Chapter Four: Command and Control
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SECTION I – STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

National Interest

0401. The decision to commit military force is ultimately a national, political matter. The national interest will therefore be both the first and the last factor to be considered while taking that decision - all other considerations are subordinate. National interest is impossible to define absolutely, being the product of economics, history, geography, national characteristics, party politics and the views of allies. The examination of a national interest may offer nothing conclusive in predicting a state’s behavior, however, an understanding of the influences on coalition members’ national interests would be helpful. MIC partners would wish to understand members’ national perspectives on, amongst others: vital ground and national survival; non-negotiable principles; domestic and international public opinion; perceived legitimacy of military involvement; political and economic factors (unlikely to be military factors); and history and historical obligations. Each state will decide to take military action based on the expected benefits for its own political, domestic, strategic and economic interests. Domestic public opinion may be a major consideration in governments’ decisions. Often politicians take campaign stances based on the endurance of their state’s military commitments, as well as limiting the duration of existing commitments in order to retain domestic political balance. Historically states have also withdrawn their contributions from ongoing coalition operations for national reasons. Finally, national interests change and are often redefined. New governments are elected; domestic policies are dynamic; economies adapt; and other higher priority interests may factor in a state’s decision-making process. Thus it follows, due to the primacy of the national interest, that it is not possible to say in advance how a state might react when considering courses of action. In sum, the various states’ national interests, and how those interests might determine national behavior, are not definable or binding.

Legal

0402. A firm legal foundation is a fundamental requirement for the resort to the use of force (jus ad bellum). The Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC) provides the legal framework for the way in which force is used (jus in bello). The classic exceptions to the basic prohibition on the use of force in the UN Charter Article 2(4) are United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs) under Chapter VII and self-defense, whether national or collective. Some say there is also a customary international law exception of humanitarian intervention. It is possible that states may differ in their legal reasoning for the use of force in the same coalition operation, or differ in their understanding on the width of the self-defense ground and the actions that can be carried out in self-defense, or differ on any express or implied authorizations of the UN Security Council. Once a state has established it is lawful to used armed force it is unlikely that this
decision will be revisited in the course of an operation. However, during ongoing operations military activity will be continually scrutinized and reviewed, to reflect policy and military objectives. Not only national policy but also national legal interpretation will likely constrain national conduct within operations. At a tactical level national ‘red cards’ and caveats are used to avoid or remove national responsibilities for disputed coalition action. In a non-international armed conflict the domestic laws of the troop contributing nation as well as relevant international law, including treaty obligations (e.g. the Geneva Conventions) and customary international law, and where operating within another state with its consent that host nation’s own domestic laws, will provide the applicable envelope of laws. A Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) typically will set out important jurisdictional arrangements. International Human Right Laws must also be carefully considered, especially in complex operating environments other than armed conflict, such as a crisis resolution.

Rules of Engagement

0403. Rules of Engagement (ROE) should reflect the policy and military parameters for the use of force. ROE are not law, but they should be lawful. ROE development is a vital component of campaign planning. While coalitions can operate under national ROE, there are many advantages of operating under agreed coalition ROE.

**ROE, Self-Defense and Defense of Others.** In coalition operations it is vital to understand the relationship between ROE, self-defense and defense of others. Different national views exist. Usually self-defense is considered an inherent right which stands apart from ROE. ROE are not needed to grant it and they cannot take it away. Defense of others may, however, be a matter of ROE, according to national policy and law.

0404. ROE are directives to military forces and individuals that define the circumstances, conditions, degree, and manner in which the use of force or other action may or may not be applied. ROE are intended to avoid ambiguity that could lead to a commander inadvertently violating national (or coalition) policy and objectives, or to a violation of international law through inappropriate action or reaction in a given situation. In regards specifically to international law, the Law of Armed Conflict, and other conventions and laws to which coalition members may be subject, ROE only exist to give guidance and cannot by themselves guarantee the lawfulness of any action. It remains the commander’s responsibility to ensure that action is lawful. ROE are written as a series of prohibitions and permissions applicable to situations spanning the entire range of military operations.

0405. Although coalition participants may have similar political mandates, each nation is likely, as a starting point, to bring to the coalition a different national ROE reflecting that nation's unique political and legal interests and its reason for entering the coalition.
Some national ROE will be relatively free of constraint, while others may not. Commanders of deployed forces may lack the authority to speak on behalf of their nation in the ROE development process. To facilitate interoperability efforts should be made to standardize ROE with a view to developing Coalition ROE, but this may not be achievable. Therefore, it may be necessary to tailor the employment of contingents to conform with and optimize their own national ROE. In these circumstances the commander will need visibility of coalition members’ ROE so that he can work round national differences as much as possible.

