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ACT

THE OPERATIONAL FUNCTION

ARMY DOCTRINE





ACT

THE OPERATIONAL FUNCTION

PRODUCED FOR

Directorate of Army Doctrine
PO Box 17000 Stn Forces, Kingston, Ontario, Canada, K7K 7B4

DESIGN AND PRODUCTION

Canadian Army Publishing, Kingston, Ontario, Canada, K7K 7B4



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PUBLICATION

NDID—B-GL-320-000/FP-001

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Printed in Canada



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HIERARCHY

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

AIM

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

REFERENCES

The main reference for this publication is [B-GL-300-001/FP-001 *Land Operations*](#).



SOURCE: COMBAT CAMERA

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LINKS TO RELATED ARMY “OPERATIONAL” MATERIAL

[B-GL-300-001/FP-001 *Land Operations*](#)

[B-GL-323-004/FP-003 *Counter-insurgency Operations*](#)

[B-GL-352-001/FP-001 *Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance \(ISTAR\)*](#)

[B-GL-351-003/FP-003 *Signals in Land Operations Volume 3 – Tactical Electronic Warfare and Signals Intelligence*](#)

[B-GL-300-007/FP-001 *Fire Support in Land Operations*](#)

SECTION 1



SOURCE: COMBAT CAMERA

INTRODUCTION

THE ROLE OF DOCTRINE¹

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 such, land operations doctrine forms the foundation upon which the CF 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.



SOURCE: COMBAT CAMERA

1. NATO AAP 6 Definition.

SECTION 2

OPERATIONAL FUNCTIONS AND CORE FUNCTIONS

3. Fighting power is the sum total of a military force's capability, that is, its power to execute missions. Conceptually, it consists of intellectual, moral and physical components. 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.
4. In the conduct of operations and their related activities, fighting power must be tailored to the situation and the assigned mission. In doing so, a balance will be achieved among the operational functions in the composition of a force to accomplish core functions: **find, fix** and **strike**, with **exploit** an implied function. These core functions may be viewed as a general framework for tactical activities.
5. Together, operational and core functions comprise the functional framework, which answers the question of how we conduct operations and what we use in that conduct. The functional framework is effectively the plan for an operation.

THE OPERATIONAL FUNCTIONS²

6. The operational functions are useful in two ways.
 - a. First, operational functions are a means to envision and build 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, comprises a tailored balance of all the operational functions. For example, an armoured reconnaissance troop will have an aspect of Command, an ability to collect information (Sense), an ability to Act (manoeuvre and access to fire support), some form of protection (Shield) and some inherent ability to Sustain itself. 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 in Sense.
 - b. Second, operational functions may be used as a means to visualize, plan and execute 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 it will be logistically supported (Sustain)?

2. The operational functions (Command, Sense, Act, Shield and Sustain) are proper nouns. Through an interim period from 1997 to 2001 using six combat functions (command, information operations, manoeuvre, firepower, protection and sustainment), they have replaced the common 11 tactical-level-orientated combat functions used prior to 1997 (command and control; information systems; intelligence; electronic warfare; close combat; aviation; fire support; engineer support and mine warfare; nuclear, biological and chemical warfare; air defence; and combat service support), and they now better speak to activities and effects on both the physical and psychological planes. All capabilities contained in the combat functions are inherent to the operational functions. Note, however, that while ABCA has adopted the five operational functions, in NATO doctrine, the combat functions have been retained.

ACT (THE FUNCTION)

7. Act is the operational function that integrates manoeuvre (integral fire and movement), fire support and influence activities to achieve an advantage over an adversary or other targets in order to affect their behaviour.

8. Act is the ensemble of physical activities (fire support and manoeuvre)—termed “fires”—and influence activities, coordinated and harmonized through a manoeuvrist approach and battlespace management. Act capabilities engage a wide variety of targets in a complementary fashion on the physical and psychological planes. Influence activities such as civil–military cooperation (CIMIC) reconstruction, public affairs (PA) engagement, or psychological operations (PSYOPS) may be used to inform and influence target audiences to affect behaviour, be it to support a campaign or to convince adversary elements to surrender.

9. This orchestration of physical and influence means to gain a psychological advantage is the essence of the manoeuvrist approach, fracturing an adversary’s sources of strength—centres of gravity—to dislocate the adversary, breaking cohesion and the will to resist.

THE CORE FUNCTIONS – FIND, FIX, AND STRIKE

10. The tactical actions against targets discussed above are executed through three core functions: find, fix and strike. The need to be prepared to exploit is implicit. The core functions provide a general, conceptual tactical framework for the various activities that must be executed to achieve an assigned mission and are the means through which the operational functions, including Act, may be balanced and applied.

11. Finding and fixing the adversary or any other target will contribute to shaping the situation. Striking and exploiting have the potential to be decisive in the achievement of the mission. The function of fixing should not be limited to the tactical task “fix” or confined to defensive operations to protect the force. Defensive or offensive operations designed to fix the target may set the conditions for offensive action to strike it. Likewise, the ability of an adversary to influence elements of a population may be “fixed” through aggressive PSYOPS and PA activities. These core functions are normally carried out through the Sense and Act operational functions and their inherent capabilities, which are coordinated through the Command operational function.

12. Where circumstances permit, success in operations designed primarily to find, fix or strike the adversary should be exploited. Operational experience indicates that finding, fixing, striking and exploiting should be conducted concurrently or, at least, in seamless transition from one to another. All should be considered during planning so as to be ready to take advantage of opportunities.

