

“A Complex and Volatile Environment”: The Doctrinal Evolution from Full Spectrum Operations to Unified Land Operations

A Monograph

by

MAJ Cornelius Granai
United States Army



School of Advanced Military Studies
United States Army Command and General Staff College
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Name of Candidate: MAJ Cornelius O. Granai IV

Monograph Title: "A Complex and Volatile Environment": The Doctrinal Evolution from Full Spectrum Operations to Unified Land Operations

Approved by:

_____, Monograph Director
Anthony E. Carlson, PhD

_____, Seminar Leader
David M. Wood, COL

_____, Director, School of Advanced Military Studies
Henry A. Arnold III, COL

Accepted this 23rd day of May 2015 by:

_____, Director, Graduate Degree Programs
Robert F. Baumann, PhD

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Abstract

“A Complex and Volatile Environment”: The Doctrinal Evolution from Full Spectrum Operations to Unified Land Operations, by MAJ Cornelius Granai, 41 pages.

In autumn 2011, the US Army introduced Unified Land Operations (ULO) as its new operational concept, concluding the era of Full Spectrum Operations (FSO). FSO was the Army’s operational concept during recent conflicts, including the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Army transitioned to ULO based on voids in Army doctrine and terminology, the persistent need to nest with joint doctrine, lessons learned from Iraq and Afghanistan, and the necessary requirement to convey the Army’s unique warfighting capabilities to outside organizations. In addition, the concurrent enactment of ULO and Doctrine 2015 made doctrine more accessible to Soldiers and leaders throughout the Army.

However, the adoption of ULO did not constitute a radical transformation of doctrinal thinking. To the contrary, there are only minor differences between FSO and ULO. Unfortunately, however, some of the adjustments unintentionally resulted in a confusing mix of original terminology and mature concepts.

This monograph compares the two most recent doctrinal constructs and analyzes their key features in order to elucidate their compatibilities. Moreover, it argues that many of the allegedly new concepts, such as the core competencies and mission command, are carry-overs from Field Manual (FM) 3-0 Change 1, published in early 2011 as part of FSO. Ideally, this monograph seeks to assist future doctrinal revisions, while clearly delineating the similarities between FSO and ULO.

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Acronyms

ADP	Army Doctrine Publication
ADRP	Army Doctrinal Reference Publication
AKO	Army Knowledge Online
ATP	Army Techniques Publication
CSA	Chief of Staff of Army
CAM	Combined Arms Maneuver
CADD	Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate
DOD	Department of Defense
FM	Field Manual
FSO	Full Spectrum Operations
JP	Joint Publication
SAMS	School of Advanced Military Studies
TRADOC	Training and Doctrine Command
ULO	Unified Land Operations
WAS	Wide Area Security

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Introduction

As an approved and prescribed publication, doctrine stands juxtaposed to “informal practice,” which evolves from customs, tradition, and experience passed on through assorted writings, circulated materials, and conversation.

—Walter Kretchik, *US Army Doctrine*

In 2011, the US Army adopted Unified Land Operations (ULO) as its new operational concept, officially ending the era of Full Spectrum Operations (FSO). FSO had been part of the Army’s vocabulary for the better part of ten years, serving as its doctrinal construct that supported numerous warfighting missions, specifically in Afghanistan and Iraq. After a decade of persistent conflict, many Army leaders, including General Robert Cone, the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Commander in 2011, acknowledged the necessity for an enhanced doctrine. The new operational concept intended to support warfighters, who struggled to comprehend and defeat emerging and complex threats, which often dwarfed into a hybrid combination of conventional, unconventional, terroristic, and criminal elements.¹ In other words, the introduction of ULO drew on multiple years of lessons learned to make Army doctrine compatible with the twenty-first century environment. ULO, with its evolving ideas of the core competencies of combined arms maneuver (CAM) and wide area security (WAS), mission command, and initiative, would help the Army meet many ongoing challenges and promote long-term success. In addition, ULO nested with the joint operational construct of Unified Action, while articulating to the public how the nation’s land component contributed to national security.

¹ Robert Cone, "Laying the Groundwork for the Army of 2020," *The Land Warfare Papers*, no. 11-2 (August 2011): 2, accessed July 13, 2014, http://www.ausa.org/publications/ilw/Documents/LPE%2011-2_web.pdf.

Nevertheless, a comparison of FSO and ULO reveals only minor variances between the two concepts. This monograph will evaluate the two operational concepts and argue that the transition from FSO to ULO constituted no more than a subtle progression. In fact, much of ULO is almost identical to FSO, and many of the perceived innovative concepts, including the core competencies, originated during the latter stages of FSO. Furthermore, other supposed ULO ideas, such as the establishment of leadership tenets, actually represented a return to Air Land Battle. Put simply, the move to ULO was no more than a semantic evolution in doctrinal thinking. However, the adoption of ULO caused inadvertent confusion amongst warfighters.

This monograph used multiple research methodologies. First, the author conducted oral history interviews with civilians and leaders that were influential in the writing of ULO to gain insights concerning the reasons for the doctrinal advancement. The oral history interviews were unstructured and occurred without a formal questionnaire. The interviews were open discussions conducted for the purpose of soliciting information. Second, online primary sources about FSO supplemented the oral history interviews. Third, online secondary sources analyzed the effectiveness of the new doctrine and provided examples of the unintended confusion caused by the implementation of ULO. Fourth, the author consulted doctrinal manuals, including Joint Publication (JP) 3-0 *Joint Operations*, JP 1-02 *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, FM 3-0 *Operations*, FM 3-94 *Theater Army, Corps, and Division Operations*, Army Doctrinal Publication (ADP) 3-0 *Unified Land Operations*, ADP 6-0 *Mission Command*, and Army Doctrinal Reference Publication (ADRP) 1-02 *Terms and Military Graphics* during the research process.

Due to the emotional discussion that Army doctrine occasionally engenders, it is important to emphasize the monograph's purpose. First, it seeks to describe why the Army saw the need to conduct multiple revisions of doctrine beginning in 2001, culminating in the adoption of ULO. Second, the monograph will provide evidence of the minimal differences between FSO

and ULO, with a detailed analysis and comparison of both operational concepts. The investigation will demonstrate the move to ULO is no more than an evolution. Third, it will highlight some of the misperceptions that the replacement of FSO inadvertently triggered.

The monograph eschews a discussion about which operational concept is superior. It simply attempts to highlight the minimal divergences between FSO and ULO. The monograph will also not make any recommendations about how to improve doctrine, and it will not make any revision suggestions. At most, it is a timely examination of the subtle evolution from FSO to ULO and the implementation of Doctrine 2015.

A Background and Description of FSO

Just after the turn of the twenty-first century, the concept of FSO entered the Army's lexicon. Leaders such as Colonel Bill Benson, the former Commander of 4th Brigade 1st Cavalry Division and a graduate of the Advanced Operational Arts Studies Fellowship at the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS), believed FSO was the de facto operational concept for the Army, beginning in 2001.² Benson argued that FSO was the ideal description for how the Army accomplished its missions, which included major combat operations and stability operations, known at the time as, "operations other than war."³ The 2001 version of FM 3-0 defined FSO as, "the range of operations Army forces conduct in war and military operations other than war."⁴

² Colonel Bill Benson, "Unified Land Operations: The Evolution of Army Doctrine for Success in the 21st Century," *Military Review* (March-April 2012): 51, accessed July 13, 2014, http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/MilitaryReview/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_20120430_art004.pdf.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Field Manual (FM) 3-0, *Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2001), viii.

FSO reemphasized the critical importance of not just offensive and defensive operations, but stability tasks as well.⁵

The US Army did not officially define FSO as its operational concept until seven years later.⁶ The 2008 version of FM 3-0 stated:

Army forces combine offensive, defensive, and stability or civil support operations simultaneously as part of an interdependent joint force to seize, retain, and exploit the initiative, accepting prudent risk to create opportunities to achieve decisive results. They employ synchronized action—lethal and nonlethal—proportional to the mission and informed by a thorough understanding of all variables of the operational environment. Mission command that conveys intent and an appreciation of all aspects of the situation guides the adaptive use of Army forces.⁷

In 2008, according to Colonel Benson, FSO began incorporating multiple lessons drawn from several years of war by emphasizing the importance of stability type missions. General William Wallace, at the time the TRADOC Commander, stated in his Forward to FM 3-0 (2008): “Battlefield success is no longer enough; final victory requires concurrent stability operations to lay the foundation for lasting peace.”⁸ For the first time, offense, defense, and stability operations were fully compatible in a combat zone. As Benson put it, FSO’s most lasting legacy was in establishing stability operations as co-equal to offense and defense. Small wonder stability tasks continue to influence the Army doctrine in the era of ULO.⁹

A revision in doctrinal terminology accompanied the 2008 publication of FM 3-0. Some of the modifications included “battle command,” “risk,” and the “operational variables.” Further,

⁵ Benson, 51.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ FM 3-0, *Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2008), 3-1.

