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COMMAND

THE OPERATIONAL FUNCTION

ARMY DOCTRINE





COMMAND

THE OPERATIONAL FUNCTION

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HIERARCHY

This is a functional-level Army doctrine publication that resides between keystone and supporting levels in the Army doctrine hierarchy.

AIM

This publication provides an overview of the COMMAND operational function and an introduction to what is contained in COMMAND-related supporting level doctrine.

REFERENCES

The main references for this publication are [B-GL-300-001/FP-001, *Land Operations*](#) and [B-GL-300-003/FP-001, *Command in Land Operations*](#). The work of Ross Pigeau and Carol McCann has also been extensively drawn upon.¹



1. Carol McCann & Ross Pigeau, "Clarifying the Concepts of Control and of Command." *Proceedings of the 1999 Command and Control Research and Technology Symposium*, Washington, DC: CCRP, Dept. of Defence, pp. 475-490, 1999.

Ross Pigeau & Carol McCann, "What is a Military Commander?" in P. Essens, A. Vogelaar, E. Tanercan & D. Winslow (Eds.). *The Human in Command: Peace Support Operations*. Amsterdam: Mets & Schilt, pp. 394-413, 2001.

Ross Pigeau and Carol McCann, "Re-conceptualizing Command and Control," *Canadian Military Journal* 3, 1 (2002): 56.

Carol McCann, Ross Pigeau and Allan English, "Using the Command and Control Framework to Analyse Command Challenges," *Proceedings of the 7th Command and Control Research and Technology Symposium*, Washington, DC: CCRP, Dept. of Defence, 2002.

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LINKS TO RELATED ARMY "OPERATIONAL" MATERIAL

- [B-GL-300-001/FP-001, *Land Operations*](#)
- [B-GL-300-003/FP-001, *Command in Land Operations*](#)
- [B-GL-300-000/FP-000, *Canada's Army: We Stand On Guard for Thee*](#)
- NATO Allied Administrative Publication (AAP) 6 – *NATO Glossary of Terms and Definitions*
- NATO Allied Administrative Publication (AAP) 39 – *NATO Handbook of Land Operations Terminology*, Standards Library
- NATO Allied Tactical Publication (ATP) 3.2.2 – *Command and Control of Allied Land Forces*
- [A-PA-005-000/AP-003, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Doctrine*](#)
- [A-PA-005-000/AP-005, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Leading People*](#)
- [A-PA-005-000/AP-004, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Conceptual Foundations*](#)



"Doctrine is the fundamental principles and practices by which military forces guide their actions in support of objectives."

SECTION 1



INTRODUCTION

He who wishes to be obeyed must know how to command.
—Niccolo Machiavelli



SOURCE: COMBAT CAMERA

THE ROLE OF DOCTRINE²

1. Doctrine is the fundamental principles and practices by which military forces guide their actions in support of objectives. The role of doctrine is to impart knowledge and provide authoritative guidance for the organization of armed forces and the conduct of operations as part of the military art. As a result, land operations doctrine forms the foundation upon which the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) generates and employs forces for land operations. Doctrine acts as a guide for action rather than as a set of fixed rules: it is authoritative but requires judgement in application. Capstone doctrine establishes the Army's view of the nature of operations, the fundamentals by which land forces conduct operations, and the methods by which commanders exercise command. Capstone doctrine also serves as the basis for decisions about organization, training, leader development, materiel, soldiers and facilities. [B-GL-300-001/FP-001, *Land Operations*](#), is the Army's capstone doctrine manual.

2. Doctrine is also a statement of how the Army intends to fight. In this sense, doctrine often describes an idealized situation and then contrasts the ideal with the reality that Army leaders can expect. Doctrine provides a means of conceptualizing campaigns and operations as well as a detailed understanding of conditions, frictions and uncertainties that make achieving the ideal difficult. Doctrine also helps potential partners understand how the Canadian Army will operate. It establishes a common frame of reference and a common cultural perspective to solving military problems, including useful intellectual tools.

3. This publication provides a brief outline of the overarching principles and other fundamental aspects of the Command operational function. The reader will be presented with an overview of the interrelation of operational principles, and broad categories of Command activities. A comprehensive library of doctrinal reference documentation is available for a deeper understanding of presented concepts. The Army Electronic Library can be found on the DWAN at http://acims.mil.ca/sp/CADTC_DAD_AEL/default.aspx.

2. NATO AAP 6 Definition.

SECTION 2

WHAT IS COMMAND?³

...armies are for war, and the nature of war hasn't changed much since the first dawn. The requirements of good soldiering and good military leadership haven't changed much either.

—David Bercuson, Significant Incident

4. Military command encompasses the art of leading, decision-making, motivating and directing all ranks into action to accomplish assigned missions. It requires a vision of the desired end state, an understanding of military science (doctrine), military art (the profession of arms), concepts, missions, priorities and the allocation of resources. It requires an ability to assess people and risks and involves continually re-evaluating the situation.
5. Command is defined as “the authority vested in an individual of the armed forces for the direction, coordination and control of military forces.”⁴ Command is exercised through the creative expression of the human will necessary to accomplish a mission through the exercise of the authority vested by the national government and the chain of command for the direction, coordination and control of military forces.⁵ Canadian commanders are legally empowered by the *National Defence Act* (NDA) to generate military capability and command assigned armed forces in support of strategic policies and objectives. Exercising that authority and responsibility⁶ is an interpersonal endeavour that is highly reliant upon the relationship between a commander and subordinates.
6. Commanders are empowered with command authority. However, they must also possess the intellectual ability to decide on a course of action and the interpersonal skills to inspire subordinates within the command to carry out that action. Legally, morally and practically, the authority for command is vested in a single individual, rather than a team (although many aspects of command are collaborative). Likewise, responsibility for the effective exercise of command, and the achievement of assigned objectives, rests with the same individual. Commanders rely on the professional expertise of their advisors and subordinate commanders.

3. B-GL-300-003/FP-001, *Command in Land Operations*, p. 1-1, para 101.

4. AAP-6, NATO Terminology Bank Record 14848.

5. CAF Defence Terminology Bank Record 26200.

6. Authority involves “the legal right to make decisions, transmit his intentions to his subordinate commanders, and impose his will on subordinates.” (DTB Record 21091) Responsibility is “something that one is required to do as part of a job, role or legal obligation.” (DTB Record 22854).

COMMAND VS CONTROL

7. Control is defined as “the authority exercised by commanders over part of the activities of subordinate organizations, or other organizations not normally under their command, which encompasses the responsibility for implementing orders or directives.”⁷ It is important to note that “control” is used to implement orders and directives related to “command.” This relationship overtly demonstrates the interlinking of concepts and the pre-eminence of command. Indeed, command without control is ineffective.

8. Control reduces uncertainty, mitigates risk and increases agility by imposing relative order through the establishment of structures and processes to enable command and manage risk. Control must be achieved in a manner that provides commanders with relevant feedback to inform decisions while also allowing them to focus their efforts on broader issues and future operations. Commanders who can operate in a chaotic and uncertain environment without becoming frustrated by attempting to over-control the situation will be more dynamic in making decisions.⁸ Therefore, commanders must carefully consider when to impose control measures⁹ to support the decision-making process as well as when and what authority should be delegated in the execution of operations, and to whom that authority should be delegated.

Command is the expression of creativity and will of the commander to accomplish the mission, while effective **control** involves structures and processes that are created to enable command and manage risk.¹⁰

DECISION-ACTION CYCLE

9. Battles may be lost and missions unsuccessful because of a commander's failure to recognize favourable circumstances and make sound and timely decisions. The decision-action cycle, also known as the observe-orient-decide-act cycle (OODA loop), is a command and control process that an individual actively applies in order to act on a set of circumstances. Commanders first observe and learn about their own forces' status and situation, the environment, and the enemy. Then, they orient themselves by achieving situational awareness in order to develop a battlefield visualization. After conducting planning, they decide what to do and how to do it. Commanders act upon that decision by directing the execution of the action. That returns them to the observation stage where, having acted, they observe the enemy reaction and their own forces' actions, continuing the decision-action cycle.

7. Defence Terminology Bank Record 375 and Allied Administrative Publication (AAP) 6.

8. B-GL-300-003/FP-001, *Command in Land Operations*, p. 1-10, para 107.4.

9. Control measures are "directive(s) given graphically or orally by a commander to subordinate commands in order to assign responsibilities, coordinate fires and manoeuvre, and control combat operations." (Defence Terminology Bank Record 694402)

10. Pigeau, Ross, and Carol McCann, "Reconceptualizing Command and Control," *Canadian Military Journal* 3, 1 (2002): 56.





SOURCE: COMBAT CAMERA

WHY COMMAND?¹¹

10. Command is the most important activity across the breadth of the continuum of operations. By itself, it will not ensure victory; however, operations would be impossible without effective command. Command is the central operational function which leads to successful operations.

11. Command is about people. Many activities, such as battle procedure, assist the execution of command, but command alone will ensure that campaigns, battles and tactical engagements do not degenerate into mob action. Through command, the nation has the option to engage military force to either accomplish or support stated strategic and operational objectives.

