanitarian relief organizations play a major role in stability operations.

stability operation. An operation conducted outside the United States in coordination with other instruments of national power to establish or maintain a secure environment and provide essential governmental services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction, and humanitarian relief. (ADP 3-0)

5-64. Army units should focus on the minimum essential stability tasks to stabilize a post-conflict region including providing basic security, food, water, shelter, and medical treatment. Civil Affairs plan and coordinate with unified action partners to lead larger stability operations tasks including establishing civil security, implementing civil control, restoring essential services, providing support to governance, supporting economic and infrastructure development, and conducting security cooperation.

STABILITY AND RETURN TO COMPETITION

5-65. Army special operations forces play a role in transition to post-conflict competition. The theater special operations command and apportioned Army special operations forces maintain an enduring forward presence, long-term regional orientation and engagement, and focus on the combatant command campaign plan and relevant security interests.

5-66. In conjunction with other Army and joint forces, special operations units set applicable conditions and consolidate gains to support conventional forces transition of military government to an authorized civilian authority. Army special operations forces may conduct the following:

- Direct action to destroy or neutralize remaining threats.
- Security force assistance to build the capability and capacity of foreign security forces.
- Foreign internal defense activities to develop partner forces to address internal sources of instability and threats to security.
- Personnel recovery operations.
- Civil affairs and stability operations to create conditions that allow for the eventual transition.
- Military information support operations to influence enemies from reinitiating malign activities.

- Synchronization of the military information support operations and public affairs messaging to coincide with friendly unit activities to favorably inform and influence behavior favorable towards friendly security forces.
- Transition from stability-focused tasks to the theater campaign plan's security cooperation objectives.
- Support to the reestablishment of a legitimate civilian authority to act as a transitional authority.
- Disarm, demobilize, and reintegrate irregular partner forces.

5-67. Army special operations forces and unified action partners shift to security assistance roles and stability tasks in support of the conventional forces transition to legitimate government authorities. Sufficient conditions for transitioning governance responsibilities depend on the credibility, capability, and capacity of the governing organization to restore pre-conflict conditions.

5-68. Leaders determine the broad conditions for transition at the outset of operations and refine them based on how the situation changes once hostilities come to an end. Army special operations forces understand the partner nation culture, a strong sense of the regional organization and interoperability, and provide the joint force commander a working knowledge of critical infrastructure, facilities, and essential services.

5-69. As conventional forces retrograde personnel and equipment, Army special operations forces provide the combatant command stay behind forces, and continuous engagement with transregional actors and local partners to promote alliances and stability within the area of operations and across the entire region. Relationships with local and regional leaders reinforce the need for continued engagements and military exchanges to further strengthen partnerships and promote host-nation and regional stability.

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Source Notes

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Glossary

The glossary lists acronyms and terms with Army or joint definitions. Where Army and joint definitions differ, (Army) or (joint) precedes the definition. The proponent publication for terms is listed in parentheses after the definition.

SECTION I – ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADP	Army doctrine publication
ATP	Army techniques publication
C5ISRT	command and control, computing, communications, cyber, intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and targeting capabilities
CFLCC	coalition forces command land component commander
CJCSI	Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction
DODD	Department of Defense directive
DODI	Department of Defense instruction
FM	field manual
JP	joint publication
JSOTF-P	Joint Special Operations Task Force–Philippines
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
MISO	military information support operations
SAG-U	Security Assistance Group-Ukraine
SOF	special operations forces
TC	training circular
USASOC	United States Army Special Operations Command
USC	United States Code
USSOCOM	United States Special Operations Command

SECTION II – TERMS

advanced operations base

A small, temporary base established near or within a joint operations area to command, control, and support special operations training or tactical operations. (ADP 3-05)

***Army special operations forces**

Those Active Component and Reserve Component Army forces designated by the Secretary of Defense that are specifically organized, trained, and equipped to conduct and support special operations.

characteristic

A feature or quality that marks an organization or function as distinctive or is representative of that organization or function. (ADP 1-01)

civil knowledge integration

The actions taken to analyze, evaluate, and organize collected civil information for operational relevance and informing the warfighting function. (FM 3-57)

civil-military integration

The actions taken to establish, maintain, influence, or leverage relations between military forces and indigenous populations and institutions to synchronize, coordinate, and enable interorganizational cooperation and to achieve unified action. (FM 3-57)

civil network development and engagement

The activity by which the civil network capabilities and resources are engaged, evaluated, developed, and integrated into operations. (FM 3-57)

close area

The portion of the commander's area of operations where the majority of subordinate maneuver forces conduct close combat. (ADP 3-0)

command and control

The exercise of authority and direction by a properly designated commander over assigned and attached forces in the accomplishment of the mission. (JP 1, Volume 2)

core competency

An essential and enduring capability that a branch or an organization provides to Army operations. (ADP 1-01)

countering weapons of mass destruction

Efforts against actors of concern to curtail the conceptualization, development, possession, proliferation, use, and effects of weapons of mass destruction, related expertise, materials, technologies, and means of delivery. (JP 3-40)

counterinsurgency

Comprehensive civilian and military efforts designed to simultaneously defeat and contain insurgency and address its root causes. (JP 3-24)

counterproliferation

Those actions taken to reduce the risks posed by extant weapons of mass destruction to the United States, allies, and partners. (JP 3-40)

counterterrorism

Activities and operations taken to neutralize terrorists and their organizations and networks to render them incapable of using violence to instill fear and coerce governments or societies to achieve their goals. (JP 3-26)

crisis

An emerging incident or situation involving a possible threat to the United States, its citizens, military forces, or vital interests that develops rapidly and creates a condition of such diplomatic, economic, or military importance that commitment of military forces and resources is contemplated to achieve national and/or strategic objectives. (JP 3-0)

denied area

(joint) An area under enemy or unfriendly control in which friendly forces cannot expect to operate within existing operational constraints and force capabilities. (JP 3-05)