⁸ FM 3-0 (2008), Forward.

⁹ Benson, 53.

FSO reiterated the ubiquitous nature of initiative along the “range of military operations.”¹⁰

Benson argued that throughout its existence, FSO continually introduced, revised, and developed ideas like initiative and battle command, which eventually developed into “mission command.”¹¹

FSO thus revised terminology and provided the warfighter with relevant doctrine to assist in multiple conflicts around the world.

Early in 2011, the Army published the little-known FM 3-0 Change 1. Serving as a bridge between FSO and ULO, the manual was published six months prior to the publication of ADP 3-0, the capstone document for ULO. FM 3-0 Change 1 and the establishment of ULO as the contemporary operational concept through ADP 3-0 transpired within a year of each other, and the concepts that many assumed originated with ULO were first articulated in FM 3-0 Change 1. Furthermore, many of ULO’s new terms were carry-overs from FM 3-0 Change 1. Some of these include mission command, the core competencies of CAM and WAS, and operational design, which is now known as the Army Design Methodology.¹² FM 3-0 Change 1 thus served as a bridge between FSO and ULO.

An Acknowledgment of the Army’s Warfighting Challenges

As the US Army struggled to achieve long-term operational and strategic success in both Iraq and Afghanistan, senior Army leaders deplored a pattern of intellectual failure at all levels of command. According to General Cone, tactical commanders found difficulties in understanding the ongoing fight in both warzones, while operational level leaders wrestled with uncertainty,

¹⁰ Benson, 51.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² FM 3-0 Change 1, *Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), Forward.

situational understanding, and the organization of forces to counter the non-linear threat.¹³ To General Cone, FSO failed to support warfighters tangled in the complexities of a counterinsurgency fight. As he put it, “On the streets and highways of Iraq, at the company and battalion levels, our leaders and soldiers were in a fight they did not understand. At the senior command levels, there was ambiguity and leaders struggled to gain an understanding of the adversary and to bring the appropriate organizations and structures to bear. Our training and doctrine had ill-prepared us for counterinsurgency; quite frankly we had assumed the problem away.”¹⁴ It quickly becomes evident why Cone believed a new operational concept was necessary for the Army.

Efforts to revise FSO began in 2009 with the publication of TRADOC’s *The Army Capstone Concept*. The 2009 version of the *Capstone Concept* intended to guide the Army in future conflicts beginning in 2016. General Martin E. Dempsey, who at the time was the TRADOC Commander, characterized the critical significance of the new *Army Capstone Concept*. Dempsey stated that the document described, “The broad capabilities the Army will require from 2016-2028.”¹⁵ He continued: “*The Army Capstone Concept* provides a foundation for a campaign of learning and analysis that will evaluate and refine the concept’s major ideas and required capabilities.”¹⁶ One of the 2009 *Army Capstone Concept*’s intents was to guide

¹³ Cone, 2.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ The Army Capstone Concept, *Operational Adaptability: Operating under Conditions of Uncertainty and Complexity in an Era of Persistent Conflict, 2016-2028*, TRADOC Pam 523-3-0. (Fort Monroe, VA, Headquarters, United States Army, 2009), i.

¹⁶ Ibid.

upcoming doctrinal revisions.¹⁷ To Dempsey, the doctrinal update would validate the *Army Capstone Concept* while preparing the Army for future conflicts in an environment dominated by uncertainty, complexity, and hybrid threats.¹⁸

The 2009 *Army Capstone Concept* highlighted numerous concepts, including decentralized operations, flexibility, operational adaptability, stability tasks, initiative, mission command, and consolidating gains. It also had an early description of what eventually morphed into the core competencies of CAM and WAS.¹⁹ Additionally, the pamphlet reinforced the importance of integration with the joint force and the significance of robust intelligence collection through reconnaissance and surveillance.²⁰ Many of the concepts discussed in the 2009 *Army Capstone Concept* influenced the evolution to ULO.

In July 2011, General Cone, who succeeded Dempsey as TRADOC Commander, described the 2009 *Army Capstone Concept* as follows: “The *Army Capstone Concept* lays out what we need the Army to do while documents such as the *Army Operational Concept* describes how the Army fights.”²¹ He continued: “Within a complex and volatile environment, these concepts provide intellectual challenge and help drive the implementation of these seminal ideas into our doctrine, leader development, and training. To make this change, we will soon publish the new version of our capstone warfighting doctrine, FM 3-0, Unified Land Operations.”²² The

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid, 31.

²⁰ Ibid, 17.

²¹ Cone, 1.

²² Ibid.

Army Capstone Concept provided an intellectual bridge from FSO to ULO, which was described in the short-lived FM 3-0 Change 1 and now endures in ADP 3-0.

The Completion of the Doctrinal Evolution

Even with the new terms and the introduction of stability operations, FSO confronted the Army with an institutional quandary. To several employees of CADD, including one of its doctrine writers, Chuck Schrankel, the Army struggled to distinguish its warfighting capabilities from other DOD services. Schrankel argues that ULO, with its core competencies of CAM and WAS, allows the Army to define itself in a more precise and noteworthy manner. According to Schrankel, FSO did not resonate with outside organizations, specifically Congress.²³ He insists that there was an acknowledgment from the Army for a requirement to return to the basics of warfighting. This would in turn present a more coherent description of what the Army brought to the current battlefield.²⁴ Because the Army needed a more effective way of defining and distinguishing its warfighting capabilities as the nation's strategic land power component, it published FM 3-0 Change 1 and most importantly, ADP 3-0, in 2011. In 2011, through FM 3-0 Change 1 and ULO, the Army eliminated "command and control" and "full spectrum operations" and introduced terms and concepts such as the "core competencies" and "decisive action." Schrankel and other high-level doctrine writers, including Mike Scully, insist that the adoption of

²³ Chuck Schrankel, professional interview by author, Fort Leavenworth, KS, August 14, 2014.

²⁴ Ibid.

the core competencies and decisive action allowed the Army to articulate its specific capabilities to Congress, other outside agencies, and the public.²⁵

Colonel Benson concurred with the observations of Schrankel and Skully. In his 2012 article, he argued, “The central idea of Army doctrine is to seize, retain, and exploit the initiative to gain and maintain a position of advantage in sustained land operations, and ULO returned this central idea to its proper place, applicable to all Army operations.”²⁶ While conducting ULO, the Army would now execute decisive action, the simultaneous conduct of offense, defense, and stability tasks. Inherent in decisive action is the newly defined core competencies of CAM and WAS. Decisive action and the core competencies thus accentuate the Army’s distinctive warfighting abilities.

In addition, CAM and WAS differentiate the Army’s unique institutional capabilities within the Department of Defense. According to the CADD Director Clint Ancker, the Army was the only service large enough to conduct both core competencies over an extended time and space. Ancker insisted that the US Marine Corps was able to execute offense, defense, and stability operations, but they were unable to fight over such wide areas, and not to the scale of the Army.²⁷ Doctrinally, the Marine Corps can only sustain itself for sixty days without logistical support from their host nation or other services, such as the Army.²⁸ Furthermore, since the interwar period, the speed of early entry expeditionary forces and amphibious operations have

²⁵ Mike Skully, professional interview by author, Fort Leavenworth, KS, August 14, 2014.

²⁶ Benson, 47.

²⁷ Clint Ancker, professional interview by author, Fort Leavenworth, KS, August 12, 2014.

