

February 1999

U.S. ATLANTIC  
COMMAND

Challenging Role in the  
Evolution of Joint  
Military Capabilities



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B-278198

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# Executive Summary

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## Purpose

As the twenty-first century approaches, the United States faces the critical challenge of ensuring that its military forces can meet a full range of demands. Joint operations are key to meeting this challenge, and the U.S. Atlantic Command (USACOM) was designed to play a major role in advancing the evolution of joint military capabilities. In response to congressional interest in Department of Defense (DOD) efforts to improve joint operations, GAO determined (1) USACOM's actions to establish itself as the joint force trainer, provider, and integrator of most continental U.S.-based forces; (2) views on the value of the Command's contributions to joint military capabilities; and (3) recent expansion of the Command's responsibilities and its possible effects on the Command.

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## Background

Until 1993, the lack of a joint headquarters to oversee the forces of the four services based in the continental United States was long considered a problem that the Joint Chiefs of Staff tried twice to fix. The concept of a joint headquarters for U.S.-based forces resurfaced again at the end of the Cold War. In making a recommendation in 1993 to the Secretary of Defense for such a joint headquarters, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (1989-93), General Colin Powell, said that such a command would bring greater focus to joint training and operations among continental U.S.-based forces. U.S.-based forces, he said, needed to be trained to operate jointly as a way of life. Acting on the Chairman's recommendation, the Secretary of Defense assigned USACOM this responsibility in October 1993. Later, revisions to the Unified Command Plan<sup>1</sup> provided broad guidance on USACOM's new functional roles, and an implementation plan, approved by the Secretary of Defense, provided USACOM the basic concept of its mission, responsibilities, and forces.

One of USACOM's principal missions is to maximize America's military capability through joint training, force integration, and deployment of ready U.S.-based forces to support geographic commands', its own, and domestic requirements. Since USACOM was established, its mission has received increased emphasis with the issuance of Joint Vision 2010—the military's long-range strategic vision—in July 1996. Joint Vision 2010 serves as a conceptual template for how the armed forces expect to channel resources to achieve new levels of effectiveness in joint warfighting.

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<sup>1</sup>The plan sets forth basic guidance to all unified commanders; establishes their missions, responsibilities, and force structure; delineates the general geographic area of responsibility for geographic commanders; and specifies functional responsibilities for functional commanders.

To accomplish its mission and conduct operations in its geographic area of responsibility, USACOM has four service component commands: the Navy's U.S. Atlantic Fleet, the Army's U.S. Forces Command, the Air Force's Air Combat Command, and the Marine Corps' Marine Forces Atlantic.

Approximately 1.4 million armed forces personnel—or about 80 percent of the active and reserve forces based in the continental United States—are assigned to these component commands. As of fiscal year 1998, USACOM's headquarters included about 1,600 civilian and military personnel, and the Command had an operations and maintenance budget of about \$100 million that was funded through the Department of the Navy budget. The Command's size increased significantly in October 1998, when five additional DOD activities were transferred to USACOM.

The Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (the Results Act, P.L. 103-62) requires federal agencies to clearly define their missions, set goals, link activities and resources to goals, prepare annual performance plans, measure performance, and report on their accomplishments. The Senate and House Reports on the Results Act legislation anticipated that the act's principles would be institutionalized and practiced at all organizational levels of the federal government. USACOM has developed a new strategic planning system to enhance the management of its major areas of focus, which include joint force training, providing, and integrating.

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## Results in Brief

USACOM has advanced joint training by developing a state-of-the-art joint task force commander training program and simulation training center. The Command has also progressed in developing other elements of joint training, though not at the same level of maturity or intensity. However, USACOM has had to make substantive changes in its approach to providing and integrating joint forces. Its initial approach was to develop ready force packages tailored to meet the geographic commands' spectrum of missions. This was rebuffed by the military services and the geographic commands, which did not want or value USACOM's proactive role and by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (1993-97), who did not see the utility of such force packages. By late 1995, USACOM reverted to implementing a force-providing process that provides the Command with a much more limited role and ability to affect decisions and change. The Command's force integrator role was separated from force providing and also redirected. The emphasis is now on improving the interoperability<sup>2</sup> of

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<sup>2</sup>The ability of systems, units, or forces to provide services to and accept services from other systems, units, or forces to enable them to operate effectively together.

existing systems, developing and evaluating advanced technologies in support of joint operations, and advancing the development of joint doctrine.

The establishment of performance goals and measures would help USACOM assess and report on the results of its efforts to improve joint military capabilities. Although it could be difficult to develop such goals and measures and to assess the Command's performance, such assessments could help USACOM better determine what it needs to do to enhance its performance. The Congress anticipated that Results Act principles, such as setting performance goals and measuring performance, would be institutionalized at all organizational levels in federal agencies. The Command's recently instituted strategic planning system does not include performance measures that can be used to evaluate its impact on the military capabilities of U.S. forces.

Views of the value of USACOM's contributions varied widely within DOD. The Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Staff, and USACOM believed the Command was providing an important focus to the advancement of joint operations. The Commander in Chief of USACOM saw the Command's most important contributions as having been in joint training and, most recently, force integration. The views of the geographic commands were generally more reserved, with some benefiting more than others from USACOM's efforts. While these commands reported that USACOM had been a responsive and dependable provider of trained forces, they also reported that they had received little direct benefit from USACOM's efforts in training and integration.

The Secretary of Defense recently expanded USACOM's charter. The Command's new authorities are likely to increase its role and capabilities to provide training and joint warfighting support and enhance its ability to influence decisions within the Department. USACOM's efforts to effect change can be expected to continue to encounter opposition, particularly from the military departments. The parochial or service-oriented priorities of the military services can often conflict with USACOM's joint priorities.

Although USACOM's roles are expanding and the number of functions and DOD organizational elements the Command has relationships with is significant, its roles and responsibilities are still largely not spelled out in key DOD policy and guidance, including joint doctrine, guidance, and other publications. Making such change to policy and guidance documents

would help provide a common understanding of USACOM's roles and responsibilities.

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## Principal Findings

### Progress and Redirection in Executing Functional Roles

USACOM's actions to enhance joint training have generally been consistent with those envisioned when the Command was established. Its efforts have focused on developing a training program for joint task force commanders and staff. This program has evolved into a three-phased program that includes academics, planning drills, and simulated joint exercises that emphasize command and control of forces in an array of worldwide situations ranging from peacetime operations to major conflicts. While not at the same level of maturity or intensity, the Command has recently given more attention to developing service interoperability training exercises and providing mobile training teams to assist geographic commands in the design and evaluation of joint training.

USACOM has redirected the approach and scope of its joint force provider and integrator roles. "Adaptive joint force packaging" was to be the foundation for implementing these roles. Under this concept, USACOM was to assemble joint force packages tailored to respond to the requirements of supported geographic commands from the most capable and ready forces available. These force packages—trained and organized around capabilities to meet specific mission requirements—were to be proposed to the supported commands and refined as necessary. The concept offered the opportunity to explore and refine options for providing capabilities tailored to mission requirements. USACOM largely abandoned this concept in 1995, primarily because of resistance from other geographic commands who did not want or value a significant role for USACOM in determining how to meet mission requirements. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff supported the position of the geographic commands.

In providing forces to supported commands, USACOM has become more reactive than proactive. It has shifted from developing products—preplanned joint groupings of forces to conduct specific potential future missions—to overseeing a process that identifies, selects, trains, and deploys forces, on an ad hoc basis, to meet the near-term capability requirements of the geographic commands. A major responsibility of the Command is to work with its service components and

the geographic commands to resolve operating and personnel tempo issues related to assets that are in high demand. This involves analyzing tempo data across its service components and developing alternatives for meeting geographic commands' needs within tempo guidelines. The assets include specialized aircraft, such as surveillance and reconnaissance and electronic warfare planes; other combat assets, such as the Patriot Missile System; and less prominent support assets, such as military police and dog teams.

In its joint force integrator role, USACOM has redefined its efforts as providing a process to improve interoperability and enhance joint force capabilities through a blending of technology, systems, and doctrine. This includes sponsoring a large number of technology demonstration projects that have a multiservice emphasis to enhance joint operational capabilities, searching for solutions to joint interoperability problems among advanced battle systems, and responding to joint doctrinal issues evolving from training, operations, and other sources.

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**Value of USACOM's  
Contributions to Joint  
Military Capabilities Not  
Assessed, and Views Vary**

USACOM has conducted several self-assessments of its performance. These have largely been evaluations of progress toward accomplishing tasks associated with its functional roles and other areas of major focus—they provide little insight into the Command's contributions to improved joint military capabilities. The most recent of these evaluations, conducted in early 1998, assessed progress as being satisfactory but also identified some specific areas, such as determining training exercise requirements, where progress has not been satisfactory.

USACOM recently developed a new strategic planning system and was giving increased attention to the monitoring and accomplishment of tasks designed to achieve established goals, objectives, and subobjectives in major areas of focus at the Command, including joint training, force providing, and integration. While USACOM officials believed the actions being taken would ultimately improve joint military capabilities, the new system's assessments and measures could not be used to evaluate the difference the Command was making in military capabilities. The Results Act principles call for performance planning to include performance measures to help assess whether goals and missions are being accomplished. Command officials believed they needed more detailed guidance from DOD for implementing the Results Act principles.

Views within DOD of the value of USACOM's contributions varied by organization and functional role. In describing the Command's contributions as a joint force trainer, USACOM and its service components pointed primarily to its joint task force headquarters training program, describing it as unique high-fidelity training. The value of this training to other geographic commands has been quite limited for several reasons. Participation requires a significant investment of time and staff, as the training is lengthy and much of it is conducted at USACOM's simulation facility in the Norfolk, Virginia, area. The commands have also been concerned that the scenarios used in the training might have limited applicability in their areas of operational responsibility. The commands have preferred to provide their own joint training for their assigned forces, including their headquarters staff. While concentrating on its joint task force commanders training program, USACOM has, until recently, given little attention to its interoperability training exercise program for which its service components are brought together to train on joint tasks or capabilities considered essential to accomplishing missions in a joint environment. It has relied on its service components to plan and execute the training, and as a result, the training has not always had the intended joint operational emphasis.

As a major joint force provider, USACOM is valued by the Joint Staff, the geographic commands it supports, and its service component commands. USACOM and its service component commands see USACOM as an "honest broker" that draws upon the range of forces and capabilities available among the services, when necessary, to respond to the mission requirements of the geographic commands. These commands also saw benefit in having a single, unified command act as an arbitrator among themselves and as their spokesman on issues with other DOD organizations. The Joint Staff believed the Command had made important improvements in the process, particularly valuing the cross-service coordination that USACOM provides in identifying force capabilities to meet the mission needs of the commands that request forces. The Central and Southern Commands, which have very few assigned forces, described USACOM and its service component commands as a dependable and responsive force provider. Similarly, the European Command, which has forces assigned, valued USACOM's support, noting that the Command has ensured equitable tasking among continental U.S.-based forces and has allowed the European Command to concentrate on the operation at hand.

In force integration, USACOM believed the payoff of its investments in advanced technology projects would be seen when the joint capabilities

developed are deployed. On a more near-term basis, the Command was increasing its attention to interoperability problems in select areas, such as theater missile defense and information operations. It recently achieved a major success when DOD approved joint requirements, developed by USACOM with the support of the other geographic commands, for the theater ballistic missile defense program. USACOM believed this was an indication of potential growth in its influence in a requirements generation system and acquisition process that has long been dominated by the military services. An important next step is for the military services, which acquire the weapon systems and equipment and manage much of the money used to fix interoperability problems, to invest the resources required to make the changes needed to improve interoperability. The services have not always been willing to make such investments. The geographic commands GAO visited were generally not keenly aware of USACOM's integration efforts and therefore could not comment on the Command's contributions.

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### Command Still Being Assimilated and Roles and Responsibilities Expanded

The Unified Command Plan, which serves as the charter for USACOM and the other unified commands, only broadly describes the roles and responsibilities of the commands. USACOM's training role, however, is identified and discussed in detail throughout the Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff's training and policy guidance, including the Joint Training Manual and Joint Training Master Plan. In contrast, USACOM's joint force provider and integrator roles have not been incorporated in joint publications and guidance to provide a common institutional understanding of the Command's functional roles. For example, a key joint guidance document for planning and executing military operations—the Joint Operational Planning and Execution System—does not specifically discuss USACOM's role as a force provider.

USACOM's size and responsibilities have been expanded considerably. In October 1998, five activities controlled by the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, were transferred to USACOM in line with reform initiatives to streamline DOD headquarters organizations. These activities include the Joint Warfare Analysis Center, the Joint Command and Control Warfare Center, the Joint Warfighting Center, the Joint Battle Center, and the Joint Communications Support Element. In October 1998, the Deputy Secretary of Defense approved the 1999 realignment and restructuring of several additional activities affecting USACOM. USACOM believed these added capabilities strengthen the Command's abilities to provide joint training, force integration, and joint experimentation, and support and to develop

and assess joint doctrine. The Commander in Chief of USACOM believed the Command's ability to influence decisions on joint training, doctrine, and operations was also enhanced.

The Secretary of Defense also assigned USACOM responsibility for joint concept development and experimentation and the joint deployment process, effective October 1998. With joint experimentation, USACOM serves as the integrator of a range of joint experiments intended to foster innovation and rapid fielding of new joint operational concepts and capabilities. The Secretary of Defense expected that this joint experimentation would facilitate the development of new joint doctrine, improve joint training and education, and enhance the consideration of joint requirements in the weapons and material acquisition processes. A \$30 million fiscal year 1999 budget was approved by DOD for USACOM for joint experimentation. As owner of the joint deployment process, USACOM is responsible for improving the efficiency of force deployment activities. USACOM officials believed this new role would also offer opportunities to improve its efficiency as a force provider. Additional resource requirements for this role were expected by the Command to be minimal.

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## Recommendations

It is important that USACOM be able to evaluate its performance and impact in maximizing joint military capabilities. Such assessments, while very difficult to make, could help the Command better determine what it needs to do to enhance its performance. GAO, therefore, recommends that the Secretary of Defense direct the Commander in Chief of USACOM to adopt performance goals and measures that will enable the Command to assess its performance in accomplishing its mission of maximizing joint military capabilities.

Additionally, as USACOM attempts to advance the evolution of joint military capabilities and its role continues to expand, it is important that the Command's roles and responsibilities be clearly defined, understood, and supported throughout DOD. Only USACOM's roles and responsibilities in joint training have been so defined in DOD policy and guidance documents. Therefore, GAO recommends that the Secretary of Defense fully incorporate USACOM's functional roles, authorities, and responsibilities in appropriate DOD directives and publications, including joint doctrine and guidance.

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## Agency Comments and GAO's Evaluation

In written comments (see app. VII) on a draft of this report, DOD concurred with GAO's recommendations. In its comments, DOD provided additional information on USACOM's efforts to establish performance goals and objectives and DOD's efforts to incorporate USACOM's functional roles, authorities, and responsibilities in appropriate DOD directives and publications. This information has been incorporated at appropriate places in the report.

Regarding GAO's recommendation to incorporate USACOM's functional roles, authorities, and responsibilities in appropriate DOD directives and publications, DOD said the 1999 Unified Command Plan, which is currently under its cycle review process, will further define USACOM's functional roles as they have evolved over the past 2 years. It also noted that key training documents have been, or are being, updated. GAO believes that in addition to the Unified Command Plan and joint training documents, the joint guidance for planning and executing military operations—the Joint Operational Planning and Execution System process—should discuss USACOM's role as the major provider of forces.

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Abbreviations

DOD	Department of Defense
CONUS	continental United States
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
USACOM	U.S. Atlantic Command

# Introduction

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Until 1993, most forces based in the United States were not assigned to a single geographic command. Due to their location, these forces had limited opportunities to train jointly with the overseas-based forces they would joint in time of crisis or war. The lack of a joint headquarters to oversee the forces of the four military services based in the continental United States (CONUS) was long considered a problem that the Joint Chiefs of Staff tried twice to fix. The concept of a joint headquarters for U.S.-based forces resurfaced again at the end of the Cold War and led to the establishment of the U.S. Atlantic Command (USACOM) in 1993 as the unified command for most forces based in CONUS.

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## A Vision for a New Command

With the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Eastern European communist regimes in 1989, the Cold War was over and a new world order began. Senior Department of Defense (DOD) leadership began considering the implications of such changes on the Department. They recognized that the end of the Cold War would result in reduced defense budgets and forces, especially overseas-based forces, and more nontraditional, regional operations such as peacekeeping and other operations short of a major theater war. In developing a CONUS power projection strategy, they looked at options for changing the worldwide command structure, which included establishing an Americas Command.

The initial concept for an Americas Command—a command that would have geographic responsibility for all of North and South America—was not widely accepted by DOD leadership. However, the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Colin Powell, and other senior military leaders during the early 1990s increased attention to the need to place all CONUS-based forces under one joint command to respond to worldwide contingencies. Factors influencing this concept were the anticipation that the overall DOD force drawdown would increase reliance on CONUS-based forces and that joint military operations would become predominant. Chairman Powell believed such a command was needed because CONUS-based forces remained service-oriented. These forces needed to train to operate jointly as a way of life and not just during an occasional exercise. The concept of one command providing joint training to CONUS-based forces and deploying integrated joint forces worldwide to meet contingency operations was recommended by Chairman Powell in a 1993 report on roles and missions to the Secretary of Defense.<sup>1</sup> The mission of this command would be to train and deploy CONUS-based forces

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<sup>1</sup>Roles, Missions, and Functions of the Armed Forces of the United States, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, February 1993.

as a joint team, and the Chairman concluded that the U.S. Atlantic Command was best suited to assume this mission.