FIND

13. Finding a potential target is a basic function that endures throughout an operation. It includes locating, identifying, tracking and assessing the target, be it an adversary or otherwise. Forces may be directed specifically to fight for information, particularly in the opening stages of an operation. This will normally be a sound investment when the situation is confusing and seemingly chaotic. Whatever its source, information is never wholly reliable. It should be verified or corroborated with other sources. The assessed and processed information becomes intelligence, which is used to guide the Command and Act functions.

14. A commander cannot know everything. Intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance (ISTAR) systems can produce so much information that they may overload a commander or analyst who tries to assimilate it all, thereby becoming a point of friction. Those problems can be overcome by setting clear priorities for information gathering and by directing ISTAR elements accordingly, fulfilling the “direction” step of the intelligence cycle.

15. Although technological means will prove helpful in locating and assessing an adversary or other target, human analysis and experience is still required to assess likely intentions. It must be remembered that soldiers and others in contact with the adversary and local populace are sources of information, often very accurate. Thus, key intelligence needs should be widely disseminated throughout the force, down to the lowest levels as appropriate, as standing priority information requirements.



SOURCE: COMBAT CAMERA

16. Finding the adversary requires far more physical and intellectual effort than simply locating it/them. A commander is much more likely to succeed if he knows the organization, location and strength of an adversary's force, its intentions, how it fights and how it may react to friendly action. It is equally important to establish where the threat is not located and to determine what he is unlikely to do within a given time, as that may provide opportunities for surprise and exploitation. Receiving information from a wide variety of sources contributes to the quality of the intelligence picture that helps a commander formulate his plan.

17. Within the battlespace and environment, the Find function includes identifying and analyzing those elements (other than an adversary) that affect a situation and may play a role in realizing the successful conclusion to a campaign. The elements include key players and elements in the environment, such as cultural influences, social ties, and religious/political leaders and clan groups, which may have to be engaged in pursuit of enduring campaign objectives and end-states. The "find" analysis should indicate the role these environmental characteristics, individuals and groups play in the environment, their aims and the ways in which they may be influenced to support the campaign. In short, a holistic approach must be taken to the "find" function so that all key elements within the environment are found and analyzed for their role in achieving campaign success.

Finding the adversary requires far more physical and intellectual effort than simply locating it/them. A commander is much more likely to succeed if he knows the organization, location and strength of an adversary's force, its intentions, how it fights and how it may react to friendly action.

FIX

18. To fix an adversary or another target is to deprive it of freedom of action. This can be done by denying the adversary or target his goals (including limiting his freedom of movement), distracting the adversary from his goals, or denying him information needed to obtain his goals. This may be done on the physical plane, the psychological plane, or both. For example, security presence patrols may fix an insurgent to operating within a limited area while electronic warfare (EW) assets block insurgent radio messages yet allow alternative media messages to fix the spread of insurgent propaganda, thus fixing the insurgent's ability to influence a population.

19. Fixing in physical terms involves the use of combat forces to hold ground against an adversary's attack, to hold or fix an adversary in one location by fires, or to hold vital points by protecting against adversary intervention. Its object is to restrict an adversary's freedom of action and increase our own. Manoeuvre forces may be fixed through a combination of shaping attacks, blocking positions and deception, while the use of presence patrols, searches and vehicle check points will help fix an insurgent force.

20. Fixing on the psychological plane involves disrupting and preventing the adversary's ability to influence the understanding and will of other elements in an environment, namely elements in a population and their leaders. The object is to restrict his manoeuvre on the psychological plane, that is, by shaping the perceptions, will and behaviour of others. That is mainly done through influence activities and may include, for example, issuing timely media statements explaining the actual facts of an engagement before the adversary can issue propaganda seeking to undermine friendly force legitimacy.

21. Deception and surprise are key to fixing adversary manoeuvre forces. Denying the adversary the opportunity to achieve his goals and putting him in a reactive frame of mind enhances our freedom of action. Distraction is achieved by deceiving, luring and surprising the adversary. When an adversary is deceived, he is certain how to react, but his decision is wrong. When he is lured, he is invited to take a course of action that will make him vulnerable. When he is surprised, he becomes uncertain how to react to ambiguous information until it is too late. Given such uncertainty, the adversary can be forced to cover all options, thereby dissipating his force and being distracted from his purpose. He is thus fixed.

22. Physical activities may have secondary effects to fix a target on the psychological plane. For example, the destruction or jamming of an adversary's propaganda radio station will remove a capability and prevent it from influencing the local populace. The fixing of an adversary force will often be planned as a shaping effect in support of a simultaneous or subsequent decisive action.

23. Fixing an adversary with manoeuvre activities can quickly consume one's own fighting power. Thus, a balance must be struck to ensure that the resources allocated to fixing do not unnecessarily reduce those required for striking. Likewise, on the psychological plane, the use of friendly PSYOPS and PA messages to fix those activities of the adversary must not significantly reduce the ability to produce one's own messages and the means to influence target audiences.

STRIKE

24. Striking the adversary is achieved by attack and other offensive activities, ideally on both the physical and psychological planes. Striking activities may be decisive or shaping in terms of their role within the overall plan.

25. Striking in physical terms involves the attack on adversary forces to seize or capture ground; destroy equipment, vital points and installations; kill adversary personnel; or gain a position of advantage. The objective is to apply fires to gain advantage over an adversary. Success, particularly in critical capabilities or areas, will lead to secondary psychological effects on the adversary, such as a decrease in morale and cohesion—thus gaining a psychological advantage, the essence of the manoeuvrist approach to operations.