²⁸ Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication (MCDP) 1-0 *Marine Corps Operations*, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), 2-10.

defined the Marine Corps' institutional identity.²⁹ The core competencies presented a clear and concise picture of how the Army contributed to national defense and defined the Army's mission as strategic land power.³⁰

CAM and WAS provide a framework for soldiers on how to fight in ULO. To several former Army leaders like General Cone, the core competencies acknowledge the necessity of preparedness for both major combat and counterinsurgency operations.³¹ In particular, CAM became tantamount to uniting all Army, joint, interagency, and coalition forces available to fight against a common adversary and also seizing territory. WAS became synonymous with consolidating tactical gains, while paving the way for long-term strategic success by building host nation capacity to govern and secure the local population.³² CAM and WAS thus clarified for warfighters how to fight and win through decisive action. They also assisted leaders in harnessing the complexity of the current operational environment, which often consisted of an insurgency and non-state actors operating in urban terrain, intermingled within the populace.³³

The final impetus for the adoption of ULO was the continual effort to nest with the joint doctrinal construct of "Unified Action." ULO describes the contributions of the Army to the joint force. Prior to ULO, FSO included language such as an Army version of the range of military operations, operational themes, and the spectrum of conflict, which, according to Ancker, were inconsistent with Unified Action. These dueling definitions caused inconsistencies in proper usage. To resolve this problem, CADD writers borrowed numerous joint doctrinal concepts.

²⁹ MCDP 1-0, 1-2.

³⁰ Ancker, interview.

³¹ Cone, 2.

³² The Army Capstone Concept, 11.

³³ Ibid.

Some of these include the joint range of military operations and “commander’s intent.”³⁴ As the DOD’s premier ground component, the Army must nest with joint doctrine, and ULO exercises a doctrinal connection to the joint force.

To articulate the US Army’s contribution to joint operations, ULO enumerates six tenets: flexibility, integration, lethality, adaptability, depth, and synchronization. These tenets portray the multiple aspects of each mission across the range of military operations.³⁵ The wide-ranging tenets characterize the universal principles of combat and provide the warfighter with vitally important features to assist in the planning, preparing, and execution of operations in the ULO doctrinal construct.³⁶

With the general concept of ULO developed, senior Army leaders began to provide distinct guidance on the new operational concept. The Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) General Raymond Odierno wrote in his ADP 3-0 forward:

The central idea of Unified Land Operations is that Army units seize, retain, and exploit the initiative to gain and maintain a position of relative advantage in sustained land operations to create conditions for favorable conflict resolution. This central idea applies to all military operations—offensive, defensive, and stability or defense support of civil authorities. This unifying principle connects the various tasks Army forces may perform.³⁷

Furthermore, ADRP 3-0 states: “Unified land operations describes how the Army seizes, retains, and exploits the initiative to gain and maintain a position of relative advantage in sustained land operations through simultaneous offensive, defensive, and stability operations in order to prevent

³⁴ Ancker, interview.

³⁵ Skully, interview.

³⁶ Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 3-0, *Unified Land Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), 7.

³⁷ ADP 3-0, forward.

or deter conflict, prevail in war, and create the conditions for favorable conflict resolution. ADP 3-0, *Unified Land Operations*, is the Army's basic warfighting doctrine and is the Army's contribution to Unified Action."³⁸

The definition of ULO did not differ significantly from FSO. In comparison, the 2008 definition of FSO states, "Army forces combine offensive, defensive, and stability or civil support operations simultaneously as part of an interdependent joint force to seize, retain, and exploit the initiative, accepting prudent risk to create opportunities to achieve decisive results. They employ synchronized action—lethal and nonlethal—proportional to the mission and informed by a thorough understanding of all variables of the operational environment. Mission command that conveys intent and an appreciation of all aspects of the situation guides the adaptive use of Army forces."³⁹ Obviously, there is not a tremendous difference between the two definitions. Both emphasize simultaneous offense, defense, and stability tasks, and both elevate the significance of individual initiative. Even where minor adjustments in wording appear, the definition still describes how the Army remains a component of the joint force, and each concept expounds on the Army's support to the joint fight.⁴⁰ The new ULO definition did omit some of FSO's phrases and words; for instance, the definition of FSO emphasized ideas such as the "interdependent joint force," "accepting prudent risk," and the "employment of synchronized lethal and non-lethal action."⁴¹ However, the definitions are virtually indistinguishable. (See Appendix A of this monograph, which provides the underlying logic of the concept of ULO)

³⁸ ADRP 3-0, 1-1.

³⁹ FM 3-0 (2008), 3-1.

⁴⁰ Jeff Laface, professional interview by author, Fort Leavenworth, KS, August 12, 2014.

⁴¹ FM 3-0 (2008), 3-1.

Clearly, the Army's transition to ULO constituted a minor doctrinal evolution. The Army incorporated lessons learned from recent wars, and built on established doctrine as a method for improving future capabilities. Specifically, the Army still conducted maneuvers along the range of military operations that included offense, defense, and stability missions, and it still emphasized the prominence of variables such as leadership, initiative, and an understanding of the operational environment. There is no question that there is a unifying conceptual connection between the overall notions of FSO and ULO.

An Evolution Rather than a Revolution

The introduction of ULO brought several adaptations to doctrinal terms and graphics. Some of the eliminated terms included "command and control," "full spectrum operations," "battlespace," "battle command," and "intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance" (ISR). In their places were substituted the ideas of mission command, decisive action or unified land operations, the "operational environment," and "information collection."⁴² There were also some modifications to previous definitions. The "warfighting functions," "operational framework," and "operational art" all had adjustments to their specified constructs. These updates emerged from the belief that the Army needed to adapt its language to accommodate complex and hybrid threats, avoid misapplication of certain terms, simplify, and provide a better doctrinal basis for handling today's operational environment.⁴³ The following sections contains an exhaustive comparison of FSO's and ULO's terminology.

⁴² ADRP 3-0, v-vi.

⁴³ Mission Command Center of Excellence, "Doctrine Update 1-12," *Doctrine Update* (December 16, 2011): 8, accessed July 13, 2014, http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/adp/Repository/Army%20Doctrine%20Update%201-12_16%20Dec%202011.pdf.

FSO versus Decisive Action

In addition to ULO replacing FSO as the Army's operational concept, the phrase "decisive action" replaced FSO as the term that described how the Army conducts operations within the construct of ULO. In other words, the Army developed decisive action to explain how to execute the new operational concept. ULO thus took the idea of FSO and divided its meaning into two new thoughts: ULO as the operational concept, and decisive action as the new doctrinal approach for successfully accomplishing missions within ULO. By doing so, the Army removed FSO twice from the Army's vocabulary, once with the evolution to ULO and once with the implementation of decisive action.⁴⁴

When comparing FSO with decisive action, there is little difference in the two constructs. ADRP 3-0 defines decisive action as, "The continuous, simultaneous combinations of offensive, defensive, and stability or defense support of civil authorities' tasks."⁴⁵ The only noticeable difference between FSO and decisive action is a semantic shift from "civil support operations" to "defense support of civil authorities." Both definitions discuss the simultaneous execution of offense, defense, and stability operations, and also how the Army contributes to homeland protection. The definition of decisive action incorporates most of FSO's concept. According to CADD doctrine writer Jeff Laface, the decision to separate FSO into two components originated from the Army's belief that ULO better explained what the Army brought to the joint fight and Unified Action, while decisive action better described what the Army executed in combat.⁴⁶ In reality, however, decisive action and FSO are practically duplicative and overlapping.

⁴⁴ ADRP 3-0, v.

⁴⁵ ADRP 1-02, *Terms and Military Symbols* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), 1-17.

⁴⁶ Laface, interview.

Command and Control versus Mission Command

Another impactful, but not innovative, modification came from the replacement of “command and control” with “mission command.” The term mission command entered the doctrinal lexicon in 2003 with the publication of FM 6-0 *Mission Command: Command and Control of Army Forces*. The concept, which was also a part of the 2003 version of FM 3-0, shared many of the same characteristics that ULO incorporates today. The 2003 definition stated: “Mission command is the conduct of military operations through decentralized execution based upon mission orders for effective mission accomplishment. Successful mission command results from subordinate leaders at all echelons exercising disciplined initiative within the commander’s intent to accomplish missions. It requires an environment of trust and mutual understanding.”⁴⁷ The 2003 definition underscored initiative executed within an understanding of the commander’s intent, while promoting the idea of shared trust between a commander and his or her subordinates. ULO’s only modification to mission command is a statement on “empowering of agile and adaptive leaders in the conduct of unified land operations.”⁴⁸ Despite the slight definition update, the concept itself took on increased significance and recognition as it replaced command and control as a key leadership function.

Until the implementation of ULO, mission command and command and control had separate official doctrinal definitions. However, command and control was the more prevalent of the two definitions. The reason for eliminating command and control came from its definition, which potentially gave the reader an incorrect impression that command and control was

⁴⁷ FM 6-0, *Mission Command: Command and Control of Army Forces* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2003), Glossary-10.

