MCWP 3-22.2

SUPPRESSION OF ENEMY AIR DEFENSES (SEAD)

U.S. Marine Corps

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Unless otherwise stated, whenever the masculine gender is used, both men and women are included.

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
Headquarters United States Marine Corps
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FOREWORD

Marine Corps Warfighting Publication (MCWP) 3-22.2, *Suppression of Enemy Air Defenses (SEAD)* provides the information needed by Marines to understand, plan, and execute SEAD missions in support of Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF), joint, and combined operations. The focus of MCWP 3-22.2 is for the MAGTF commander, his staff, and other personnel involved in planning and executing operations to understand the requirements to plan successful SEAD missions during an operation. This publication:

- Defines SEAD.
- Assesses the threat.
- Highlights capabilities and limitations of SEAD.
- Discusses SEAD planning.
- Discusses critical aspects of SEAD mission execution.

MCWP 3-22.2 supersedes Fleet Marine Force Manual (FMFM) 5-45, *Suppression of Enemy Air Defenses*, dated 30 September 1994.

Reviewed and approved this date.

BY DIRECTION OF THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

B. B. KNUTSON, JR.
Lieutenant General, U.S. Marine Corps
Commanding General
Marine Corps Combat Development Command

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Suppression of Enemy Air Defenses

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Chapter 1
Fundamentals

The Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF) commander uses ground based and airborne fires to suppress enemy air defense systems allowing friendly aircraft to conduct missions within the airspace protected by these defenses. This is known as suppression of enemy air defenses (SEAD). SEAD increases the effectiveness and flexibility of MAGTF operations.

SEAD supports MAGTF, joint, and combined aviation operations across the spectrum of warfare—from peacekeeping to military operations other than war (MOOTW), and low-intensity through high-intensity conflicts. SEAD is a tactical mission. It may support one or more levels of warfare (tactical, operational, and strategic) depending on the mission and the threat systems encountered. See figure 1-1 on page 1-2.

Definitions

Prohibitive interference is that degree of influence introduced by the enemy that prevents the accomplishment of the MAGTF's mission. Prohibitive interference is subjective. Factors influencing prohibitive interference are asset attrition (the inability to achieve the MAGTF mission due to destruction of MAGTF assets) and mission aborts (inability to achieve the MAGTF mission due to enemy forced aborts or likelihood of destruction).

Antiair warfare's (AAW's) primary function is to gain and maintain the degree of air superiority required for the MAGTF to conduct operations. AAW prevents the enemy from restricting MAGTF air, land, and naval operations at a given time and place.