FIGHTING POWER

12. Fighting power is the sum total of a military force's capability to execute missions. It is generated through the integration of three foundational components which must be holistically considered in order to attain effective and balanced fighting power:

- a. the **INTELLECTUAL** component, consisting of foundational education, doctrinal knowledge and awareness of the operating environment;
- b. the **MORAL** component, consisting of largely intangible psychological, ethical and cultural factors from which we derive morale, cohesion, *esprit de corps* and fighting spirit at all organizational levels; and
- c. the **PHYSICAL** component, consisting of quantifiable elements such as organizations, equipment, systems and training, which are conceived, designed and built to ultimately accomplish tasks.

13. The operational functions within fighting power—**Command, Sense, Act, Shield, and Sustain**—stem from its intellectual component and, guided by its moral component, form the basis to conceive, design, and build its physical component.

11. B-GL-300-003/FP-001, *Command in Land Operations*, p. 1-3, para 102.

14. The terms “combat power,” “fighting power” and “firepower” are often interchangeably used; however, Figure 1 illustrates the differences and interrelationship between these distinct terms.

TERM	DEFINITION	SOURCE
COMBAT POWER	“The total means of destructive and/or disruptive force that a military unit or formation can apply against an opponent at a given time.”	B-GL-300-001/FP-001, <i>Land Operations</i> , and NATO AAP-6
FIGHTING POWER	“The ability to fight, consisting of three essential, inter-related components: a physical component; a moral component and an intellectual component. Fighting power is measured by assessment of operational capability.”	B-GL-300-001/FP-001, <i>Land Operations</i> , - NATO, Allied Joint Publication 01(C), and - NATO, Allied Joint Publication 3.2 – <i>Allied Joint Doctrine for Land Operations</i>
FIREPOWER	“The amount of fire which may be delivered by a position, unit or weapon system.”	NATO AAP-6

Figure 1: Relationship Between Combat Power, Fighting Power and Firepower

THE OPERATIONAL FUNCTIONS

15. The operational functions are useful in two ways:

- a. Operational functions are a means of envisioning and building military capabilities rather than a series of boxes into which every military capability must fit. According to its battlefield role, every military capability, from the individual soldier upwards, is a tailored balance of all the operational functions. For example, an armoured reconnaissance troop will have an aspect of command and control (Command), an ability to collect information (Sense), an ability to manoeuvre and access fire support (Act), some form of protection (Shield) and some inherent ability to sustain itself (Sustain). Given the primary role of this particular capability to collect information in the face of an enemy at long ranges, most of the emphasis will be on the Sense function.
- b. Operational functions may be used as a means of visualizing, planning and executing operations. Every operation is planned and conducted through a consideration of the five operational functions, taking into account the operational environment at hand, the objective to be achieved and any imposed limitations. How will the operation be commanded? What information must be gathered to support decisions (Sense)? What actions will be taken and with what fire, mobility or influence support (Act)? How can risks to the force's fighting power be mitigated (Shield)? How will it be logistically supported (Sustain)?

16. The operational functions describe the functional capabilities of a military force, regardless of the type of unit or formal operational role, and apply to all levels of warfare—tactical, operational, and strategic.¹² The balanced orchestration of these functions is equally required for operational planning and execution, as well as combat capability development from the soldier to formation level:

- a. **COMMAND** is widely regarded as the principal operational function, as it unifies the others in order to transform the overall commander's intent into desired results. It integrates all the operational functions into a single comprehensive strategic, operational or tactical level concept.¹³ It provides vertical and horizontal integration through the planning, direction, coordination and control of military forces and other elements as allocated. It provides the means to unify and integrate the activities of the other functions in the finding, fixing, striking and exploiting¹⁴ of adversaries or other targets.
- b. **SENSE** is the operational function concerning capabilities which enable commanders at all levels to maintain awareness of the operational environment through the use of widely dispersed sensor systems (including human) feeding into centralized analytical and coordination elements. The Sense function informs commanders and supports with decision-making at all levels by concentrating resources on the collection, analysis and dissemination of data and information from integral and external collection sources in response to specific intelligence requirements. Sense concurrently supports the need for real-time situational awareness and feeds into the production of predictive intelligence products.
- c. **ACT** is the operational function concerning capabilities that integrate manoeuvre, fire support and influence activities to achieve an advantage over an adversary or other targets in order to affect their behaviour and achieve desired objectives. The Act function accomplishes command direction.
- d. **SHIELD** is the operational function concerning capabilities that provide for the protection of a force by enhancing its survivability and freedom of action (to include mobility and counter-mobility) through risk management and vulnerability minimization. The Shield function protects the personnel and resources assigned to a commander.
- e. **SUSTAIN** is the operational function concerning capabilities that leverage strategic, operational and tactical assets to re-generate, support and maintain forces. The Sustain function provides for the personnel and resource support requirements needed in the attainment of command objectives and for the maintenance and re-generation of combat power.

17. The central component of the Command function is a philosophy—mission command—emphasizing the importance of formulating and communicating the commander's intent and allowing subordinates the authority and initiative to fulfil it. A thorough understanding of the intent guides decision-making and enables this mission command philosophy at all levels. It encourages initiative and speed of action, and provides for a unity of purpose nested within each level of command.

12. B-GL-300-001/FP-001, *Land Operations*, p. 4-18, para 412.

13. Defence Terminology Bank Record 26166.

14. The need to be prepared to exploit is implicit, B-GL-320-000/FP-001, *Act: The Operational Function*, p. 10.

18. The Canadian Army (CA) defines five operational functions: *Command, Sense, Act, Shield* and *Sustain*. Commanders seek to integrate and execute these functions as overwhelming combat power¹⁵ when and where required. The aim is to convert the potential of forces, resources and opportunity into a capability that is greater than the sum of the parts. The role of the commander, and hence that of the command operational function, is to provide the vision and direction required to orchestrate the activities of the other operational functions. A commander's personal talent and skill allows the fullness and complexity of a situation, in relation to the desired or assigned end state, to be quickly grasped, intuitively understood and used as a basis to formulate an intent. This art calls for a commander to comprehend, evaluate and synthesize all the elements of the operational environment affecting the achievement of the end state, and to extract from them an operational concept for success.¹⁶ Furthermore, the CAF's professionalism, its practise of the military ethos and ethics, and its degree of cohesion are a function of command.

19. The manoeuvrist approach emphasizes the destruction of an enemy's will to fight by concentrating combat power to deliberately attack their centre of gravity. In many cases, the ability to effectively command is one of the centres of gravity that must be attacked. Likewise, the ability to command forces is also a friendly centre of gravity and therefore mandates a critical requirement for protection.

20. The authority to command, as held by commissioned officers, entails more than simply providing direction for the orchestration of military capabilities and functions to achieve an end state.¹⁷ Conflict involves legally empowered representatives of a sovereign power applying violence or potential violence in the achievement of legitimate military objectives. A commissioned officer, in the role of commander at any level, is to ensure the legitimate application of that violence in pursuit of strategic objectives. Without such moral and professional authority exercised through command, mob rule and uncontrolled violence will prevail.

21. Command at the section level is executed in detail by an appointed and generally qualified non-commissioned member (NCM) on behalf of the platoon and company commander (or Corps equivalents). It is arguably the most important and in some ways the most powerful command position in an Army, for nowhere else does a single individual have such direct and immediate responsibility and power over so many subordinates. Thus, training for this level of command must be detailed and focused on the particular requirements of the Army corps or branch in question. Failure to ensure appropriate and sufficient training and practise for this level of command will ultimately and unquestionably lead to operational failure. Detailed explanations of the nature of command, aspects of the human dimension of command and the theory of command organizations can be found in B-GL-300-003/FP-001, *Command in Land Operations*.

15. B-GL-300-001/FP-001, *Land Operations*, defines combat power as "the total means of destructive and/or disruptive force that a military unit or formation can apply against an opponent at a given time."

16. This includes the ability to translate strategic objectives into the design of a campaign and the visualization of an operational end state; to synchronize operational fires and manoeuvre; to coordinate and employ large numbers of forces in a joint and combined setting; and to effectively manage the tempo and rhythm of operations in a way which keeps an opponent continually disadvantaged. Equally important is the requirement to clearly communicate the commander's intent to subordinates, ensuring that it becomes the guiding focus throughout the operation.

17. The exception is legal officers who are advisors and have no authority to command.

SECTION 3

THE APPLICATION OF COMBAT POWER:
THE MANOEUVRIST APPROACH

So in war, the way is to avoid what is strong and strike at what is weak.
—Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*

22. The manoeuvrist approach¹⁸ is a philosophical approach to operations that seeks to defeat adversaries by shattering their moral and physical cohesion—their ability to fight as an effective, coordinated whole—rather than by destroying them physically through incremental attrition.¹⁹ It uses all capabilities—fire, manoeuvre and influence activities—to achieve a psychological advantage over the enemy. The manoeuvrist approach is equally applicable to all types of campaigns from peace support through major combat.