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## Expanding Atlantic Command to Become the Joint Force Integrator

The Chairman's 1993 report on roles and missions led to an expansion of the roles of the U.S. Atlantic Command. Most notably, the Secretary of Defense, upon review of the Chairman's report, endorsed the concept of one command overseeing the joint training, integrating, and deploying of CONUS-based forces. With this lead, but without formal guidance from the Joint Staff, USACOM leadership began developing plans to expand the Command. As guidance and the plan for implementing the Command's expanded roles developed, DOD's military leadership surfaced many issues. Principal among these issues was whether (1) all CONUS-based forces would come under the Command, including those on the west coast; (2) the Commander in Chief (Commander) of USACOM would remain the Commander of NATO's Supreme Allied Command, Atlantic; and (3) the Command would retain a geographic area of responsibility along with its functional responsibilities as joint force integrator.

While these issues were settled early by the Secretary of Defense, some issues were never fully resolved, including who would be responsible for developing joint force packages for deployment overseas in support of operations and numerous concerns about who would have command authority over forces. This lack of consensus on the expansion and implementation of USACOM was expressed in key military commands' review comments and objections to USACOM's implementation plan and formal changes to the Unified Command Plan. Table 1.1 provides a chronology of key events that led to giving the U.S. Atlantic Command the new responsibilities for training, integrating, and providing CONUS-based forces for worldwide operations.

**Table 1.1: Events That Led to Expansion of the U.S. Atlantic Command**

Time frame	Event
<b>1989</b> Fall	Berlin Wall falls and Cold War ends.
<b>1990</b> March	Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, proposes Americas Command in Unified Command Plan review.
<b>1992</b> August	Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, proposes a permanent, CONUS-based command to respond to worldwide contingencies.
<b>1993</b> February	Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, recommends establishing the U.S. Atlantic Command in his <u>Roles, Missions, and Functions of the Armed Forces of the United States</u> report.
March	Secretary of Defense endorses Chairman's recommendation.  Commander, U.S. Atlantic Command, establishes implementation working group for expanding the Command's roles.
April	Secretary of Defense directs service secretaries and unified commanders to implement the Chairman's recommendation.
May/June	Draft plan for implementing USACOM concept presented to military services and unified commanders for comment.
August	Final review of USACOM implementation plan by military service, component, and unified commanders.  Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, requests Secretary of Defense's approval of Unified Command Plan changes, including expansion of USACOM's roles.
October	Secretary of Defense directs implementation of Unified Command Plan revisions and approves USACOM implementation plan, effective October 1, 1993.

Source: USACOM.

## Initial Charter Documents Provide Direction for Establishing the Command

The USACOM implementation plan and revised Unified Command Plan, both issued in October 1993, provided the initial approval and guidance for expanding the responsibilities of the U.S. Atlantic Command. The Unified Command Plan gave USACOM "additional responsibilities for the joint training, preparation, and packaging of assigned CONUS-based forces for worldwide employment" and assigned it four service component commands. The implementation plan provided the institutional framework

and direction for establishing USACOM as the “Joint Force Integrator” of the bulk of CONUS-based forces. As the joint force integrator, USACOM was to maximize America’s military capability through joint training, force integration, and deployment of ready CONUS-based forces to support geographic commanders, its own, and domestic requirements. This mission statement, detailed in the implementation plan, evolved into USACOM’s functional roles as joint force trainer, provider, and integrator.

The USACOM implementation plan was developed by a multiservice working group for the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, and approved by the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman. The plan provided USACOM the basic concept of its mission, responsibilities, and forces. It further detailed the basic operational concept to be implemented in six areas. Three of these areas of particular relevance to USACOM’s new functional roles were (1) the adaptive joint force packaging concept; (2) joint force training and interoperability concepts; and (3) USACOM joint doctrine and joint tactics, techniques, and procedures.<sup>2</sup> The Command was given 12 to 24 months to complete the transition.

The Unified Command Plan is reviewed and updated not less than every 2 years. In 1997, USACOM’s functional roles were revised in the plan for the first time to include the following:

- Conduct joint training of assigned forces and assigned Joint Task Force<sup>3</sup> staffs, and support other unified commands as required.
- As joint force integrator, develop joint, combined, interagency capabilities to improve interoperability and enhance joint capabilities through technology, systems, and doctrine.
- Provide trained and ready joint forces in response to the capability requirements of supported geographic commands.

## Overview of USACOM

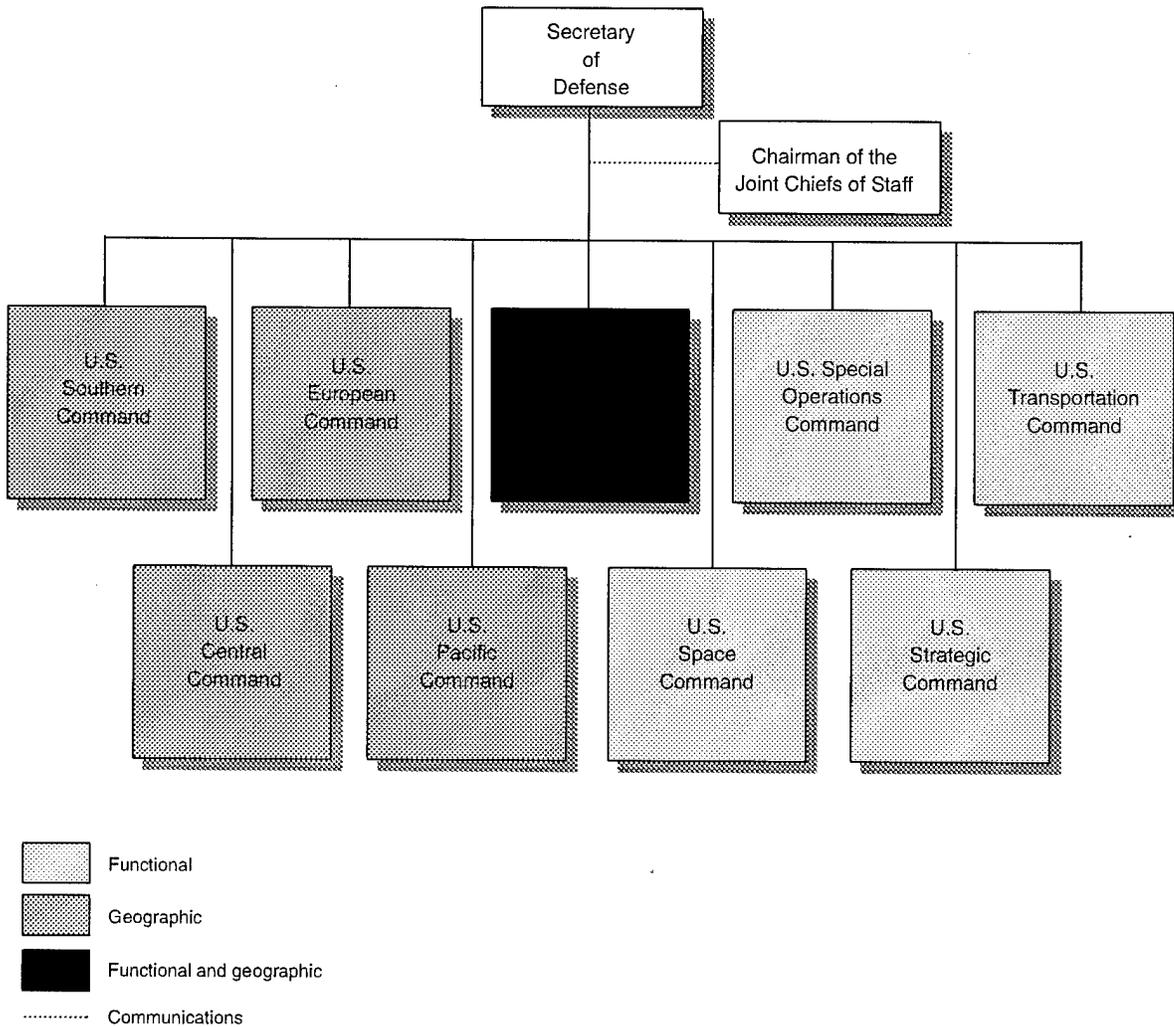
DOD has nine unified commands, each of which comprises forces from two or more of the military departments and is assigned broad continuing missions. These commands report to the Secretary of Defense, with the

<sup>2</sup>Joint doctrine is the fundamental principles that guide the employment of forces from two or more services in coordinated action toward a common objective. Joint tactics, techniques, and procedures are published by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and detail the actions and methods that implement joint doctrine and describe how forces will be employed in joint operations.

<sup>3</sup>A joint task force comprises units and personnel from two or more of the military services and is established on a geographical area or functional basis when a mission has a specific limited objective and does not require centralized control of logistics. It is dissolved when its purpose has been achieved or when it is no longer required. For example, USACOM established a joint task force in May 1994 to provide humanitarian assistance to Haitians escaping by sea from political strife.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff functioning as their spokesman. Four of the commands are geographic commands that are primarily responsible for planning and conducting military operations in assigned regions of the world, and four are functional commands that support military operations. The ninth command, USACOM, is unique in that it has both geographic and functional missions. Figure 1.1 shows the organizational structure of the unified commands.

Figure 1.1: Organizational Structure of the Unified Commands



Source: The Joint Staff Officer's Guide (1997), Armed Forces Staff College, Norfolk, Virginia.

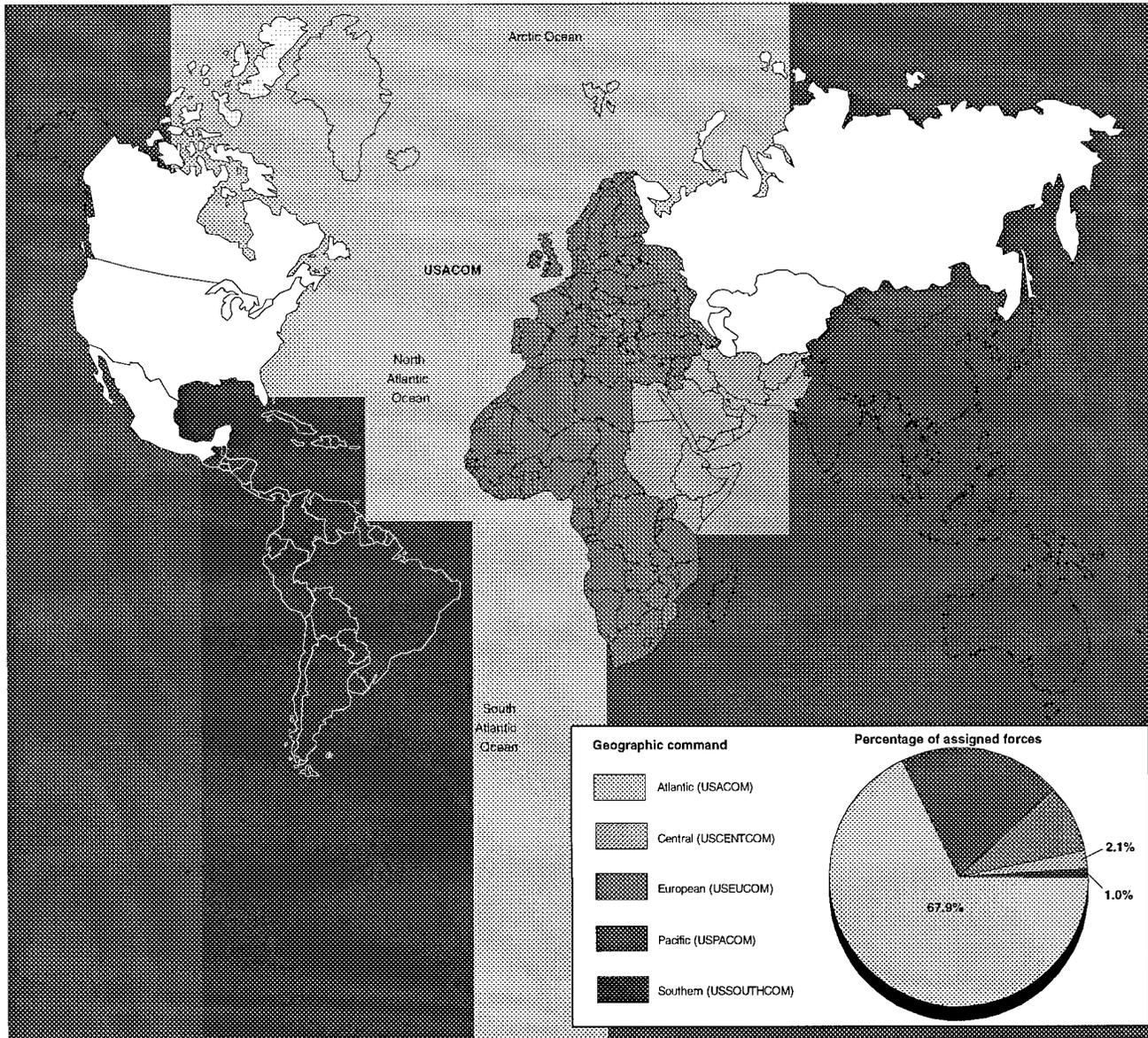
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**Chapter 1**  
**Introduction**

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In addition to its headquarters staff, USACOM has several subordinate commands, such as U.S. Forces Azores, and its four service component commands—the Air Force's Air Combat Command, the Army's Forces Command, the Navy's Atlantic Fleet Command and the Marines Corps' Marine Corps Forces Atlantic. Appendix I shows USACOM's organizational structure. USACOM's service component commands comprise approximately 1.4 million armed forces personnel, or about 80 percent of the active and reserve forces based in the CONUS, and more than 65 percent of U.S. active and reserve forces worldwide. Figure 1.2 shows the areas of the world and percentage of forces assigned to the geographic commands.

Figure 1.2: Assignment of Worldwide Areas and Forces by Geographic Command



Note: World areas in white have not been assigned to a geographic command. By order of the Secretary of Defense, on October 1, 1999, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan in Central Asia will be added to the U.S. Central Command's area of responsibility.

Source: Our analysis of DOD's data.

While USACOM's personnel levels gradually increased in its initial years of expansion—from about 1,600 in fiscal year 1994 to over 1,750 in fiscal year 1997—its civilian and military personnel level dropped to about 1,600<sup>4</sup> in fiscal year 1998, primarily because part of USACOM's geographic responsibilities were transferred to the U.S. Southern Command.<sup>5</sup> During this period, USACOM's operations and maintenance budget, which is provided for through the Department of the Navy, grew from about \$50 million to about \$90 million. Most of the increase was related to establishing the Joint Training, Analysis and Simulation Center, which provides computer-assisted training to joint force commanders, staff, and service components. The Command's size increased significantly in October 1998, when five activities, controlled by the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, and their approximately 1,100 personnel were transferred to USACOM. The Secretary of Defense also assigned USACOM authority and responsibility for DOD's joint concept development and experimentation in 1998. An initial budget of \$30 million for fiscal year 1999 for these activities was approved by DOD. USACOM estimates it will have 151 personnel assigned to these activities by October 2000.

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## Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

In response to congressional interest in DOD's efforts to improve joint operations, we reviewed the assimilation of USACOM into DOD as the major trainer, provider, and integrator of forces for worldwide deployment. More specifically, we determined (1) USACOM's actions to establish itself as the joint force trainer, provider, and integrator of most continental U.S.-based forces; (2) views on the value of the Command's contributions to joint military capabilities; and (3) recent expansion of the Command's responsibilities and its possible effect on the Command. We focused on USACOM's functional roles; we did not examine the rationale for USACOM's geographic and NATO responsibilities or the effect of these responsibilities on the execution of USACOM's functional roles.

To accomplish our objectives, we met with officials and representatives of USACOM and numerous other DOD components and reviewed studies, reports, and other documents concerning the Command's history and its activities as a joint trainer, provider, and integrator. We performed our fieldwork from May 1997 to August 1998. A more detailed discussion of the

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<sup>4</sup>Only 373 of these personnel were at USACOM headquarters. The remaining personnel were in subordinate activities or commands such as the Command's joint intelligence center (710), Joint Task Force-6 (180), Information Systems Support Group (120), and subunified commands (100).

<sup>5</sup>USACOM's geographic area of responsibility covers the majority of the Atlantic Ocean, excluding the waters around Central and South America, the Caribbean Sea, and the Gulf of Mexico.

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**Chapter 1**  
**Introduction**

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scope and methodology of our review, including organizations visited, officials interviewed, and documents reviewed, is in appendix II.

