
Control of Aircraft and Missiles



U.S. Marine Corps

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FOREWORD

The control of aircraft and missiles within the Marine Corps is exercised through the Marine air command and control system (MACCS). The MACCS provides the aviation combat element (ACE) commander with the means to exercise control of those organic and non-organic aviation assets necessary to support Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF) operations. The 3-25 series of warfighting publications addresses the functions of this system and each of its component agencies.

Marine Corps Warfighting Publication (MCWP) 3-25, *Control of Aircraft and Missiles*, supersedes Fleet Marine Force Manual (FMFM) 5-60, *Control of Aircraft and Missiles*. Designed for Marine air-ground task force, naval expeditionary force, and joint force commanders, their staffs, and any other Marine Corps personnel involved in the planning and execution of aviation command and control operations, MCWP 3-25 discusses how the control of aircraft and missiles is the function which integrates the six functions of Marine aviation into a cohesive effort. It further presents principles of aviation control; the Marine Corps' philosophy of centralized command and decentralized control; the integration of Marine control of aircraft and missiles in Marine air-ground task force, naval expeditionary force, and joint force operations; the responsibilities of the Marine Corps forces component commander when designated as the airspace control authority; and how all this is effected in the Marine air command and control system.

By addressing these issues, this publication links the higher order doctrine contained in the Marine Corps Doctrinal Publications and MCWP 3-2, *Aviation Operations*, with the lower level tactics, techniques, and procedures contained in the MCWP 3-25 series, and provides commanders and their staffs with the requisite knowledge to plan for the control of aircraft and missiles.

Reviewed and approved this date.

BY DIRECTION OF THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

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Chapter 1

Fundamentals

"From the very beginning the British had an extraordinary advantage which we could never overcome throughout the entire war: radar and fighter control."

—Adolf Galland, WWII Luftwaffe Ace ¹

Command and control is essential to all Marine air-ground task force operations and crucial to success in war. The linking of decision making and execution forms the basis of command and control. The use of combined arms is a tenet of the Marine Corps' maneuver warfare philosophy. The Marine air-ground task force uses command and control to exercise a combined arms effort by integrating the other warfighting functions (e.g., fires, maneuver, force protection, logistics, and intelligence). Marine aviation is a vital component of the Marine air-ground task force combined arms strategy. Command and control of Marine air-ground task force aviation is performed through the Marine air command and control system. Exercising control of aircraft and missiles is principal to the Marine air-ground task force's ability to plan, direct, and control the efforts of its aviation combat element.

The control of aircraft and missiles is one of six functions the aviation combat element commander is responsible to provide to the Marine air-ground task force. Because this function interacts continuously with the other five functions, it is necessary to examine all six functions of Marine aviation to understand how the aviation combat element controls aircraft and missiles.