EFFECTS-BASED APPROACH TO OPERATIONS

The effects-based approach to operations is one in which the desired end state is carefully considered prior to undertaking tactical actions, to ensure that military forces only conduct tactical actions that will likely lead to that desired end state eventually. It is little more than a natural planning process that ensures tactics ultimately support the strategic aim. That is, it is the application of the operational art. It is formally defined as:

The way of thinking and specific processes, integrated in both the physical and psychological planes that focus on desired outcomes (effects) rather than activities to enable both the integration and effectiveness of the military contribution within a comprehensive approach and the realisation of operational and strategic outcomes. Note: The specific processes involve the organization of activities to achieve planned, desired and measurable effects that will realize objectives and ultimately meet the mission end state. (DTB Record 35089)

PRINCIPLES OF THE MANOEUVRIST APPROACH

23. In formulating plans, a commander should strive to implement the manoeuvrist approach in order to gain a physical and psychological advantage in relation to the enemy and their objectives. The manoeuvrist approach is realized through the following principles:

- a. **CONCENTRATION ON THE ADVERSARY'S VULNERABILITIES** to attack the adversary's weaknesses on both the psychological and physical planes to degrade their will to fight and disrupt their force cohesion. Activities and their effects should be focused on exploiting vulnerabilities while avoiding strengths.

18. The manoeuvrist approach is also referred to as "manoeuvre warfare."

19. NATO Allied Administrative Publication 39 (AAP-39), *Glossary of Land Military Terms and Definitions*.



SOURCE: COMBAT CAMERA

- b. **MISSION TYPE ORDERS** focus on the effects to be achieved. Mission-type orders direct forces through the commander's clearly articulated intent, tasks and desired effects, rather than by detailed supervision and the imposition of control measures or restrictions. Mission orders enable decentralized decision-making and empower commanders at all levels to react to situations and to capitalize on opportunities as they arise, while being guided by the intent of commanders one and two echelons above.
- c. **AGILITY** through rapid decision-making and intellectual acuity enables a commander to seize and retain the initiative and dictate the course of operations by *acting quicker than the adversary can react* on both the physical and psychological planes. Once overcome by events, the adversary loses cohesion and unity of action, and the ability to influence the operating environment. Agility is required at all levels of command and in all situations.
- d. **FOCUS ON MAIN EFFORT** generally expressed in terms of a particular friendly unit, activity or effect. The main effort focuses combat power and resources on the vital element of the plan and allows subordinates to make decisions that will support the commander's intent without constantly seeking advice. While each unit is granted the freedom to operate independently, all forces are unified in their desired end state.
- e. **EXPLOIT TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES.** Commanders are able to react to changes quicker than the adversary by maintaining situational awareness and exercising freedom of action. Reserves are formed to exploit opportunities created by the active shaping of the operating environment. Commanders must build and practise (through training) a culture among subordinates that uses mission command and encourages initiative.
- f. **ACT BOLDLY AND DECISIVELY.** Commanders at all levels must deal with uncertainty and take decisive action to seize fleeting opportunities in support of the higher commander's intent. They accept confusion and disorder, and generate it for the adversary. Risk is calculated, understood, mitigated and accepted.
- g. **COMMAND FROM A POSITION TO INFLUENCE THE MAIN EFFORT.** Commanders place themselves where they can influence the main effort and ensure that the desired effects are created to realize the desired objectives. If the main effort of a campaign rests with influence activities that seek to engender security and support from a populace, then commanders must position themselves to influence the unity of effort between all the available elements of power and within the local populace. To retain the ability to influence operations, a commander must not permanently allocate all resources to subordinate units or formations.

APPLICATION OF THE MANOEUVRIST APPROACH

24. The manoeuvrist approach to operations seeks to attack the adversary's will to fight, and thus undermine and even shatter their cohesion by avoiding trials of strength and targeting the adversary's vulnerabilities or weakness.²⁰ Attacking the adversary's cohesion is done both physically and psychologically through fire and influence activities.
25. Three approaches to attacking will and cohesion are:
 - a. **PRE-EMPTION** to seize a fleeting opportunity to deny the adversary an advantageous course of action. Pre-emption relies upon surprise, and requires sound intelligence to understand and anticipate an adversary's actions which can be swiftly exploited. The purpose of pre-emptive action is to prevent an adversary from gaining an objective or establishing influence. Effective pre-emption denies initiative to an adversary, causes confusion and doubt, destroys confidence, and undermines plans. Pre-emption is often achieved by allowing subordinates at all levels the initiative, consistent with the commander's intent, to seize opportunities as they arise on both the physical and psychological planes.
 - b. **DISLOCATION** of an adversary is to deny them the ability to bring their strength to bear. It seeks to avoid fighting the adversary on their terms by avoiding and neutralizing their strengths so they cannot be used effectively. Envelopments or deep penetrations into the operational depth of an adversary, by small military forces, may cause dislocation by attacking reserves, lines of communications, and C2 networks. Deception can be used to lure the adversary into making incorrect tactical decisions and dislocating their forces. Influence activities, such as psychological operations and local public affairs, can dislocate the messages of enemy propaganda.
 - c. **DISRUPTION** selectively attacks the adversary to break apart critical assets and degrade coherence of their fighting power. Disruption ruptures the integrity of the adversary's fighting power and reduces it to less than the total of its constituent parts. It often shapes the operational environment for more decisive action. Disruptive actions include getting into an adversary's lines of communication, seizing or neutralizing what is important to them, surprising and deceiving them, presenting them with unexpected situations, using psychological operations (PSYOPS) to disrupt propaganda and undermine their forces, and attacking their plans and preparations. In many campaign themes, such as a counter-insurgency (COIN), the establishment of credible coalition forces and superior governance models can disrupt the influence and intimidation that the adversaries have over a populace.

20. A breakdown in cohesion will lead to isolation, fear, confusion and a loss of the will to fight. The adversary will be unable to apply their full combat power, and their component parts can be defeated in detail. Ideally, the result is an adversary made up of a collection of individuals and small groups lacking motivation, direction and purpose. This loose collection can be more easily defeated, since its ability to fight effectively as a force has been eliminated.



26. The manoeuvrist approach is not only applied through physical activities (fires) that affect enemy will and cohesion as second-order effects, it is also applied through influence activities that directly attack enemy will and cohesion. The manoeuvrist approach is conducted simultaneously on the physical and psychological planes in a complementary fashion. Just as a commander may wish to reach a piece of vital ground in order to make the enemy's defence untenable, and thus undermine the enemy's will and cohesion, the same commander may wish to issue highly effective PSYOPS messages to undermine enemy forces, provide emergency aid to locals suffering occupation, and issue accurate and timely public affairs (PA) statements, to out-manoeuvre the enemy in time, space and influence.

27. Activities are planned and conducted with a common objective in mind, so that activities seeking to shatter the will and cohesion of an adversary do not negatively affect the will and cohesion of those groups that support the campaign. When an adversary is attacked, the legitimacy of the campaign must be maintained in the eyes of its supporters and potential supporters.

28. Depending upon the campaign theme, it may be possible to influence the adversaries and opponents to become supporters of the campaign. This requires activities that address the root causes of the crisis and conflict itself, the application of activities on the psychological plane, and the considered and judicious use of physical violence.

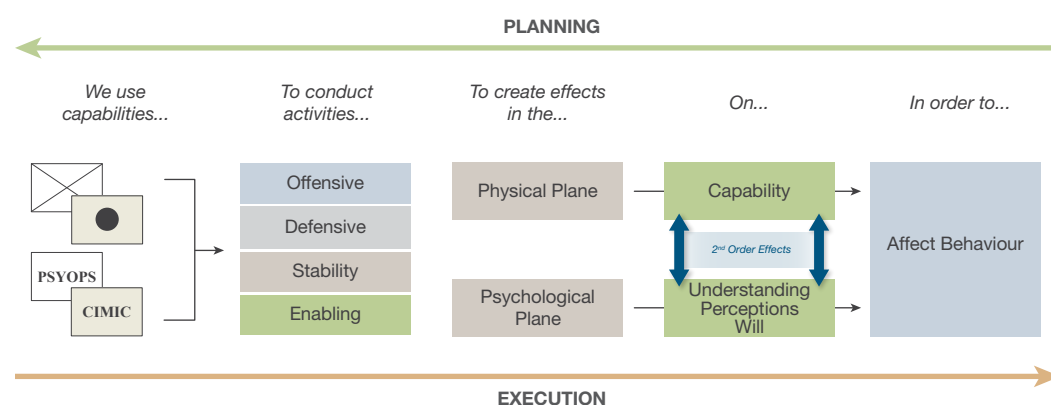


Figure 2: Application of Capabilities to Create Desired Effects

29. A successful manoeuvrist approach requires a style and philosophy of command that fosters de-centralized decision-making, the use of initiative at all levels, the ability to react to the unexpected and the ability to take advantage of opportunity. It requires a sound understanding of the enemy and their relationship with the local populace.