Our review was performed in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

# USACOM Has Had Successes and Major Redirection in Implementing Its Functional Roles

In pursuing its joint force trainer role, USACOM has generally followed its 1993 implementation plan, making notable progress in developing a joint task force commander training program and establishing a state-of-the-art simulation training center. The joint force provider and integrator roles were redirected with the decision, in late 1995, to deviate from the concept of adaptive joint force packages, a major element of the implementation plan. For its role as joint force provider, USACOM has adopted a process-oriented approach that is less proactive in meeting force requirements for worldwide deployments and is more acceptable to supported geographic commanders. To carry out its integrator role, USACOM has adopted an approach that advances joint capabilities and force interoperability through a combination of technology, systems, and doctrine initiatives.

## Some Successes Achieved by USACOM as Joint Force Trainer

USACOM planned to improve joint force training and interoperability through six initiatives laid out in its implementation plan. The initiatives were to (1) improve the exercise scheduling process, (2) develop mobile training teams, (3) train joint task force commanders and staffs, (4) schedule the use of service ranges and training facilities for joint training and interoperability, (5) assist its service components in unit-level training intended to ensure the interoperability of forces and equipment, and (6) develop a joint and combined (with allied forces) training program for U.S. forces in support of nontraditional missions, such as peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance. USACOM has taken actions on the first two initiatives and has responded to the third, fifth, and sixth initiatives through its requirements-based joint training program. While the fourth initiative was included in the Command's implementation plan, USACOM subsequently recognized that it did not have the authority to schedule training events at the service-owned ranges and facilities.

## Actions Taken to Improve Exercise Scheduling and to Develop Mobile Teams

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff initially gave USACOM executive agent authority (authority to act on his behalf) for joint training, including the scheduling of all geographic commander training exercises, USACOM's first initiative. In September 1996, the Chairman removed this authority in part because of resistance from the other geographic commands. By summer 1997, the Chairman, through the Joint Training Policy, again authorized USACOM to resolve scheduling conflicts for worldwide training. While USACOM maintains information on all training that the services' forces are requested to participate in, the information is not adequately automated to enable the Command to efficiently fulfill the scheduling

function. The Command has defined the requirement for such information support and is attempting to determine how that requirement will be met.

USACOM does provide mobile training teams to other commands for training exercises. Generally, these teams cover the academic phase of the exercises. The Command, for example, sent a training team to Kuwait to help the Central Command prepare its joint task force for a recent operation. It also has included training support, which may include mobile training teams, for the other geographic commanders in its long-range joint training schedule.

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### Requirements-Based Joint Training Program Established

To satisfy its third, fifth, and sixth initiatives, USACOM has developed a joint training program that reflects the supported geographic commanders' stated requirements. These are expressed as joint tasks essential to accomplishing assigned or anticipated missions (joint mission-essential tasks). The Command's training program is derived from the six training categories identified in the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff's joint training manual and are described in appendix III. USACOM primarily provides component interoperability and joint training and participates in and supports multinational interoperability, joint and multinational, and interagency and intergovernmental training. The Command's primary focus has been on joint task force training under guidance provided by the Secretary of Defense.

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### Joint Task Force Commander Training

Joint training, conducted primarily at USACOM's Joint Training, Analysis and Simulation Center, encompasses a series of exercises—Unified Endeavor—that provide training for joint force commanders and their staffs. The training focuses on operational and strategic tasks and has evolved into a multiphased exercise. USACOM uses state-of-the-art modeling and simulation technology and different exercise modules that allows the exercise to be adapted to meet the specific needs of the training participants. For example, one module provides the academic phase of the training and another module provides all phases of an exercise. Until recently, the exercises generally included three phases, but USACOM added analysis as a fourth phase.

- Phase I includes a series of seminars covering a broad spectrum of operational topics. Participants develop a common understanding of joint issues.

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- Phase II presents a realistic scenario in which the joint task force launches crisis action planning and formulates an operations order.
- Phase III implements the operations order through a computer-simulated exercise that focuses on joint task force procedures, decision-making, and the application of doctrine.
- Phase IV, conducted after the exercise, identifies lessons learned, joint after-action reviews, and the commander's exercise report.

USACOM and others consider the Command's Joint Training, Analysis and Simulation Center to be a world premier center of next-generation computer modeling and simulation and a centerpiece for joint task force training. The Center is equipped with secured communications and video capabilities that enable commands around the world to participate in its exercises. These capabilities allow USACOM to conduct training without incurring the significant expenses normally associated with large field training exercises and help reduce force personnel and operating tempos. For example, before the Center was created, a joint task force exercise would require approximately 45,000 personnel at sea or in the field. With the Center, only about 1,000 headquarters personnel are involved. As of December 1998, USACOM had conducted seven Unified Endeavor exercises and planned to provide varying levels of support to at least 17 exercises—Unified Endeavor and otherwise—per year during fiscal years 1999-2001. Figure 2.1 shows one of the Center's rooms used for the Unified Endeavor exercises.

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Figure 2.1: USACOM's Training Center Provides State-of-the-Art Equipment to Facilitate Joint Task Force Commander Training



Source: TRW, Inc.

We attended the Unified Endeavor 98-1 exercise to observe firsthand the training provided in this joint environment. While smooth joint operations evolved over the course of the exercise, service representatives initially tended to view problems and pressure situations from a service rather than a joint perspective. The initial phase allowed the key officers and their support staff, including foreign participants, to grasp the details of the scenario. These details included the basic rules of engagement and discussions of what had to be accomplished to plan the operation. In the exercise's second phase, staff from the participating U.S. and foreign military services came together to present their proposals for deploying and employing their forces. As the exercise evolved, service representatives came to appreciate the value and importance of coordinating every aspect of their operations with the other services and the joint task force commander. The third phase of the exercise was a

highly stressful environment. The joint task force commander and his staff were presented with numerous unknowns and an overwhelming amount of information. Coordination and understanding among service elements became paramount to successfully resolving these situations.

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## Interoperability Training

For interoperability training, units from more than one of USACOM's service components are brought together in field exercises to practice their skills in a joint environment. USACOM sponsors three recurring interoperability exercises in which the Command coordinates the training opportunities for its component commands, provides specific joint mission-essential tasks for incorporation into the training, and approves the exercise's design. The goal of the training is to ensure that U.S. military personnel and units are not confronted with a joint warfighting task for the first time after arrival in a geographic command's area of responsibility. For example, USACOM sponsors a recurring combat aircraft flying exercise—Quick Force—that is designed to train Air Force and participating Navy and Marine Corps units in joint air operations tailored to Southwest Asia. This exercise is devised to train commanders and aircrews to plan, coordinate, and execute complex day and night, long-range joint missions from widely dispersed operating locations.

USACOM relies on its service component commands to plan and execute interoperability training as part of existing service field exercises. According to USACOM's chief for joint interoperability training, the service component commanders are responsible for evaluating the joint training proficiency demonstrated. The force commander of the exercise is responsible for the accomplishment of joint training objectives and for identifying any operational deficiencies in doctrine, training, material, education, and organization. USACOM provides monitors to evaluate exercise objectives. Until recently, USACOM limited its attention to interoperability training, as its primary focus was on its Unified Endeavor training program. As this training has matured, USACOM recently began to increase its attention on more fully developing and planning the Command's interoperability training. The Command recently developed, with concurrence from the other geographic commanders, a list of joint interoperability tasks tied to the services' mission-essential task lists. With the development and acceptance of these joint interoperability tasks, Command officials believe that their joint interoperability exercises will have a better requirements base from which to plan and execute. Also, USACOM is looking for ways to better tie these exercises to computer-assisted modeling.

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### Other Training Support Provided by USACOM

USACOM provides joint and multinational training support through its coordination of U.S. participation in “partnership for peace” exercises. The partnership for peace exercise program is a major North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) initiative directed at increasing confidence and cooperative efforts among partner nations to reinforce regional stability. The Command was recently designated the lead activity in the partnership for peace simulation center network.

USACOM also supports training that involves intergovernmental agencies. Its involvement is primarily through support to NATO, as Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic, and to non-DOD agencies. For example, USACOM has begun including representatives of other federal agencies, such as the State Department and Drug Enforcement Administration, in its Unified Endeavor exercises.

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### Command Assumes Much More Limited Role as Force Provider

USACOM has made substantive changes to its approach to providing forces. Adaptive joint force packaging was to have been the foundation for implementing its force provider role. When this concept encountered strong opposition, USACOM adopted a process-oriented approach that is much less controversial with supported geographic commands and the military services. With over 65 percent of all U.S. forces assigned to it, USACOM is the major source of forces for other geographic commands and for military support and assistance to U.S. civil agencies. However, its involvement in force deployment decisions varies from operation to operation. The Command also helps its service components manage the operating tempos of heavily used assets.

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### Force Package Concept Was Adopted but Replaced by Process-Oriented Approach

USACOM’s implementation plan introduced the operational concept of adaptive joint force packages as an approach for carrying out USACOM’s functional roles, particularly the provider and integrator roles. Under this approach, USACOM would develop force packages for operations less than a major regional war and complement, but not affect, the deliberate planning process<sup>1</sup> used by geographic commanders to plan for major regional wars. USACOM’s development of these force packages, using its CONUS-based forces, was conceived as a way to fill the void created by reductions in forward-positioned forces and in-theater force capabilities in

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<sup>1</sup>A DOD planning process conducted principally in peacetime for the deployment and employment of apportioned (the distribution of limited resources among competing requirements for planning purposes) forces and resources in response to a hypothetical situation. The process relies heavily on assumptions regarding the political and military circumstances that will exist when the plan is implemented.

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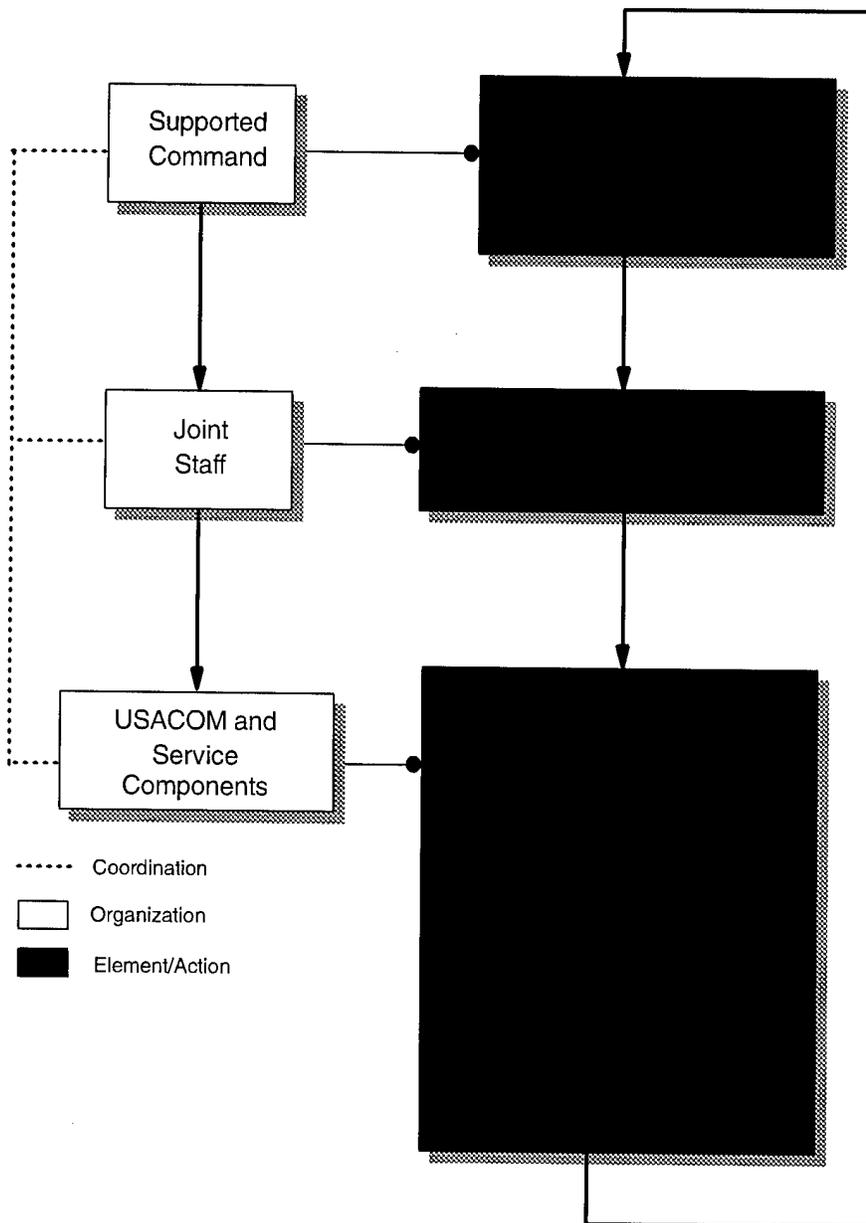
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the early 1990s. It was designed to make the most efficient use of the full array of forces and capabilities of the military services, exploring and refining force package options to meet the geographic commanders' needs. The approach, however, encountered much criticism and resistance, particularly from other geographic commands and the military services, which did not want or value a significant role for USACOM in determining which forces to use in meeting mission requirements. Because of this resistance and the unwillingness of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to support USACOM in its broad implementation of the force packaging concept, USACOM largely abandoned it in 1995 and adopted a process-oriented approach. Adaptive joint force packages and their demise are discussed in appendix IV.

The major difference between the adaptive joint force packaging concept and the process-oriented approach that replaced it is that the new approach allows the supported geographic commander to "package" the forces to suit his mission needs. In essence, USACOM prepares the assets, which are put together as the supported commander sees fit rather than having ready-to-go packages developed by USACOM. The new approach retains aspects of the force packaging concept. Most notably, geographic commanders are to present their force requirements in terms of the capability needed, not in the traditional terms of requests for specific units or forces. Forces are to be selected by the supported commanders, in collaboration with USACOM, from across the services to avoid over-tasking any particular force. The process is shown in figure 2.2 and discussed in more detail in appendix V.

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Figure 2.2: USACOM's Process for  
 Providing Forces



Source: USACOM.

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## USACOM Is the Major Provider of Forces

USACOM, commanding nearly 68 percent of the combat forces assigned to geographic commands, is the major provider of forces for worldwide operations. The size of its assigned forces far exceeds the requirements for operations within the Command's area of responsibility, which is much less demanding than that of other geographic commands. As a result, USACOM can provide forces to all the geographic commands, and its forces participate in the majority of military operations. The Command also provides military support and assistance to civil authorities for domestic requirements, such as hurricane relief and security at major U.S. events. During 1998, USACOM supported over 25 major operations and many other smaller operations worldwide. These ranged from peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance to evacuation of U.S. and allied nationals from threatened locations. On average, USACOM reported that it had over 30 ships, 400 aircraft, and 40,000 personnel deployed throughout 1998.

The Pacific, European, and Special Operations Commands also have assigned forces, but they are unable to provide the same level of force support to other commands as USACOM. The Pacific Command has large Navy and Marine Corps forces but has limited Army and Air Force capabilities. European Command officials said their Command rarely provides forces to other commands because its forces are most often responding to requirements in their own area of responsibility. The Special Operations Command provides specialized forces to other commands for unique operations. The Central and Southern Commands have very few forces of their own and are dependent on force providers such as USACOM to routinely furnish them with forces.

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## USACOM's Involvement in Force Provider Decisions Is Limited

USACOM provides forces throughout the world for the entire range of military operations, from war to operations other than war that may or may not involve combat. Since the Gulf War in 1991, the U.S. military has largely been involved in operations that focus on promoting peace and deterring war, such as the U.S. military support to the NATO peacekeeping mission in Bosnia and the enforcement of U.N. sanctions against Iraq. The extent of USACOM's involvement in force decisions varies from operation to operation. In decisions regarding deployment of major combatant forces, the Command plays a very limited role. The military services and USACOM's service components collaborate on such decisions. Although USACOM's interaction with geographic commands and service components may influence force decisions, USACOM's Commander stated that when specific forces are requested by a geographic commander, his Command cannot say "no" if those forces are available.

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USACOM is not directly involved in the other geographic commands' deliberate planning—the process for preparing joint operation plans—except when there is a shortfall in the forces needed to implement the plan or the supported commander requests USACOM's involvement. Every geographic command is to develop deliberate plans during peacetime for possible contingencies within its area of responsibility as directed by the national command authority and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. As a supporting commander, USACOM and its service component commands examine the operation plans of other commands to help identify shortfalls in providing forces as needed to support the plans. USACOM's component commands work more closely with the geographic commands and their service components to develop the deployment data to sequence the movement of forces, logistics, and transportation to implement the plan.

During crises, for which an approved operation plan may not exist, the responsible geographic command either adjusts an existing plan or develops a new one to respond to specific circumstances or taskings. The time available for planning may be hours or days. The supported commander may request inputs on force readiness and force alternatives from USACOM and its component commands. A European Command official said USACOM is seldom involved in his Command's planning process for crisis operations because of the compressed planning time before the operation commences.

USACOM has its greatest latitude in suggesting force options for military operations other than war that do not involve combat operations, such as nation assistance and overseas presence operations, and for ongoing contingency operations. In these situations, time is often not as critical and USACOM can work with the supported command and component commands to develop possible across-the-service force options.

