

Though neither policy nor strategy, joint doctrine deals with the fundamental issue of how best to employ the national military power to achieve strategic ends.

—Joint Pub 1

Directing amphibious vehicle onto beach at Mogadishu.



U.S. Navy

DOCTRINE FOR Joint Force Integration

By CHARLES C. KRULAK

EDITOR'S *Note*

In an increasingly complex world, we must avoid a “cookie cutter” approach to joint warfighting. It is misguided to impulsively organize joint forces along purely functional lines, or according to the medium in which they operate—land, sea, or air. Under this logic, functional organizations are assumed to negate service parochialism and achieve the desired levels of jointness. However, they do not necessarily provide the most effective force for all operations. It may be necessary to organize along service lines, even employing a combination of service and functional components. Each joint force must be organized for the mission at hand and seek the greatest flexibility possible.

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As we approach the 21st century, there will be no shortage of challenges for the Armed Forces of our Nation. These challenges will be the result of a world that is currently undergoing a metamorphosis. Today we see numerous emerging countries experiencing enormous economic growth. With this new economic growth comes a commensurate ability to procure military power. The diffusion of technology and a burgeoning world arms market make available for procurement some of the latest high tech weaponry and, for those who desire them, possibly even weapons of mass destruction.

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At the same time we see this shifting balance in economic and military power, we continue to see the world's resources becoming more scarce. The competition for them always has been and always will be a dominating theme in international relations. This mix of emerging economies, competition for resources, and new military might is a proven recipe for instability.

At the same time we see the potential for instability caused by growth and competition, we see established nation-states all across the globe splintering along ethnic, religious, or tribal lines. These trends not only produce crises between and within nations but create a much greater degree of instability—instability that can eventually degenerate into chaos. In this chaotic world we may find ourselves not only challenged to operate along the whole spectrum of conflict but, at times, on many different levels simultaneously in the same area of operations (AO). This multi-spectral aspect of conflict adds a new challenge to our forces—operating in an environment of “mission depth.” We have experienced this mission depth on a small scale in Mogadishu, with Marines on one block providing humanitarian assistance, while on the next dealing with civil disturbance, and on yet another fully engaged in armed combat.

As we prepare to protect the Nation's interests in the future, well thought out, flexible joint doctrine will be at the forefront of our ability to deal with the challenges of this evolving world of shifting balances of power, chaos, and mission depth. We must be ready to commit force in innovative ways. We must look for new solutions to new problems and be able to take advantage of new capabilities. We must resist the temptation to gravitate toward standardized, “cookie cutter” solutions because we have a level of comfort and familiarity with those solutions.

Command Relationships

Nowhere is the need for flexibility more critical than in our approach to arranging command relationships within a joint force. The proper organization of a force for mission accomplishment is one of the most important

functions of command. This has been true since Rome organized its legions in multiples of ten, and it is true today as a CINC decides to fight his force using functional component, service component, or a combination thereof. The imperative remains unchanged. A commander must be able to wield influence throughout both the spatial and temporal depth of the battlespace in a synergized effort aimed at achieving his purpose. With exponentially exploding technology in weapons and our ability to process information, the

molecular management of our forces is not the school solution

ability to optimize the command and control structure will take on even greater importance. Herein lies one of the great challenges we face in the continuing development of joint doctrine. We must optimize a commander's ability to focus a growing resource base while enhancing his ability to deal with an increasingly complex set of tasks and conditions. The Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 provides a framework to do just that. It mandates that we provide a joint force commander (JFC) with the best force-resource base available, without regard to the military department or departments from which we must draw the assets. It is the springboard from which we overcome service parochialism and fight a joint fight. Joint doctrine is our key to organizing for that joint fight.

There is, however, a growing misconception of what “fighting joint” means with respect to organizing for combat. There are many who believe that organizing a joint force means the simple division of forces and capabilities along functional lines based on the medium in which they operate. Forces that operate on or in water—and in some cases from water—are controlled by a joint force maritime component commander (JFMCC); those that operate on land are controlled by a joint force land component commander (JFLCC); those that operate in the air

are controlled by a joint force air component commander (JFACC); and those that operate in the realm of special operations are controlled by a joint force special operations component commander (JFSOCC). The logic is that we negate service identities by functionally aligning a force and thus assume that such a force has achieved the desired level of jointness and can better accomplish its mission.