⁴⁸ ADRP 1-02, 1-38.

primarily scientific in nature. As defined in the 2003 version of FM 6-0, command and control was “the exercise of authority and direction by a properly designated commander over assigned and attached forces in the accomplishment of a mission. Commanders perform command and control functions through a command and control system.”⁴⁹ Even though FM 6-0 (2003) provided leaders with the important understanding of both the art of command and the science of control, the definition clearly focused more on the science of command and control.⁵⁰

ULO did, however, bring added significance to the term mission command. Mission command existed in Army doctrine prior to ULO, but the preferred doctrinal term was the now obsolete “command and control.”⁵¹ To ensure leaders understood the added importance of mission command, the Army published ADP 6-0, *Mission Command*. ADP 6-0 established six mission commands principles. They include: prudent risk, building cohesive teams through mutual trust, creating shared understanding, providing a clear commander’s intent, exercising disciplined initiative, and using mission orders.⁵² These critical principles support both the art and the science of mission command.

ISR versus Information Collection

ULO did away with the concept of “intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance” and its acronym “ISR.” In its place came the term “information collection.” The Army apparently concluded that ISR misrepresented what happened during the collection of information. In FSO, the Army defined ISR as:

⁴⁹ FM 6-0 (2003), Glossary-4.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 2-1.

⁵¹ FM 6-0 (2003), 1-15.

⁵² ADP 6-0, *Mission Command* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), 2.

Intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance is an activity that synchronizes and integrates the planning and operation of sensors, assets, and processing, exploitation, and dissemination systems in direct support of current and future operations. This is an integrated intelligence and operations function. For Army forces, this activity is a combined arms operation that focuses on priority intelligence requirements while answering the commander's critical information requirements.⁵³

The Army worried that "intelligence," "surveillance," and "reconnaissance" were becoming interchangeable, when in fact they represent three distinct concepts. This confusion led many soldiers and commanders to misuse ISR as a verb rather than a noun. For instance, a soldier would not conduct intelligence. He or she would conduct surveillance or reconnaissance to acquire information. Analysis of the information would then potentially provide intelligence. It is a sequential, not simultaneous process. The adoption of information collection thus sought to clarify the task.⁵⁴

ULO now defines "information collection" as: "An activity that synchronizes and integrates the planning and employment of sensors and assets as well as the processing, exploitation, and dissemination systems in direct support of current and future operations."⁵⁵ From the Army's perspective, information collection conveyed a clearer description of the tasks conducted, which could potentially provide intelligence. Reconnaissance and surveillance were certainly a portion of "information collection," but it is now evident that the "I" in ISR was something that originated from other activities. The move from ISR to information collection was about reaffirming the critical difference between intelligence and the gathering of information.

⁵³ FM 3-0 Change 1, 4-8

⁵⁴ "Doctrine Update 1-12," 9.

⁵⁵ ADRP 1-02, 1-30.

Battlespace versus Operational Environment

ULO eliminated “battlespace” because of its routinely incorrect usage. Frequently during FSO, leaders and soldiers interchangeably used battlespace and “area of operation.”⁵⁶ Although battlespace was an approved doctrinal term, it implied much more than just the territorial or defined boundaries of an area of operation. FSO defined a battlespace as: “The environment, factors, and conditions that must be understood to successfully apply combat power, protect the force, or complete the mission.”⁵⁷ The definition explained that a battlespace constituted more than just physical terrain and included aspects such as civil considerations. Nevertheless, the Army maintained that inappropriate usage was rampant.⁵⁸

As a result, the Army incorporated the joint term “operational environment.” It better characterized the differences among the physical terrain and all of the elements of geographic space to include physical, social, and political components. ADRP 3-0 defines an operational environment as: “a composite of the conditions, circumstances, and influences that affect the employment of capabilities and bear on the decisions of the commander.”⁵⁹ The operational environment elucidates the multiple variables involved with both the human and physical terrain of a battlefield.

Despite the shift towards operational environment, there are limited differences between the terms. Both highlight the importance for awareness of multiple conditions within an area and emphasize the necessity of grasping the interconnected and multifaceted variables of the

⁵⁶ "Doctrine Update 1-12," 8.

⁵⁷ FM 1-02, *Operational Terms and Military Graphics* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2004), 1-21.

⁵⁸ "Doctrine Update 1-12," 8.

⁵⁹ ADRP 3-0, Glossary-5.

environment. They both recognize warfare as an ideal example of what Neil Harrison, the author of *Complexity in World Politics: Concepts and Methods of a New Paradigm*, describes as the ultimate “complex open system.”⁶⁰ As ADRP 3-0 puts it: “An operational environment consists of many interrelated variables and sub variables, as well as the relationships and interactions among those variables and sub variables. How the many entities and conditions behave and interact with each other within an operational environment is difficult to discern and always results in differing circumstances.”⁶¹ Put simply, battlespace and the operational environment both capture the modern battlefields complexities.

The Warfighting Functions

The six warfighting functions are an important element of both FSO’s and ULO’s doctrinal approach. Nevertheless, the transition to ULO did not have any substantive impact on their associated meanings. ADRP 1-02 defines the warfighting functions as, “a group of tasks and systems (people, organizations, information, and processes), united by a common purpose that commanders use to accomplish missions and training objectives.”⁶² In 2008, FM 3-0 included the same definition.⁶³

Under FSO and ULO, the six warfighting functions are virtually indistinguishable. However, the replacement of command and control with mission command is notable. ADRP 1-02 defines the mission command warfighting function as: “The related tasks and systems that

⁶⁰ Neil Harrison, ed., *Complexity in World Politics: Concepts and Methods of a New Paradigm* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2006), 13.

⁶¹ ADRP 3-0, 1-1.

⁶² ADRP 1-02, 1-62.

⁶³ FM 3-0 2008, 4-3.

develop and integrate those activities enabling a commander to balance the art of command and the science of control in order to integrate the other warfighting functions.”⁶⁴ FM 3-0 defined the command and control warfighting function as: “the related tasks and systems that support commanders in exercising authority and direction.”⁶⁵ The most significant difference between the obsolete command and control warfighting function and the mission command warfighting function is its recognition of the art of command instead of just the science of control.⁶⁶

Calculated Risk versus Prudent Risk

The introduction of ULO adjusted some of the doctrinal terminology involving risk, as “prudent risk” replaced FSO’s “calculated risk.” For most of FSO, the phrase calculated risk best described what a commander needed to consider prior to and during operations. The 2004 version of FM 1-02 defined calculated risk as, “An exposure to chance of injury or loss when the commander can visualize the outcome in terms of mission accomplishment or damage to the force, and judges the outcome as worth the cost.”⁶⁷ Commanders encouraged their subordinates to accept calculated risk in order to achieve their mission objectives in a more complete or expeditious fashion.⁶⁸ Currently, ADRP 1-02 defines prudent risk as, “a deliberate exposure to potential injury or loss when the commander judges the outcome in terms of mission accomplishment as worth the cost.”⁶⁹ When compared to FSO’s definition, they are very similar in nature.

⁶⁴ ADRP 1-02, 1-38.

⁶⁵ FM 3-0 (2008), 4-6.

⁶⁶ Ibid, 4-3.

⁶⁷ FM 1-02, 1-26.

⁶⁸ FM 3-0 (2008), 5-4.

⁶⁹ ADRP 1-02, 1-47.

Nevertheless, there was still a slow doctrinal transition concerning calculated risk and prudent risk worth noting. In 2008, the term prudent risk entered the US Army's doctrinal parlance as part of FSO's definition. It states that Army forces: "accept prudent risk to create opportunities to achieve decisive results."⁷⁰ Eventually, "prudent risk" and "calculated risk" became virtually indistinguishable. For example, the 2008 version of FM 3-0 included a discussion on "economy of force." It states: "Commanders allocate only the minimum combat power necessary to shaping and sustaining operations so they can mass combat power for the decisive operation. This requires accepting prudent risk. Taking calculated risks is inherent in conflict."⁷¹ Applying prudent risk and calculated risks in back to back sentences implies their interchangeability.

Capstone manuals frequently discuss risk as a critically important aspect of warfighting. FSO and ULO emphasize risk as part of seizing and maintaining the initiative, while reiterating that when appropriately executed, risk provides opportunities to exploit on the battlefield.⁷² They evaluate how taking appropriate risks during combat operations can hasten mission accomplishment.⁷³ With the benefit of hindsight, the 2008 timeframe was the transition phase for calculated and prudent risk. When ULO became the Army's operational concept, prudent risk formally supplanted calculated risk, but in reality, there are minimal differences between the two.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ FM 3-0 (2008), 3-1.