SOURCE: COMBAT CAMERA

MISSION COMMAND

30. Mission command is “a philosophy of command that promotes unity of effort by means of a clear expression of the higher and superior commanders’ intents, and the delegation of authority to subordinate commanders to use their initiative in accordance with these intents.”²¹ It is a practical solution to the chaos and uncertainty of land combat operations. It accepts that the successful application of surprise and shock against an enemy is best executed through rapid and timely decision-making at all levels of command in response to both threats and opportunities on the battlefield.

31. Mission command underpins the manoeuvrist approach and the effects-based approach with three enduring tenets:

- a. The importance of understanding a superior commander’s intent. It is vital that in exercising mission command, subordinate commanders understand the operational objectives and principles of the applicable campaign theme, so that their activities may be properly planned and conducted within those contexts. At the tactical level, commanders must clearly understand the intent of their superiors, two echelons up, and work relentlessly to achieve that intent even in rapidly changing situations.
- b. A clear responsibility to fulfil the commander’s intent.
- c. Swift and timely decentralized decision-making to:
 - (i) provide freedom of action; and
 - (ii) gain/retain the initiative.

21. DTB Record 21037.



A person who delegates authority is also responsible, and hence accountable, not for the form of direct supervision that a supervisor is expected to exercise but, rather, for control over the delegate and, ultimately, for the actual acts performed by the delegate. The act of delegation to another does not relieve the responsible official of the duty to account.

While one can delegate the authority to act, one cannot thereby delegate one's assigned responsibility in relation to the proper performance of such acts. Where a superior delegates the authority to act to a subordinate, the superior remains responsible: first, for the acts performed by the delegate; second, for the appropriateness of the choice of delegate; third, with regard to the propriety of the delegation; and, finally, for the control of the acts of the subordinate.

*—Report of the Somalia
Commission of Inquiry*

32. Mission command requires commanders to:
 - a. give orders in a manner that ensures subordinates understand intent, their own tasks and the context of those tasks. Mission statements are to express tasks to be achieved as both an activity and effect tied together with a purpose. Effective mission statements focus on what needs to be done and NOT on how to do it;
 - b. ensure subordinate commanders understand the operational objectives within their line of operation and the overarching campaign principles which their tactical activities support;
 - c. tell subordinates what effect they are to achieve and why it needs to be achieved;
 - d. allocate appropriate resources to carry out missions and tasks;
 - e. use a minimum of control measures so as to provide subordinates with freedom of action;
 - f. allow subordinates to decide how best to achieve their missions and tasks; and
 - g. create a culture and atmosphere that encourages the tenets of mission command, that builds self-confidence in subordinates and that practises mission command in training.
33. Subordinates must exercise initiative under mission command, with a firm understanding of higher-level objectives to be obtained and the influence that their actions will have on achieving those objectives. Short-term tactical success must not undermine the legitimacy of the campaign or the achievement of operational objectives.
34. Mission command must be practised both in garrison and in training, and in operations across the entire spectrum of conflict. The successful employment of mission command rests on its fundamentals being fully understood, fostered and frequently practised. Commanders must also adjust their command style to reflect the situational factors, including the experience, capability and understanding of subordinate commanders.



SECTION 4

COMMAND IN CONTEXT

*If it is necessary for a commander to interfere constantly with
a subordinate, one or the other should be relieved!*
—Field Marshal Lord Carver

35. Generals commanding a theatre-level HQ and NCOs commanding a section both possess specific personal competencies and have authorities that are commensurate with their positional responsibilities. Command rests on three pillars: authority, management and leadership. Each pillar is an integral and often interrelated component of command.

RESPONSIBILITY, AUTHORITY, AND COMPETENCY

36. The relationship between the terms “responsibility,” “authority,” and “competency” often generates confusion, particularly within a hierarchical organization such as the army, where subordinates are only expected to implement legal and ethical orders as issued by their superior commanders.

37. Legally, every individual soldier and commander is personally responsible for their actions in peace and war as well as for the direct or indirect consequences of those actions. While commanders are responsible for making decisions, issuing orders, and monitoring the execution of assigned tasks, they are also responsible and accountable for the actions of those to whom they have delegated command authority. The basic components of command responsibility are to provide subordinates with the necessary guidance and resources to fulfil their mission and take responsibility for the health, welfare, morale and discipline of their personnel. The concept of “command responsibility” therefore encompasses both the ethical and legal obligation that a commander assumes for the actions, accomplishments or failures of a unit. Commanders will at times be torn between a priority on the well-being of their subordinates and the accomplishment of the mission. The completion of the mission is vital.²²

38. Authority is the degree to which commanders are empowered to implement their will based upon legal and personal factors.²³ Legal authority is explicitly granted from a higher level of command, while personal authority is informally earned based upon factors such as reputation, experience and integrity.²⁴ Positional power, derived from instruments such as a Queen’s commission and the NDA, grants formal legal authority to commanders “to make decisions, transmit their intentions to subordinates, and impose their will on others.” This legal authority provides a commander with the ability to influence the will of subordinates through “tangible rewards such as time off, awards or promotion... [and the] capacity to officially punish

22. The guiding principle for commanders is that accomplishment of the mission is paramount over all other considerations. After this comes the reputation and benefit of the regiment or service, and then the benefit of the subordinates. But in certain extreme operational situations, it will become obvious to the commander that in no way is the mission achievable. In these situations, the commander has a difficult choice to make. Preservation of the force, while still doing what can be done for the mission, becomes the key consideration. If faced with an honourable enemy, surrender is possible. In other cases, some form of withdrawal or holding until relieved may be the best course of action, all the while looking to sustain or create conditions to allow another force to assume the mission.

23. Department of National Defence, A-PA-005-000/AP-005, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Leading People* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy — Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2007), 26.

24. Pigeau and McCann, “Reconceptualizing Command and Control,” *Canadian Military Journal* 3, 1 (2002): 58.



SOURCE: COMBAT CAMERA

and administer sanctions.” Personal power, based upon CA values and strength of character, provides a complementary and informal aspect of command authority.²⁵ Delegation of authority is an action by which a commander assigns to a subordinate commander a clearly stated part of their authority.²⁶

39. Mission success requires commanders to be knowledgeable, skilled and capable.²⁷ Personal competency is demonstrated through a combination of physical competency (i.e., physical fitness and soldier skills), intellectual competency (i.e., reasoning, risk assessment, conceptualization, complex analytical skills and judgement), emotional competency (i.e., resiliency, hardiness, stress management and the ability to withstand operational uncertainty) and interpersonal competency (i.e., the ability to effectively interact and engage with others to develop trust, respect and effective teamwork).²⁸ A commander’s personal competency is further augmented through the development of insight and the understanding of the doctrinal principles applicable to the situation at hand.

BALANCED COMMAND ENVELOPE²⁹

40. Commanders must possess an appropriate balance between competency, authority and responsibility. If these elements are out of balance, significant challenges may result.

41. Careful consideration must be given to an individual’s competency and willingness to accept responsibility before being granted legal authority. Such individuals must have the personal and professional attributes to effectively wield command. Commanders should progress through positions of increasing levels of authority as they prove themselves capable of handling the responsibility of command. However, commanders who acquire increased competency (through education or experience) and are not afforded the opportunity for additional authority may experience a drop in motivation (intrinsic responsibility).

42. Unbalanced competency, authority and responsibility could set the conditions for the creation of ineffective or dangerous commanders. Ineffective command results from the acceptance of high levels of responsibility without a corresponding level of authority. Ineffective commanders are powerless to accomplish their assigned objectives, as they are not appropriately empowered. Dangerous command conditions result from the granting of authority to a commander who does not accept responsibility for the use of power. Similarly, individuals with high levels of intrinsic responsibility risk becoming overwhelmed due to a lack of competency or frustrated by a lack of authority.

25. DND, A-PA-005-000/AP-005, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Leading People*, 26-30.

26. AAP-6.

27. Department of National Defence, A-PA-005-000/AP-003, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Doctrine* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy – Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2005).

28. Ross Pigeau and Carol McCann, “What is a Commander?” (Toronto: DCIEM, 2000) and Pigeau, Ross, and Carol McCann, “Reconceptualizing Command and Control,” *Canadian Military Journal* 3, 1 (2002).

29. Ross Pigeau and Carol McCann, “Re-conceptualizing Command and Control,” *Canadian Military Journal* 3, 1 (2002): 61.

COMMAND, AUTHORITY, MANAGEMENT, AND LEADERSHIP³⁰

43. The inter-relationships and interconnectedness of command, management, and leadership functions often make it difficult to disentangle the command, management, and leadership effects achieved by individuals in positions of authority.