26. To strike on the psychological plane is to attack or engage a target's understanding, perception and will. Much of this striking, be it against an adversary or some other target group, will be done through influence activities. This requires good intelligence, sound analysis, specialist advice and thorough coordination.



SECTION 3



FULL-SPECTRUM (TACTICAL) OPERATIONS

27. Full-spectrum operations are defined as “the simultaneous conduct of (tactical) operations by a force across the spectrum of conflict.”³ They are a tactical level construct and consist of the complete range of tactical actions that a military force can expect to conduct on nearly any campaign or major operation. These tactical level actions consist of offensive, defensive, enabling and stability operations. Note that the term “operations” here is used in a strictly tactical level sense, meaning tactical actions. The four tactical actions are described as follows:

- a. **OFFENSIVE.** These seek to seize terrain or to physically affect enemy capabilities (and include EW attack). They consist in part of attacks, raids and pursuits.
- b. **DEFENSIVE.** These seek to deny the enemy achievement of their objectives. They include defence and delay.
- c. **ENABLING.** These seek to enable other actions or the engagement of targets audiences outside of an enemy force. They thus include withdrawal, advance to contact, etc., along with many influence activities such as PSYOPS and public affairs.
- d. **STABILITY.** These are tactical activities conducted by military and security forces, often in conjunction with other agencies, to maintain, restore or establish a climate of order. In broad terms, they consist of security and control; support to governance and reconstruction; support to other agencies; security sector reform; and support to demobilization, disarmament and reintegration. They are realized through a wide variety of tactical tasks such as framework patrols (to secure populations), check points, escorts to humanitarian convoys and construction of indigenous infrastructure.

28. All campaigns are realized through a tailored combination of these four tactical actions. Part of the operational art is for commanders to ensure that they strike the correct balance across this spectrum of tactical actions to reflect the nature of the campaign and the objectives to be achieved (see Figure 1).

3. DTB Record 27434.

SECTION 4

PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES (FIRES), INFLUENCE ACTIVITIES, AND EFFECTS ON THE PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PLANES

30. The object of military operations is to impose one's will on an adversary and alter the adversary's behaviour. The organized application of physical violence against a target's capability is one means to that end and may be seen as a traditional application of fighting power. However, other activities may be undertaken that engage and affect an adversary's or another's will to fight or to support a particular activity. Thus, there is a combination of physical activities and influence activities that may be undertaken. Seen from this perspective, activities and their effects exist on two planes—the physical and the psychological—and activities fall into two categories: physical activities and influence activities.

THE PHYSICAL PLANE

31. The physical plane comprises the physical objects, actions and effects in the battlespace. It includes military forces, the electromagnetic spectrum, civilian populations, armed factions, logistical resources and infrastructure, as well as geography, oceanography and meteorology.

32. On the physical plane, warfare is a clash between armed combatants. Activities on the physical plane and their direct effects are tangible and measurable. The physical plane and related activities have the following attributes:

- a. Each party in a conflict expends quantities of ammunition and other combat supplies, and each is supported by the industrial and economic power of their respective sides.
- b. Activities and effects on the physical plane can generally be easily observed, understood, estimated and measured with a degree of certainty over a short time period. Of primary concern are the logistic support requirements for manoeuvre and fire support. It is on this plane that the *science* of warfare predominates, including those activities directly subject to the laws of physics, chemistry and like disciplines.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL PLANE

33. The psychological plane constitutes the perception, understanding, motivation, conviction, emotions, commitment, and ultimately the will of individuals and groups. It may also be referred to as the moral plane or the cognitive plane.⁴ It represents the *will* that drives and or changes behaviour and enables individuals to overcome fear and adversity, as well as the cohesion that holds them together. It includes psychological aspects such as belief in a cause, indoctrination and judgement, as well as emotive responses such as patriotism, ethnicity, religious zeal and *esprit de corps*. It also involves issues of self-interest.

4. "Moral plane" and "psychological plane" may be used interchangeably as long as their use speaks to affecting a target's perception, will, and, in turn, behaviour and actions. The use of the term "moral plane" and its concepts of right and wrong may cause some conceptual or intellectual challenges when dealing with different cultures, societies and groups. The cognitive plane refers to knowledge and understanding but in terms of logic only. Psychological refers to understanding and perceptions based on both logic and emotion.

34. On the psychological plane, activities create first-order effects on the perceptions, understanding, will, and ultimately the behaviour of target audiences. The basis of any conflict is a struggle between opposing wills or a struggle for moral and intellectual support from a target audience. These aspects of conflict are difficult to grasp and quantify. They are manifest in such intangibles as the resolve of adversaries, the support for a leader, the cohesion of a group and the willingness of a population to support a movement or idea, to name but a few. Interactions on this plane affect the manner in which forces, their commanders, other individuals, or various groups perceive and understand an environment and situation.

35. Activities on the psychological plane may seek to undermine an adversary's cohesion and will (e.g., PSYOPS); influence a commander's perception of a situation (e.g., deception); affect the perceptions and understanding of a populace and their leaders (e.g., the profile of forces and CIMIC projects to gain campaign legitimacy); and inform a general public to build understanding of a campaign and its objectives (public affairs). These activities may be termed "influence activities," for they have first-order effects on the psychological plane.