By defaulting to functional component we leave consideration of the mission completely out of the process. In fact, by taking this simplistic functional approach to organizing a joint force, all we really accomplished is a reorganization by matching a force to the molecules—water, earth, or air—through which it operates. The mission is not addressed. Instead of simply administering a force by molecular management we should be properly exercising the process outlined in either JOPES deliberate or phase III crisis action planning in order to find the optimal command and force structure to accomplish a mission.

Structure and Mission

Today's joint doctrine allows us the flexibility to optimize the capabilities of our forces by utilizing the strengths of existing service component commands, organizing along functional lines, creating joint task forces (JTFs), or a combination thereof. Instead of arriving at a functionally based solution by default, we should ask what is the value added by reorganizing from the existing service component structure? If there is no value added, why reorganize it? We must remember that molecular management of our forces is not the school solution. It is an option.

To find the best structure-mission match-up, we should be rigorous in analyzing how best to tailor a force to the course of action (COA) envisioned by a JFC. If that course necessitates two or more forces from separate military departments operating within the same medium in close geographical proximity then a functional component command structure may be the solution. To determine if this is the case, there are a number of considerations that may be addressed in our analysis

such as: C² capabilities of a joint force commander and his staff and their envisioned role in the operation; who has the leading capability to plan and execute a mission and/or the preponderance of forces operating in the medium; whether a given mission is the same or dissimilar for different parts of the force; are significant forces from more than one existing service component operating in the same medium in a geographic area; what is the interoperability of C² and the forces involved; what span of control does the C² architecture allow; and what is the duration and scope of operations.

Each JFC must organize those forces at his disposal for mission accomplishment. Often a single JFMCC, JFLCC, JFACC, and JFSOCC is the right command and control solution. In other cases, it simply may not be. Take for example a theater in which a JFC finds himself faced with an MRC scenario for which he organizes a force along functional lines and deploys it to the theater of operations. Simultaneously he finds there is another demand for action at the lower end of the spectrum, perhaps even an MOOTW. This could be at a separate locale, or as chaos in the theater gains momentum it could be in the same AO as the MRC. One solution to his dilemma is to relieve the various subordinate commanders of dealing with operations at different ends of the spectrum and create a JTF solely for the purpose of dealing with the new demand. He now has one more subordinate to communicate with but has simplified his lines of command while not overtaxing his subordinates. He has created a command structure well suited to deal with the mission depth in his AO. This was a fairly easy solution and is adequately addressed in Joint Pub 3-0 at present.

But let's examine a more complex case in which a JFC is fighting an MRC. A significant portion of our military capability is at his disposal. In addition, he has been designated commander of a large multinational coalition force. The AO is expansive and the JFC determines that he must take very disparate

USS Essex off Somali coast.



U.S. Navy (David P. Gallant)

Marine sniper taking aim.



Military Photography (Greg Stewart)

objectives in the far eastern and far western parts of his AO. Given the size of his force, expanse of the AO, and dissimilar nature of operations in east and west, he decides to designate two commanders as JFLCC: one JFLCC west and one JFLCC east. While once again he has added another commander to communicate with, command and control are enhanced. His subordinate commanders each have a force and mission they and their staffs can contend with. The JFC can now best allocate resources to each JFLCC and the JFC has a clear mental picture of the priorities of his subordinates when receiving information or giving guidance to one of them.

Using a variation on this case we can explore another and perhaps more likely command relationship option. As before, the objectives also involve operations in a similar medium but are separated geographically. One of the forces, however, is significantly larger and is the designated main effort. It is comprised of both joint and coalition forces. A smaller force is assigned the other objective and designated the supporting effort. It is also organized for ground operations but is predominantly from a single military department while the larger force draws significant forces from multiple service

departments. The JFC in this case determines that the best command and control structure to successfully execute his intended COA lies in designating the larger force a functional component command and having one of his service components exercise command and control over the smaller force. He has used a functional component to coalesce and harness a large and complex force and capitalized on the existing command relationship and abilities of a service component to deal with a simpler force and mission. He was able to arrive at this optimal solution because he used an analytical approach and an open-minded evaluation of the full field of options available to him.

