

U.S. Army Training and Doctrine
Command, Fort Eustis, VA



The U.S. Army in Multi-Domain Operations 2028

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



2018

Distribution Statement A.
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The Army in Multi-Domain Operations

Operational Environment

- Contested in all domains
- Increasingly lethal, expanded battlefield
- Increasingly complex environment
- Challenged deterrence

Russian and Chinese Anti-Access and Area Denial Systems Create Multiple Layers of Stand-off

Competition

Creating stand-off by separating the U.S. and partners politically with...

- National- and district-level forces
- Unconventional warfare
- Information warfare
- Conventional forces: Long-, mid-, and short-range systems

...to fracture alliances and win without fighting

Armed Conflict

Creating stand-off by separating the Joint Force in time, spaces, and function with...

- National- and district-level forces
- Conventional forces: Long-, mid-, and short-range systems
- Unconventional warfare
- Information warfare

...to win quickly with a surprise, fait accompli campaign

Central Idea: Army forces, as an element of the Joint Force, conduct Multi-Domain Operations to prevail in competition; when necessary, Army forces penetrate and dis-integrate enemy anti-access and area denial systems and exploit the resultant freedom of maneuver to achieve strategic objectives (win) and force a return to competition on favorable terms.

Multi-Domain Operations (MDO) Problems

1. How does the Joint Force **compete** to enable the defeat of an adversary's operations to destabilize the region, deter the escalation of violence, and, should violence escalate, enable a rapid transition to armed conflict?
2. How does the Joint Force **penetrate** enemy anti-access and area denial systems throughout the depth of the Support Areas to enable strategic and operational maneuver?
3. How does the Joint Force **dis-integrate** enemy anti-access and area denial systems in the Deep Areas to enable operational and tactical maneuver?
4. How does the Joint Force **exploit** the resulting freedom of maneuver to achieve operational and strategic objectives through the defeat of the enemy in the Close and Deep Maneuver Areas?
5. How does the Joint Force **re-compete** to consolidate gains and produce sustainable outcomes, set conditions for long-term deterrence, and adapt to the new security environment?

Tenets of Multi-Domain Operations

Calibrated Force Posture

- Forward presence forces*
- Expeditionary forces**
- National-level capabilities
- Authorities

* contact and blunt forces; ** blunt and surge forces

Multi-Domain Formations

- Conduct independent maneuver
- Employ cross-domain fires
- Maximize human potential

Convergence (time, space, capabilities)

- Cross-domain synergy
- Layered options
- Mission command / disciplined initiative

Convergence at Echelon

XXXX

Theater Army

XXXX

Field Army

XXX

Corps

XX

Division

- Provides AOR-tailored capability
- Maintains enduring initiative
- Sets the theater
- Enables expeditionary maneuver
- Responds immediately to regional emergencies
- Protects bases, key nodes, and networks

- Executes competition against a near-peer
- Conducts all-domain operational preparation of the environment
- Provides credible deterrence
- Commands multiple corps
- Enables partners and SOF
- Employs long-range fires

- Tailors to multiple missions and roles (e.g., Joint Task Force)
- Coordinates deep cross-domain maneuver
- Commands multiple divisions
- Shapes Close Areas: enemy mid-range fires and IADS
- Defeats long-range fires

- Commands multiple BCTs and enablers
- Converges cross-domain capabilities in the Close Area
- Shapes Deep Maneuver Area
- Executes expeditionary and deep maneuver
- Dominates the close fight

Compete, Penetrate, Dis-integrate, Exploit, and Re-compete

Compete to expand the competitive space:

- Enable defeat of information and unconventional warfare
- Conduct intelligence and counter adversary reconnaissance
- Demonstrate credible deterrence

Penetrate strategic and operational stand-off:

- Neutralize enemy long-range systems
- Contest enemy maneuver forces
- Maneuver from operational and strategic distances

Dis-integrate the enemy's anti-access and area denial systems:

- Defeat enemy long-range systems
- Neutralize enemy short-range systems
- Conduct independent maneuver
- Conduct deception

Exploit freedom of maneuver to defeat enemy objectives:

- Defeat enemy mid-range systems
- Neutralize enemy short-range systems
- Maneuver to isolate and defeat enemy maneuver forces

Re-compete to consolidate and expand gains:

- Secure terrain and populations physically
- Enable sustainable outcomes with partners
- Set conditions for long-term deterrence
- Re-calibrate force posture
- Secure the initiative

Foreword

From the Chief of Staff of the Army

America's adversaries have studied US operations closely during Operations DESERT STORM, IRAQI FREEDOM, and ENDURING FREEDOM. They know the American way of war well and that we excel in a way of war that emphasizes joint and combined operations; technological dominance; global power projection; strategic, operational, and tactical maneuver; effective joint fires; sustainment at scale; and mission command initiative.