36. The psychological plane and related activities have the following attributes:

- a. Targets on the psychological plane will include more than simply an adversary. The target or target audience may include adversaries, their commanders, other individuals (particularly leaders in a population), systems, and groups of people within the environment.
- b. Activities and effects on the psychological plane should follow a targeting process identical to that used for activities on the physical plane. Targeting for each should be done simultaneously to ensure activities and effects are comprehensive and complementary.
- c. Activities on the psychological plane are more difficult and require the greater investment in combat development and training. On this plane, the quality of military leadership and the morale of the fighting troops and their cohesion and sense of purpose are of primary importance. Secondly, intuitive judgement is required to affect a target's understanding and will. Here, the *art* of warfare is dominant.
- d. Activities and their effects on the psychological plane may have subsequent effects on the physical plane. For example, leaflets convincing adversary conscripts to desert will lessen the physical combat power of adversary forces.⁵ These are second-order effects.

5. Although much has been written regarding elements on an "informational plane," this level of existence has yet to be truly identified and defined as being distinct from either the physical or psychological planes. Information that exists on information systems, on computer systems, or even in the form of electrons, belongs to the physical plane, for it can be blocked, destroyed, or otherwise physically altered. Information that resides in an individual's mind or in the collective opinion of a group of people, and thus affects their perceptions, will and behaviour, exists on the psychological plane. They too can be altered, but through activities that seek to influence.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES – FIRES

37. Physical activities are those tangible undertakings—the application of capabilities—that consume resources and produce immediate, first-order effects on the physical plane through force, to achieve objectives and end-states. They will focus on the physical destruction, attrition, disruption or denial of those things essential to adversaries through the application of lethal and non-lethal fires throughout the depth of the joint operations area. They include all physical activities, such as electronic and cyber warfare. Physical activities affect capability in order to affect an adversary's behaviour.

38. Physical activities may be termed "fires." Fires are defined as "the physical means deliberately used to create or support the realization of physical effects as first-order effects. Note: They include lethal and non-lethal systems."

39. Fires should be planned and conducted so that they also have second-order effects on the psychological plane, in terms of undermining will and shattering cohesion by denying the adversary the physical means or opportunities needed to achieve his objective. This is the realization of the manoeuvrist approach. Thus, fires should aim to create first-order effects on the physical plane and second-order effects on the psychological plane. These latter effects may prove to be decisive. For example, an artillery attack will reduce an adversary's capability and affect his behaviour, and thus it has an effect on the physical plane. It may have a secondary effect on the psychological plane by reducing the morale and will of the adversary and thus affect his behaviour.

40. Non-lethal fires may be used against non-adversaries, such as crowd confrontation measures against violent demonstrators in order to maintain security and public order. Destruction may be pursued to undermine an adversary's ability to conduct operations, but it is often most effective when it is used to damage the adversary's morale and increase his feelings of fear, desperation and hopelessness. That is, fires are most effective when they create significant second-order effects on the psychological plane. Thus, fires affect an adversary's behaviour by attacking capability as a first order and by affecting perception and will, and ultimately behaviour, as a second order. This is the essence of the manoeuvrist approach to operations, that is, the shaping of understanding, the undermining of will and the shattering of cohesion as the ideal result of fires.

41. Physical destruction may not in itself lead to success. The destruction, for example, of a large number of insurgents will not solve the underlying causes of an insurgency and may create new recruits to the movement. This would be a physical activity that leads to an undesired second-order effect. Additionally, targeting the adversary could cause unnecessary collateral damage that in turn undermines the support of a neutral populace and the legitimacy of a campaign and creates new opposition. Success criteria that rely on destruction must take into account the risk to public and political support that protracted and inconclusive battles and engagements entail. Therefore, physical destruction of the adversary by itself is not a wholly reliable means of achieving lasting success, even when it is aimed at secondary effects on the psychological plane against the adversary's will and behaviour.



INFLUENCE ACTIVITIES

42. An influence activity is defined as “an activity designed to affect the character or behaviour of a person or a group as a first-order effect. Note: It affects understanding, perceptions and will, with the aim of affecting behaviour in a desired manner.” Influence activities fall within the tactical framework of full-spectrum operations. Most influence activities, such as PSYOPS or Public Affairs (PA), are considered as part of enabling operations. Others under CIMIC, such as civil reconstruction or assistance to governance, would be considered a stability operation.⁶

43. Influence activities seek to predispose, persuade, convince, deter, disrupt, compel or coerce target audiences to adopt a particular course of action or to assist, encourage and reassure those that are following a desired course of action. Since defeating an adversary by fires and their related effects alone has limitations and rarely leads to an enduring end-state in many campaigns, land operations doctrine also encompasses activities that seek to create a direct, first-order effect of influencing target audiences. Those influence activities affect perception, understanding, and thus will, and ultimately the behaviour of the target or target audience. Consequently, influence activities create first-order effects on the psychological plane. In some cases, influence activities may create second-order effects on the physical plane. For example, psychological leaflets that convince conscripts to flee an adversary position will, as a second order, reduce the combat power of the adversary.

44. Influence activities may be physical-based psychological activities such as a feint or demonstration to deceive an adversary commander, a firepower demonstration to dissuade a former belligerent from violating a ceasefire, or the construction of infrastructure to engender support and stability amongst a local population. They will include physical demonstrations of commitment and credibility as reflected in civil–military cooperation (CIMIC) projects, such as the reconstruction of infrastructure and social or governance development, which are meant to demonstrate campaign legitimacy and gain support from political/social leaders and local populations. Even though these examples have a physical aspect to them, they create a first-order effect of influencing perceptions and will.