0406. Coalition ROE development is a time-consuming process and should begin early in the planning process. As with national ROE doctrine, there will need to be rules for implementing, authorizing and requesting ROE, as well as a common understanding on delegations and permissions.

**Constitutional Constraints**

0407. A nation may impose additional constraints on itself through its constitution and its domestic law; these constraints may apply to both the commitment of military force and the use of troops once committed. Constitutional constraints should be distinguished from policy constraints; the former are likely to be considerably less flexible than the latter. Individual national advice will be required not only to describe the constraint, but to determine the extent to which it is nationally binding.

**Treaty Obligations**

0408. National obligations arising from multilateral and bilateral agreements influence national decisions both *ad bellum* and *in bello*. While membership of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), might oblige a state to act in a certain way in a given set of circumstances, that would only be if that nation judged the participation in an operation to be lawful (*ad bellum*). Similarly, being a signatory to, for example, the Geneva Conventions will oblige a state to constrain the way its forces operate during the operation (*in bello*).

**Policy Constraints**

0409. Policies, that is to say the way governments decide to do business, are within governmental control in a way that constitutional constraints may not be. Policy positions are likely to be taken in reaction to other factors rather than be factors themselves. Noting the distinction between national policies and national constitutional constraints, policy constraints will not be considered further.

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38 The principles on which a state is governed that may be embodied in a statute or evolve by precedent.
Cultural Factors

0410. Cultural factors must also be considered:
   a. What language does the troop contributing nation speak?
   b. Will it need interpreters?
   c. What language will its liaison officers speak?
   d. What cultural barriers exist in establishing harmonious relationship with other coalition partners?
   e. Are there any specific nutritional standards/constraints?

SECTION II – COMMAND PHILOSOPHY

0411. While all command and control (C2) arrangements must be sufficiently flexible to cope with additional subordinate elements, the commander and his headquarters should not be overloaded to the extent where efficiency and tempo are adversely affected. The formation of additional subordinate headquarters may become necessary in order to prevent such circumstances.

0412. Control of Significant Resources. Some specialist, and often scarce, force elements provide critical cross-component capabilities. To ensure efficient employment they demand C2 at the operational level and are not generally delegated to subordinate commanders. Discrete national contributions, as well as embedded component assets, may be brigaded under the control of a specific commander within the coalition headquarters. Specialist coordination at the operational level provides a pan-Joint Operations Area (JOA) view and the ability to re-balance resources across the force.

SECTION III – COMMAND AND CONTROL STRUCTURES

0413. The lead nation will be responsible for establishing an effective C2 architecture, which may extend to component level, and is likely to adopt predominantly national or alliance structures and procedures. However, no single command structure necessarily best fits all circumstances. Specific C2 architectures must be driven by the context and may require iterative adjustment as the situation or tempo develops. Political imperatives, in particular, may have a significant impact. Participating nations should, however, strive to maximize unity of command, with missions, tasks, responsibilities, and authorities clearly defined and understood by all participants.

0414. In formal alliances, national political objectives are addressed, and generally subsumed, within wider multinational objectives. Moreover, alliances are characterized by a degree of commonality, or standardization, across aspects of doctrine, process,
procedures, and materiel. Coalitions, however, typically represent less coherent and unfamiliar groupings brought together for a limited period to address a specific crisis. Political considerations may dominate decisions regarding force composition, organization, and command arrangements. Moreover, the disparate amalgam of forces involved may have limited commonality or compatibility. National pride and cultural considerations may also exacerbate the problem by limiting organizational options and thus constraining freedom of action. This complex set of factors is also likely to change as the situation, political dynamic, and potentially national contributions, changes over time. The strategic level commander is designated as the Coalition Strategic Commander and should be attuned to such changes and adjust the command structure and training program to mitigate negative impacts where possible.

0415. **National Contingent Command.** Regardless of how the force is organized operationally, each nation furnishing forces will normally establish a national contingent headquarters, with a dedicated National Contingent Commander (NCC) and logistic support element. Although the NCC does not share the same command responsibility or authority within the force as the operational commander, he should understand the operation to the same extent in order to provide effective advice and support.

a. In general terms, the role of the NCC is to integrate his own national contingent into the force, promoting cohesion, trust and understanding while implementing his own nation’s policies and caveats. He would also act as a national figurehead; a conduit back to his nation on tactical incidents and operational developments; matters of support to, and force protection of, his contingent; and media issues.

b. The NCC will implement national caveats, although he will usually delegate elements to his national commanders within each component so that issues can be resolved early at lower levels, thus minimizing the overall impact on coalition cohesion. Any issues that are likely to cause friction should be identified early and discussed with the operational commander in an effort to resolve the problem.

