

ARMY, MARINE CORPS, NAVY, AIR FORCE



**AIR LAND SEA
APPLICATION
CENTER**

TAGS

***MULTI-SERVICE TACTICS,
TECHNIQUES, AND
PROCEDURES FOR THE
THEATER AIR-GROUND
SYSTEM***

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MULTI-SERVICE TACTICS, TECHNIQUES, AND PROCEDURES

FOREWORD

This publication has been prepared under our direction for use by our respective commands and other commands as appropriate.

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PREFACE

1. Purpose

Each component brings unique capabilities to a joint operation. Successful theater operations require effective synchronization of all forces: ground, air, naval, space, and special operations. Coordinated operations permit the joint force commanders (JFCs) to rapidly develop the situation and dominate the enemy throughout the battlespace in order to meet their operational objectives. The TAGS consists of an overarching joint C2 architecture and Service coordination links which facilitate the integration, synchronization, planning, and execution of joint air-ground operations. The TAGS is a system of systems, a synergy of the various component air-ground systems, orchestrating the planning and execution of air-ground operations. The objective of this publication is to describe how each of the component systems operates within the TAGS. For the purpose of this publication, the TAGS refers to organizations, personnel, equipment, and procedures that participate in the planning and execution of all air-ground operations. Key to the TAGS is an understanding of the systems and how to maximize each component to achieve quick and decisive results in combat.

2. Scope

This publication provides a generic concept and procedures for Theater Air-Ground System (TAGS) operations. It is a “primer” for all planners to facilitate the integration of air and ground operations. It discusses the basics of joint and component air-ground systems and operations, an overview of the joint air tasking order (ATO) cycle, and the command and decision-making process at component and joint force levels. This unclassified publication describes a generic TAGS; therefore, practitioners in mature theaters should refer to theater manuals and special operations instructions for theater-specific procedures. This publication has worldwide application and can serve as a model for any level of conflict.

3. Applicability

The tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP) described in this publication apply to all elements of a joint force. This publication uses approved joint and Service doctrine and terminology as its foundation. The publication identifies methodologies to employ existing Service command and control systems in order to facilitate air-ground operations.

4. Implementation Plan

Participating Service command offices of primary responsibility (OPRs) will review this publication, validate the information and, where appropriate, reference and incorporate it in Service manuals, regulations, and curricula as follows:

Army. Upon approval and authentication, this publication incorporates the procedures contained herein into the US Army Doctrine and Training Literature Program as directed by the Commander, US Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC). Distribution is in accordance with applicable directives.

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5. User Information

a. TRADOC, MCCDC, NWDC, Headquarters AFDC, and the Air Land Sea Application (ALSA) Center developed this publication with the joint participation of the approving Service commands. ALSA will review and update this publication as necessary.

b. This publication reflects current joint and Service doctrine, command and control organizations, facilities, personnel, responsibilities, and procedures. Changes in Service protocol, appropriately reflected in joint and Service publications, will likewise be incorporated in revisions to this document.

c. We encourage recommended changes for improving this publication. Key your comments to the specific page and paragraph and provide a rationale for each recommendation. Send comments and recommendations directly to—

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TAGS

MULTI-SERVICE TACTICS, TECHNIQUES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE THEATER AIR GROUND SYSTEM

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TAGS

Multi-Service Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for the Theater Air Ground System

Overview

This MTTP discusses the basic understanding of joint and component air-ground operations, the joint targeting process, and the command decision-making process at component and joint force levels. This manual has application for planning and warfighting personnel at all echelons. It is written for air-ground practitioners at all echelons down to Air Force Wing, Army Battalion, Naval Expeditionary Force, and Marine Air-Ground Task Forces (MAGTF).

The Joint Force

Chapter I summarizes the joint task force (JTF) level considerations, organizational options, and command relationships that influence air-ground operations. It further describes the role of the joint force commander and discusses in broad terms the roles and responsibilities of the joint force air component commander (JFACC) and other elements of the TAGS, including the area air defense commander (AADC) and airspace control authority (ACA). A brief introduction to the joint air operations center (JAOC) is provided.

Army Component

Chapter II describes how the US Army integrates and synchronizes its capabilities within the joint force. It outlines the Army's operations framework and discusses how it influences air operations, and explains the Army approach to planning operations. The Army air-ground system (AAGS) is the focus of the chapter. The various elements of the AAGS and fire support coordination system are discussed in detail, including the tactical air control party (TACP), fire support coordinator (FSCOORD), battlefield coordination detachment (BCD), Army Air and Missile Defense Command (AAMDC), and deep operations coordination cell (DOCC).