- a. **COMMAND** is the purposeful exercise of legitimate authority over structures, resources, people and activities. Command is bounded by the lawful authority delegated to a commander and may only be exercised down the chain of command.
- b. **AUTHORITY** is always derived from a higher or superior entity and encompasses both a legal and constitutional component that gives the commander the right to make decisions, transmit their intentions to subordinates, and impose their will on others.
- c. **MANAGEMENT** involves responsibilities for a broad range of functions including planning, problem-solving and decision-making, organizing, informing, directing, developing, coordinating, monitoring, controlling, allocating and managing resources. Management is empowered by the authority delegated to a manager and may only be exercised down the managerial chain.
- d. **LEADERSHIP** may be exercised by anyone, regardless of organizational position, to purposefully influence up, down and across the chain of command to achieve an objective.³¹ Leader influence works in concert with the formal authorities of command and management but also operates independently of such formal authority.³² Command provides the structures and leadership provides the motivations, which together shape operational effectiveness.³³

44. Leadership is not constrained by the limits of formal authority and is an essential trait for both commanders and managers. Individuals anywhere in the chain of command may, given the ability and motivation, influence peers and even superiors. Military command is distinguished from management by the unique authorities of military commanders to resort to large-scale lethal force, to compel subordinates to go into harm’s way and to dispense a distinct military justice with substantial powers of punishment.

30. A-PA-005-000/AP-003, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Doctrine*, A-PA-005-000/AP-004, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Conceptual Foundations*, and A-PA-005-000/AP-005, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Leading People*.

31. Within a JIMP environment, leadership influence can extend beyond the boundaries of the CAF.

32. A-PA-005-000/AP-003, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Doctrine*, and A-PA-005-000/AP-004, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Conceptual Foundations*.

33. Alan Okros, “The Command Team: A Valuable Evolution or Doctrinal Danger?” *Canadian Military Journal* 13, 1 (Spring 2012): 15. Accessed 24 October 2015 <http://www.journal.forces.gc.ca/vol13/no1/page15-eng.asp>.



Warrant

*The Honourable the Minister of
National Defence, Canada*

*By Virtue of the Authority given to me by
His Excellency the Governor General in Council in this
Behalf, I do hereby Constitute and Appoint you the said*

Jimmy Joe Bloggins,

*To be
Chief Warrant Officer*

*from the
30th day of January 2017*

*and to continue in the said Office during the pleasure of the Honourable the Minister of
National Defence. You are, therefore, carefully and diligently to Discharge your Duty
as such by doing and performing all manner of things Thereunto belonging, as required
by the Established Regulations of the service, And you are to observe and follow such
Orders and Directions as you shall receive From your Commanding, or any other
your Superior Officer, according to Law.*

*Given under my hand and Seal at National
Defence Headquarters this 20th day of January 2017*

Minister of National Defence



ELIZABETH THE SECOND, by the
Grace of God of The United Kingdom, Canada
and Her other Realms and Territories Queen,
Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the
Faith, to

Jimmy Joe Bloggins,

HEREBY appointed an Officer
In Her Majesty's Canadian Armed Forces
With Seniority of the 1st day of May 2005

WE, reposing especial Trust and Confidence in your Loyalty, Courage and Integrity, do by
these Presents Constitute and Appoint you to be an Officer in our Canadian Armed
Forces. You are therefore carefully and diligently to discharge your Duty as such in the rank of
Second Lieutenant or in such other Rank as We may from time to time hereafter be pleased to
promote or appoint you to, and you are in such manner and on such occasions as may be prescribed by
Us to exercise and well discipline both the Inferior Officers and Non Commissioned Members
serving under you and use your best endeavours to keep them in good Order and Discipline. And We
do hereby Command them to Obey you as their Superior Officers, and you to observe and follow such
Orders and Directions as from time to time you shall receive from Us, or any other your Superior
Officer according to Law, in pursuance of the Trust hereby reposed in you.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF Our Governor General of Canada hath hereunto
set her hand and Seal at Our Government House in the City of Ottawa this
second day of May in the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Five and in
the Fifty fourth Year of Our Reign.

BY COMMAND OF
HER EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR GENERAL

MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENCE

Figure 3: Queen's Commissions

CREATING THE COMMAND CLIMATE³⁴

45. A commander—by force of personality, leadership, command style and general behaviour—has a considerable influence on the morale and performance of staff and subordinate commanders. It is a commander's responsibility to create and sustain an effective climate within the command. This command climate should encourage subordinates to think independently and to seize the initiative in support of their commander's intent.

46. A commander must establish a balance between risk and error acceptance within the command. A good commander accepts (within reason) errors in judgement and knowledge but does not tolerate lapses or errors in ethical judgement or conduct.

47. Commanders who are excessively risk-averse may create a climate within which subordinate commanders are reluctant to make decisions or take initiative. Conversely, an overly relaxed command climate may lead to carelessness, lowered standards of conduct, and negligence. Therefore, it is incumbent on commanders at all levels to strike the right balance of risk-taking and error acceptance within their command.



34. B-GL-300-003/FP-001, *Command in Land Operations*, p. 2-19.

In the early 1990s, the UN Protection Force in the former Yugoslavia included a Canadian battlegroup rotated every six months. After five years, the UN coalition had come to include a variety of nations, a good number of which were deemed to be incompetent, corrupt and unreliable.

In late 1995, the Dayton Peace Accord was about to be signed as a strategic plan to force a resolution to the ongoing conflict. With this change in sight, the force commander for UNPROFOR Bosnia and Herzegovina and the HQ staff examined two distinct operational designs for the Accord's implementation. One involved the UN handing the mandate for implementation over to a new NATO force. The other option planned for the UN to remain but under a new, robust mandate, with a fewer number of nations involved.

In deciding what nations should be recommended to remain in theatre under this possible UN mandate, the commander and his staff drew two columns. In one column they listed all the nations deemed reliable and competent enough to implement the mandate. In the other column, they listed nations deemed incompetent and which should not be invited to remain. The Canadian Army's reputation at that time caused it to be placed in this latter column.

Source: Capt A. Whelan, RRF, SO3 Operations, UNPROFOR Bosnia and Herzegovina HQ, 1995



DISCIPLINE

48. A key element of command is the imposition of discipline and adherence to high standards within the subordinate command, and the attention that must be paid to the finer details of any undertaking, no matter how routine or pedestrian. While the moment-to-moment enforcement of standards of deportment and task accomplishment will fall to the WOs and NCOs, responsibility for lapses in discipline and standards—be they technical, professional or moral—must fall to the officers. When officers fail to set a higher set of standards in dress, deportment and professional and personal conduct, there is an implied permission to all those around them, in particular subordinates, to drop the standards expected of them. They feel free to adopt lower standards in all facets of military life than those that should be expected. Discipline fails and professional rot occurs. This “implied permission” quickly begins to affect other facets of responsibility. A lack of standards in dress, for example, may quickly manifest itself in a lack of standards in operational requirements, such as the application of the Law of Armed Conflict. It is therefore imperative to establish and enforce firm discipline in the relative comforts of garrison and in the forgiving environment of training in order to ensure mission success during actual operations.

49. A well-disciplined unit with solid leadership at various levels of command should be able to withstand and remain effective despite individual failures in command and leadership. However, when a systemic, pervasive failure in leadership and quality command occurs, the fundamental moral underpinnings of a unit begin to collapse and the unit will fail operationally. The Canadian Army is not immune to such circumstances.

COMMAND IN THE INFORMATION AGE

50. Many factors that affect command—such as the nature of war, chaos, uncertainty and time—are amplified by the ever evolving influence of digital technology within the contemporary operating environment. Technology enables the real-time coordination of both lethal and non-lethal actions over great distances and has expanded the tactical area of interest to a global scale. Widespread use of networked sensors and information systems within the military, and the digitization of battlefield information, have blurred the clear dividing line between staff support information systems and networks that link human operators to essential battlefield information. Technology has enabled commanders, staff officers and soldiers to better maintain real-time shared awareness of both friendly and enemy force activities within the operational environment.

51. Technology provides a means to reduce the uncertainty associated with land combat, which, in turn, has a profound impact on the command of land forces and the conduct of land warfare. Successful commanders must embrace technology and acknowledge their critical dependence on it. It must be understood that the widespread use of technology without effective information management will result in information overload. Commanders must strive to understand the positive and negative influences of technology on situational awareness, the tempo of operations and the perceptions of targeted audiences. Information and knowledge management³⁵ directly supports the decision-making process and enhances the ability to control implementation of commander's intent. Therefore, information management is a command responsibility.



52. The speed and coverage of networked sensor systems are capable of providing vast quantities of data and information regarding the operational environment. Commanders must recognize the likelihood of information overload and inaccurate sensor information. An abundance of information can cloud the commander's understanding of the operating environment and hamper the decision-making process. The importance of analysis and processing grows as the quantity of data and information increases.

53. Commanders must be aware that the technical systems upon which they depend are vulnerable to both attack and technical failure. In order to safeguard the functionality of those systems, commanders and their subordinates must adhere to security regulations designed to protect the systems and, when required, physically defend these system from all potential forms of attack and corruption.

54. Enemy disruption and technical failure of information systems will greatly impede if not fully halt, the conduct of operations unless commanders ensure that they train for operations in a denied, degraded, or disrupted electromagnetic operating environment.

55. Commanders and staff must be capable of continuing operations with degraded or absent networked command and control systems. Training must emphasize the importance of standard operating procedures which include non-technical processes for battle-tracking and battle management by staff as well as regular battlefield circulation by commanders, which can facilitate regular face-to-face interaction between commanders, subordinates and staff.