0416. **Integrated Command Structures.** Formation of a fully integrated command structure greatly complements unity of command. However, this type of structure is more likely to be found within a formal alliance. Within the NATO, for example, a commander is designated from a member nation while staff and subordinate commanders and staff are of multinational composition. The key ingredients in an integrated command structure are that a single commander be designated, that the staff is composed of representatives from all member nations, and that subordinate commands and staffs are integrated to the lowest echelon necessary in order to accomplish the mission. This type of command structure may not be possible in an ad hoc multinational coalition operation.
Coalition Force Headquarters and Staff Functions

0417. As previously stated, the lead nation will provide the overarching framework for command, which will encompass not only the commander and majority of his headquarters’ staff, but also structure, language, procedures, command and control, communications, intelligence and information management systems. It will generally lead all the key functional areas such as J3, J5 and J9, with staff from contributing nations being integrated throughout. Figure 4.1 illustrates a notional operational level command and staff framework. The combination of a mature and experienced staff and the broader perspective of coalition partners is essential in building effective coalitions. Staff training and rehearsals prior to operations are crucial.

![Figure 4.1 – Notional Multinational Operational Level Command](image)

Notes:
1. The operational level commander is designated the Coalition Force Commander (CFC).
2. It is likely that the staff in J3, J5 and J9 will be largely from the lead nation. The remaining staff divisions may be led by the other contributing nations.
3. Although certain intelligence assets will be available across the force, each nation is likely to retain a separate intelligence element. The role of the J2 staff is to provide as full and coherent an intelligence picture as national caveats allow. Wherever possible national restrictions should be minimized.
4. The Lead Nation will normally provide framework CIS assets and leadership of J6.
5. Multinational Logistic Centre (MNLC) - Cell for logistic coordination, not a component command. Contributing nations may deploy a separate National Support Element.
6. In the same way as the CFHQ, component headquarters are likely to be based on a single nation with integrated staff from national contingents. National contributions may be discrete, self-contained force packages (an armored brigade) or individual capabilities (AAR). The level of multi-nationality will be dictated largely by the nature of the operation. The diagram depicts illustrative force elements within each component. Certain additional strategic capabilities (e.g. SOF, TLAM, ISR etc), retained under national command, may be made available for specific operations to the coalition.
7. CFACC will control the CAOC, which will have clear linkages across all components.
Staff Functions

0418. The Coalition Force Commander (CFC) usually has 4 principal advisers: the Chief of Staff (COS), the Deputy COS (DCOS), the Political Adviser (POLAD) and the Legal Adviser (LEGAD). In addition to these advisors, the CFC can add other functional advisors, such as a medical (MEDAD), gender or cultural advisers, the Chief Information Operations (Info Ops), and the Chief Public Affairs Officer.

0419. **Chief of Staff.** COS is responsible for operations, operations support, plans and intelligence. He coordinates work across the headquarters, with particular interest in Information Management. He is pivotal to the efficient running of the headquarters; a good COS can engender and sustain mutual trust and understanding between individual staff members, advisers and subordinate headquarters.

0420. **Deputy Chief of Staff.** DCOS coordinates logistics, personnel and often finance. Though normally of equivalent rank, the COS is *primus inter pares*.

0421. **Political/Policy Adviser.** POLAD advises a commander on:
   a. Coalition policy.
   b. Local, national, regional and international political issues.
   c. Political issues specifically related to coalition members, partners, and the host nations.
   d. The relationship with International Organizations such as the United Nations (UN) as well as non-governmental organizations (NGO)s.

0422. **Legal Adviser.** LEGAD provides legal advice and can be either civil servants or military lawyers selected to advise the CFC. Principally they advise on:
   a. International law and mandates.
   b. Use of force and compliance with the relevant international law, primarily through ROE.
   c. Judicial issues specifically related to coalition members, partners, and the host nation.
   d. All legal matters arising from the conduct of the operation.

0423. **Personnel and Administration (J1).** The J1 staff’s principal role is to advise the CFC and his staff on the personnel policies and manpower management systems and procedures established by national authorities for their force components. The J1 responsibilities include personnel management, accounting, entitlements and benefits, morale, welfare,
recreation, postal services, safety, provost and discipline, prisoners of war, administration and casualty reporting. The J1 should also coordinate personnel matters with the personnel staffs of the national contingents and will usually establish a Joint Personnel, Resources and Finance Center.