45. Psychological activities may be non-physical. They use or affect information to create perceptions, understanding, will and behaviour. By way of example, they include the use of flyers and radio messages to convince adversary conscripts to surrender or to convince locals not to join an insurgency; the manner in which soldiers are directed to behave and dress during security patrols in order to develop support and trust amongst a populace; and the release of media statements in order to provide information and generate understanding among the public audiences.

46. The key to successfully employing influence activities is to decide the effect that is to be created. Commanders must understand and select the influence effects (results) that they wish to create and then select the activities required to create them. A wide range of activities will be used to influence a target, and they should be planned in a reinforcing manner. In the main, influence activities include the following :

- a. **DECEPTION.** Deception will only be applied to adversary commanders and forces in order to affect their perception of the threat and intent. Deception is normally conducted in support of manoeuvre and fire support, with an adversary as the target audience, and therefore the planning should be led by those staff responsible for manoeuvre.
- b. **PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS (PSYOPS).** PSYOPS use controlled messages to influence the understanding, perceptions and will of targeted groups and individuals. Note that PSYOPS should never deceive or spread untruths, otherwise they will lose credibility and undermine campaign legitimacy. So long as only truthful information is used, PSYOPS differ from public affairs in that the commander controls both the message and the medium.
- c. **CIVIL–MILITARY COOPERATION (CIMIC).** CIMIC is realized through support to reconstruction of public services, social infrastructure, creation of governance, and social development activities.
- d. **PRESENCE, PROFILE AND POSTURE (PPP).** The PPP of troops in contact with a local populace will send a specific message. The manner (an obvious sign of commitment) in which troops interact with a local populace will send an important message to this audience, which will either undermine or engender support. The message may change over time from one of serious intent to one of approachable information collector.
- e. **PUBLIC AFFAIRS (PA).** PA is an influence activity in that PA activities facilitate the flow of information to various audiences through the media with the effect that information is provided and understanding is enhanced. Public affairs must not be directly associated with PSYOPS activities.⁷

47. Influence activities focus on promoting perceptions, attitudes and understanding that influence will and affect the behaviour of governments, organizations, groups and individuals to support the achievement of the objective and ultimately the end-state.

48. The target array or audiences for influence activities are wide in scope. They may be elements of the adversary, such as weak-willed conscripts that can be encouraged to flee the battlefield. Or possibly, they may include individual power holders, religious leaders, and segments of a populace that could influence perceptions and gain support for the campaign and its objectives. Such is the case in COIN and peace support operations. They may also include allies and friendly troops in order to counter adversary propaganda and biased media coverage.⁸ In short, these target audiences will include adversary, friendly and neutral individuals and groups.

6. The reader must keep in mind that the generic term “operation” in this sense, such as “stability operation,” means a tactical level activity.

7. PA must not be associated with PSYOPS, although messages must be coordinated through an Info Ops forum such as an IOCC. The main difference between PA and PSYOPS is that PA does not control the medium of its messages while PSYOPS does.

8. Although forces would unlikely use psychological operations on their own troops, they may launch internal public affairs campaigns to counter biased media reports and adversary propaganda.

49. In creating influence, selected activities convey information as well as physical evidence and indications to target groups and individuals, with the aim of influencing their emotions, attitudes, motives, perceptions, reasoning and, ultimately, their will and behaviour. Although influence activities seek results on the psychological plane only, they may have secondary effects on the physical plane. For example, flyers that convince adversary conscripts to flee will have the first-order psychological effect of causing them to flee and the second-order effect on the physical plane of reducing the adversary commander's combat power. Additionally, it will likely have a third-order effect on the psychological plane of undermining the commander's confidence.
50. The need to influence a target audience may be key to the long-term success of a mission. For example, key to success in a COIN campaign is the need to separate the insurgents from the physical and moral support of the populace and to gain and maintain the support of the populace for the campaign. Commanders at the lowest levels must be made to understand the importance of such influence activities and the effects, positive and negative, that may be gained from them. The conduct of individual soldiers will influence the perceptions and support of local populations and, most notably, one incident of poor conduct can rapidly undermine, in an exponential manner, many positive influences.
51. Influence activities may be applied across the spectrum of conflict in any campaign. The nature or theme of the campaign will determine their relative overall importance. Some examples follow:
- a. A deception (through a demonstration, for example) by manoeuvre forces supported by false radio traffic will affect the adversary commander's perception, influence him to incorrectly identify the main effort, and move his forces away from the true intended area of attack, thus firstly affecting his behaviour and, secondly, his capabilities.
 - b. A firepower demonstration during a peace support campaign may convince a belligerent commander not to move his forces from a garrison.
 - c. PSYOPS may be used in the form of a public radio station to bring accurate news to a local populace and to encourage its support for a COIN campaign.
 - d. CIMIC activities may assist in civil reconstruction to engender moral support from a government and its populace and to enhance the perception of the campaign and its legitimacy amongst a local populace.
 - e. PA messages may be issued to counter adversary propaganda and to ensure local and international understanding and support for the campaign and its operations.

52. Influence activities may be conducted to create their own independent effects, or they may be conducted to support physical activities (fires). For example, prior to a deliberate attack on an adversary position, PSYOPS flyers may be dropped, informing adversary soldiers of the means to surrender and giving a promise of fair treatment.

53. Influence activities are a key part of full-spectrum operations. Most, such as PSYOPS, PA and KLE, may be classified as enabling operations, while civil reconstruction and assistance to governance (as part of CIMIC) would be considered a stability operation. Given their nature, their scope, the necessary resources, and the timeframe required, many influence activities, particularly those related to CIMIC, will be conducted in conjunction with other agencies within the joint, inter-agency, multinational, public (JIMP)⁹ framework.