⁷¹ Ibid, A-2.

⁷² ADRP 3-0, 2-1.

⁷³ FM 6-0 (2003), 2-23.

⁷⁴ ADRP 3-0, 2-8.

Operational Frameworks

An illustration of US Army doctrine coming full circle is ULO's three specific operational frameworks, which commanders use to describe operations. Similar to the doctrinal concept of Air Land Battle, ULO's operational frameworks include: "decisive-shaping-sustaining," "deep-close-security," and "main and supporting efforts."⁷⁵ The Commander is responsible for selecting an appropriate operational framework.

In 2008, FM 3-0 withdrew the term "operational framework."⁷⁶ Generally, the construct of FSO reinforced the idea of decisive-shaping-sustaining as the way for commanders to describe their concept of the operation. Other than allowing the commander to shift priority of effort to a designated main effort by phase, FM 3-0 afforded commanders with few alternatives for maneuvering their forces.⁷⁷

According to Dr. Thomas Brusino, currently a professor of history at SAMS and a co-developer of ADP 3-0, the reconstitution of operational frameworks in ULO, which FSO had eliminated, provided one of the most critical evolutions between the doctrinal constructs.⁷⁸ Brusino described the reinstatement as "sort of a return to due north, which I think is what you sort of see with the return of deep-close-security."⁷⁹ He argues that the three operational

⁷⁵ ADRP 3-90, *Offense and Defense* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), v.

⁷⁶ FM 3-0 (2008), D-4.

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, 5-11.

⁷⁸ Thomas Brusino, professional interview by author, Fort Leavenworth, KS, October 30, 2014.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*.

frameworks were beneficial for visualizing, describing, and directing forces, and that the Army recognized the need to rejuvenate all three constructs.⁸⁰

The course correction back to operational framework acknowledged the need to provide additional flexibility to commanders.⁸¹ Giving commanders the flexibility to choose among the three designs of operational framework empowered commanders with three distinct options for commanding their forces on the battlefield. Moreover, the flexibility helps better define actions in a counterinsurgency or stability-type fight, which can be challenging to describe in the decisive-shaping-sustaining configuration. Commanders expressed operations with an understanding of time, space, and purpose, and ULO's three operational frameworks provided them with the doctrinal capability to best describe battlefield operations.⁸²

ULO's operational framework did maintain some continuity with FSO. Specifically, ULO continues to permit commanders to shift the main effort by phase of an operation. This is critical as the designation of the main effort allows commanders to prioritize indirect fires, support, and other assets as needed, while still maintaining a decisive and shaping force for the overall mission.⁸³ As part of ULO's "operational structure," which also includes the "operations process" and the warfighting functions, the restored and improved operational framework filled doctrinal gaps, but the revision was no more than a return to past doctrinal structures.⁸⁴

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ ADRP 3-0, 1-9.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid, 1-12.

⁸⁴ Ibid, 1-8.

Operational Art

The term “operational art” has recently emerged as an integral component of the Army’s doctrinal language. The operational artist is responsible for linking tactical actions with strategic objectives as defined by policymakers in Washington, DC.⁸⁵ Shortly after the adoption of FSO, the Army began to employ the joint definition of operational art, which states: “The employment of military forces to attain strategic and/or operational objectives through the design, organization, integration, and conduct of strategies, campaigns, major operations, and battles. Operational art translates the joint force commander’s strategy into operational design, and, ultimately, tactical action, by integrating the key activities at all levels of war.”⁸⁶

The Army largely kept the joint definition of operational art after 2011. However, there was one change. By 2011, prevailing joint doctrine included a revised definition, which stated: “The cognitive approach by commanders and staffs—supported by their skill, knowledge, experience, creativity, and judgment—to develop strategies, campaigns, and operations to organize and employ military forces by integrating ends, ways, and means.”⁸⁷ The 2011 definition does have some similarities to earlier delineations, but there are two substantial modifications worth mentioning. The first is how the 2011 version of operational art specifically mentions its connection to “ends, ways, and means.” The second is that the new joint doctrinal definition, implemented by ULO, characterizes “staff activities” as a necessary aspect of

⁸⁵ Ibid, 4-1.

⁸⁶ JP 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2004), 387.

⁸⁷ JP 3-0, *Joint Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), GL-14.

operational art.⁸⁸ Nevertheless, revisions to the definitions between 2004 and 2011 are minimal, and represent little more than an evolution in the way the Army views operational art.

Even so, ULO did introduce some fresh thinking about operational art. Most notably, ULO it recognized the validity of operational art at all three levels of war. This evolution in operational art's relevance throughout the chain of command legitimizes the need for an understanding of operational art by all commanders. During FSO, operational art was only applicable at the "operational level."⁸⁹ The short-lived FM 3-0 Change 1 did adjust operational art's applicability to all levels of war, but the recognized transition came in ULO. Additionally, in order to reaffirm the significance of war's artful nature at all echelons, FSO had distinguished operational art from the term "military art." Military art was something practiced at each level, which reiterated its applicability up and down the chain of command. However, because the operational level of war is where strategic objectives and tactical actions unite, FSO applied operational art only at the operational level.⁹⁰ Eventually, ULO took the idea of military art and merged it with the theory of operational art, which promotes it at all tiers of command.⁹¹

FM 3-0 Change 1 also introduced the elements of operational art. Much like the applicability of operational art throughout multiple echelons, the elements of operational art coalesced with the publication of FM 3-0 Change 1. In 2011, FM 3-0 Change 1 created the eleven fundamental elements of operational art, providing a baseline for their adoption. Some of the elements included "endstate," "center of gravity," "tempo," and "risk."⁹² When the transition to

⁸⁸ ADRP 3-0, 4-1.

⁸⁹ FM 3-0 (2008), 6-1.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ ADRP 3-0, 4-1.

⁹² FM 3-0 Change 1, 7-5.

ULO occurred, many of the same operational art elements remained unchanged, with only a few exceptions. Doctrinal writers eliminated the “direct or indirect approach,” along with “simultaneity” and “depth.” The one addition was the concept of “basing.”⁹³ Furthermore, after a brief respite in FM 3-0 Change 1, ULO, similar to FM 3-0 of 2008, now distinguishes between the elements of operational art and the joint idea of the “elements of operational design.”⁹⁴

Civil Support versus Defense Support of Civil Authorities

The Army has a critical responsibility of defending the homeland. As a result, civil support and defense support of civil authorities are both essential pieces of the FSO and ULO operational concepts. Along with offense, defense, and stability operations, they describe the specific tasks the Army performs when in a *Title 32* status instead of its standard *Title 10* responsibility. In other words, when the Army operates domestically, by law authorities such as the Governor of a state must request Army assistance from Federal establishments. When doing so, the Army conducts defense support of civil authorities, and not its expeditionary functions of offense, defense, and stability. The domestic obligation of the Army is not as recognized as its overseas missions, but civil support or defense support of civil authorities is a crucial part of both FSO and ULO.⁹⁵

ULO borrowed the joint definition of defense support of civil authorities.⁹⁶ JP 1-02 defines defense support of civil authorities as “support provided by US Federal military forces, Department of Defense civilians, Department of Defense contract personnel, Department of

⁹³ ADRP 3-0, 4-3.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid, 2-8

⁹⁶ “Doctrine Update 1-12,” 8.

Defense component assets, and National Guard forces in response to requests for assistance from civil authorities for domestic emergencies, law enforcement support, and other domestic activities, or from qualifying entities for special events.”⁹⁷ There are negligible differences FSO’s civil support and ULO’s defense support of civil authorities. They both emphasize crises like natural disasters, terrorist attacks, preventing disease epidemics, supporting civil law enforcement, and so forth.⁹⁸ The only difference between the FSO and ULO version of the Army’s homeland responsibilities is semantic in nature.

The Tenets of ULO

The new operational concept of ULO required a set of principles that would be the cornerstone of all Army operations. These six new doctrinal tenets include: flexibility, integration, lethality, adaptability, depth, and synchronization.⁹⁹ These six tenets convey how the Army intends to fight in the “complex and volatile” twenty-first century.