56. The pervasiveness of digital communication and over-reliance on it poses another threat to effective command. Ubiquitous and inter-linked communication means will allow senior commanders to directly supervise, even during engagements, junior subordinates who are several echelons lower. Such practices undermine mission command and the authority of all subordinate commanders. Commanders must exercise self-discipline and humility.

35. Knowledge management is defined as “An integrated systematic approach which, when applied to an organization, enables the optimal use of timely, accurate and relevant information; it also facilitates knowledge discovery and innovation, fosters the development of a learning organization and enhances understanding by integrating all sources of information, as well as individual and collective knowledge and experience. DTB Record 18879

SECTION 5

FUNDAMENTALS OF COMMAND ORGANIZATION³⁶

57. The basis of the command framework, in peace, conflict and war, is the chain of command—the structure by which command is exercised through a series of superior and subordinate commanders. The chain of command is an authority and accountability system linking the office of the Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) to the lowest level of the Canadian Forces and back. It is also a hierarchy of individual commanders who make decisions within their connected functional formations and units. The chain of command is intended to be a pre-emptive instrument of command, allowing commanders to seek information actively, give direction and oversee operations. It is a fundamental aspect of the structure and operation of the Canadian military, and ensuring its soundness is therefore a paramount responsibility of command.³⁷

58. The design of an efficient command organization able to achieve its objectives effectively requires an understanding of what an organization is and how it functions. At its simplest, an organization is two or more people working together in a coordinated manner so as to achieve group results. An organization should have a clear role. In addition, all organizations have a human aspect; they therefore require some degree of discipline within a defined structure.

59. Organizational structures may be created to reflect factors including geography, function or nationality:

- a. Geographically based command structure: A command organization based on the geographic areas of responsibility for the respective subordinate elements. Such command structures based upon geography are well suited for operations involving multiple regions with distinct environmental differences (dramatic variations in terrain, threat or assigned mission).
- b. Functionally based command structure: A command organization based on military functions rather than geographic areas. Organizational structures that include a land component command (LCC), air component command (ACC) and naval component command (NCC) are employing functional commands.
- c. Nationality based command structure: A command organization that may be employed within multi-national coalition operations to form subordinate task force elements that are predominantly commanded by a single force contributing nation.

36. B-GL-300-003/FP-001, *Command in Land Operations*.

37. *Dishonoured Legacy: The Lessons of the Somalia Affair*, GoC Publications Website, Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Deployment of Canadian Forces to Somalia.

60. There are five organizing fundamentals that apply to command:

- a. **UNITY OF COMMAND.** A commander should be accountable to only one superior within a clear chain of command to ensure unity of effort, promote timely and effective decision-making, and avoid conflicting orders and instructions.³⁸ The chain of command is the framework for decision-making and authority within a military force exercised through a series of superior and subordinate commanders. Commanders within the chain of command must know where they fit into the chain, from whom they receive orders and whom they command.
- b. **COOPERATION.** A principle of war, cooperation complements unity of command. It entails the coordination of individual and group activities to achieve an optimum combined effect for the common good. The basis of cooperation is teamwork, trust and mutual understanding, based upon a common understanding of the commander's intent and developed through training. Three further elements contribute to cooperation: a common aim (reflecting unity of effort); mutual goodwill; and a clear division of responsibilities. Mutually agreed upon doctrine and clearly defined command relationships formalize military cooperation.
- c. **BALANCED STRUCTURE.** There is a limit to the number of subordinates that a superior can command effectively. The optimal number will depend primarily on the complexity and tasks of the particular organization. A balanced and capable overall structure is achieved by adjustment of the span of command—the “width” of an organization or number of direct subordinates of a commander.
- d. **RESPONSIVE PROCEDURES.** Procedures must be simple, efficient and flexible in order to be responsive, and so assist the development and maintenance of tempo within a command. Battle drills and standard operating procedures (SOP) are key to this; they save time and effort, allow decisions to be quickly implemented and provide responses to emerging situations.
- e. **DYNAMIC ORGANIZATION.** Organizations must be dynamic in response to changes in technology, doctrine and the operational situation. For example, the structure of a force and its headquarters deployed for a particular type of campaign must be able to adapt to the full range of possible threats and resulting tactical tasks. Standard groupings, practised in training, should be employed, since frequent re-grouping or the formation of ad hoc organizations results in the loss of cohesion and decreased operational tempo.

SPAN OF COMMAND

61. The effectiveness of a command is directly linked to the successful organization and integration of component capabilities to optimize combat power. Both enduring and ad hoc force groupings should be independently organized to contain the elements necessary to fulfil the operational functions. Span of command—the number of direct subordinates to a given commander within the chain of command—must be carefully considered when designing an organization, as an overly broad span of command may overload a commander's decision-making ability, while narrowing spans of command adds unnecessary

levels of command. The optimal number of subordinates that a superior can effectively command is determined by factors including the overall size and spatial deployment of the forces and the complexity of the assigned mission. Commanders are best able to command a maximum of five subordinates, regardless of personal experience or the use of advanced C2 systems.³⁹

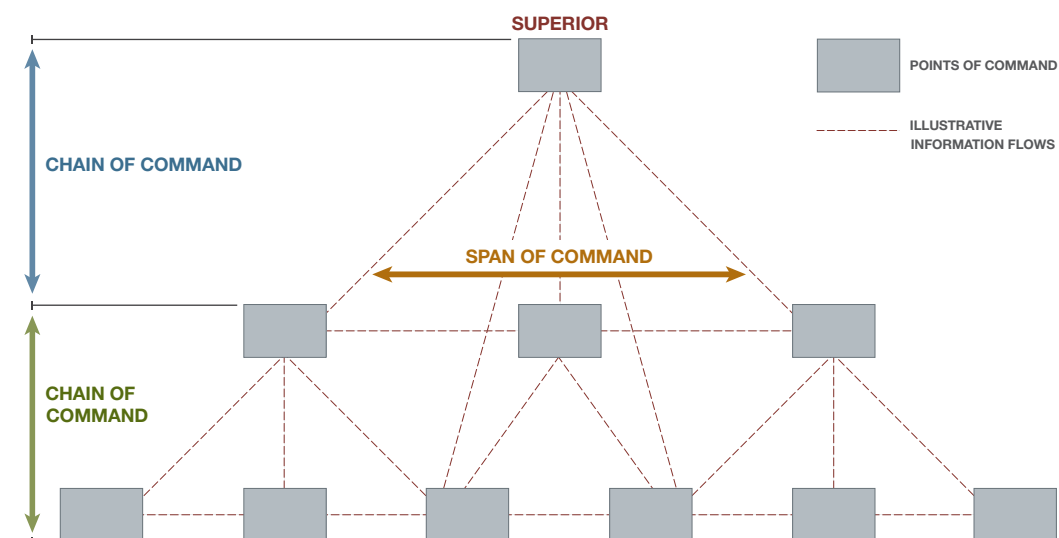


Figure 4: Organization of command and information flows

COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS

62. Clear command and administrative relationships are fundamental to the establishment of a stable and effective chain of command. Command relationships delegate authority to subordinates commensurate with their responsibilities. When determining specific command relationships among subordinate formations or units, it is helpful to consider the following questions:

- a. Can the commander employ the unit for any purpose (can the allocated force be given a mission)?
- b. If the mission (the purpose of their employment) is not within the commander's purview, can they be given tasks within the given mission? Such restrictions to assigning tasks only and not a new mission limits the use of the force and is most often used for combat support forces assigned for a limited period of time.
- c. Can the commander break up the formation or unit, or must it retain its integrity?
- d. Are there any restrictions on their use (i.e., for a specified duration or place)?

38. In many cases, clear chains of command exist; however, individuals may be appointed to multiple positions (land component commanders may be “double hatted” as joint task force commanders).

39. B-GL-300-003/FP-001, *Command in Land Operations*, para 304.2.

63. Command relationships are defined as follows:^{40, 41}

- a. **FULL COMMAND.** The military authority and responsibility of a commander to issue orders to subordinates. It covers every aspect of military operations and administration and exists only within national services.⁴²
- b. **OPERATIONAL COMMAND (OPCOM).** The authority granted to a commander to assign missions or tasks to subordinate commanders, to deploy units, to reassign forces, and to retain or delegate operational and/or tactical control as the commander deems necessary. It does not include responsibility for administration or logistics.
- c. **TACTICAL COMMAND (TACOM).** The authority delegated to a commander to assign tasks to forces under their command for the accomplishment of the mission assigned by a higher authority.
- d. **OPERATIONAL CONTROL (OPCON).** The authority delegated to a commander to direct forces assigned so that the commander may accomplish specific missions or tasks which are usually limited by function, time or location. This includes the authority to deploy units concerned and to retain or assign tactical control of those units. It does not include authority to assign separate employment of components of the units concerned. Neither does it, in and of itself, include administrative or logistic control.
- e. **TACTICAL CONTROL (TACON).** The detailed and, usually, local direction and control of movements or manoeuvres necessary to accomplish missions or tasks assigned.
- f. **PLANNING AUTHORITY.** The authority granted to a commander or individual assigned responsibility for coordinating specific functions or activities involving forces of two or more countries or commands, or two or more services or two or more forces of the same service. They have the authority to require consultation between the agencies involved or their representatives, but do not have the authority to compel agreement. In case of disagreement between the agencies involved, they should attempt to obtain essential agreement by discussion. In the event they are unable to obtain essential agreement, they shall refer the matter to the appropriate command authority. While not fully incorporated within the CA, coordinating authority is used within a NATO context to formally appoint a coordination lead and may be employed within coalition operations.
- g. **ADMINISTRATIVE RELATIONSHIPS.**⁴³ Command relationships do not include administrative support for any relationship other than FULL COMMAND. Within national arrangements only, OPCOM, TACOM and OPCON normally include the administrative responsibility ATTACHED FOR DAILY MAINTENANCE. If the relationship involves anything other than normal combat supplies, the exact relationship must be specified.