54. In order to understand what activities are required to create influences and thus the desired psychological effects and behaviour, commanders must understand the target audience and the cultural and environmental influences, habits, motivations and practices that all affect the target's psychological reasoning. In simple terms, they must understand how the target audience thinks and reacts and avoid making assumptions or predictions based upon their own cultural viewpoint. Unless the target audience is properly considered, unintended negative effects¹⁰ may occur and do enormous damage to the campaign, and great effort must be made to avoid them. For example, the firepower demonstration conducted to convince a belligerent commander not to manoeuvre his forces may only serve to embarrass him in front of his supporters and thus cause him to actually manoeuvre his forces. Likewise, activities carried out to instil fear or dissuasion in a target audience may only create hatred instead.¹¹ During planning and war-gaming processes, staff should play the role of target audiences in order to view the plans from the standpoint of the intended target so that likely reactions may be gauged and considered. Cultural and political experts will assist in such assessments. Commanders may use scenario vignettes to war-game situations that do not fit the traditional war-gaming methodologies.

55. The concept of conducting activities to influence understanding and perceptions is not new and has been colloquially articulated in the concept of winning hearts and minds or, more correctly, minds and hearts: perceptions and understanding are influenced (minds) in order to create a particular will and behaviour (hearts).

9. Joint, inter-agency, multinational public framework incorporates all actors whose power and influence will be involved in reaching the strategic end-state. They involve joint forces, allies, other governmental departments and agencies, indigenous agencies and departments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international organizations (IOs) and private enterprises.

10. Unintended effects can be positive or negative.

11. An observation from the United States Marine Corps (USMC) Joint Urban Warrior 2005 seminar war game noted that when insurgents are killed or captured, local media coverage should be maximized to dissuade members of the local populace from joining the insurgency in Iraq and Afghanistan. However, consideration of the issue would lead one to believe that such a tactic could probably instil hatred, vice fear, in many members of the local population and thus undermine support for the campaign and even encourage more people to join the insurgents.

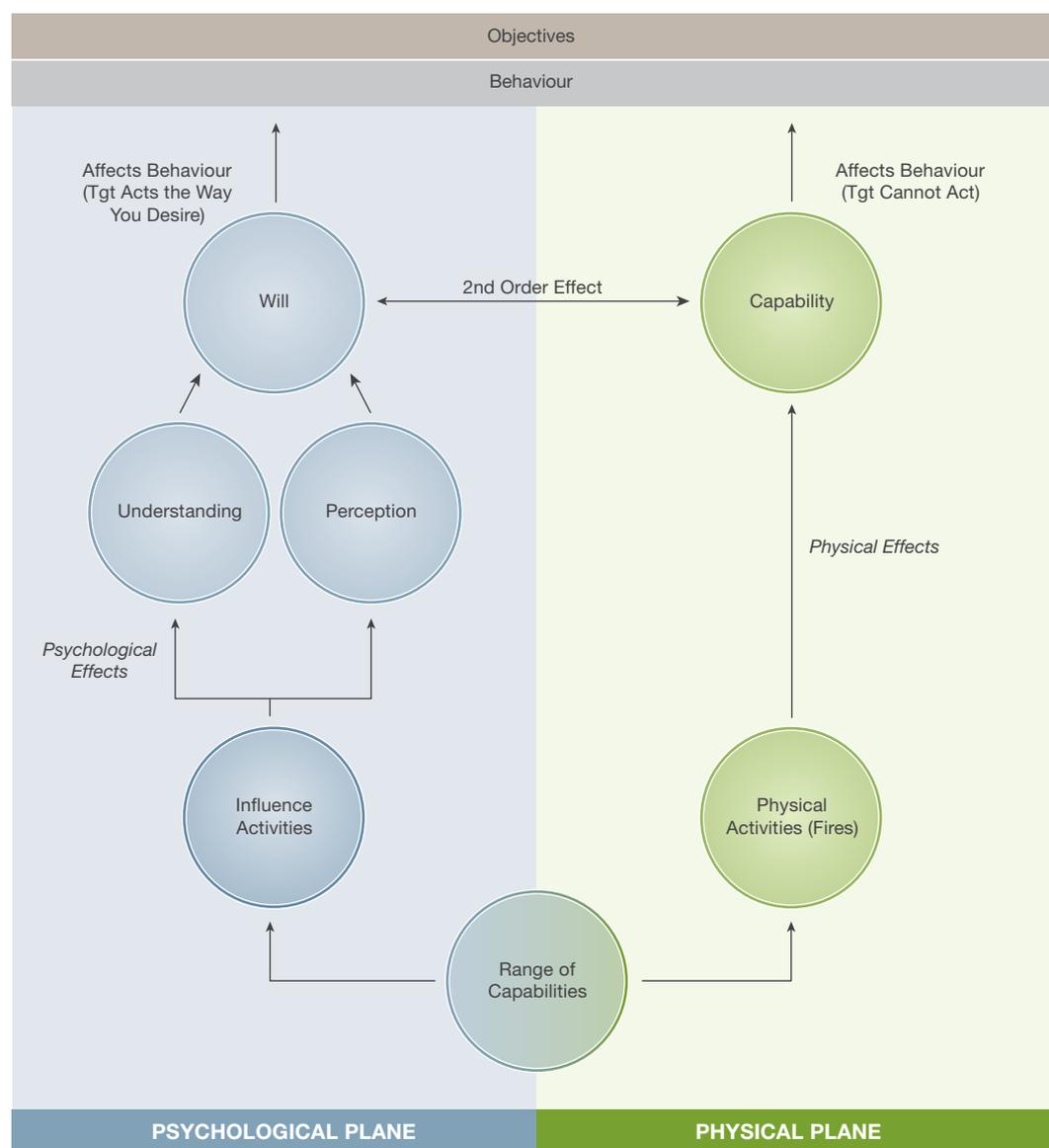


Figure 2: Simultaneous Conduct of Physical Activities (Fires) and Influence Activities and Their Effects