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**Attention Given to**  
**Balancing Operating and**  
**Personnel Tempos**

A primary consideration in identifying and selecting forces for deployment is the operating and personnel tempos of the forces, which affect force readiness. As a force provider, USACOM headquarters supports its service component commands in resolving tempo issues and monitors the readiness of assigned forces and the impact of deployments on major contingency and war plans. While tempo issues are primarily a service responsibility, USACOM works with its service component commands and the geographic commands to help balance force tempos to maintain the readiness of its forces and desired quality-of-life standards. This involves

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analyzing tempo data across its service components and developing force alternatives for meeting geographic commands' needs within tempo guidelines.

According to USACOM officials, the Command devotes much attention to managing certain assets with unique mission capabilities that are limited in number and continually in high demand among the geographic commands to support most crises, contingencies, and long-term joint task force operations in their regions. These low-density/high-demand assets, such as the Airborne Warning and Control Systems and E/A-6B electronic warfare aircraft and Patriot missile batteries, are managed under the Chairman of the Joint Staff's Global Military Force Policy. This policy, which guides decisions on the peacetime use of assets that are few in number but high in demand, establishes prioritization guidelines for their use and operating tempo thresholds that can be exceeded only with Secretary of Defense approval. The policy, devised in 1996, is intended to maintain required levels of unit training and optimal use of the assets across all geographic commander missions, while discouraging the overuse of selected assets.

USACOM is responsible for 16 of the 32 low-density/high-demand assets<sup>2</sup>—weapon systems and personnel units—that are included in the Global Military Force Policy. The Pacific and European Commands have some of these 16 assets, but the bulk of them are assigned to USACOM. These assets are largely Air Force aircraft. In this support role, USACOM has initiated several actions to help implement the policy, including bringing the services and geographic commands together to resolve conflicts over the distribution of assets, devising a monitoring report for the Joint Staff, and recommending to the services assets that should be included in future policy revisions. Appendix VI provides a list of the low-density/high-demand assets currently assigned to USACOM.

The Global Military Force Policy does not capture all of the highly tasked assets. For example, the policy does not include less prominent assets such as dog teams, military security police, water purification systems, intelligence personnel, and medical units. There were similar concerns about the high operating tempos of these assets, and USACOM has monitored them closely. Most of these assets, or alternatives to them, were available across the services. Therefore, USACOM has some flexibility in identifying alternative force options to help balance unit tempos.

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<sup>2</sup>All assets of the remaining 16 asset types are assigned to the U.S. Special Operations Command. These special operations forces asset types include Navy SEAL platoons, the Army's 75th Ranger Regiment, and the Air Force's MH-60G helicopter.

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Another Joint Staff policy affecting USACOM as a force provider is the Global Naval Force Presence Policy. This policy establishes long-range planning guidance for the location and number of U.S. naval forces—aircraft carriers and surface combatant and amphibious ships—provided to geographic commands on a fair-share basis. Under this scheduling policy, the Navy controls the operating and personnel tempos for these heavily demanded naval assets, while it ensures that geographic commands' requirements are met. USACOM has little involvement in scheduling these assets. While this policy provides little flexibility for creating deployment options in most situations, it can be adjusted by the Secretary of Defense to meet unexpected contingencies.

According to an action officer in USACOM's operations directorate, one of USACOM's difficulties in monitoring tempos has been the lack of joint tempo guidelines that could be applied across service units and assets. Each service has different definitions of what constitutes a deployment, dissimilar policies or guidance for the length of time units or personnel should be deployed, and different systems for tracking deployments. For example, the Army defined a deployment as a movement during which a unit spends an overnight away from its home station. Deployments to combat training centers were not counted. In contrast, the Marine Corps defines a deployment as any movement from the home station for 10 days or more, including a deployment for training at its combat training center. As a result, it is difficult to compare tempos among the services. An official in USACOM's operations directorate said the services would have to develop joint tempo guidelines because they have the responsibility for managing the tempos of their people and assets. The official did not anticipate a movement anytime soon to create such guidelines because of the differences in the types of assets and in the management and deployment of the assets. DOD, in responding to a 1998 GAO report on joint training, acknowledged that the services' ability to measure overall deployment rates is still evolving.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Joint Training: Observations on the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Exercise Program (GAO/NSIAD-98-189, July 10, 1998).

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## Integrator Role Evolves Into a Process to Improve Interoperability and Joint Capabilities

The integrator role has changed significantly since 1993 and is still evolving. It was originally tied to adaptive joint force packaging. But with that concept's demise, the Command's role became to implement a process to improve interoperability and enhance joint force capabilities through the blending of technology, systems, and doctrine. The Command's force integration objectives are to (1) identify and refine doctrinal issues affecting joint force operations; (2) identify, develop, evaluate, and incorporate new and emerging technologies to support joint operations; and (3) refine and integrate existing systems to support joint operations. The Command's emphasis since 1996 has been to sponsor advanced concept technology demonstration projects that have a multiservice emphasis and search for solutions to joint interoperability problems among advanced battle systems. It has given limited attention to joint doctrinal issues.

Establishing its integration role has not been easy for USACOM. USACOM's Commander (1994-97) characterized the Command's integration efforts as a "real struggle" and said the Joint Staff was not supportive. The current USACOM Commander expressed similar comments, citing the integration role as the most challenging yet promising element of his Command's mission. He told us the Command stumbled at times and overcame numerous false starts until its new integration role emerged. He said that as USACOM's functional roles mature, the Command may create more friction with the services and other commands, many of which view USACOM as a competitor. Its efforts were significantly enhanced with the October 1998 transfer to the Command of five joint centers and activities previously controlled by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (see ch. 4).

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## Advanced Concept Technology Demonstration Projects Provide Primary Means for Fulfilling Role

USACOM's primary means to fulfill its integration role has been to sponsor advanced concept technology demonstration projects. These projects are designed to permit early and inexpensive evaluations of mature advanced technologies to meet the needs of the warfighter. The Command considered such projects to be the best way to achieve integration by building new systems that are interoperable from the beginning. The warfighter determines the military utility of the project before a commitment is made to proceed with acquisition. These projects also allow for the development and refinement of operational concepts for using new capabilities.

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As an advanced concept technology demonstration project sponsor, USACOM provides an operations manager to lead an assessment to determine the project's joint military utility and to fully understand its joint operational capability. The Command also provides the personnel for the projects and writes the joint doctrine and concepts of operation to effectively employ these technologies. USACOM only accepts projects that promote interoperability and move the military toward new levels of effectiveness in joint warfighting. Various demonstration managers, such as the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology, fund the projects. At the completion of our review, USACOM was sponsoring 12 of DOD's 41 active advanced concept technology demonstrations. It completed work in 1996 on the Predator project,<sup>4</sup> a medium-altitude unmanned aerial vehicle that the Air Force is to acquire. Table 2.1 identifies each USACOM project and its funding through fiscal year 2003.

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<sup>4</sup>The Predator is a fully autonomous, unmanned aerial vehicle with technology that provides continuous day-and-night coverage with optical, infrared, and radar sensors. In March 1996, the Predator began flying operational reconnaissance and surveillance missions in Bosnia. The advanced concept technology demonstration evaluation was completed in September 1996 and transferred to the Air Force, which began system production in August 1997.

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**Table 2.1: USACOM's Advanced Concept Technology Demonstration Projects**

Dollars in millions

<b>Project</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Funding</b>
High Altitude Endurance Unmanned Aerial Vehicles	Provide near-real-time imagery to the warfighter by using two complementary, performance-enhanced air vehicles (Global Hawk, Darkstar) and a ground control segment.	\$1,011
Joint Countermine	Demonstrate the capability to conduct a "seamless" transition of countermine operations from sea to land.	556
Synthetic Theater of War	Under exercise conditions, develop and preview technology that provides effective and efficient joint task force training.	215
Battlefield Awareness and Data Dissemination	Disseminate and manage information for warfighter systems.	114
Semi-Automated Image Intelligence Processing	Develop tools to assist image analysts in exploiting large volumes of image data from tactical image platforms.	119
Combat Identification	Demonstrate and assess the utility of air-to-surface and surface-to-surface technologies to positively identify friendly, hostile, and neutral platforms.	67
Navigation Warfare	Demonstrate proof of concept for preventing adversaries' use of precision satellite navigation while protecting friendly access to Global Positioning System.	57
Joint Logistics	Develop joint decision support tools to achieve seamless interoperability and control of the logistic pipeline.	52
Advanced Joint Planning	Identify and enhance operational planning capabilities for the geographic commands.	28
Joint Modular Lighter System	Build and demonstrate a prototype causeway system to safely assemble and operate (in a loaded condition) through high sea conditions.	25
Integrated Collection Management	Allow Joint Task Force commanders to better synchronize intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets across national, theater, and tactical levels of control.	17
Link-16/Variable Message Format	Proof of concept for the exchange of information between Link-16 and Variable Message Format Ground networks.	3

Source: USACOM.

We issued a report in October 1998 on opportunities for DOD to improve its advanced concept technology demonstration program, including the process for selecting candidate projects and guidance on entering technologies into the normal acquisition process, and the risky practice of procuring prototypes beyond those needed for the basic demonstration and before completing product and concept demonstration.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup>Defense Acquisitions: Advanced Concept Technology Demonstration Program Can Be Improved (GAO/NSIAD-99-4, Oct. 15, 1998).

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Interoperability and Other  
USACOM Integration  
Efforts

In addition to its advanced concept technology demonstration projects, USACOM has sought opportunities to advance the interoperability<sup>6</sup> of systems already deployed or about to be deployed that make a difference on the battlefield. Particularly critical capabilities USACOM has identified for interoperability enhancements include theater missile defense; command, control, and communications; intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; and combat identification (friend or foe). The military services have a long history of interoperability problems during joint operations, primarily because DOD has not given sufficient consideration to the need for weapon systems to operate with other systems, including exchanging information effectively during a joint operation. We reported on such weaknesses in the acquisition of command, control, communications, computers, and intelligence systems in March 1998.<sup>7</sup>

A critical question is who pays the costs associated with joint requirements that USACOM identifies in service acquisition programs? The services develop weapon system requirements, and the dollars pass from the Secretary of Defense to the services to satisfy the requirements. If USACOM believes modifications are needed to a weapon system to enable it to operate in a joint environment, the Command can elevate this interoperability issue to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and to the Joint Requirements Oversight Council<sup>8</sup> for action. For example, the USACOM Commander recently told the Chairman and the Council that the Air Force's unwillingness to modify the Predator and the concept of operations to allow other services to directly receive information from the unmanned aerial vehicle would limit a joint commander's flexibility in using such vehicles, hurt interoperability, and inhibit the development of joint tactics. According to USACOM's Operations Manager for this area, the Air Force needs to provide additional funding to make the Predator truly joint but it wants to maintain operational control of the system. As of November 1998, this interoperability concern had not been resolved.

USACOM can also enhance force integration through its responsibility as the trainer and readiness overseer of assigned reserve component forces. This responsibility allows USACOM to influence the training and readiness of

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<sup>6</sup>Enhance the ability of such units or forces to provide and accept services with other systems, units, or forces and to use these services to enable them to operate effectively together.

<sup>7</sup>Joint Military Operations: Weaknesses in DOD's Process for Certifying C4I Systems' Interoperability (GAO/NSIAD-98-73, Mar. 13, 1998).

<sup>8</sup>The Joint Requirements Oversight Council, an instrument of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of Defense, supports the Chairman by assessing military requirements for defense acquisition programs, assessing joint warfighting capabilities, and assigning a joint priority among major weapons meeting valid requirements.

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these reserves and their budgets to achieve full integration of the reserve and active forces when the assigned reserves are mobilized.<sup>9</sup> This is important because of the increased reliance on reserve component forces to carry out contingency missions. The USACOM Commander (1993-97) described the Command's oversight as a critical step in bringing the reserve forces into the total joint force structure.

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<sup>9</sup>A reserve unit does not come under the command authority of USACOM or another combatant command until it is mobilized or ordered to active duty for purposes other than training.

# Value of USACOM's Contributions to Joint Military Capabilities

USACOM and others believe that the Command has helped advance the joint military capabilities of U.S. forces. While USACOM has conducted several self-assessments of its functional roles, we found that these assessments provided little insight into the overall value of the Command's efforts to enhance joint capabilities. The Command has established goals and objectives as a joint trainer, provider, and integrator and is giving increased attention to monitoring and accomplishing tasks designed to achieve these objectives and ultimately enhance joint operational capabilities. Our discussions with various elements of DOD found little consensus regarding the value of USACOM's contributions in its functional roles but general agreement that the Command is making important contributions that should enhance U.S. military capabilities.

## USACOM's Assessments Provide Little Insight on Value of Command's Contributions

USACOM has conducted three self-assessments of its functional roles. These appraisals did not specifically evaluate the Command's contribution to improving joint operational capabilities but discussed progress of actions taken in its functional roles. The first two appraisals covered USACOM's success in executing its plan for implementing the functional roles, while the most recent appraisal rated the Command's progress in each of its major focus areas.<sup>1</sup>

In quarterly reports to the Secretary of Defense and in testimony before the Congress, USACOM has presented a positive picture of its progress and indicated that the military has reached an unprecedented level of jointness.

## Early Assessments Report Progress on Implementing Functional Roles

In a June 1994 interim report to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, USACOM's Commander noted that the Command's first 6 months of transition into its new functional roles had been eventful and that the Command was progressing well in developing new methodologies to meet the geographic commands' needs. He recognized that it would take time and the help of the service components to refine all the responsibilities relating to the new mission. He reported that USACOM's vision and strategic plan had been validated and that the Command was on course and anticipated making even greater progress in the next 6 months.

USACOM performed a second assessment in spring 1996, in response to a request from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for a review of the

<sup>1</sup>Major focus areas are the main areas, as defined by USACOM, where the Command must focus its efforts to fulfill its vision and mission. These areas now include joint force trainer, joint force provider, and joint force integrator.

success of USACOM's implementation plan at the 2-year point. The Command used Joint Vision 2010, the military's long-range strategic vision, as the template for measuring its success, but the document does not provide specific measures for gauging improvements in operational capabilities. USACOM reported that, overall, it had successfully implemented its key assigned responsibilities and missions. It described its new functional responsibilities as "interrelated," having a synergistic effect on the evolution of joint operations. It reported that it had placed major emphasis on its joint force trainer role and noted development of a three-tier training model. The Command described its joint force provider role as a five-step process, with adaptive joint force packaging no longer a critical component. Seeing the continuing evolution of its force provider role as a key factor in supporting Joint Vision 2010, USACOM assessed the implementation plan task as accomplished. The Command considered its joint force integrator role the least developed but the most necessary in achieving coherent joint operations and fulfilling Joint Vision 2010. Although the assessment covered only the advanced concept technology demonstrations segment of its integrator role, USACOM reported that it had also successfully implemented this task.

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### Most Recent Assessment Cites Progress and Problems in Command's Major Focus Areas

As requested by USACOM's Commander, USACOM staff assessed progress and problems in the Command's major focus areas in early 1998. This self-assessment covered the Command's directorate-level leadership responsible for each major focus area. An official involved in this assessment said statistical, quantifiable measures were not documented to support the progress ratings; however, critical and candid comments were made during the process. The assessments cited "progress" or "satisfactory progress" in 38 of 42 rated areas, such as command focus on joint training, advanced concept technology demonstration project management, and monitoring of low-density/high-demand asset tempos. Progress was judged "unsatisfactory" in four areas: (1) exercise requirements determination and worldwide scheduling process; (2) training and readiness oversight for assigned forces; (3) reserve component integration and training, and readiness oversight; and (4) institutionalizing the force provider process. This assessment was discussed within the Command and during reviews of major focus areas and was updated to reflect changes in command responsibilities.

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### Command Reports Progress in Advancing Joint Operations

USACOM, like other unified commands, uses several mechanisms to report progress and issues to DOD leadership and the Congress. These include periodic commanders-in-chief conferences, messages and reports to or

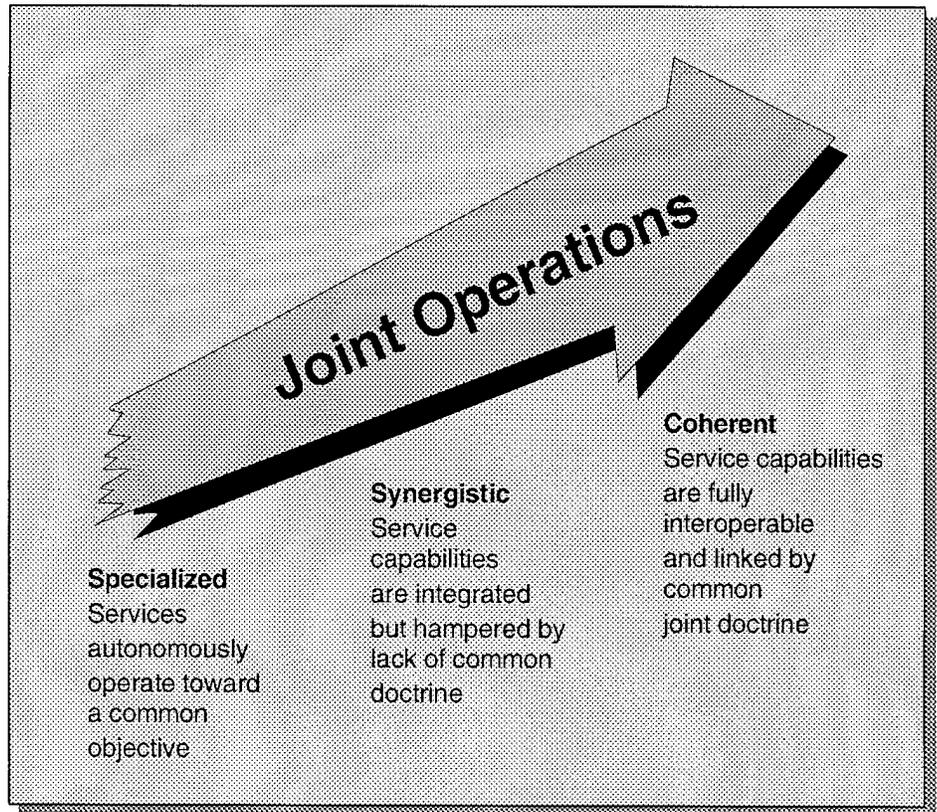
discussions with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and testimony before the Congress. Minutes were not kept of the commanders-in-chief conferences, but we obtained Commander, USACOM, quarterly reports, which are to focus on the Command's key issues. Reports submitted to the Secretary of Defense between May 1995 and April 1998 painted a positive picture of USACOM's progress, citing activities in areas such as joint training exercises, theater missile defense, and advanced technology projects. The reports also covered operational issues but included little discussion of the Command's problems in implementing its functional roles. For example, none of the reports discussed the wide opposition to adaptive joint force packaging or USACOM's decision to change its approach, even though the Secretary of Defense approved the implementation plan for its functional roles, which included development of adaptive joint force packages.