40. The detailed breakdown and scope of authority within each of these relationships is detailed in Canadian Army doctrine B-GL-300-003/FP-001, *Command in Land Operations*, Chapter 3 – Annex A and Annex B and is based on NATO ATP 3.2.2, Command and Control of Allied Land Forces.

41. A table depicting the relative powers associated with each command relationship, less administrative relationships, can be found at Annex A.

42. The term “command” as used internationally implies a lesser degree of authority than when it is used in a purely national sense. No NATO or coalition commander has full command over the forces assigned to them since, in assigning forces to NATO, nations will delegate only operational command or operational control.

43. Administrative control (ADCON) exists within NATO doctrine and may be used within a NATO coalition.

64. Once defined, the chain of command and the command relationships within it should be adhered to until formally changed. Commanders must respect the unity of command and be aware of the possible damaging consequences of ignoring an established structure.

65. During an operation, command relationships—often classified as “groupings” in orders formats—may change quite rapidly as the situation develops and an operation moves from one phase to another. In order to ensure a smooth transition across different and changing task organizations, the following is required:

- a. Shared and well-understood SOPs. Ideally, these exist across a force prior to operations and are adjusted as needed for a particular theatre.
- b. Routine practise in training in combined arms operations.
- c. Standing affiliations within formations so that units and sub-units develop familiarity prior to operations.
- d. Sound marry-up drills and rehearsals prior to the conduct of an operation.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COMMANDER AND STAFF

66. The relationship between commanders and their staff is important, as it is the staff that assists the commander by anticipating, planning, coordinating, controlling and overseeing operations, in accordance with the commander's intent. Staff levels can vary from a small grouping of key advisors at the battalion level to a robust team of continental staff and specialist advisors at the formation level. All commanders must ensure that their staff is aware of their command style and command philosophy and understands their intent for the particular operation at hand. This understanding will provide the staff with an awareness of the commander's priorities, perspective, expectations, approach to operations and tolerance for risk.

67. The commander and staff relationship at the unit level may be characterized by the staff implementing the commander's direction, while operations of increased complexity, such as at the formation level and above, may require the commander to rely upon the varied subject-matter expertise within the staff to inform the decision-making process.

68. Staff must assist the commander in creating a shared sense of purpose within the organization and unity of effort among subordinate, flanking and superior formations. Staff members must be capable of analyzing available information from the operational environment and adding their respective expertise-based insights to the shared understanding of the operating picture. Staff must be able to anticipate potential issues before they become problematic and identify viable mitigation strategies that support the commander's overall intent.

69. The effectiveness of the staff has a direct correlation with the organization's fighting power, as it is they who orchestrate operations through planning and the prioritized control of resources and capabilities. Just as commanders are accountable for the training and validation of their subordinate combat capabilities, commanders are also responsible for ensuring that their staff is able to fulfil the role of supporting and controlling subordinate elements in the accomplishment of assigned missions.



SECTION 6

COMMAND IN OPERATIONS⁴⁵

COMMAND PRIOR TO OPERATIONS

76. Effective command prior to operations will help ensure success in those operations. Failure to prepare will lead to operational failure and unnecessary loss of life.

77. Commanders direct, train and prepare their commands, and do their best to ensure that sufficient resources are available for the task. The training and professional development of subordinates is a key responsibility of all commanders and a core function which, if neglected, under-resourced or delegated without close supervision, will undermine the operational effectiveness and combat power of the Army. In order to encourage mission command, commanders should ensure that they train individuals to assume command one level higher and develop them for positions with increased responsibility.

78. Commanders have a duty to employ a common doctrine in the execution of command and control. Army doctrine draws upon enduring principles, lessons learned and best practices to provide guiding principles, practices and procedures that lead to effectiveness, efficiency, standardization and unity of effort.

79. Training is the best way to practise, develop and validate the application of a common doctrine. Training is also critical to future operational success, as it provides commanders and their subordinates with the opportunity to practise and gain experience in decision-making, planning, command and control. Training need not be complicated or based on highly technical simulation systems. It must be focused on anticipated requirements and can be undertaken using simple, basic means, such as cloth model exercises and tutorials.

80. The greater the proficiency in planning and decision-making, the greater the organizational agility of a force, resulting in an increased tempo of operations, which in turn provides a marked advantage over the enemy. Commanders must ensure their subordinate commanders and staff are highly capable with regard to battle procedure, the estimate and the operational planning process.

81. At lower tactical levels, the timely, efficient and effective execution of plans requires the flexible use of drills and procedures. Training should be stimulating and rewarding and inspire subordinates to achieve greater heights. Good training fosters teamwork and generates confidence in commanders, organizations and doctrine.

82. All personnel preparing for operational deployment must fully understand the law of armed conflict and the rules of engagement for their specific mission. Contraventions of the law of armed conflict or the authorized rules of engagement are serious offences that reflect poorly on Canada and the CAF. Such violations, by any member of a deployed force, may result in the removal of the commander from theatre and subsequent administrative and/or disciplinary action.

45. B-GL-300-003/FP-001, *Command in Land Operations*, p. 2-19, para 216.

83. In addition to training and professional development, commanders must identify and confirm the readiness or availability of material stocks, equipment or manpower resources required for upcoming operations. The promotion of good personnel and equipment preparedness results in a heightened state of operational readiness.

COMMAND IN OPERATIONS⁴⁶

84. The execution of operations involves putting a plan into action by applying combat power to accomplish the mission while using situational understanding to assess progress and inform dynamic decision-making.⁴⁷ It is during execution that the chaos and uncertainty of land operations are at their most severe and commanders are forced to confront the challenges of command. A commander must continually visualize the progress of an operation, assess the current situation, direct the application of combat power, react to unforeseen enemy actions, and exploit opportunities as part of a coherent scheme of manoeuvre guided by the intent and assigned objectives of their superior commander.

85. A commander must monitor and maintain the continuity of operations in order to retain the initiative and execute the decision-action cycle faster than that of the adversary. Assessment is particularly important during operations, as the situation changes often and rapidly. The execution of operations requires a commander to be continually engaged in various stages of the decision-action cycle, reviewing the mission analysis and updating the commander's critical information requirements (CCIR).

LOCATION OF THE COMMANDER⁴⁸

86. Commanders are frequently confronted with the dilemma of where best to position themselves during an operation. A commander could either go forward to lead and motivate part of the force or keep to the rear in an attempt to coordinate the actions of the span of command and remain in contact with higher headquarters.

87. At the lowest levels of command, the commander will likely be in direct contact with those being commanded. At section and platoon level, for example, commanders will normally be able to see their soldiers and thus give direct orders. At each successive level, the physical separation between a commander and subordinates will increase, as the commander's choice of location will be influenced by a wider range of responsibilities and a more complex battlefield framework.

88. A commander must consider their position in relation to the forces being commanded and the nature of the mission at hand. The decision as to where to be positioned can have important consequences, not only for the command organization but also for the success of the operation. The basic factors influencing that decision are common for both the operational and tactical levels:

- a. access to information on which to make timely decisions, including the ability of the commander to judge the condition and morale of their own forces;
- b. communications to points of command. Within technical limitations, communications systems must be adapted to the needs of the commander, and not vice versa;
- c. planning and decision-making capability; and
- d. security, including physical protection.

89. The position a commander chooses has an important effect on their ability to assess progress, interact with staff and subordinate commanders, and influence events. Forward command helps commanders to develop a good feel for the battle, to make timely decisions and so grasp fleeting opportunities, and to talk to, influence and lead key subordinates. However, if a commander is too close to the action, they risk of becoming embroiled in tactical issues that obscure their overall vision, which could undermine their judgement and the efforts and confidence of subordinates. Therefore, the most suitable position is that point where the commander can best influence the progress of the campaign, major operation, or battle by making timely decisions appropriate to their level of command.

COMMAND AFTER OPERATIONS

90. Upon returning from operations, a commander's top priorities are the health of their soldiers, re-constitution of their unit/formation and support for the development of the institutional Army.

91. Commanders must respect any employment restrictions related to post-deployment periods and ensure that subordinates complete all post-operational requirements, including medical screenings (both physical and psychological) and tour-related personnel assessments. Any post-operation reduction in a unit's readiness level provides an opportunity for commanders to have subordinates loaded on courses, take annual leave and, as required, posted to new units.