60. Fires and influence activities are planned, coordinated, targeted and conducted simultaneously in a holistic, complementary fashion. Just as physical activities are conducted and effects created through manoeuvre on the physical plane, influence activities are conducted and effects created through a form of conceptual manoeuvre¹² on the psychological plane. Thus, just as a commander may wish

12. There are a number of definitions within NATO for manoeuvre, the most common of which is as follows: "Employment of forces on the battlefield through movement in combination with fire, or fire potential, to achieve a position of advantage in respect to the enemy in order to accomplish the mission." When considering a concept of manoeuvre on the psychological plane, one must accept a colloquial meaning for the word but retain the idea of gaining a position of advantage.

to manoeuvre his forces to reach a piece of key terrain and threaten the adversary's position before the adversary reaches it, that same commander may wish to issue a media statement, launch a PSYOPS message or build emergency infrastructure in a village before the adversary issues a propaganda statement, issues a false media message, or intimidates the local population into giving support. Thus, a commander creates desired effects through coordinated actions on both planes.

61. Fires and influence activities are of course related to the tactical framework of full-spectrum operations but focus on the effect to be achieved, that is, the reason for the activity. This effort to gain a position of psychological advantage over the adversary is the core issue of the manoeuvrist approach. Fires and influence activities are planned, targeted and conducted in a simultaneous and complementary fashion. They are conducted and coordinated through a manoeuvrist approach and organized through battlespace management, with the view to seeking a position of advantage—not only physical but psychological—over the adversary (see Figure 3).

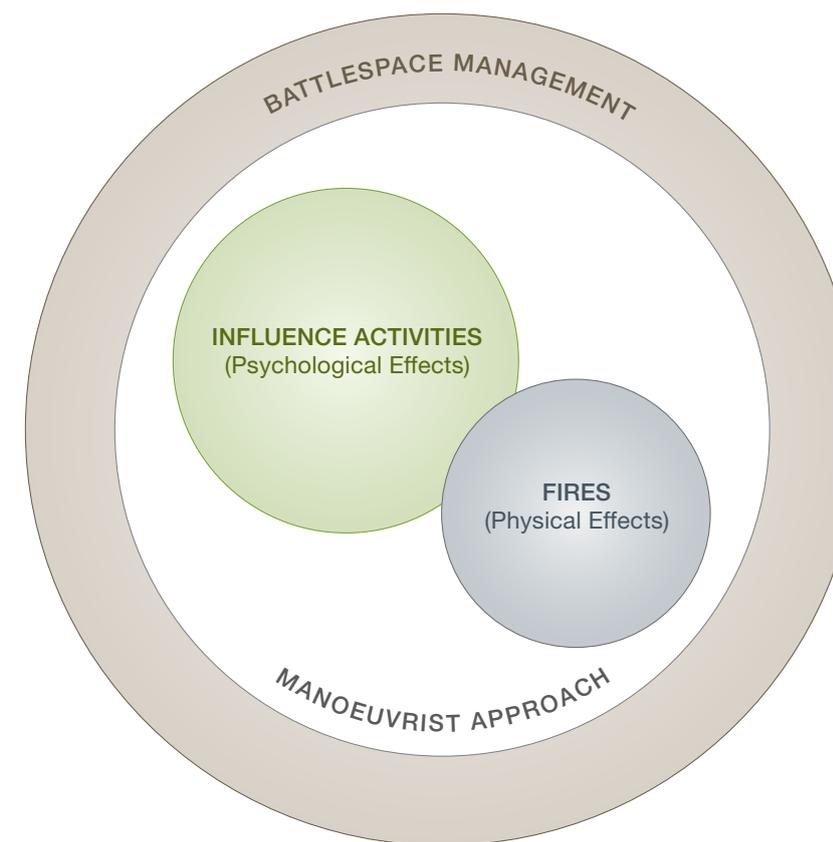


Figure 3: Physical Activities (Fires) and Influence Activities Conducted and Coordinated Through a Manoeuvrist Approach and Battlespace Management

SECTION 6

MANOEUVRE WARFARE: MANOEUVRE DOCTRINE AND ITS APPLICATION

64. The concept of “manoeuvre warfare” is defined as:

“A war fighting philosophy and approach to operations that seeks to defeat the adversary by shattering his moral and physical cohesion—his ability to fight as an effective, coordinated whole—rather than by destroying him physically through incremental attrition”
(NATO AAP-39, Glossary of Land Military Terms and Definitions).¹³

65. Manoeuvre warfare is often referred to as the manoeuvrist approach (the preferred term here). It is realized through the following activities and effects against an adversary: shaping understanding, attacking and undermining will, and shattering cohesion.

66. Cohesion is seen as the glue that solidifies individual and group will under the command of leaders. Cohesion allows military forces to endure physical and mental hardship and retain the physical and moral strength to continue fighting and accomplish their mission.