Flexibility is the first tenet of ULO. ADP 3-0 defines flexibility as: “To achieve tactical, operational, and strategic success, commanders seek to demonstrate flexibility in spite of adversity. They employ a versatile mix of capabilities, formations, and equipment for conducting operations.”¹⁰⁰ The publication explains that flexibility contributes to mission accomplishment based on its relevance throughout the operations process.¹⁰¹ Clearly, flexibility allows Army units

⁹⁷ JP 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), 68.

⁹⁸ FM 3-0, 3-17.

⁹⁹ ADRP 3-0, 2-12.

¹⁰⁰ ADP 3-0, 7.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

to plan, prepare, and execute any operation while maintaining the ability to respond to any battlefield tendency. However, FSO had also considered flexibility a significant rule of warfighting. FSO did not specifically define flexibility, but it was an imperative consideration in its overall hypothesis. The root word “flexible” and “flexibility” consistently appear throughout the FSO capstone manual. An ideal depiction of the similarities between flexibility in both FSO and ULO derives from the 2008 version of FM 3-0, which stated: “Flexibility and innovation are at a premium, as are creative and adaptive leaders.”¹⁰² The only significant variance between flexibility in FSO and ULO lives in the implementation of the six tenets, but the idea of flexible and adaptable leaders is nothing new.

Integration is ULO’s second tenet. Integration underscores how the Army organizes internally and externally to effectively combat aggression.¹⁰³ The Army has always attempted to establish an interior combined arms force capable of dominating on the battlefield. More recently, however, the Army has emphasized integration with forces from the joint, interagency, and multi-national services to increase its warfighting capabilities. As a result, integration now takes place at all three levels of war, throughout the military, the US government, and with its allies.

The third tenet of ULO is lethality. Lethality, as defined by ADP 3-0 is, “a persistent requirement for Army organizations, even in conditions where only the implicit threat of violence suffices to accomplish the mission through nonlethal engagements and activities.”¹⁰⁴ It should come as no surprise that both FSO and ULO concentrate on the Army’s ability to produce lethal

¹⁰² FM 3-0, 1-19.

¹⁰³ ADP 3-0, 7.

¹⁰⁴ ADP 3-0, 8.

effects in order to accomplish the mission. Lethal capabilities is what the Army brings to the joint fight as the nation's strategic land power component.¹⁰⁵

The next tenet of ULO is adaptability. The emphasis on adaptive leaders and soldiers is integral to Army operations. Adaptability was such an important piece of the 2009 *Army Capstone Concept: Operational Adaptability* that it was part of its title.¹⁰⁶ During its discussion of adaptability, ADP 3-0 states, "Army leaders must adapt their thinking, their formations, and their employment techniques to the specific situation they face. This requires an adaptable mind, a willingness to accept prudent risk in unfamiliar or rapidly changing situations, and an ability to adjust based on continuous assessment."¹⁰⁷ Adaptable leaders are capable of responding to changing situations in order to gain a significant advantage over adversaries.¹⁰⁸ ULO emphasizes the need for adaptation along the range of military operations. Adaptability also played a role in the FSO construct. However, the description in FSO was almost identical to its ULO successor.¹⁰⁹

Depth, another ULO tenet, has multiple points of interest. First, combat requires depth in order to extend missions through time, space, and purpose. Leaders can attack the depths of enemy to disrupt their ability to respond to offensive action.¹¹⁰ Second, commanders seek organizational depth as an ideal technique for defeating a threat. For instance, ADP 3-0 states, "Employing security forces and obstacles, maintaining reserves, conducting continuous reconnaissance, and managing the tempo of an operation illustrate building depth within the

¹⁰⁵ Bruschino, interview.

¹⁰⁶ The Army Capstone Concept, 1.

¹⁰⁷ ADP 3-0, 8.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ FM 3-0, 2-3

¹¹⁰ ADP 3-0, 8.

friendly force.”¹¹¹ Depth is applicable in each of ULO’s operational frameworks and it articulates how to fight in sustained ground combat.¹¹² During Air Land Battle, depth was one of the Tenets of Army Operations.¹¹³ FSO and ULO have continued to highlight the significance of depth. In fact, FSO and ULO both describe depth as “the extension of operations in time, space, and resources or purpose.”¹¹⁴

The final ULO tenet is synchronization. Like depth, synchronization was a doctrinal tenet during the era of Air Land Battle.¹¹⁵ Currently, synchronization emphasizes the “arrangement of military actions in time, space, and purpose to produce maximum relative combat power at a decisive place and time.”¹¹⁶ Additionally, FSO and ULO assert the need for synchronization throughout operations. Specifically, both speak of synchronization’s connection to simultaneity, and both doctrinal constructs caution against an overly synchronized strategy that could stifle subordinate initiative.¹¹⁷

After an analysis of flexibility, integration, lethality, adaptability, depth, and synchronization, it quickly becomes evident that each of the six tenets actually played considerable roles in both FSO and ULO. Even though FSO never defined specific tenets, flexibility, integration, lethality, adaptability, depth, and synchronization all still contributed to

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid, 9

¹¹³ FM 100-5, *Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1986), 2-6.

¹¹⁴ FM 3-0 Change 1, 7-14.

¹¹⁵ FM 100-5 (1986), 2-6.

¹¹⁶ JP 2-0, *Joint Intelligence* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 2013), GL-11.

¹¹⁷ FM 3-0 (2008), 3-4.

FSO's concept. The most reasonable conclusion is that the tenets of ULO are a modest evolution and not a shift or change in doctrinal thought.

Doctrine 2015

As the Army transitioned from FSO to ULO, it institutionalized a new structure for publishing and disseminating its doctrine. In June 2011, Army leadership, including then TRADOC Commander General Dempsey, unveiled "Doctrine 2015."¹¹⁸ Doctrine 2015 created four categories of doctrinal publications: ADPs, ADRPs, FMs, and Army Techniques Publications (ATP). Each category provided a doctrinal hierarchy to clarify the authority amongst the manuals.¹¹⁹ Figure 1 of this monograph on page 33 provides a visual illustration of the overall concept of Doctrine 2015. The idea behind Doctrine 2015 is to reduce redundancy among doctrinal manuals by reducing the size and number of active publications, while outlining the differences among the various doctrinal categories. In 2012, Lieutenant General David Perkins, the Combined Arms Center (CAC) Commander, explained that Doctrine 2015 made doctrine easier to access, understand, and disseminate.¹²⁰ He continued: "Doctrine 2015 will accomplish this by improving our soldiers' and leaders' understanding of current doctrine through increased accessibility and more current links to today's operational environment."¹²¹

The ADP serves as the pinnacle of the Doctrine 2015 hierarchy. The intent of the ADP is to provide a concise (no longer than 25 pages) overview of the essential doctrinal principles related to ULO. There are only a few doctrinal topics that qualify for publication in an ADP.

¹¹⁸ Ancker, interview.

¹¹⁹ James Hodge, "Doctrine 2015: The Future of Sustainment Doctrine," *Army Sustainment* 44, no. 2 (2012): 2.

¹²⁰ Lieutenant General David Perkins and Nathan Finney, "Speed of War For Army Knowledge," *Army Magazine*, March 1, 2012, 38.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

Some examples include: ADP 1 (*The Army*), ADP 3-0 (*ULO*), and ADP 1-02 (*Operational Terms and Graphics*), along with an ADP for each of the six Army warfighting functions. Consisting of fifteen manuals, the ADP's provide a brief synopsis of the principles of the ULO and represent the zenith of current Army doctrine.¹²² In addition, the Army produced ADRPs as mutually supportive manuals expanding and broadening on the principles delineated in the ADP.¹²³ ADRPs represent the second level of the doctrinal hierarchy and always remains coupled with an ADP.

The third level of the Doctrine 2015 hierarchy is the FM. Unlike the ADP and the ADRP, there is nothing new about the continued publication of FMs. The FM has been involved with Army doctrine for numerous decades and it continues under ULO. However, in Doctrine 2015, the FM does not act as the capstone or base of Army doctrinal philosophy as it has in the past. Instead of providing information in each doctrinal category, the FM speaks only to Army tactics and procedures, not principles and techniques. Furthermore, within the Doctrine 2015 construct, there are only fifty total FMs included in the Army's doctrinal inventory, and each manual is no longer than two hundred pages.¹²⁴

ATPs form the essential base of the Doctrine 2015 hierarchy. The ATPs discuss techniques for how to perform missions or tasks within a specific organization or functional area.¹²⁵ They give multiple methods for the leader to consider prior to action. Moreover, unlike the ADPs, ADRPs, or FMs, the ATP does not have a page length restriction. According to Clint Ancker, the ATPs will focus specifically on techniques, only discussing principles, tactics, or

¹²² "Doctrine Update 1-12," 3.