Air Force Component

Chapter III provides a basic understanding of how the Air Force views the employment of air and space power and the Air Force contribution to the TAGS. It discusses the Air Force's TAGS-related missions and responsibilities in a joint operation, operational factors that influence the way missions are accomplished, and the Air Force component command and control (C2) system. This chapter presents the tenets of airpower and Air Force core competencies from an air and space perspective. A discussion of the Air Force air and space operations center (AFAOC) clarifies the roles and missions of each of its subcomponents. A detailed description of Air Force capabilities, weapon systems, organization, planning considerations, and command and control architectures is included.

Navy Component

Chapter IV provides a general understanding of the roles that naval forces can accomplish in the JFC's campaign, the doctrinal tools currently in use, and the C2 systems used to apply naval air power to the JFC's mission. It includes a description of Navy capabilities, weapon systems, organization, planning considerations, and command and control architectures that function as part of the TAGS. This chapter also discusses Tomahawk land attack missile (TLAM) operations, command and control, integration of TLAMs into the TAGS, the sea-based JFACC concept, and amphibious operations.

Marine Corps Component

Chapter V provides a detailed description of Marine Corps capabilities, weapon systems, organization, planning considerations, and command and control architectures that function as part of the TAGS. This chapter highlights the various types of Marine air ground task forces (MAGTFs); tailoring of MAGTFs to support diverse missions; size, capabilities, and composition of MAGTFs; and examines the roles of MAGTFs in detail. It also addresses the Marine Corps process for planning amphibious operations and joint or multinational operations. It discusses, in detail, coordination links for the Marine Air Command Control System (MACCS), fire support, and targeting.

Theater Air Ground System Operations

Chapter VI integrates the component-specific capabilities, missions, and doctrine to give an understanding of how the TAGS operates. It expands earlier discussions on the role of the joint force commander in the TAGS, outlines TAGS coordination links, and focuses on the integration of the air tasking order (ATO) and targeting cycles. The in-depth discussion of the ATO development process includes target development, close air support (CAS) sortie distribution, force allocation, and force execution. There are additional sections on defensive counterair and interdiction.

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Chapter I

THE JOINT FORCE

1. Background

It is important that personnel assigned to, or working with, the Theater Air-Ground System (TAGS) understand the decision processes and problems associated with the operational and tactical levels of command. Armed with this knowledge, commanders and staffs will better understand TAGS functions and how to work within the system to receive or give support. Actions at the joint force level establish the requirements for TAGS, including the combatant commander's guidance, perspective, and strategy for the area of responsibility (AOR); the joint force commander's (JFC's) joint operations area (JOA) strategy (if the JFC is not the combatant commander), command organization and relationships; the campaign plan; assignment of objectives; and apportionment of forces. This chapter summarizes the joint task force (JTF) level considerations and organizational options that influence theater air-ground operations. It describes the role of the JFC, command relationships, the role and responsibilities of the joint component commanders, and TAGS liaison requirements.

2. Establishing the JTF

The Secretary of Defense, a combatant commander, subordinate unified commander, or an existing JTF commander establishes JTFs. Joint forces are established on either a geographic or functional basis. Establishing a joint force based on a geographic area is the most common method of assigning responsibility. This TAGS publication applies to a JTF established on a geographic area basis since functional JTFs are typically associated with unified commands for transportation, space, special operations, and strategic operations.

3. The Joint Force Commander (JFC)

If a combatant commander decides to delegate authority for an assigned mission, a subordinate JFC may be designated to command a subordinate JTF. In this publication, JFC means either a geographic combatant commander or a subordinate who is designated a JFC. The JFC has the authority to organize forces to best accomplish the assigned mission, based on the concept of operations, by establishing subordinate commands, assigning responsibilities, establishing or delegating appropriate command and support relationships, and establishing coordinating instructions for the component commanders. The JFC has full authority to assign missions, redirect efforts, and direct coordination among subordinate commanders, and exercises operational control (OPCON) over assigned and normally over attached forces. The JFC assembles a joint staff with appropriate members in key positions of responsibility from each service or functional component having significant forces assigned to the command. The manner in which JFCs organize their forces directly affects the responsiveness and versatility of joint force operations. According to JP 3-0, the JFC's vision and concept of operations are the basis for organizing forces to accomplish the mission.