In congressional testimony in March 1997, the Commander of USACOM (1995-97) discussed the Command's annual accomplishments, plans for the future, and areas of concern. The Commander noted that U.S. military operations had evolved from specialized joint operations to a level approaching synergistic joint operations.<sup>2</sup> In 1998 testimony, the current USACOM Commander reported continued progress, describing the military as having reached "an unprecedented level of jointness." USACOM's ultimate goal is to advance joint warfighting to a level it has defined as "coherent" joint operations with all battle systems, communications systems, and information databases fully interoperable and linked by common joint doctrine. Figure 3.1 depicts the evolution from specialized and synergistic joint operations to coherent joint operations.

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<sup>2</sup>In specialized joint operations, such as those during Operation Desert Storm in 1991, the military services operate somewhat autonomously within distinct spheres to achieve a common objective. In synergistic joint operations, such as those in Haiti in 1994, service capabilities are integrated without a common doctrine across all aspects of joint operations. The lack of a common doctrine hampers full integration of service capabilities.

Figure 3.1: Evolution of Joint  
Operations



Source: USACOM.

## Goals and Objectives Established, but Assessments of Command's Impact Not Planned

At the conclusion of our review, USACOM was completing the development of a new strategic planning system to enhance its management of its major focus areas and facilitate strategic planning within the USACOM staff. Goals, objectives, and subobjectives were defined in each of its major focus areas, and an automated internal process was being established to help the Command track actions being taken in each area. The goals and objectives were designed to support the Command's overall mission to maximize U.S. military capability through joint training, force integration, and deployment of ready forces in support of worldwide operations. Table 3.1 provides examples of goals, objectives, and subobjectives in the joint force trainer, provider, and integrator major focus areas.

**Chapter 3**  
**Value of USACOM's Contributions to Joint**  
**Military Capabilities**

**Table 3.1: Examples of Goals, Objectives, and Subobjectives in USACOM Major Focus Areas**

<b>Major focus area and goal</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Subobjective</b>
<p><b>Joint force trainer</b>            Sustain and improve a high quality joint task force training program to produce trained joint commanders and staff.<sup>a</sup></p>	<p>Enhance fidelity and rigor of joint task force training to provide supported commands with flexible high-quality training that reduces staff tempos.<sup>a</sup></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>—Resolve schedule conflicts between USACOM's joint task force training and training provided by others.</li> <li>—Design multiechelon exercises to meet the multiple training needs of geographic commands, joint task forces, and USACOM's service components.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Joint force provider</b>            Provide combat-ready joint forces to meet worldwide requirements.<sup>b</sup></p>	<p>Identify and select combat-ready forces.<sup>b</sup></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>—Balance tempos among service components with Global Military Force Policy and geographic command requirements.</li> <li>—Develop a database to track availability of deploying forces.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Joint force integrator</b>            Develop joint, combined, and interagency capabilities to improve interoperability and enhance current operational capabilities.<sup>c</sup></p>	<p>Monitor and assess USACOM joint integration initiatives that promote interoperability and enhance near-term joint military operations.<sup>c</sup></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>—Develop concepts, influence doctrine, and identify requirements at the geographic command level for providing trained theater air and missile defense forces that are integrated for joint operations.</li> <li>—Develop fully interoperable technology to improve target identification and combat effectiveness of joint forces and to reduce fratricide.</li> </ul>

<sup>a</sup>One of five trainer goals with one of four objectives supporting this goal.

<sup>b</sup>One of three force provider goals with one of three objectives supporting this goal.

<sup>c</sup>One of three integrator goals with one of three objectives supporting this goal.

Source: USACOM.

The goals and the objectives and subobjectives necessary to achieve the goals are established by officials in each major focus area. The objectives and subobjectives are to be understandable, relevant, attainable, and measurable. Progress in achieving the subobjectives becomes the

measures for the objective's success, and progress on objectives is the measure of success in achieving a goal. The relative importance of each objective and subobjective is reflected in weights or values assigned to each and is used to measure progress. Objective and subjective assessments of progress are to be routinely made and reported. Command officials expect that in some areas progress will not be easy to measure and will require subjective judgments.

USACOM officials believed the Command's new planning system, which became operational on October 20, 1998, meets many of the expectations of the Government Performance and Results Act, which requires agencies to set goals, measure performance, and report on their accomplishments. The Command believed that actions it plans to adopt in major focus areas would ultimately improve the military capabilities of U.S. forces, the mission of the Command. The officials, however, recognized that the planning system does not include assessments or measures that can be used to evaluate the Command's impact on military capabilities. Under the Results Act, agencies' performance plans are to include performance goals and measures to help assess whether the agency is successful in accomplishing its general goals and missions. The Congress anticipated that the Results Act principles would be institutionalized and practiced at all organizational levels of the federal government. Establishing such performance measures could be difficult, but they could help USACOM determine what it needs to do to improve its performance.

DOD has begun to implement the Results Act at all organizational levels, and the Secretary of Defense tasked subordinate organizations in 1998 to align their programs with DOD program goals established under the act. Recognizing that the development of qualitative and quantitative performance measures to assess mission accomplishment has been slow, USACOM has provided training to its military officers on performance objectives. USACOM officials said that while the Command has begun to take steps to implement the principles of the Act, they believed the Command needs additional implementation guidance from the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

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## Views Regarding the Value of USACOM's Contributions

In the absence of specific assessments of USACOM's impact on joint operations, we asked representatives from the Joint Staff, USACOM and its service component commands, and supported geographic commands for their views on USACOM's value and contributions in advancing DOD's joint military capabilities. Opinions varied by command and functional role and

ranged from USACOM having little or no impact to being a great contributor and having a vital role. Generally speaking, Joint Staff officials considered USACOM to be of great value and performing an essential function while views among the geographic commands were more reserved.

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### Joint Force Training Viewed as Positive but Only Recently Used by Some Commands

USACOM and its service components believed the Command's joint task force headquarters training was among the best joint training available. This training has allowed USACOM components' three-star commanders and their senior staffs to be trained without fielding thousands of troops and to concentrate on joint tasks considered essential to accomplishing a mission anywhere in the world. The Commander of USACOM cited this training as the best example of USACOM's success in affecting joint operations. He told us that USACOM has secured the funding it needs to do this training and has developed what he described as a "world-class" joint training program.

Representatives of the geographic commands we visited believed USACOM's joint task force commander training has provided good joint experience to CONUS-based forces. They believed this training has enabled participants to perform more effectively as members of a joint task force staff. While these commands spoke well of the training, they have been slow to avail themselves of it and could not attribute any improvement in joint tasks force operations to it. The commands have not taken advantage of this training for several reasons. First, other geographic commands considered providing headquarters' staff joint task force commander training their responsibility and were reluctant to turn to USACOM for assistance. Second, USACOM's joint task force commander training is conducted at the Command's Joint Training Analysis and Simulation Center in Suffolk, Virginia. Thus, geographic commands would have to make a significant investment to deploy several hundred headquarters staff for up to 18 days to complete the three phases of USACOM's training. Third, the commands are not confident that the training at the Center provides a true picture of the way they would conduct an operation. That is, the scenarios USACOM uses may have limited application in the other geographic commands' regional areas of operational responsibility. The commands have, therefore, preferred to train their own forces, with assistance from the Joint Warfighting Center. Representatives from this Center have gone to the commands and assisted them with their training at no cost to the command. In October 1998, the Center was assigned to USACOM. USACOM officials believed this would enhance the training support provided by the Command to geographic commands (see ch. 4).

Indications are that the geographic commands are beginning to more fully use USACOM as a training support organization. According to the Commander of USACOM, the current generation of commanders of the geographic commands have been more receptive of USACOM support than their predecessors. Also, as USACOM adjusts its training to make it more relevant to other geographic commanders, the commands are requesting USACOM's support. In 1998, USACOM sent mobile training teams to the U.S. Central Command in support of an operation in Kuwait. The Command was also supporting the U.S. European Command in one of its major training exercises. U.S. Southern Command has requested support from USACOM for one of its major Caribbean joint exercises and asked the Command to schedule the training exercise for the next 3 years.

Regarding interoperability training, USACOM's component commands believed the Command should be more involved in planning and executing training exercises. Most of this training was existing service exercises selected to be used as joint interoperability training. Some service component officials believed that without sufficient USACOM influence, the sponsoring services would be inclined to make these exercises too service-specific or self-serving. For example, the Navy's annual joint task force exercise has basically been a preparation for a carrier battle group to make its next deployment. The Air Force has participated, but Air Combat Command officials told us they did not believe they gained much joint training experience from the exercise. USACOM officials recognize that the Command has not given interoperability training the same level of emphasis as its joint task force training. They believed, however, that components' use of the recently developed universal joint interoperability tasks list in planning this training would result in more joint orientation to the training.

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### USACOM Adds Value as Joint Force Provider

As the major joint force provider, USACOM was valued by the Joint Staff, other geographic commands, and its service component commands. The Joint Staff believed that USACOM, as a single joint command assigned the majority of the four services' forces, has provided a more efficient way of obtaining forces to meet the mission needs of the other geographic commands. Prior to establishing USACOM, the Joint Staff dealt individually with each of the services to obtain the necessary forces. Now, the Joint Staff can go to USACOM, which can coordinate with its service component commands to identify available forces with the needed capabilities and recommend force options. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (1993-97) told us that forces have never been provided as efficiently as

USACOM has done it and that forces were better trained and equipped when they arrived where needed.

The geographic commands we visited that USACOM primarily supports viewed the Command as a dependable and reliable force provider. The U.S. Central Command stated that forces provided by USACOM have been well trained and have met the Command's needs. The Command described USACOM forces as having performed exceptionally well in Operation Desert Thunder, in response to Iraq's denial of access to its facilities to U.N. weapon inspectors in February 1998. The Command also stated that USACOM could provide forces more tailored to fighting in its area of responsibility than the U.S. European or Pacific Commands because USACOM forces have routinely deployed for exercises and missions in support of ongoing operations in their area. Similarly, U.S. European Command officials said that USACOM has been responsive to their Command's force needs and was doing a good job as a force provider. The U.S. European Command also noted that USACOM has ensured equitable tasking among CONUS-based forces and has allowed the European Command to focus on the operation at hand. The U.S. Southern Command, with few forces of its own, believed that the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Panama throughout 1999 would make the Southern Command more dependent on USACOM for forces to support its exercise and operations requirements.

In discussing its contributions as a major provider of forces, USACOM believed that it adds value by providing the Joint Staff with informed force selection inputs based on all capable forces available from across its service components. For example, the European Command requested that an Air Force engineering unit build a bridge in 1997. USACOM identified a Navy Seabees unit already deployed in Spain as an option. The European Command agreed to use this unit. USACOM believed that it has supported other geographic commands by providing well-trained forces and alerting them of any potential training needs when forces are deployed.

USACOM and its service component commands viewed the Command as an "honest broker" that has drawn upon the capabilities of all the services, as necessary, to meet the mission requirements of the geographic commands. As pointed out by USACOM's Commander, while USACOM has not been involved in all deployment decisions concerning its assigned forces—such as the Navy's carrier battle groups or large Army units—and was not in a position to deny an available force to a supported command, the

Command has served as a clearinghouse for high-demand forces. For example:

- USACOM had provided optometrists for its mobile training teams deployed to Africa to train Africans for peacekeeping activities. Optometrists were needed to diagnose eye problems of African troops, who experienced difficulties seeing with night optical equipment. The Forces Command was unable to provide the needed personnel beyond the first deployment, so USACOM tasked its Atlantic Fleet component to provide personnel for the redeployment.
- In May 1997, an aerostat (radar balloon) that provided coverage in the Florida straits went down. USACOM tasked the Navy's Atlantic Fleet to provide radar coverage every weekend with an E-2C aircraft squadron. When the balloon was not replaced as expected and the requirement continued, the Atlantic Fleet asked for relief from USACOM. USACOM adjudicated resources with the Air Combat Command so that the Air Forces's E-3 aircraft would provide coverage for half of the time.

USACOM's service component commands also saw the benefit in having a single unified command act as an arbitrator among themselves. USACOM can arbitrate differences between two of its component commands that can provide the same capability. It can provide rationale as to why one should or should not be tasked to fill a particular requirement and make a decision based on such things as prior tasking and operating and personnel tempos. Its components also saw USACOM as their representative on issues with DOD and other organizations. In representing its components, for example, USACOM handled politically sensitive arrangements over several months with a U.S. embassy, through the State Department, to provide military support to a foreign government for a counterdrug operation conducted between July 1997 and February 1998. USACOM's involvement allowed its Air Force component, the Air Combat Command, to limit its involvement in the arrangements and concentrate on sourcing the assets and arranging logistics for the operation.

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### Joint Force Integrator Value May Lie in Longer-Term Benefits

The Commander of USACOM told us he considered joint force integration to be the Command's most important functional role. He believed that over the next 2 years the Command's integration efforts would gain more recognition for enhancing joint operational capabilities than its efforts in joint training. He said the Command was beginning to gain access to critical "levers of progress," such as the Joint Requirements Oversight Council, which would enhance its influence. He cited the Command's

development—in collaboration with other geographic commands—of a theater ballistic missile defense capstone requirements document and its August 1998 approval by the Council as a demonstration of the Command's growing influence and impact. This document is to guide doctrine development and the acquisition programs for this joint mission. While approval was a very significant step for jointness, it raised important questions, including who will pay for joint requirements in service acquisition programs. The services have opposed USACOM's role and methodology in developing joint requirements and did not believe they should be responsible for funding costs associated with the joint requirements.

The USACOM Commander believed the Command has made considerable progress in developing the process by which joint force integration is accomplished. He cited the Command's advanced concept technology demonstration projects that have a joint emphasis as one of its primary means of enhancing force integration. He said, for example, that the Command's high-altitude endurance unmanned aerial vehicle project should soon provide aerial vehicles that give warfighters near-real-time, all-weather tactical radar and optical imagery.

Views and knowledge about USACOM's integration role varied among the geographic commands we visited. Few commands were knowledgeable of USACOM's efforts at integration but perceived them to be closely aligned with the Command's joint force trainer and provider functions. While these commands were aware that USACOM had responded to some specific opportunities (for example, theater ballistic missile defense) in its integrator role, they described the Command's involvement in refining joint doctrine and improving systems interoperability as a responsibility shared among the commands. A representative of the Joint Staff's Director for Operational Plans and Interoperability told us USACOM's integrator role, as originally defined, faded along with adaptive joint force packages. He believed the Command's staff had worked hard to redefine this role and give it a meaningful purpose and considered the Command as adding value and performing a vital mission in its redefined role.

# Command Still Being Assimilated and Roles and Responsibilities Expanded

USACOM's evolving functional roles as joint force trainer, provider, and integrator have not been fully embraced throughout DOD. Except for USACOM's joint force trainer role, its functional roles and responsibilities have not been fully incorporated into DOD joint publications or fully accepted or understood by other commands and the military services. USACOM's functional responsibilities are expanding with the recent assignment of five additional joint staff activities, a new joint experimentation role, and ownership of the joint deployment process. USACOM's Commander believes these will have a positive impact on its existing functional roles.

## Joint Training Role Has Been Institutionalized

Over time, the Joint Staff and USACOM have incorporated the Command's joint force trainer role into joint publications. These documents provide a common understanding among DOD organizations of USACOM's role in the joint training of forces. USACOM's training role is identified in the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, joint training policy and discussed in detail in the Chairman's joint training manual and joint training master plan.