¹²³ Perkins, 36.

¹²⁴ "Doctrine Update 1-12," 3.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

procedures to provide context, thus reducing redundancy.¹²⁶ The ATP may form the bottom of the doctrinal hierarchy, but it is a critical piece of Doctrine 2015, giving the warfighter the tools to fight and win future wars.

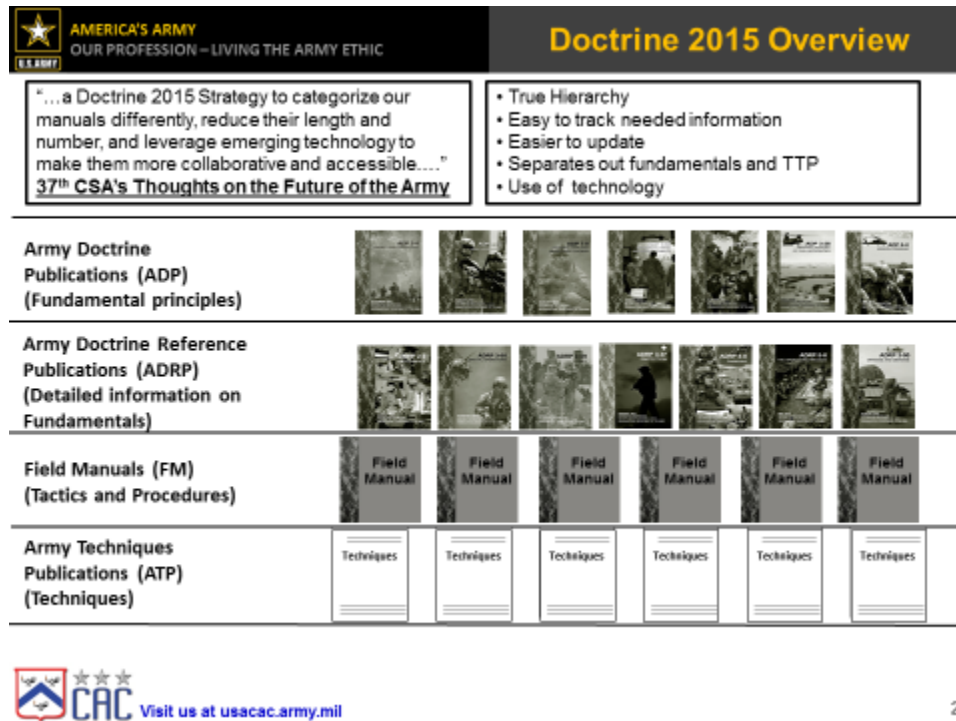


Figure 1. Doctrine 2015 Overview

Source: Combined Arms Center (CAC), *DCG Doctrine Update* (Fort Leavenworth, KS February 2015), 2.

Leveraging the information age, Doctrine 2015 includes a milWiki website for leaders and soldiers to offer recommendations and updates to the content of the ATPs. The ATP is the only doctrinal publication where commanders and soldiers get an opportunity to offer continuous feedback on how the methods articulated in ATPs worked in combat. Commentary on milWiki does not constitute official doctrine. However, after an accountable organization’s adjudication

¹²⁶ Ancker, interview.

process, select recommendations will become a part of the ATP on the milWiki website.¹²⁷ The idea is to broaden participation in the doctrinal development process. Major General James Hodge, the 2012 Commanding General of the Army Combined Arms Support Command and Sustainment Center of Excellence insists that greater soldier participation is “essential for getting the most out of the Doctrine 2015 initiative.”¹²⁸

Nonetheless, despite the novelty of the milWiki site, it does not offer a radical departure from US Army past practices. For some time now, the Army has disseminated current doctrine through the “My Doctrine” portion of the Army Knowledge Online (AKO) website, as well as directly through armypubs.army.mil, increasing accessibility to the entire Army. The creation of the milWiki website expands the user-friendly concept and affords the soldier the opportunity to participate in doctrinal development, but it is not a complete overhaul of the Army’s doctrinal review system.

Unintended Confusion

Unfortunately, the implementation of ULO resulted in unanticipated confusion, with two misunderstandings worth discussing in detail. In particular, confusion continues concerning the core competencies, along with the overall concept of ULO. ULO critics, such as Andrew Nocks, an Assistant Professor at the US Army Command and General Staff College, argues that the “analogous quality of the core competencies leads to a misrepresentation of their intent.”¹²⁹ In a

¹²⁷ “Doctrine Update 1-12,” 3.

¹²⁸ Hodge, 3.

¹²⁹ Andrew Nocks, “More Mumbo-Jumbo: The Clutter and Confusion within the Army’s Operational Concept of Unified Land Operations,” *Small Wars Journal* 8, no. 6 (June 2012), accessed July 13, 2014, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/more-mumbo-jumbo-the-clutter-and-confusion-within-the-army%E2%80%99s-operational-concept-of-unified>.

recent article published in the *Small Wars Journal*, Nocks contends that “decisive action and the novel ideas presented as the Army core competencies are sufficiently similar in thinking that there is a developing struggle to separate and operationalize the ideas as intended.”¹³⁰ In short, it becomes challenging for leaders and soldiers to distinguish decisive action from CAM and WAS. In order to eliminate this confusion, Nocks maintains that “the Army must clearly define the relationship between decisive action and the newly described core competencies and our recently published doctrine does not meet that obligation.”¹³¹

Other observers seem to agree with Nock’s argument that ULO has too many similar concepts. CADD doctrine writer Chuck Schrankel argues that:

ULO is confusing. I think it does affect Soldiers in the field because the construct - the model - is confusing. Not because there are too many big ideas, but because there are ideas that basically are identical. This gets to the idea of full spectrum operations or what is now called decisive action, along with CAM and WAS. How can you have two models that essentially say the same thing? One, decisive action is how we conduct unified land operations or execute unified land operations through decisive action. The other one, you demonstrate your core competency.¹³²

In other words, Schrankel believes that decisive action and the core competencies are too similar in nature, which potentially confuses the warfighter.¹³³

Confusion also exists about the idea of decisive action. Some argue that decisive action does not accurately portray all Army wartime activities along the range of military operations. Major JP Clarke, a US Army strategist, insists that many of the Army’s current operations are far

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Schrankel, interview.

¹³³ Ibid.

from “decisive” and hence the idea of decisive action is fundamentally misleading. In a 2013 article published in *Military Review*, Major Clarke wrote: “Without a doctrinal glossary, the casual reader would never guess that decisive action encompassed offensive, defensive, stability operations, and defense support of civil authorities. The Army is America’s decisive force, but that does not mean that everything we do is decisive.”¹³⁴

It is unlikely that the authors of ULO realized the implementation of ADP 3-0 would cause such confusion. Nevertheless, as Ancker argued in a *Military Review* article: “It is a product of collaboration and dialogue among individuals who care deeply about the Army and desire a common language for the profession. The Army must encourage such collaboration and dialogue and welcome professional critiques to grow and mature as a force.”¹³⁵ The constructive criticisms highlighted above provide a brief overview of some of the institutional confusion regarding ULO. The Army has an opportunity to take these opinions to improve the doctrine of the future.

Conclusion

Doctrine serves as a critically important guide and common institutional language. Recent operational concepts have included the Air Land Battle, FSO, and ULO. These three most

¹³⁴ J.P. Clark, “The Missed Opportunity: A Critique of ADP 3-0, Unified Land Operations,” *Military Review* 10, (July-August 2013): 49, accessed July 13, 2014, http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/MilitaryReview/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_20120831_art010.pdf.

¹³⁵ Clinton Ancker and Michael Skully, “Army Doctrine Publication 3-0: An Opportunity to Meet the Challenges of the Future,” *Military Review* 9, (January-February 2013): 42, accessed July 13, 2014, http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/MilitaryReview/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_20130228_art009.pdf.

contemporary doctrinal philosophies have built on one another, while drawing lessons from past conflicts to recreate a common operating picture for commanders, leaders, and soldiers.