0424. **Intelligence (J2)**. The J2 staff is responsible for the provision of accurate, timely and relevant intelligence to meet the CFC’s operational and security requirements within the JOA and maintaining situational awareness in the CFC’s Area of Interest and Area of Intelligence Responsibility. The J2 will usually establish a Joint All Sources Information Centre.

0425. **Operations (J3)**. The essential role of the J3 staff is to act as the focal point through which the CFC directs the conduct of an operation, ensuring unity of effort and the most effective use of resources supporting immediate and planned operations. As such the J3 is responsible for establishing a Joint Operations Centre (JOC). The J3 may comprise sections/cells that cover: maritime, land and air operations; special forces operations; space operations; information operations; psychological operations; Chemical Biological and Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) activities, Civil Military Cooperation (CIMIC), targeting; coordination of refugee support; multinational specialized units operations; and military police operations.

0426. **Provost Marshall**. The Provost Marshall is the CFC’s advisor on security, order and discipline inside the force. Together with the multinational specialized unit commander (if established), he is responsible for matters related to the civilian population security issues and police matters.

0427. **Logistics (J4)**. The J4 staff is responsible for assessing the logistics required for the achievement of the CFC’s objectives and for ensuring that these support requirements are met throughout the operation. Based on this assessment, the J4 staff develops the logistic concept and plans in support of operations and coordinates the overall logistic effort. The size and complexity of operations, component participation and force contribution of the nations as well as the degree to which national and/or multinational logistics are to be integrated into the logistics concept may require specific logistic coordinating activities. If appropriate, a multinational joint logistic centre in support of the CFC’s logistics staff may be activated to coordinate support between component commanders, National Support Elements (NSE), the host nation and NGOs.

0428. **Medical Support**. In order to ensure proper medical planning and support for the forces under command, the CFC needs a medical staff structure to enable him to make

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39 Detailed information is in Allied Joint Publication (AJP)-2 Allied Joint Intelligence, Counter Intelligence and Security Doctrine and subordinate documents.
40 Detailed information in AJP-4 Allied Joint Logistic Doctrine and subordinate documents.
41 Detailed information in AJP-4.10 Allied Joint Medical Support Doctrine and subordinate documents.
medical assessments, plan and deal with national medical support. The MEDAD in a coalition headquarters is responsible for ensuring that the commander and his staff are properly aware of health and medical implications of a course of action and any issues connected to the operation. As a special staff officer, he maintains direct access to the commander.

0429. **Plans and Policy (J5).** \(^{42}\) The J5 staff assists the CFC in the preparation of his campaign plan and the planning for future operations. J5 coordinates planning efforts within the headquarters and with higher, subordinate and adjacent commands as well as civil authorities. The J5 staff is responsible for establishing and forming the core of a Joint Operations Planning Group (JOPG). The J5 staff may subdivide into advance planners and implementation planners. The advance planners focus their effort on long-range analysis and subsequent required products. They will initiate and develop scenario-based plans in anticipation of a future event or circumstance that a coalition force may face. Implementation planners act as the conduit between J5 and J3. They focus their effort on crisis response planning and initiate/develop plans in response to a current or developing crisis. They are responsive to tasks assigned by J3 and assist J3 in the transformation of operation plans (OPLANs) into an operations order (OPORD), and continue to assist the J3 organization during plan execution.

0430. **Communications and Information Systems (J6).** \(^{43}\) The J6 staff should ensure that adequate communication and information support is provided and that interoperable communication and information systems (CIS) procedures are used at all levels. Furthermore, J6 staff should be included in the planning, coordination and execution of C3 architectures and in-JOA CIS systems to provide the capabilities necessary to enable the CFC’s C2 requirements. The J6 staff usually establishes a Joint C3 support centre. Activities which are probably critical to the coalition CIS should be fully coordinated between the Info Ops cell, the JOC and the Joint C3 support centre.

0431. **Civil-Military Cooperation (J9).** \(^{44}\) The J9 staff is responsible for advising the CFC on the implications of all the activities undertaken which directly concern the relations between the armed forces, local government, civil population, international organizations, NGOs and other agencies of the countries where the coalition force is deployed, employed and supported. J9 staff members are not necessarily individual specialists with skills applicable in a civilian environment. However, they should have broad military experience, understand CIMIC principles and procedures, understand the environment in which they will operate and understand the workings of NGOs and international organizations. They should be capable of explaining military requirements to civilian organizations and vice versa. Finally, they should be able to carry out accurate

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\(^{42}\) Detailed information in AJP-5 Allied Joint Doctrine for Operational Planning.