The Chairman's joint training master plan makes USACOM responsible for the joint training of assigned CONUS-based forces, preparing them to deploy worldwide and participate as members of a joint task force. It also tasks the Command to train joint task forces not trained by other geographic commands. As defined in the joint training manual, USACOM develops the list of common operational joint tasks, with assistance from the geographic commands, the Joint Warfighting Center, and the Joint Staff. These common tasks, which are used by USACOM to train CONUS-based forces, have been adopted by the Chairman as a common standard for all joint training.

To further clarify its training role, USACOM issued a joint training plan that defines its role, responsibilities, and programs for the joint training of its assigned forces. This plan also discusses the Command's support to the Chairman's joint training program and other geographic commands' joint training. USACOM has also developed a joint task force headquarters master training guide that has been disseminated to all geographic commands and is used to develop training guides.

## Other Functional Roles Not Yet Institutionalized

While USACOM's force provider and integrator roles are described in broad terms in the Unified Command Plan, these roles have not been incorporated into joint guidance and publications. This lack of inclusion could hinder a common understanding about these roles and what is

expected from USACOM. For example, key joint guidance for planning and executing military operations—the Joint Operational Planning and Execution System—does not specifically discuss USACOM’s role as a force provider even though the Command has the preponderance of U.S. forces. The lack of inclusion in joint guidance and publications also may contribute to other DOD units’ resistance or lack of support and hinder sufficient discussion of these roles in military academic education curriculums, which use only approved doctrine and publications for class instruction.

Internally, USACOM’s provider role is generally defined in the Command’s operations order and has recently been included as a major focus area. However, USACOM has not issued a standard operating procedure for its provider role. A standard operating procedure contains instructions covering those features of operations that lend themselves to a definite or standardized procedure without the loss of effectiveness. Such instructions delineate for staffs and organizations how they are to carry out their responsibilities. Not having them has caused some difficulties and inefficiencies among the force provider staff, particularly newly assigned staff. USACOM officials stated that they plan to create a standard operating procedure but that the effort is an enormous task and has not been started.

USACOM’s integrator role is defined in the Command’s operations order and included as a major focus area. The order notes that the training and providing processes do much to achieve the role’s stated objective of enhanced joint capabilities but that effectively incorporating new technologies occurs primarily through the integration process. Steps in the integration process include developing a concept for new systems, formulating organizational structure, defining equipment requirements, establishing training, and developing and educating leaders. The major focus area for the integration role defines the role’s three objectives and tasks within each to enhance joint force operations.

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## USACOM’s Roles and Responsibilities Have Been Further Expanded

The Secretary of Defense continued to expand USACOM’s roles and responsibilities in 1998, assigning the Command several activities, the new role of joint experimentation, and ownership of the joint deployment process. These changes significantly expand the Command’s size and responsibilities. Additional changes that will further expand the Command’s roles and responsibilities have been approved.

**Chapter 4**  
**Command Still Being Assimilated and Roles**  
**and Responsibilities Expanded**

**Chairman Activities  
 Transferred to USACOM**

Effective October 1998, five activities, formerly controlled by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and about 1,100 of their authorized personnel were transferred to USACOM. Table 4.1 identifies the activities and provides information on their location, missions, and fiscal year 1999 budget request and authorized military and civilian positions.

**Table 4.1: Missions and Authorizations for Five Activities Transferred to USACOM**

Activity	Mission	Fiscal year 1999 budget request and personnel authorizations
Joint Warfare Analysis Center, Dahlgren, Virginia	Provide Joint Staff and geographic commands with targeting options to carry out U.S. national security and military strategy during peacetime, crisis, and war.	\$75 million 384 positions
Joint Warfighting Center, Fort Monroe, Virginia	Assist the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, geographic commands, and military services in (1) preparing for joint and multinational operations through the conceptualization, development, and assessment of current and future joint doctrine and (2) accomplishing joint and multinational training exercises.	\$58.2 million 45 positions
Joint Communications Support Element, MacDill Air Force Base, Florida	Provide contingency and crisis communications to meet the operational support needs of the geographic commands, services, defense agencies, and non-DOD agencies such as the State Department.	\$23.3 million 415 positions
Joint C4ISR <sup>a</sup> Battle Center, Suffolk, Virginia	Provide geographic commands' joint task forces with a joint command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assessment and experimentation capability.	\$18.2 million 45 positions
Joint Command and Control Warfare Center, Kelly Air Force Base, Texas	Provide the Joint Staff and geographic commanders expertise in planning and executing command and control warfare and information operations.	\$16.7 million 166 positions

<sup>a</sup>C4ISR: command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance.

Source: USACOM.

According to USACOM's Commander, these activities will significantly enhance the Command's joint training and integration efforts. Each of the transferred activities has unique capabilities that complement each other and current USACOM organizations and activities. For example, by combining the Joint Warfare Analysis Center's analytical capabilities with USACOM's cruise missile support activity, the Command could make great strides in improving the capability to attack targets with precision munitions. Also, having the Joint Warfighting Center work with USACOM's Joint Training and Simulation Center is anticipated to improve the joint training program, enhance DOD modeling and simulation efforts, and help to develop joint doctrine and implement Joint Vision 2010. USACOM's

Commander also believed the Command's control of these activities would enhance its capability to analyze and develop solutions for interoperability issues and add to its ability to be the catalyst for change it is intended to be.

The transfer of the five activities was driven by the Secretary of Defense's 1997 Defense Reform Initiative report, which examined approaches to streamline DOD headquarters organizations.<sup>1</sup> Transferring the activities to the field is expected to enable the Joint Staff to better focus on its policy, direction, and oversight responsibilities. The Chairman also expects the transfer will improve joint warfighting and training by strengthening USACOM's role and capabilities for joint functional training support, joint warfighting support, joint doctrine, and Joint Vision 2010 development. USACOM plans to provide a single source for joint training and warfighting support for the warfighter, with a strong role in lessons learned, modeling and simulation, doctrine, and joint force capability experimentation.

USACOM has developed an implementation plan and coordinated it with the Joint Staff, the leadership of the activities, other commands, and the military services. The intent is to integrate these activities into the Command's joint force trainer, provider, and integrator responsibilities. Little organizational change is anticipated in the near term, with the same level and quality of support by the activities provided to the geographic commands. The Joint Warfighting Center and USACOM's joint training directorate will merge to achieve a totally integrated joint training team to support joint and multinational training and exercises. Under the plan, USACOM also expects to develop the foundation for "one stop shopping" support for geographic commanders both before and during operations.

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### USACOM Designated Executive Agent for Joint Concept Development and Experimentation

In May 1998, the Secretary of Defense expanded USACOM's responsibilities by designating it executive agent for joint concept development and experimentation, effective October 1998. The charter directs USACOM to develop and implement an aggressive program of experimentation to foster innovation and the rapid fielding of new concepts and capabilities for joint operations and to evolve the military force through the "prepare now" strategy for the future. Joint experimentation is intended to facilitate the development of new joint doctrine, organizations, training and education, material, leadership, and people to ensure that the U.S. armed forces can meet future challenges across the full range of military operations.

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<sup>1</sup>Defense Reform Initiative Report, Secretary of Defense, November 1997.

The implementation plan for this new role provides estimates of the resources required for the joint experimentation program; defines the experimentation process; and describes how the program relates to, supports, and leverages the activities of the other components of the Joint Vision 2010 implementation process. The plan builds upon and mutually supports existing and future experimentation programs of the military services, the other unified commands, and the various defense research and development agencies. The plan was submitted to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in July 1998, with a staffing estimate of 127 additional personnel by September 1999, increasing to 171 by September 2000. In November 1998, USACOM had about 27 of these people assigned and projected it would have 151 assigned by October 2000.

USACOM worked closely with the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Staff to establish the initial funding required to create the joint experimentation organization. USACOM requested about \$41 million in fiscal year 1999, increasing to \$80 million by 2002. Of the \$41 million, \$30 million was approved: \$14.1 million was being redirected from two existing joint warfighting programs, and \$15.9 million was being drawn from sources to be identified by the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller).

The Secretary of Defense says DOD is committed to an aggressive program of experimentation to foster innovation and rapid fielding of new joint concepts and capabilities. Support by the Secretary and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is considered essential, particularly in areas where USACOM is unable to gain the support of the military services who questioned the size and cost of USACOM's proposed experimentation program. Providing USACOM the resources to successfully implement the joint experimentation program will be an indicator of DOD's commitment to this endeavor. The Congress has expressed its strong support for joint warfighting experimentation. In the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1999 (P.L. 105-261), it was stated that it was the sense of the Congress that the Commander of USACOM should be provided appropriate and sufficient resources for joint warfighting experimentation and the appropriate authority to execute assigned responsibilities. We plan to issue a report on the status of joint experimentation in March 1999.

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### USACOM Assigned Ownership of Joint Deployment Process

In October 1998, the Secretary of Defense, acting on a recommendation of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, made USACOM owner of the joint deployment process. As process owner, USACOM is responsible for

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**Chapter 4**  
**Command Still Being Assimilated and Roles**  
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maintaining the effectiveness of the process while leading actions to substantially improve the overall efficiency of deployment-related activities. The Joint Staff is to provide USACOM policy guidance, and the U.S. Transportation Command is to provide transportation expertise. USACOM was developing a charter to be coordinated with other DOD components, and provide the basis for a DOD directive. The deployment process would include activities from the time forces and material are selected to be deployed to the time they arrive where needed and then are returned to their home station or place of origin.

According to the Secretary of Defense, USACOM's responsibilities as joint trainer, force provider, and joint force integrator of the bulk of the nation's combat forces form a solid foundation for USACOM to meet joint deployment process challenges. The Secretary envisioned USACOM as a focal point to manage collaborative efforts to integrate mission-ready deploying forces into the supported geographic command's joint operation area. USACOM officials considered this new responsibility to be a significant expansion of the Command's joint force provider role. They believed that in their efforts to make the deployment process more efficient there would be opportunities to improve the efficiency of its provider role. As executive agent of the Secretary of Defense for the joint deployment process, USACOM's authority to direct DOD components and activities to make changes to the deployment process has yet to be defined. A Joint Staff official recognized this as a possible point of contention, particularly among the services, as the draft charter was being prepared for distribution for comment in February 1999.

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**Additional Changes**  
**Approved**

In October 1998, the Deputy Secretary of Defense approved the realignment or restructuring of several additional joint activities affecting USACOM. These include giving USACOM representation in the joint test and evaluation program; transferring the services' combat identification activities to USACOM; and assigning a new joint personnel recovery agency to USACOM. USACOM and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff believed these actions strengthened USACOM's joint force trainer and integrator roles as well as its emerging responsibilities for joint doctrine, warfighting concepts, and joint experimentation. USACOM representation on the joint test and evaluation program, which was to be effective by January 1999, provides joint representation on the senior advisory council, planning committee, and technical board for test and evaluation. Command and control of service combat identification programs and activities provide joint evaluation of friend or foe identification capabilities. The newly

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**Chapter 4**  
**Command Still Being Assimilated and Roles**  
**and Responsibilities Expanded**

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formed joint personnel recovery agency provides DOD personnel recovery support by combining the joint services survival, evasion, resistance, and escape agency with the combat search and rescue agency. USACOM is to assume these responsibilities in October 1999.

# Conclusions and Recommendations

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## Conclusions

Retaining the effectiveness of America's military when budgets are generally flat and readiness and modernization are costly requires a fuller integration of the capabilities of the military services. As the premier trainer, provider, and integrator of CONUS-based forces, USACOM has a particularly vital role if the U.S. military is to achieve new levels of effectiveness in joint warfighting.

USACOM was established to be a catalyst for the transformation of DOD from a military service-oriented to a joint-oriented organization. But change is difficult and threatening and it does not come easy, particularly in an organization with the history and tradition of DOD. This is reflected in the opposition to USACOM from the military services, which provide and equip the Command with its forces and maintain close ties to USACOM's service component commands, and from geographic commands it supports. As a result of this resistance, USACOM changed its roles as an integrator and provider of forces and sought new opportunities to effect change. Indications are that the current geographic commanders may be more supportive of USACOM than past commanders have been, as evidenced by their recent receptivity to USACOM's support in development and refinement of their joint training programs. Such support is likely to become increasingly important to the success of USACOM. During its initial years the Command made its greatest accomplishments in areas where there was little resistance to its role. The Commander of USACOM said that the Command would increasingly enter areas where others have a vested interest and that he would therefore expect the Command to encounter resistance from the military services and others in the future as it pursues actions to enhance joint military capabilities.

While USACOM has taken actions to enhance joint training, to meet the force requirements of supported commands, and to improve the interoperability of systems and equipment, the value of its contributions to improved joint military capabilities are not clearly discernable. If the Command develops performance goals and measures consistent with the Results Act, it could assess and report on its performance in accomplishing its mission of maximizing military capabilities. The Command may need guidance from the Secretary of Defense in the development of these goals and measures.

In addition to its evolving roles as joint force trainer, provider, and integrator, USACOM is now taking on important new, related responsibilities, including the management of five key joint activities. With the exception of training, these roles and responsibilities, both old and new, are largely undefined in DOD directives, instructions, and other policy

documents, including joint doctrine and guidance. The Unified Command Plan, a classified document that serves as the charter for USACOM and the other unified commands, briefly identifies USACOM's functional roles but does not define them in any detail. This absence of a clear delineation of the Command's roles, authorities, and responsibilities could contribute to a lack of universal understanding and acceptance of USACOM and impede the Command's efforts to enhance the joint operational capabilities of the armed forces.

While USACOM was established in 1993 by the Secretary of Defense with the open and strong leadership, endorsement, and support of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Colin Powell, the Command has not always received the same strong visible support. Without such support, USACOM's efforts to bring about change could be throttled by other, more established and influential DOD elements with priorities that can compete with those of USACOM. Indications are that the current DOD leadership is prepared to support USACOM when it can demonstrate a compelling need for change. The adoption of the USACOM-developed theater ballistic missile defense capstone requirements document indicates that this rapidly evolving command may be gaining influence and support as the Secretary of Defense's and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff's major advocate for jointness within the Department of Defense.

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## Recommendations

It is important that USACOM be able to evaluate its performance and impact in maximizing joint military capabilities. Such assessments, while very difficult to make, could help the Command better determine what it needs to do to enhance its performance. We, therefore, recommend that the Secretary of Defense direct the Commander in Chief of USACOM to adopt performance goals and measures that will enable the Command to assess its performance in accomplishing its mission of maximizing joint military capabilities.

Additionally, as USACOM attempts to advance the evolution of joint military capabilities and its role continues to expand, it is important that the Command's roles and responsibilities be clearly defined, understood, and supported throughout DOD. Only USACOM's roles and responsibilities in joint training have been so defined in DOD policy and guidance documents. Therefore, we recommend that the Secretary of Defense fully incorporate USACOM's functional roles, authorities, and responsibilities in appropriate DOD directives and publications, including joint doctrine and guidance.

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## Agency Comments and Our Evaluation

In written comments (see app. VII) on a draft of this report, DOD concurred with the recommendations. In its comments DOD provided additional information on USACOM's efforts to establish performance goals and objectives and DOD's efforts to incorporate USACOM's functional roles, authorities, and responsibilities in appropriate DOD directives and publications. DOD noted that as part of USACOM's efforts to establish performance goals and objectives, the Command has provided training on performance measures to its military officers.

Regarding our recommendation to incorporate USACOM's functional roles, authorities, and responsibilities in appropriate DOD directives and publications, DOD said the 1999 Unified Command Plan, which is currently under its cyclic review process, will further define USACOM's functional roles as they have evolved over the past 2 years. It also noted that key training documents have been, or are being, updated. We believe that in addition to the Unified Command Plan and joint training documents, the joint guidance for planning and executing military operations—the Joint Operational Planning and Execution System process—should discuss USACOM's role as the major provider of forces.