The development of FSO and ULO occurred during a period of transition for the US Army. When FSO entered the Army's lexicon in 2001, it drew on lessons learned from contemporary conflicts like Desert Storm and Desert Shield.¹³⁶ As the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq unfolded, FSO matured, eventually becoming the Army's operational concept. The former TRADOC Commander, General William Wallace, spoke in depth about the development of FSO. As Wallace explained, "Just as the 1976 edition of FM 100-5 began to take the Army from the rice paddies of Vietnam to the battlefields of Western Europe, the 2008 edition of FM 3-0 (*Full Spectrum Operations*) will take us into the twenty-first century urban battlefields among the people without losing our capabilities to dominate the higher conventional end of the spectrum of conflict."¹³⁷

However, for as much of a novel approach as FSO offered, the introduction of ULO was not groundbreaking. In fact, ADP 3-0 fully acknowledges that the ideas incorporated expand on FSO and Air Land Battle, but with an expounding of intellectual thoughts on the US Army's interconnectedness to the joint force.¹³⁸ Furthermore, with the bridge that became FM 3-0 Change 1, ULO did nothing more than fill perceived gaps in doctrine, distinguished Army capabilities, continued to nest with joint doctrine, and built on lessons learned, while granting increased access and greater participation through the ranks with the Doctrine 2015 initiative.

Moreover, FM 3-94, *Theater Army, Corps, and Division Operations*, published in 2014, validates this monograph's thesis as part of its discussion on the growing threat of irregular

¹³⁶ Schrankel, interview.

¹³⁷ FM 3-0 (2008), Forward.

¹³⁸ ADP 3-0, Forward.

warfare in the twenty-first century operational environment. FM 3-94 states that “Army doctrine adapted, first embracing full spectrum operations and then evolving its operational concept to unified land operations. Both have at their core the necessity of simultaneous combinations of offensive, defensive, and stability tasks (or defense support of civil authorities within the homeland).”¹³⁹ The manual describes the adoption of ULO as constituting no more than a subtle evolution, which is in line with this monograph’s findings about the continuity between the two operational concepts.

With the combat phase of the war in Afghanistan past its culmination and the Army drawing down from its high-end troop strength towards the conclusion of Operation Iraqi Freedom, a need exists to continue to analyze doctrine with an eye toward the future. ULO transitioned the Army into a contemporary era of describing and prescribing doctrine, but the rationale behind the concept was hardly distinct in content or context. ULO, however, transitioned the Army into a fresh era of disseminating and contributing to doctrine through the creation of Doctrine 2015. Since 2011, the influence of ULO and Doctrine 2015 have evolved, and the debate over their effectiveness remains a contentious issue, but there is no question that both will continue to guide twenty-first century the Army and its warfighters.

¹³⁹ FM 3-94, *Theater Army, Corps, and Division Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2014), 1-3.

Appendix A- Unified Land Operations Underlying Logic

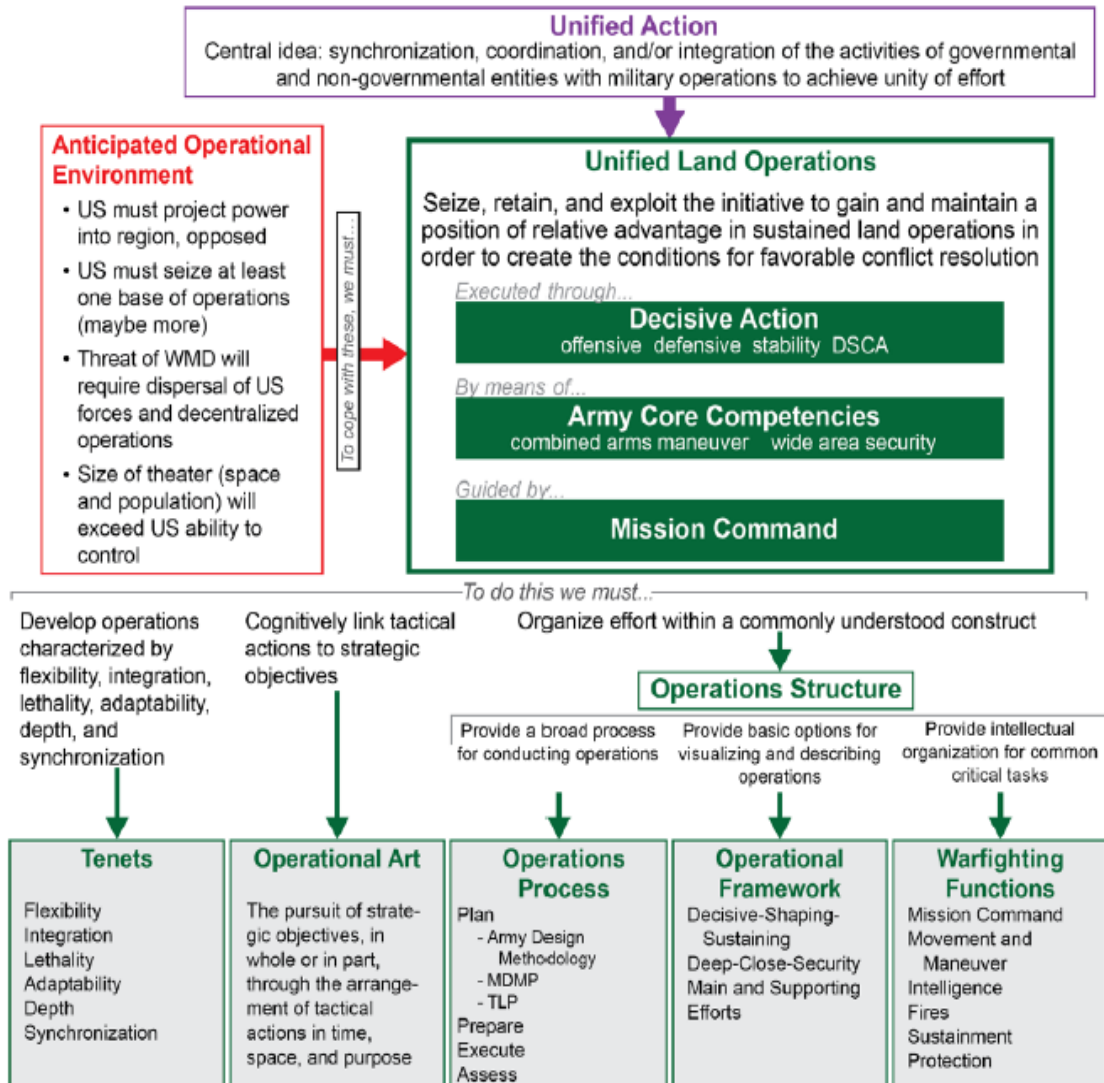


Figure 2. Unified Land Operations Underlying Logic
Source: Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 3-0, *Unified Land Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), iii-iv.

Appendix B- CONSENT AND USE AGREEMENT FOR ORAL HISTORY MATERIALS

CONSENT AND USE AGREEMENT FOR ORAL HISTORY MATERIALS

You have the right to choose whether or not you will participate in this oral history interview, and once you begin you may cease participating at any time without penalty. The anticipated risk to you in participating is negligible and no direct personal benefit has been offered for your participation. If you have questions about this research study, please contact the student at: _____ or Dr. Robert F. Baumann, Director of Graduate Degree Programs, at (913) 684-2742.

To: Director, Graduate Degree Programs
Room 3517, Lewis & Clark Center
U.S. Army Command and General Staff College

1. I, _____, participated in an oral history interview conducted by _____, a graduate student in the Master of Military Art and Science Degree Program, on the following date [s]: _____ concerning the following topic: _____.
2. I understand that the recording [s] and any transcript resulting from this oral history will belong to the U.S. Government to be used in any manner deemed in the best interests of the Command and General Staff College or the U.S. Army, in accordance with guidelines posted by the Director, Graduate Degree Programs and the Center for Military History. I also understand that subject to security classification restrictions I will be provided with a copy of the recording for my professional records. In addition, prior to the publication of any complete edited transcript of this oral history, I will be afforded an opportunity to verify its accuracy.
3. I hereby expressly and voluntarily relinquish all rights and interests in the recording [s] with the following caveat:

_____ None _____ Other: _____

I understand that my participation in this oral history interview is voluntary and I may stop participating at any time without explanation or penalty. I understand that the tapes and transcripts resulting from this oral history may be subject to the Freedom of Information Act, and therefore, may be releasable to the public contrary to my wishes. I further understand that, within the limits of the law, the U.S. Army will attempt to honor the restrictions I have requested to be placed on these materials.

Name of Interviewee Signature Date

Accepted on Behalf of the Army by Date

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