\(^{43}\) Detailed in AJP-6 (under current development).

\(^{44}\) Detailed information in AJP-9, NATO Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) Doctrine.
assessments and provide tactical advice to the commander. The J9 staff usually establishes a Joint CIMIC Centre to coordinate CIMIC and related activities.

0432. **Information Operations.** Info Ops is a military function which coordinates information activities in order to create desired effects. The Chief Info Ops is the Commander’s adviser on activities and effects in the information environment, and leads the implementation of the Coalition Information Strategy. The Chief Info Ops should be granted Coordinating Authority in order to enable cross-functional coordination.

0433. **Public Affairs.** The Public Affairs office advises the CFC on all media-related matters, taking guidance on overall information strategy from the highest political level through his line of command. To ensure synergy of effort, public affairs offices closely coordinates at all command levels with all other actors involved in information activities, and participate in the Info Ops advice and coordination process. However, it should be noted that, in order to safeguard the integrity, credibility and efficiency of military public affairs, such close coordination should not result in either organizational or direct integration of public affairs with other tools of the common information effort. A close liaison with the CIMIC staff should be maintained, and therefore the public affairs staff is normally integrated in the Joint CIMIC Centre in a separate Public Information Centre. The PIC will coordinate with the public information agencies of associated international organizations in the JOA (e.g. the UN and European Union (EU)). The Public Information Centre will interface with the international press and the local press, and is responsible for implementing the public affairs related aspects of the Coalition Information Strategy. The Chief of Public Affairs is the commander’s spokesperson and as such has direct access to the commander at all times. As the success and credibility of the spokesperson relates to continuous efforts and established trust with the media, frequent change of the commander’s spokesperson should be avoided.

0434. **Lessons Identified.** The coalition lessons identified effort should be proactive, starting at the earliest stages of the coalition. Coalition lessons identified efforts should run in parallel with national efforts, allowing timely collection and sharing of lessons, whilst acknowledging national sensitivities. Lessons identified will become lessons learned largely through national processes affecting their forces. However, the CFC should not be constrained in immediately applying lessons identified as the situation dictates. Lessons identified are an essential element in learning from current coalition operations and preparing for the next. A coalition headquarters should establish a Lessons Identified Cell from the outset of the coalition effort. This cell will collect, analyze and share lessons amongst coalition members during the planning, deployment, conduct and handover or termination of operations. Lessons may be of immediate importance, such as those concerning force protection throughout the coalition, whilst others may be less urgent and could be analyzed later in the mission, or on completion of the operation.
Liaison and Coordination

0435. Regardless of the specific command and information structures established, differences in doctrine, organization, equipment and training are mitigated by a robust liaison structure. During multinational operations, participating forces should establish liaison early at all levels in order to: foster a better understanding of mission and tactics; facilitate transfer of information; enhance mutual trust; and develop an increased level of teamwork. Liaison is often accomplished through the use of liaison teams. These teams should be knowledgeable about the structure, capabilities, weapons systems, logistics, command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance systems, and planning methods employed within their own commands, as well as having regional (or partner-specific) training and experience. These teams can provide communications using systems that might not be shareable with some coalition partners. Non-military organizations, (for example host governments or the UN) could also be recipients of these services. Liaison teams can act as filters for the exchange of information consistent with national disclosure and dissemination policies.

0436. **Liaison Officers.** Military personnel possessing regional language capabilities, cultural awareness, as well as experience of working and training with other countries’ militaries, other agencies or the indigenous population are invaluable in ensuring understanding and increasing tempo. Liaison demands usually outstrip the availability of suitable personnel and additional requirements must be identified early in the planning process.

0437. **Coordination Centers.** Coordination centers can also facilitate control of multinational operations, which require interaction with a variety of agencies, both military and non-military. A coordination centre can assist in C2 as well as coordinate a variety of functions, including logistics and civil-military operations. It can be the focal point for support issues, alert and warning, host-nation support, movement control, and training. As a coalition matures, the role of a coordination centre can be expanded to include command activities. Member nations provide a staff element to the centre that is comprised of action officers familiar with the relevant support activities. Coalition nations should be encouraged to augment this staff element with linguists and communications capabilities in order to maintain contact with their parent headquarters. A central coalition coordination centre may be established as well as a number of functional coordination centers.