67. This manoeuvrist approach¹⁴ to operations seeks to attack the adversary’s will to fight and thus undermine and even shatter his cohesion usually, but not necessarily, by avoiding trials of strength and targeting the adversary’s vulnerabilities or weaknesses. An adversary’s will, and thus cohesion, may also be affected by the shaping of his understanding. For example, if the adversary’s command and control ability is neutralized, he will fail to understand his environment, or he will misunderstand his environment and thus lose his will and cohesion. Likewise, if conscripts are convinced to surrender or flee, the will and cohesion of the entire adversary force are affected.

68. As a result, the focus is to defeat the threat by shattering his morale and physical cohesion and his ability to fight as an effective coordinated whole, rather than by destroying him physically through incremental attrition. *It is equally applicable to all types of campaigns, from peace support through major combat.*

13. NATO AAP-39, Glossary of Land Military Terms and Definitions. The manoeuvrist approach is defined in a similar manner in other NATO sources, such as Allied Joint Publication 3.2 Allied Joint Doctrine for Land Operations (Ratification draft May 2007): “An approach to operations in which shattering the enemy’s overall cohesion and will to fight is paramount. It calls for an attitude of mind in which doing the unexpected, using initiative and seeking originality is combined with a resolute determination to succeed.”

14. The manoeuvrist approach must not be confused with tactical or operational “manoeuvre,” which is an element of the Act operational function and is defined as “employment of forces on the battlefield through movement in combination with fire, or fire potential, to achieve a position of advantage in respect to the enemy in order to accomplish the mission” (AAP-6).

69. The manoeuvrist approach is not only applied through physical activities (fires) that affect will and cohesion as second-order effects. It is also applied through psychological activities that may affect the will and cohesion as first-order effects. That is, it is applied through a combination of fires and influence activities. For example, PSYOPS radio messages to a defending adversary may encourage conscripts to flee the battlefield, thus affecting the adversary's cohesion directly. Deception through a demonstration of forces and false radio traffic will confuse the adversary and undermine his confidence, will and cohesion. The manoeuvrist approach is therefore conducted simultaneously on the physical and psychological planes in a complementary fashion. For example, just as a commander may wish to reach a piece of vital ground in order to make the adversary's defence untenable, and thus undermine the adversary's will and cohesion, the same commander may wish to issue highly effective PSYOPS messages to undermine conscripts, provide emergency aid to locals suffering occupation, and issue accurate and timely PA statements, all in order to out-manoeuvre the adversary in time, space and influence.

70. In applying the manoeuvrist approach to both the physical and psychological planes, a wider conceptualization must occur. In understanding this application, it must be remembered that when applied to certain target audiences, such as a friendly, neutral or unsupportive audience, activities may be undertaken to inform, assist understanding and shape perceptions, but in an effort to strengthen will and enhance cohesion (particularly of campaign supporters). It sees the idea of manoeuvring, in competition with the adversary and others, on both the physical and psychological planes and applied to a wider range of targets other than simply adversaries. Thus, for example, a COIN campaign plan may envision attacking key insurgent strongholds in order to undermine his will and cohesion (i.e., manoeuvrist approach on the physical plane) while providing better economic and social development for the local populace and advertising these activities quickly in the local media (i.e., manoeuvre on the psychological plane to shape understanding and engender support from the populace).

71. In many campaigns, the manoeuvrist approach is applied in dealing with a wide array of targets that includes more than simply an adversary. There will be individuals and groups who support the campaign, those who are neutral or undecided, and those who oppose the campaign. In all cases, influence activities (i.e., manoeuvre on the psychological plane) will be applied against these targets to shape understanding. In some cases though, particularly for those groups that support the campaign, the aim of the activities will be to strengthen will and reinforce cohesion. This will likely be achieved through defensive Info Ops. Such activities can be summarized as follows:

- a. Against an adversary and his supporters, the manoeuvrist approach uses fires and influence activities (and thus effects on the physical and psychological planes) to shape understanding and attack will and shatter cohesion.
- b. With respect to other target audiences, particularly those who support or potentially support the campaign, the manoeuvrist approach uses influence activities and their psychological effects to shape understanding, strengthen will and reinforce cohesion.
- c. Activities with respect to all target audiences are planned and conducted simultaneously, 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. Thus, while attacking an adversary, the legitimacy of the campaign must be maintained in the eyes of the supporters and potential supporters.

- d. Depending upon the campaign theme, it may be possible to influence some of the adversaries to become supporters of the campaign. This will necessitate activities that address the root causes of the crisis and conflict itself, the complementary application of activities on the physical and psychological planes, and the considered and judicious use of physical violence.

72. The manoeuvrist approach may be applied against irregular and conventional adversaries. In some campaigns, such as a COIN involving a fanatical insurgent movement, the manoeuvrist approach in terms of fires will have little effect. No amount of force or threat of force will convince the core insurgents to surrender or break their will and cohesion. Indeed, martyrdom becomes an ideal situation for them and only acts to stiffen their resolve. In such cases, the manoeuvrist approach on the psychological plane will be the only real manner in which to realize an enduring outcome. The majority of the populace and the less fanatical members of the adversary must be persuaded through influence activities not to support the insurgency. Thus, activities must counter adversary propaganda and media operations; build legitimacy and confidence in the campaign; and address the root causes of any reason for support to be given to the adversary. Eventually, the adversary will become so isolated that he cannot operate effectively in the environment, and his appeal to any group or system will be removed.



SOURCE: COMBAT CAMERA