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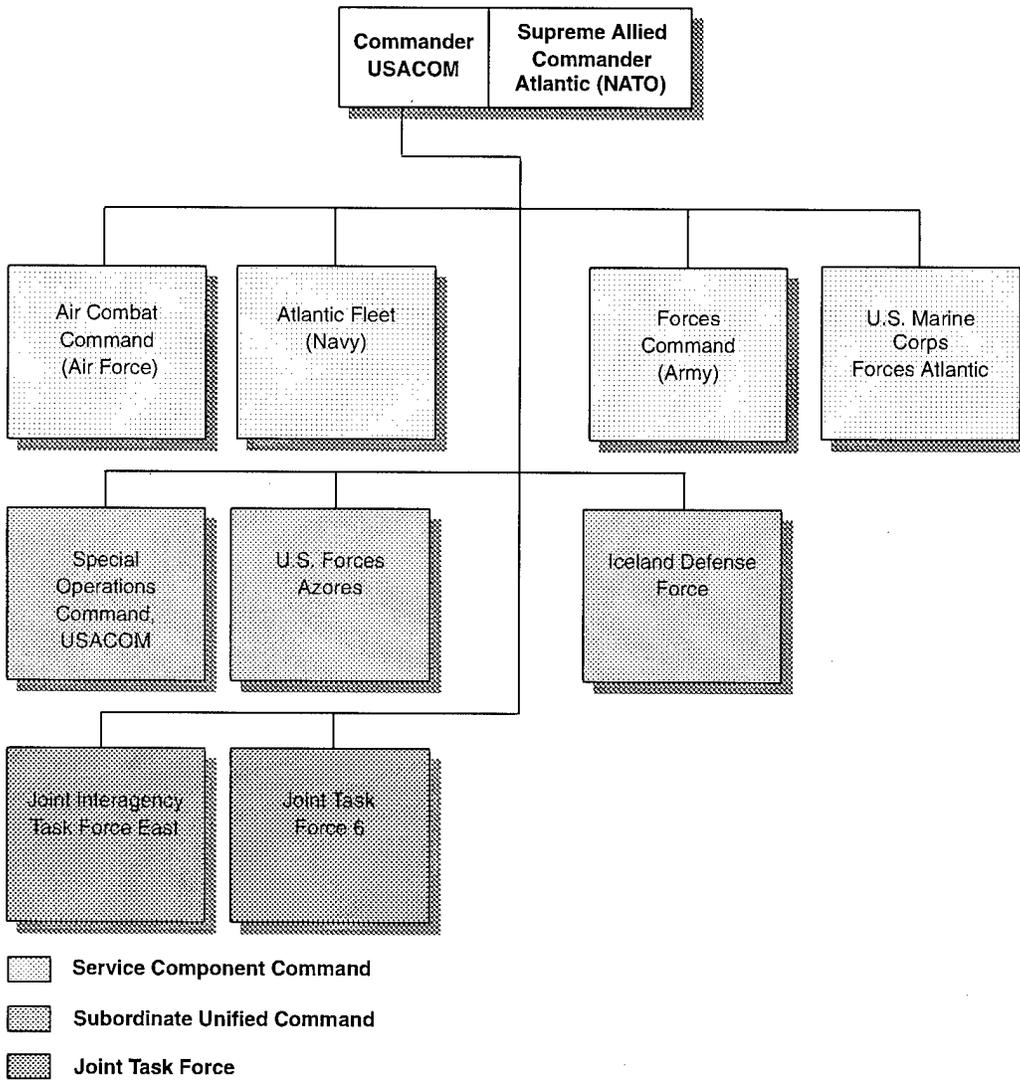
# U.S. Atlantic Command Organization

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The U.S. Atlantic Command (USACOM) was established on October 1, 1993, as one of nine unified commands and is located at Norfolk, Virginia. As shown in figure I.1, the Commander in Chief (Commander) of USACOM also serves as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic. The Command has four service component commands—the Navy's Atlantic Fleet and U.S. Marine Corps Forces Atlantic, Norfolk, Virginia; the Air Force's Air Combat Command, Langley Air Force Base, Virginia; and the Army's Forces Command, Fort McPherson, Georgia. The component commands comprise service forces such as individuals, unit detachments, organizations, and installations assigned to USACOM, and they have primary responsibility for the mission readiness of those forces. Additionally, USACOM exercises command over three subordinate unified commands (comprised of USACOM forces from two or more services)—the Special Operations Command, Atlantic; the U.S. Forces Azores; and the Iceland Defense Force. The Command is also responsible for the counternarcotics Joint Task Force 6 in El Paso, Texas, and is the executive agent for the Joint Interagency Task Force East in Key West, Florida.

Appendix I  
U.S. Atlantic Command Organization

Figure I.1: Organizational Structure of USACOM



Source: USACOM.

# Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

In response to congressional interest in the Department of Defense's (DOD) efforts to improve joint operations, we initiated our study to review the assimilation of USACOM into DOD as the major trainer, provider, and integrator of forces for worldwide deployment. More specifically, we determined (1) USACOM's actions to establish itself as the joint force trainer, provider, and integrator of most continental U.S.-based forces; (2) views on the value of the Command's contributions to joint military capabilities; and (3) recent expansion of the Command's responsibilities and its possible effects on the Command. We focused on USACOM's functional roles and did not examine the rationale for USACOM's geographic and NATO responsibilities or the effect of these responsibilities on the execution of USACOM's functional roles.

During our review, we met with Admiral Harold W. Gehman, Jr., Commander in Chief of USACOM, and other officials and staff from USACOM's headquarters; with General John J. Sheehan, Commander of USACOM (1994-1997); and with officials and staff from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Staff, the Departments of the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force, and the Headquarters of the U.S. Marine Corps, Washington, D.C.; U.S. Atlantic Fleet, Marine Corps Forces Atlantic, and Armed Forces Staff College, Norfolk, Virginia; Air Combat Command, Langley Air Force Base, Virginia; Forces Command, Fort McPherson, Georgia; U.S. European Command, Patch Barracks, Germany; U.S. Central Command, MacDill Air Force Base, Florida; U.S. Southern Command, Miami, Florida; and the Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. Interviews with these officials were a primary source of information for our review.

To understand the rationale and historical context for establishing USACOM, we reviewed official histories, posture statements and speeches, congressional hearings and testimonies, DOD studies and reports, and other relevant documents. We also met with General John Shalikashvili (U.S. Army retired), former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (1993-97); and General Colin Powell (U.S. Army retired), former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (1989-93), to obtain their unique insights and perspectives on the various events and decisions related to USACOM's history and evolution as a command. Additionally, we met with officials of the Joint Staff historical office and with the USACOM command historian.

To identify USACOM actions to establish and execute its functional roles, we examined documents and talked with USACOM officials associated with each role. We used USACOM's implementation plan, approved by the Secretary of Defense, and the biennial Unified Command Plans as a

framework for establishing the authority, scope, and approach for realizing USACOM's functional roles.

For the joint force trainer role, we reviewed training plans, manuals, and schedules related to USACOM's joint training program. To understand the approach and content of USACOM's joint task force commander and staff training, we attended several sessions of the Unified Endeavor 1998 exercise conducted at the Joint Training, Analysis and Simulation Center, Suffolk, Virginia, and Camp LeJeune Marine Corps Base, North Carolina. We also reviewed data on past joint training efforts, including the training content, participants, and approach, and on future joint training events.

For the joint force provider role, we examined documents and discussed with USACOM officials the 1995 change in approach from the adaptive joint force packaging concept to a process-oriented approach. We also obtained documents and held discussions on past and ongoing operations to determine USACOM's involvement and effectiveness in providing forces. To understand the implementation of the process, we correlated USACOM's involvement in these operations to that prescribed in the Command's process and discussed its involvement with service components and geographic commands.

For the joint force integrator role, we reviewed documents and discussed with USACOM officials the Command's efforts in three major activities: (1) USACOM-sponsored Advanced Concept Technology Demonstration projects, (2) joint doctrine development, and (3) interoperability initiatives to improve joint operations. We analyzed status reports and briefings to ascertain USACOM's level of effort and discussed with each service component its involvement in USACOM's efforts. At each unified command we visited, we attempted to contrast its efforts in these three areas with those of USACOM to identify any differences or unique aspects in USACOM's approach and contribution to joint integration.

To determine the extent that USACOM's execution of its functional roles was valued within DOD, we discussed the Command's contributions with officials at the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Staff, several geographic commands, and USACOM and its service component commands. To ascertain the extent that USACOM's efforts were advancing joint operations, we reviewed USACOM's command plans, internal assessments, performance tracking system results, and other relevant documents. We talked with DOD officials at all visited locations to obtain their views and examples of USACOM's performance. We also discussed with USACOM

officials their actions to implement the principles of the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993.

To determine the extent that USACOM has been assimilated into the DOD community, we reviewed joint doctrine, guidance, and publications for references and descriptions of USACOM and its roles. During our visits to component and geographic commands, we asked officials and staff to describe and cite sources for their understanding of USACOM roles. Additionally, we discussed with officials of the Army War College and Armed Forces Staff College the degree to which USACOM and its roles were covered in military academic curriculums.

To obtain a perspective on several approved changes for USACOM—such as the transfer to USACOM of five joint centers/activities currently controlled by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff—we obtained documents and discussed plans with DOD, Joint Staff, and USACOM officials.

# Training Categories

Category/type of training	Description of training
1/Service	Training conducted by the military services, based on service policy and doctrine, to prepare individuals and interoperable units. It includes basic, technical, operational, and component-sponsored interoperability training in response to the geographic combatant commands' operational requirements.
2/Component interoperability	Training based on joint doctrine or joint tactics, techniques, and procedures in which more than one service component participates. Normally includes commander in chief or service initiatives to improve responsiveness of assigned forces to combatant commanders. The training is conducted by service component commanders and its purpose is to ensure interoperability of forces and equipment between two or more service components.
3/Joint	Training based on joint doctrine to prepare forces and/or joint staffs to respond to operational requirements deemed necessary by combatant commanders to execute their assigned missions.
4/Multinational interoperability	Training based on allied, joint, and/or service doctrine to prepare units in response to National Command Authority-approved mandates. Purpose is to ensure interoperability of forces and equipment between U.S. and other nations' forces.
5/Joint and multinational	Training based on multinational, joint, and/or service doctrine to prepare units in response to National Command Authority-approved mandates. Purpose is to prepare joint forces under a multinational command arrangement.
6/Interagency and intergovernmental	Training based on National Command Authority-derived standard operating procedures to prepare interagency and/or international decisionmakers and staffs in response to National Command Authority-approved mandates.

Source: Joint Training Manual for the Armed Forces of the United States, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, June 1996.

# Adaptive Joint Force Packaging Concept

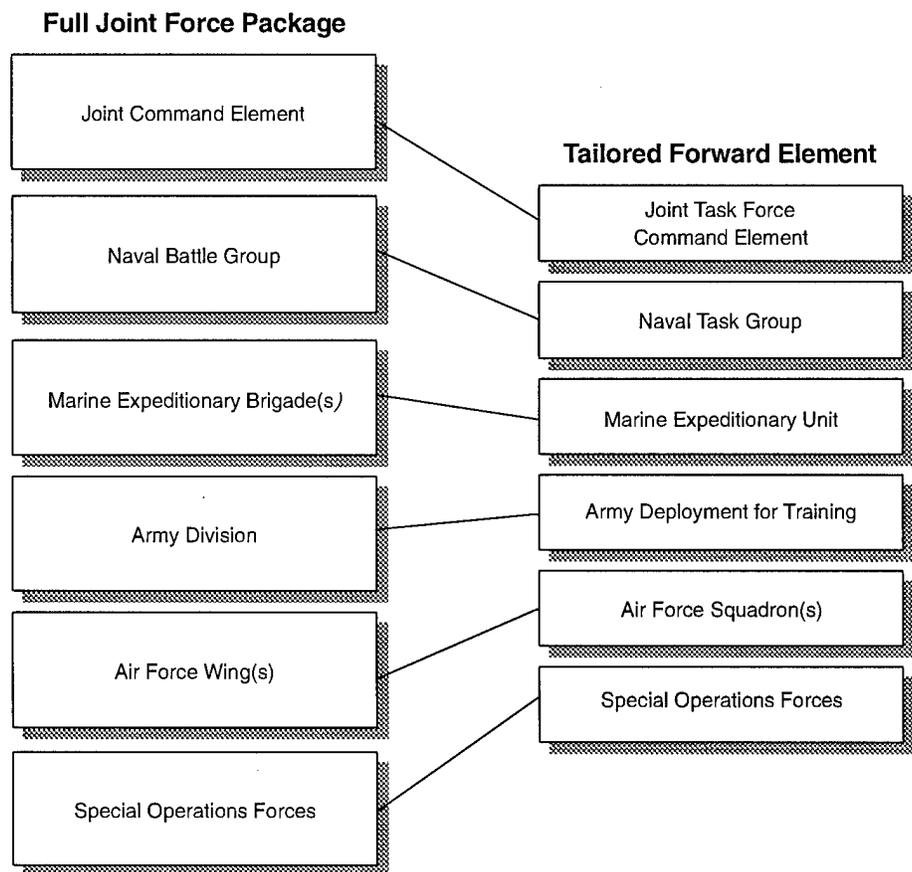
## Intention and Concept

The adaptive joint force packaging concept was conceived as a way to fill the void created by reduced in-theater force capabilities following the end of the Cold War. Under the concept, USACOM was to provide forces based in the continental United States (CONUS) that are “highly skilled, rapidly deliverable, and fully capable of operating effectively as a joint team on arrival” to geographic commanders. The concept also provided an approach for responding to a much broader range of conflicts and crises, particularly the increasing number of nontraditional missions such as peacekeeping and counterdrug operations. In his confirmation hearing to be Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in February 1994, Vice Admiral William A. Owens stated that “one of the concept’s strengths is that it gives us a starting point from which to build the enhancements truly joint warfare can bring to a force that is getting smaller, increasingly becoming CONUS-based, and changing in many other significant ways.”

An “adaptive joint force package” was defined by USACOM’s implementation plan as “a capabilities centered grouping of forces and headquarters trained and organized to meet specific peacetime and crisis requirements of the supported geographic commander.” Forces used to build these packages were to include all USACOM active and reserve forces of each of the services, the U.S. Coast Guard, and other CONUS-based forces and assets made available by supporting geographic commanders and other agencies. Under the concept, USACOM, in close coordination with geographic commanders, was to identify and develop flexible force package options for worldwide use to satisfy geographic commander requirements. The packages could either be preplanned for specific presence and contingency missions or developed as needed for an unexpected crisis.

The adaptive joint force package concept was not new. The services have used the concept to bring together different force elements when organizing for combat. For example, Army commanders task and organize combat arms, combat support, and combat service support resources to conduct a specific mission and then change this organization to accomplish subsequent missions within the same operations plan. This allows them to achieve greater collective capability than the individual pieces can accomplish on their own. Adaptive joint force packages modifies the concept to the joint environment by allowing elements from each of the services to be assembled to provide tailored joint capability packages, structured and trained for a variety of requirements. Figure IV.1 shows how an adaptive joint force package can be tailored to provide the precise capabilities needed for a given situation.

Figure IV.1: Tailoring Capabilities in an Adaptive Joint Force Package



Source: Joint Staff, Joint Chiefs of Staff.

An important aspect of adaptive joint force packages was that USACOM was to assign a joint task force commander and headquarters staff to each package for training purposes. The supported geographic commanders were to use the designated commander and staff either in whole, in part, or not at all to augment the theater commander. No matter how these packages were deployed, the intent was to optimize joint training opportunities for the forces and their staffs in the packages.

USACOM initially focused its packaging efforts on satisfying geographic commands' requirements for overseas presence. During late 1993 through early 1994, several types of maritime-oriented joint packages for overseas

presence were designed and deployed. In September 1994, USACOM's Commander sought to demonstrate the practicality of using the concept for contingency operations. For Operation Uphold Democracy, which was intended to restore democracy in Haiti, USACOM assembled a joint force package that placed Army helicopters on a Navy aircraft carrier and moved command operations from the U.S.S. Mount Whitney command ship to the beach. Special Operations Forces were embarked on the U.S.S. America aircraft carrier for the assault phase of the operation, and units of the Army's 10th Mountain Division embarked on the U.S.S. Dwight D. Eisenhower aircraft carrier were to enter Haiti following the phase. Due to the success of negotiations, the assault was not necessary. USACOM officials identified the Haiti operation as the only operation for which the concept was used.

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## Demise of Concept

The adaptive joint force packaging concept, particularly the packaging element, encountered much criticism and resistance from the geographic commanders and the military services before and after USACOM's creation. During deliberations about creating the new command, the geographic commanders and the services raised concerns about the mechanics, responsibilities, and application of the concept. Perhaps the most contentious issue among the geographic commanders was the level of control USACOM would have in developing the final force package for the supported geographic command. They believed the supported geographic commander, not USACOM, was in the best position to determine which forces were needed to meet the commander's requirements.

The adaptive joint force packaging concept was a major element of USACOM's 1993 implementation plan, which was approved by the Secretary of Defense. However, USACOM's efforts to gain the cooperation and support it needed from the supported geographic commands in developing adaptive joint force packages received little support from the succeeding Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (1993-97), General John Shalikashvili. The Chairman saw limited utility for adaptive joint force packages, particularly for the European and Pacific Commands, which had large forces of their own. Additionally, the Chairman believed it would be very difficult to develop and train force packages for future operations because of the difficulty of forecasting the type of operations in which U.S. forces would be engaged. According to Admiral Paul David Miller, the first Commander of USACOM, a great deal of the "acceptance" problem among the geographic commanders was related to their desire to control their own forces, including having their own joint task force commanders.

Armed Forces Staff College officials and others also believe that USACOM had a “salesmanship” problem—it was unable to clear up misunderstandings about the concept.

By June 1994, USACOM had removed “adaptive” from the concept’s label because it was viewed as a negative connotation. By spring 1995, USACOM had decided to concentrate on developing joint force packages for less contentious missions such as disaster relief, humanitarian assistance, and noncombatant evacuation operations. By late 1995, USACOM’s Commander decided to move away from providing a product—a joint force package—and devote the Command’s efforts to increasing the efficiency of the force providing process (see app. V) and to integrating joint forces and improving their interoperability through technology, systems, and doctrine initiatives. Although joint force training was important to the success of the joint force packaging concept approach, the decision to deviate from the concept did not have a notable effect on USACOM’s training program.