Department of Defense deception activities

Activities, including those executed in support of perception management or influence operations, conducted by a Department of Defense component to deliberately mislead an adversary or potential adversary, or to conceal an activity from foreign intelligence collection, for the purpose of accomplishing the friendly mission. (DODI S-3604.01)

direct action

Short-duration strikes and other small-scale offensive actions conducted as a special operation to seize, destroy, capture, exploit, recover, or damage designated targets. (JP 3-05)

foreign humanitarian assistance

Department of Defense activities conducted outside the United States and its territories to directly relieve or reduce human suffering, disease, hunger, or privation. (JP 3-29)

foreign internal defense

Participation by civilian agencies and military forces of a government or international organizations in any of the programs and activities undertaken by a host nation government to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, insurgency, terrorism, and other threats to its security. (JP 3-22)

hostage rescue

A personnel recovery method used to recover isolated personnel who are specifically designated as hostages. (JP 3-50)

irregular warfare

(Army) The overt, clandestine, and covert employment of military and non-military capabilities by state and non-state actors to achieve policy objectives other than military domination of an enemy, either as the primary approach or in concert with conventional warfare. (ADP 3-0)

joint special operations air component

A task-organized unit that provides command and control functions for all special operations forces aviation units under the operational command of the joint special operations air component commander. (JP 3-05)

joint special operations area

An area of land, sea, and airspace assigned by a joint force commander to the commander of a joint special operations force to conduct special operations activities. (JP 3-0)

joint special operations task force

A task force composed of special operations forces from one or more Services or personnel from other United States Government departments and agencies formed to conduct special operations. (JP 3-05)

joint task force

A joint force that is constituted and so designated by the Secretary of Defense, a combatant commander, a subunified commander, or an existing joint task force commander to accomplish a specific mission. (JP 1, Volume 1)

large-scale combat operations

Extensive joint combat operations in terms of scope and size of forces committed, conducted as a campaign aimed at achieving operational and strategic objectives. (ADP 3-0)

liaison

That contact or intercommunication maintained between elements of military forces or other agencies to ensure mutual understanding and unity of purpose and action. (FM 6-0)

military government operations

Operations executed by Civil Affairs to provide expertise in the civil sector functions in order to establish transitional military authority or conduct support to civil administration. (FM 1-02.1)

***military information support operations**

Operations to influence the behavior of targeted foreign audiences in support of a commander's objectives.

operational preparation of the environment

The conduct of activities in likely or potential operational areas to set conditions for mission execution. (JP 3-05)

principle

A comprehensive and fundamental rule or an assumption of central importance that guides how an organization approaches and thinks about the conduct of operations. (ADP 1-01)

security force assistance

(joint) The Department of Defense activities that support the development of the capability and capacity of foreign security forces and their supporting institutions. (JP 3-20)

Special Forces

United States Army forces organized, trained, and equipped to conduct special operations with an emphasis on unconventional warfare capabilities. (JP 3-05)

special operations

Activities or actions requiring distinct modes of employment, tactical techniques, equipment, and training, often conducted in hostile, denied, or politically or diplomatically sensitive environments. (JP 3-05)

special operations command and control element

A special operations element for the command and control of special operations forces and coordination with conventional forces activities. (JP 3-05)

special operations joint task force

An organization from two or more Military Departments organized to provide command and control of joint special operations forces commanded by a flag or general officer. (JP 3-05)

***special operations task force**

A scalable unit, normally of battalion size, in charge of the special operations element, organized around the nucleus of special operations forces and support elements.

special reconnaissance

Reconnaissance and surveillance actions conducted as a special operation in hostile, denied, or politically sensitive environments. (JP 3-05)

stability operation

An operation conducted outside the United States in coordination with other instruments of national power to establish or maintain a secure environment and provide essential governmental services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction, and humanitarian relief. (ADP 3-0)

terrorism

The unlawful use of violence or threat of violence, often motivated by religious, political, or other ideological beliefs, to instill fear and coerce individuals, governments or societies in pursuit of terrorist goals. (JP 3-26)

theater special operations command

A subordinate unified command established by Commander, United States Special Operations Command, under the operational control of a designated combatant commander to command and control, plan, coordinate, conduct, and support joint special operations. (JP 3-05)

unconventional warfare

Activities conducted to enable a resistance movement or insurgency to coerce, disrupt, or overthrow a government or occupying power by operating through or with an underground, auxiliary, and guerrilla force in a denied area. (JP 3-05)

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26 June 2025

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