Although these last two solutions do not expressly run counter to present doctrine, you certainly will not find a two-JFLCC example in any current doctrinal publications and I doubt that many seminars conducted at the Armed Forces Staff College explore mixing functional and service component command structures within the same joint force. Our institutional thought processes are beginning to harden around automatic functional alignment, a method that is nothing more than “management by molecular medium.” We must reverse this trend.

Unity of Command

Look closely at the language in our current doctrine: “JFCs assign missions and establish command relationships to meet the requirements of specific situations” (Joint Pub 3-0); “primary emphasis in command relations should be

functional commands are not the only way to operate jointly

to keep the chain of command short and simple so that it is clear who is in charge of what” (Joint Pub 1); and establish “functional component commands when such a command structure enhances the overall capability to accomplish the mission of the establishing commander” (Joint Pub 3-0). Functional commands are not the only way to operate jointly. Our doctrine does not mandate their use, they are only options. Furthermore these options are open to further creative manipulation if commanders so desire.

By way of counter-arguments, there are many who would protest both a functional and a service component command operating within the same medium, based on a perceived loss in unity of command. We speak a great deal of the importance of unity of command throughout doctrine. It is one of the nine principles of war and its maintenance is an imperative to success. Its violation invites failure and defeat. Mention more than one subordinate commander operating in the same medium and some assume that

we have violated this principle. This, however, is simply not the case. Unity of command has nothing to do with the number of commanders in a specific medium but everything to do with the relationship between a commander and his subordinates.

In Joint Pub 3-0 we read, “Unity of command means that all forces operate under a single commander with the requisite authority to direct all forces employed in pursuit of a common purpose.” The commander in our above case is the JFC. He maintains unity of command so long as all forces under his authority answer to him through a clearly definable chain of command and so long as subordinates answer only to one authority on each level.

Many who would decry a loss of unity of command have served in divisions which had several brigades or regiments or in corps which had more than one division. Did the division and corps commanders in those units lose unity of command by having more than one subordinate commander doing

roughly the same kind of task within the same medium? Of course not. What they realized was enhanced command and control because they had task organized their forces into manageable packages. They divided their forces into a number of subunits that their command, control, and communications infrastructure could handle. Those commanders could now wield their influence throughout divisions and corps because they had maximized their ability to control the forces. They even had the added flexibility of assigning disparate missions to various parts of their forces (assault, support, reserve, etc.) and had trusted subordinate commanders to report to them on the progress of their missions. JFCs are no different. They divide their forces into manageable packages and focus them on a mission. The number of subordinates operating in a medium is not the issue. Creating the task organization that is optimal for a JFC’s intended COA is the issue.

Sometimes designating a JFMCC, a JFLCC, a JFACC, and a JFSOCC is the desired level of command packaging. Sometimes that mix, plus a JTF for a

special mission or location, may be the solution. And sometimes it may be desirable to have a creative functional-component mix.

To best organize their forces, JFCs must understand and capitalize on capabilities provided by each service. The Marine Corps provides potent Marine Forces (MARFORs) organized to fight as Marine Air Ground Task Forces (MAGTFs). The latter can be integrated into various command relationships or can conduct independent operations directly for JFCs. We are providing service component headquarters today to unified and subunified commands. We are upgrading JTF command and control capabilities within our Marine Expeditionary Units-Special Operations Capable. And, recognizing the confusion frequently found in ad hoc JTF headquarters, we have established a standing JTF headquarters on the east coast. It can respond to crises from forward presence to conflict resolution, with the ability to act as a bridge for subsequent operations. Additionally we have created the Commandant’s Warfighting Lab to test new methods, technologies, and structures for the Marine Corps of the future. The resulting product of the laboratory’s experiments will be Marine forces provided to JFCs that are more adept at operating in scenarios of chaos and mission depth. With innovative ideas and organizations the Marine Corps is leaning forward into the joint fight of tomorrow.

Clearly joint doctrine is also leaning forward and I applaud the efforts to keep it relevant to the challenging battlefield of tomorrow. As we continue in its development, however, we must resist the urge to gravitate to simplistic “one size fits all” answers to how we will organize to fight. We must not allow the current tendency of defaulting to purely functional componentcy to infect the doctrine by which we will operate in the future. Doctrine must serve us in the full spectrum of conflict and must be useful in conflicts that may be characterized by chaos and mission depth. Retaining flexibility is the key to keeping the joint doctrine of tomorrow useful and relevant. **JFQ**