# USACOM's Force Provider Process

## Description of Process

After moving away from adaptive joint force packages in 1995, USACOM designed its current force provider process to improve the efficiency and timeliness of providing forces to supported geographic commands. The process was derived from existing doctrine, specifically the publication describing the Joint Operation Planning and Execution System.<sup>1</sup> USACOM continues to refine the process from established doctrinal guidance. The process has five basic elements:

- accept the Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff's validation<sup>2</sup> of the supported geographic command requirement;
- identify the specific units that can fulfill the requirement;
- select, in close cooperation with the supported geographic command, Joint Staff, and service component commands, those forces with the required military capabilities and readiness status;
- train the selected forces to appropriate joint tasks, conditions, and standards (common joint task and joint mission-essential task standards); and
- deploy the forces to the supported geographic command.

The process begins with a geographic command's need for forces to accomplish a particular peacetime, contingency, or crisis mission in its area of responsibility.<sup>3</sup> This force requirement generally originates with one of the geographic command's service component commands. The geographic command sends the force requirement request to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Chairman, through the Joint Staff, validates the requirement, which entails checking the reasonableness of the requirement and the ability to fill the request against other competing worldwide military requirements. Once validated, the Joint Staff asks the requesting geographic command to first attempt to meet the requirement with its own forces or forces deployed in its area of responsibility. If the geographic command is unable to meet the requirement, the Joint Staff will task another command to provide the necessary forces.

If USACOM is tasked by the Joint Staff to meet the force requirement,<sup>4</sup> its headquarters' staff determine which of its service component commands

<sup>1</sup>Joint Operation Planning and Execution System, Volume I (Planning Policies and Procedures), Joint Publication 5-03.1, August 4, 1993.

<sup>2</sup>Validation means the Secretary of Defense's authorization, upon recommendation of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to deploy a force in support of a specific operation.

<sup>3</sup>The geographical area within which a commander has authority to plan and conduct operations.

<sup>4</sup>A USACOM official stated that the Command receives an average of one request for forces each day.

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Appendix V  
USACOM's Force Provider Process  
Description of Process

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is likely to be able to provide the necessary forces. The service component commands identify the specific units that can fulfill the requirement. In collaboration with the service component commands, the Joint Staff, and the supported geographic command, USACOM selects the force that has the required capabilities and readiness status. When the approved deployment or execution order is sent from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, USACOM directs the responsible service component command to transfer or deploy the specified forces to the supported geographic command. USACOM officials indicated that this process is not linear—several parts of the process take place concurrently.

This process requires a significant amount of coordination—both formal and informal—among the staffs at USACOM headquarters, the Joint Staff, supported geographic command, and service component commands. USACOM and service component command officials stated that there are numerous informal contacts between them and their counterparts at the Joint Staff and other geographic commands from the time the requirement is being developed to the time forces are deployed. USACOM and service component officials also told us that this informal coordination, or parallel planning, accelerates the process by allowing for early consideration of force options, resolution of potential readiness issues, identification of training requirements, and advance warning of force needs from the geographic commands. USACOM officials noted that force requirements are generally met because the close coordination allows requirements to be refined so they can be met. However, a USACOM Operations Directorate official stated that while the informal discussions can help to solve problems early, it is frustrating if decisions are made without USACOM involvement or without explanation.

Response time is an important aspect in USACOM's process. In some cases, the requirement is known months before when the forces need to be deployed. In other situations, such as a need to safely and quickly remove threatened civilians from an area outside the United States, the required response time may be a matter of hours or days. Such constraints can limit the force options considered, depending on the availability and readiness of certain forces to deploy.

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## Role of USACOM and Its Service Components in the Process

USACOM headquarters acts largely as an overseer in the provider process to review and coordinate deployment taskings, clarify and define what type of force is needed, and ensure that forces are deployed where and when needed to meet the requirements of the geographic commands. Specifically, the Command's role is to (1) issue deployment taskings from the Secretary of Defense to its service component commands as appropriate, (2) receive and process critical force and deployment information from its service component commands, (3) coordinate the resolution of conflicts between the Joint Staff and the supported geographic commanders, (4) coordinate with service component commands regarding the activation of reservists, (5) coordinate with service components and the Joint Staff for the deployment of unassigned forces or forces assigned to other commands, and (6) coordinate the deployment of individual personnel to augment units already deployed.

USACOM's four service component commands play an important part in the provider process. USACOM headquarters has a staff of about 10 dedicated to its joint force provider role, which is far less than the large, robust organization it had for developing adaptive joint force packages. While other headquarters divisions provide significant support, the staff relies on the larger staffs of the service component commands to do the bulk of the work. When the Joint Staff tasks USACOM to provide forces to satisfy a requirement, USACOM headquarters relies on its service component commands for expertise and assistance to identify and select the force. Because service component commanders have primary responsibility for the mission readiness of USACOM forces, they have the best information on the readiness status of their forces and better knowledge of the forces' capabilities than do the USACOM headquarters staff. A USACOM official stated that the service component commands are the force providers. USACOM is the conduit between the service component commands and the supported geographic commands and provides a filter in both directions.

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## Requirements to Be Identified as Capabilities Needed

Under USACOM's force provider process, supported geographic commanders are to identify the capabilities needed to accomplish an assigned mission in terms of the essential tasks to be performed, the conditions under which these tasks are performed, and the standards to which these tasks must be performed. They are discouraged from identifying a specific asset or service. The required capability does not describe the means (forces) to fulfill the requirement, however. For example, if an air defense capability is needed, USACOM could identify an

Army Patriot missile battery, Marine Corps F/A-18 aircraft, a Navy AEGIS ship, Air Force F-15 aircraft, or other services' assets.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff developed and approved a common language, the Universal Joint Task List, by which geographic commanders can communicate their joint military requirements. The Universal Joint Task List includes tasks, conditions, and measures used to create common task and joint mission-essential task lists that describe the functional capabilities joint force commanders may require to execute their assigned missions. As noted in chapter 2, USACOM uses these tasks, identified with the other geographic commands, to conduct and monitor its joint training program.

According to USACOM, requesting forces by required capabilities provides USACOM some flexibility in selecting assets and units from across the services and allows for better management of the forces' operating and personnel tempos. By concentrating on required capabilities rather than traditional relationships with specific units, the same units and forces will not be routinely identified for all missions. For example, a geographic commander preparing for a possible evacuation of noncombatant civilians from his area of responsibility might request deployment of a specific force, such as a Marine Corps amphibious ready group. However, USACOM has greater flexibility in the selection of forces if the requirement is defined in terms of a joint mission-essential task—"Conduct Evacuation of Noncombatants from Theater of Operation"—and then further refined by the supported geographic commander to establish the conditions and standards specific to the current situation. USACOM would work with the various organizations—the supported geographic command, the Joint Staff, other supporting geographic commands, and USACOM's service component commands—to identify other possible force options, such as a light infantry, special operations, or tailored amphibious force. However, the supported geographic commander decides which option provides the best capability to meet the mission.

USACOM officials told us that if a specific force or service is requested, the force is generally deployed if it is available. Additionally, various DOD officials indicated that while requesting forces by capabilities is desired, the supported geographic command is in the best position to determine the forces needed to accomplish its mission. In some cases, requesting a specific force and/or service may be justified because a needed capability is available from only one service and/or one type of asset, and/or time constraints require an immediate decision. For example, (1) a Navy

aircraft carrier battle group may be the only assets that can provide a needed capability if local air bases in some world area are not available for use by land-based aircraft; (2) a specialized reconnaissance aircraft, such as the Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System, may only be available in the Air Force's inventory; or (3) the Navy is the only service that has the necessary assets to provide an antisubmarine warfare capability. However, some USACOM and service component command officials said that in some recent cases specific forces continued to be requested, even though circumstances did not justify requests for specific units. For example, Air Force F-16CJ aircraft<sup>5</sup> were specifically requested by and deployed to the Central Command, even though Marine Corps' F-18 aircraft could have also met mission requirements.

USACOM indicated that requests for forces from the supported geographic commands are often more specific than USACOM would like. However, a USACOM official stated that the geographic commands are requesting capabilities rather than specific units to meet requirements more often now than they have in the past. The official attributed this change to USACOM's success in building relationships with other geographic command staffs and the gradual rotation of officers at the commands that have an understanding of USACOM. USACOM indicated that over time, the supported geographic commands are learning to express requirements in terms of capabilities as USACOM demonstrates its ability to add value to the process.

While DOD officials recognize the importance of having geographic commands state their requirements for forces in terms of required capabilities, they could not cite nor could we find any joint doctrine, manual, or instruction that requires supported geographic commands to do this. The key joint guidance document for planning and executing military operations—the Joint Operational Planning and Execution System—does not specify how supported geographic commands should express their requirements when requesting forces. It also does not require analyses of the impact of deploying a given force in consideration of operating tempos, the Global Military Force Policy and Global Naval Force Presence Policy, and training and readiness assessments. Not having this requirement specifically identified in joint guidance and publications can hinder acceptance and cause reluctance by geographic commands to request forces by capability.

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<sup>5</sup>The Air Force's F-16CJ, a specialized version of its F-16 aircraft, is designed to counter the threat from enemy air defenses. The aircraft uses the High-speed Anti-Radiation Missile Targeting System and the High-speed Anti-Radiation Missile, which together can identify and destroy enemy missile sites.

# USACOM's Low-Density/High-Demand Assets

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff's Global Military Force Policy establishes peacetime prioritization guidelines for managing the use of certain limited assets with unique mission capabilities that are continually in high demand among the geographic combatant commands. USACOM is responsible for managing assigned assets within 16 of the 32 low-density/high-demand asset types currently identified by the policy, which are listed in table VI.1. These assets are largely Air Force aircraft. The remaining 16 asset types are assigned solely to the U.S. Special Operations Command.

**Table VI.1: USACOM's Low-Density/High-Demand Assets**

<b>Asset</b>	<b>Service</b>
<b>Reconnaissance/battlefield management</b>	
E-3 Airborne Warning and Control System aircraft	Air Force
EC-130E ABCCC aircraft	Air Force
U-2 high-altitude reconnaissance aircraft	Air Force
RC-135V/W Rivet Joint aircraft	Air Force
Ground Theater Air Control System	Air Force
Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System	Air Force
Predator unmanned aerial vehicle	Air Force
STORM JIB	Navy
<b>Electronic warfare aircraft</b>	
EC-130H Compass Call	Air Force
EA-6B	Navy/Marine Corps
<b>Theater ballistic missile defense</b>	
Patriot (missile) air defense system	Army
<b>Close air support</b>	
A/OA-10 attack aircraft	Air Force
<b>Rescue aircraft</b>	
HC-130	Air Force
HH-60G helicopter	Air Force
<b>Chemical/biological defense</b>	
310th Chemical Company (Biological Detect)	Army
Technical Escort Unit (Chemical/Biological Response)	Army

Source: Global Military Force Policy, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, November 1998.

# Comments From the Department of Defense



OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
2900 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-2900



STRATEGY  
AND  
REQUIREMENTS

JAN 14 1998

Mr. Richard Davis  
Director, National Security Analysis  
National Security and International  
Affairs Division  
U.S. General Accounting Office  
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Davis:

This is the Department of Defense (DoD) response to the General Accounting Office (GAO) draft report, "U.S. ATLANTIC COMMAND: Challenging Role in the Evolution of Joint Military Capabilities," dated November 27, 1998 (GAO Code 701114), OSD Case 1720-X.

The DoD concurs with the draft report. However, find at attachment updates on USACOM's efforts to establish performance goals and objectives that will enable the Command to accomplish its missions, and DoD's efforts to incorporate USACOM's functional roles, authorities, and responsibilities in appropriate DoD directives and publications. Recommend you review these updates and modify your recommendations to acknowledge USACOM's and DoD's efforts, to date, to achieve them.

The Department appreciates the opportunity to comment on the draft report.

Sincerely,

James N. Miller, Jr.  
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense  
Requirements, Plans, and Counterproliferation

Attachment:  
As stated



GAO DRAFT REPORT – DATED NOVEMBER 27, 1998  
(GAO CODE 701114) OSD CASE 1720-X

“U.S. ATLANTIC COMMAND: CHALLENGING ROLE IN THE EVOLUTION OF JOINT  
MILITARY CAPABILITIES”

DOD COMMENTS ON THE GAO RECOMMENDATIONS

Now on pp. 11, 63.

- **RECOMMENDATION 1:** The GAO recommended that the Secretary of Defense direct the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Atlantic Command (USACOM) to take steps to ensure the performance goals and measures are adopted by the command that will enable the command to assess its performance in accomplishing its mission of maximizing joint military capabilities. (p. 8, p.53/GAO Draft Report)

**DOD RESPONSE:** Concur. USACOM has an office, “JX,” specifically tasked with coordinating Reengineering, Knowledge Based Management, and Decision Support Systems. JX is the headquarters “go between” with DoD for reinventing government initiatives. JX has been working throughout the headquarters to establish benchmarking and develop metrics for the Command. During the summer of 1998, as part of a continuing effort to improve business processes at USACOM, the JX was tasked to work with the J5 to develop both a means of tracking progress and performance measures to assess results. While the process of establishing goals and objectives was initiated with the institution of the Strategic Planning System, progress has not been as rapid in developing qualitative and quantitative performance metrics because most military officers lack the training in civilian management tools. As a result, the JX held training on performance measures during September 1998. The objective of the training was to provide the concepts and tools necessary to allow participants to understand the strategic considerations of performance measurements as a tool for gaining competitive advantage. Attendees from across the Command participated. Building on this training and other efforts, the DCinC tasked each Directorate to develop qualitative and quantitative metrics for mission accomplishment.

Now on pp. 11, 63.

- **RECOMMENDATION 2:** The GAO also recommended that the Secretary of Defense fully incorporate USACOM’s functional roles, authorities, and responsibilities in appropriate DoD directives and publications, including joint doctrine and guidance. (p. 8, p. 53/GAO Draft Report)

**DOD RESPONSE:** Concur. The Unified Command Plan (UCP) is currently under its cyclic review process and will be republished in 1999. The 1999 UCP will further define USACOM’s functional roles as they have evolved over the last two years. Documents that spell out the implementation of USACOM’s role as the Joint trainer and lead of simulation are being reviewed and rewritten, and Joint Pub 1-01 (the doctrinal administrative publication) is being revised. Also, USACOM organizational changes have recently been updated in the Chairman’s Joint Training Policy (CJCSI 3500.01) and change five to the Joint Training Plan. Additionally, the Joint Training Master Plan is currently being updated to reflect USACOM’s new roles. Changes to other pertinent training directives will take place as they are reviewed.

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# Major Contributors to This Report

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**National Security and  
International Affairs  
Division, Washington,  
D.C.**

Richard Davis, Director  
Marvin E. Casterline, Assistant Director  
Mark J. Wielgoszynski, Senior Evaluator

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**Norfolk Field Office**

Fred S. Harrison, Evaluator-in-Charge  
Joseph A. Rutecki, Senior Evaluator  
Connie W. Sawyer, Jr., Senior Evaluator  
Carleen C. Bennett, Senior Evaluator

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# Glossary

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Area of Responsibility	The geographical area within which a combatant commander has authority to plan and conduct operations.
Continental United States	U. S. territory, including the adjacent territorial waters, on the North American continent between Canada and Mexico.
Geographic Command	A unified command (composed of significant assigned components of two or more military departments) with a broad continuing mission under a single commander that has geographic responsibilities. The geographic commands are the Atlantic, Central, European, Pacific, and Southern Commands.
Interoperability	Ability of systems, units, or forces to provide services to and accept services from other systems, units, or forces to enable them to operate effectively together.
Joint Doctrine	Fundamental principles that guide the employment of forces from two or more services in coordinated action toward a common objective.
Joint Force	A force composed of significant elements, assigned or attached, of two or more military departments, operating under a single joint force commander.
Joint Operation Planning and Execution System	A continuously evolving system that is being developed through the integration and enhancement of earlier planning and execution systems. The system provides the foundation for conventional command and control by national- and theater-level commanders and their staffs. It is designed to satisfy their information needs in the conduct of joint planning and operations and is used to monitor, plan, and execute mobilization, deployment, employment, and sustainment activities associated with joint operations.
Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures	Publications, issued by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, that detail the actions and methods for implementing joint doctrine and describe how forces will be employed in joint operations.

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Joint Task Force	A joint force that may be established on a geographical area or functional basis when the mission has a specific limited objective and does not require overall centralized control of logistics. It is dissolved by the proper authority when the purpose for which it was created has been achieved or when it is no longer required.
Major Focus Areas	The main areas, as defined by USACOM, where the Command must focus its efforts to fulfill its vision and mission.
Military Operations Other Than War	Operations that encompass a wide range of activities where the military is used for purposes other than large-scale combat operations usually associated with war, such as counterterrorism, military support to counterdrug operations, noncombatant evacuation operations, nation assistance, civil support operations, and peace operations.
National Command Authorities	The President and the Secretary of Defense or their duly deputized alternatives or successors.
Service Component Command	A command consisting of the service component commander and all those service forces, such as individuals, units, detachments, organizations, and installations under the command, including the support forces, that have been assigned to a combatant command, or further assigned to a subordinate unified command or joint task force. For example, the Army's Forces Command is one of USACOM's service component commands.
Unified Command Plan	Document sets forth basic guidance to all unified combatant commanders; establishes their missions, responsibilities, and force structure; delineates the general geographic area of responsibility for geographic commanders; and specifies functional responsibilities for functional commanders. It is approved by the President, published by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and addressed to the commanders of combatant commands.