92. Re-constitution ensures that the unit/formation is ready to deploy again as soon as possible in the event of an emergency. While commanders must make every effort to ensure the smooth re-integration of subordinates, maintenance and replenishment of the unit/formation's holdings to authorized levels must be accomplished simultaneously. Training plans should focus on basic, tactical skills that may be central to the profession but not practised in some time and should seek to build/re-build small unit cohesion.

46. B-GL-300-003/FP-001, *Command in Land Operations*, p. 2-22, para 217.

47. NATO AJP 3.2.1, *Command and Control of Land Forces*.

48. B-GL-300-003/FP-001, *Command in Land Operations*, p. 3-8, para 306.

93. Upon re-deployment, commanders remain responsible for ensuring that the experiences gained and lessons learned throughout all phases of the operation benefit the institutional Army. Post-activity reporting allows commanders to officially document operational experiences, observations and recommendations, which may benefit their successors and enhance Army professional development and capabilities, while at the same time supporting defence research analysis and institutional decision-making. To add to the collective knowledge of the Army and its future readiness/capabilities, commanders must share significant operational experiences and insights through the Army lessons process, make contributions to publications such as the *Canadian Army Journal*, speak at or engage professional development forums, and participate in seminar war-games and experimentation. Unique operational experiences that are beyond the scope of the Army's existing body of knowledge may necessitate the submission of a doctrine note. The undertaking of such work is an inherent responsibility of all professionals within the profession of arms.

COMMAND IN THE COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO OPERATIONS

94. The comprehensive approach is “a philosophy according to which military and non-military actors collaborate to enhance the likelihood of favourable and enduring outcomes within a particular situation.”^{49, 50, 51} The creation of such arrangements enables strategic and campaigning authorities to leverage the expertise of various organizations to comprehensively engage in the resolution of complex systemic problems in regions of concern. The comprehensive approach is only valid when strategic authorities clearly indicate that enduring stability is an objective. At the operational and tactical levels, stakeholder affiliations are not formalized through command relationships and therefore require an increased level of collaboration “that includes all actors that may affect the conduct of operations within a joint operating area.”⁵²

95. While the comprehensive approach to operations can offer tremendous benefits, there are notable command challenges associated with the grouping of diverse organizations:

- a. Command and control relationships must be carefully structured to allow for inclusion and the sharing of tasks in a manner that provides definitive roles and responsibilities, and they must respect and leverage the professional abilities and expertise of all stakeholders.
- b. Unity of effort requires consensus building, which is possible only with a clear understanding and recognition of each partner's mandate, agenda, priorities, requirements, capabilities and perceptions.
- c. The delineation between the operational and tactical levels can become blurry, as it is probable that a tactical commander will have both operational and tactical level factors to consider in the exercise of command.

- d. The importance of personal power is amplified as the legitimate authority of the commander may not be fully recognized by interagency or public partners; thus, the ability to compel multi-national partners to comply may be limited. Within such circumstances, negotiation among stakeholders may be required to establish mission objectives that serve the mandates of all partner organizations.

96. Effective command and relationships within the comprehensive approach require consideration to the following principles:

- a. A proactive approach to operations must be sought in order to establish a common understanding of organizational capabilities:
 - (i) The creation of inter-organizational standing agreements provides a means to formally express projected relationships, roles and responsibilities.
 - (ii) The early integration of teams provides an opportunity for mutual trust to be established and individuals to familiarize themselves with their respective roles and inter-agency interactions. Ideally, all partners will participate in both standing and mission-specific collective training events.
- b. All partners within the comprehensive approach must have a shared understanding of the root causes of the problem being addressed, the overall plan for addressing and resolving the situation, and the desired strategic end state.
- c. All partners must be aware of the strengths and limitations of each of the other partner organizations. This will enhance cooperation and mission effectiveness by allowing tasks to be undertaken by the most suitable partner, thereby leveraging the strengths of each stakeholder organization to achieve results that would be otherwise unattainable.
- d. In the absence of formalized command relationships, common objectives and the end state must be identified among stakeholders to help ensure unity of effort.

97. The level of integration required will vary depending upon the situation, the level of shared understanding and desired outcomes, the mandates of each organization and the personalities involved. At the very least, organizations will hopefully inform one another of their actions and locations, particularly to the military commander of the area of operations in which they are working (if not, the onus is on the military commander to make those determinations). When involved as stakeholders within the comprehensive approach, tactical commanders must be aware of the differences between the participants in terms of organizational mandate, reporting relationships, operating procedures, equipment capabilities, doctrine, etc.

49. Defence Terminology Bank, Record 34522.

50. This approach to operations involves the coordinated employment of “Diplomatic, Information, Military and Economic instruments of power and civil capabilities” to achieve shared objectives through the application of commonly understood principles. North Atlantic Treaty Organization. AJP-01(D), *Allied Joint Doctrine*. Brussels: NATO Standardization Agency, December 2010. P. 2-11, accessed 16 October 2015 [http://nso.nato.int/nso/zPublic/ap/ajp-01\(d\).pdf](http://nso.nato.int/nso/zPublic/ap/ajp-01(d).pdf).

51. The actors may include joint or multinational military forces, Canadian government departments and agencies (whole of government), other governments (foreign, provincial and municipal), international organizations (NATO, UN), non-governmental organizations (CARE, Oxfam), private sector entities or individuals.

52. CFJP 01, pp. 2-3.

SECTION 7



SOURCE: COMBAT CAMERA

CONCLUSION

98. Command is not just the authority and responsibility vested in an individual; rather, more importantly, it is the exercise of that authority and responsibility. It is pervasive in all facets of military operations, from strategic level commanders entrusted with command authority to the NCMs at the tactical level exercising mission command. Command is the central operational function and the force that drives and focuses all of the operational functions into a unified, comprehensive effort, leading to successful operations.



SOURCE: COMBAT CAMERA

ANNEX A

COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS⁵³

MORE AUTHORITY			LESS AUTHORITY		
AUTHORITY	FULLCOM	OPCOM	OPCON (2)	TACOM	TACON (7)
Task organize the assigned element (1).	X	X			
Assign missions to the assigned element (3).	X	X	X (4)		
Assign tasks to the assigned element for the purpose for which it has been assigned.	X	X	X	X (5)	
May further delegate command authority (6).	OPCOM OPCON TACOM TACON	OPCOM OPCON TACOM TACON	OPCON TACOM TACON	TACOM TACON	TACON
Coordinate movement, local defence and force protection.	X	X	X	X	X
Planning and coordination.	X	X	X	X	X
Administrative and logistic responsibility.	X				

Figure A-1: Command Relationships

ENDNOTES⁵⁴

1. The gaining commander may task organize the assigned unit and thus assign separate missions to it and its component parts. This is limited to FULLCOM and OPCOM. A commander assigned forces under FULLCOM or OPCOM may employ those forces for any purpose.
2. For forces allocated under OPCON, the gaining commander may not break up the organizational integrity of the force for separate employment. Under OPCON, forces assigned may only be employed within certain constraints such as function, time or location imposed by the higher authority. For example, the forces may only be assigned for a single phase of a particular operation. This may be done for national purposes in the case of a multinational context, where it is in a participating nation's interest to constrain in some fashion the employment of the contributed force. In other cases, the assigning commander may require the force for other purposes later in the operation.
3. A mission is defined as: A clear, concise statement of the task of the command and its purpose (AAP-6).
4. Under OPCON, the gaining commander may assign a mission to the assigned element that is distinct from, but related to, the gaining commander's overall mission. OPCON is normally applied to assigned manoeuvre elements such as infantry and armour forces.

53. Not fully integrated into Canadian doctrine.
54. Table drawn from Annex C to NATO ATP 3.2.2, *Command and Control of Allied Land Forces*.

5. Under TACOM, the gaining commander may only allocate to the assigned force a specific task consistent for the accomplishment of the mission and purpose assigned by the higher commander, that is, within the parameters of the current mission given by the higher authority. TACOM is used where the superior commander recognizes the need for additional resources for a task but requires the resources intact for a later role. Under TACOM the assigned force is allocated for specific tasks and is allocated normally for a limited period of time. This prevents the gaining commander from employing the assigned force in a role or manner not intended by the higher commander. When the task is complete or the specific time frame expires, the TACOM relationship with the gaining force ends. TACOM is usually applied to specific situations and to combat support elements that have unique capabilities. An engineer sub-unit assigned to an infantry unit to assist in building field fortifications for a specific period of time is an example of a situations in which TACOM would likely be used.
6. With the exception of FULLCOM, a gaining commander may further delegate the same or a lesser command authority over the allocated force to a subordinate commander, but within the same constraints initially given.
7. TACON is generally used to indicate those units that will be located within another unit or formation's assigned geographical boundaries, and by so assigning, the gaining unit becomes responsible for coordination aspects within the shared area of operations. The gaining commander has authority to coordinate local defence, force protection and terrain allocation.