Simultaneously, emerging technologies like artificial intelligence, hypersonics, machine learning, nanotechnology, and robotics are driving a fundamental change in the character of war. As these technologies mature and their military applications become more clear, the impacts have the potential to revolutionize battlefields unlike anything since the integration of machine guns, tanks, and aviation which began the era of combined arms warfare.

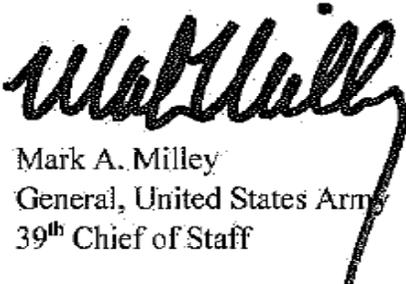
Strategic competitors like Russia and China are synthesizing emerging technologies with their analysis of military doctrine and operations. They are deploying capabilities to fight the US through multiple layers of stand-off in all domains – space, cyber, air, sea, and land. The military problem we face is defeating multiple layers of stand-off in all domains in order to maintain the coherence of our operations.

Therefore, the American way of war must evolve and adapt. *The U.S. Army in Multi-Domain Operations, 2028* is the first step in our doctrinal evolution. It describes how US Army forces, as part of the Joint Force, will militarily compete, penetrate, dis-integrate, and exploit our adversaries in the future.

This product is not a final destination, but is intended to provide a foundation for continued discussion, analysis, and development. We must examine all aspects of our warfighting methods and understand how we enable the joint force on the future battlefield. We must challenge our underlying assumptions, and we must understand the capabilities and goals of our potential enemies. That is how we change our warfighting techniques and build the fighting forces we need in the future. It is also how we maximize deterrence and, if necessary, win future wars.

Read, study, and dissect the multi-domain operations concept in this document. Every one of you is part of our evolution and the construction of the future force, and we want your critical feedback. Our intent is to publish another iteration in about 12 months following feedback from various wargames and exercises. We are laying the cornerstone for the success of our future Army in a profession where there is no room for second place. With your help, we will ensure America's Army is ready, lethal, and prepared to destroy its enemies now and in the future, in any domain, anytime, anywhere.

Army Strong!



Mark A. Milley
General, United States Army
39th Chief of Staff

Executive Summary

1. Purpose: From *Multi-Domain Battle* to *Multi-Domain Operations*.

TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-1, *The U.S. Army in Multi-Domain Operations* expands upon the ideas previously explained in *Multi-Domain Battle: Evolution of Combined Arms for the 21st Century*. It describes how the Army contributes to the Joint Force's principal task as defined in the unclassified *Summary of the National Defense Strategy*: deter and defeat Chinese and Russian aggression in both competition and conflict. *The U.S. Army in Multi-Domain Operations* proposes detailed solutions to the specific problems posed by the militaries of post-industrial, information-based states like China and Russia. Although this concept focuses on China and Russia, the ideas also apply to other threats.

2. The problem.

a. **Emerging operational environment.** Four interrelated trends are shaping competition and conflict: adversaries are contesting all domains, the electromagnetic spectrum (EMS), and the information environment and U.S. dominance is not assured; smaller armies fight on an expanded battlefield that is increasingly lethal and hyperactive; nation-states have more difficulty in imposing their will within a politically, culturally, technologically, and strategically complex environment; and near-peer states more readily compete below armed conflict making deterrence more challenging.¹ Dramatically increasing rates of urbanization and the strategic importance of cities also ensure that operations will take place within dense urban terrain. Adversaries, such as China and Russia, have leveraged these trends to expand the battlefield in time (a blurred distinction between peace and war), in domains (space and cyberspace), and in geography (now extended into the Strategic Support Area, including the homeland) to create tactical, operational, and strategic stand-off.² For the purpose of this document, Russia serves as the pacing threat. In fact, Russia and China are different armies with distinct capabilities, but assessed to operate in a sufficiently similar manner to orient on their capabilities collectively.

b. **China and Russia in competition.** In a state of continuous competition, China and Russia exploit the conditions of the operational environment to achieve their objectives without resorting to armed conflict by fracturing the U.S.'s

¹ *Hyperactive* means more active than usual or desirable; hyper-competitive during competition and hyper-violent in armed conflict.

² Stand-off is the strategic and operational effect Russia, China, and their surrogates are attempting to achieve. It is achieved with both political and military capabilities. Stand-off is the political, temporal, spatial, and functional separation that enables freedom of action in any, some, or all domains, the EMS, and the information environment to achieve strategic and/or operational objectives before an adversary can adequately respond.

alliances, partnerships, and resolve. They attempt to create stand-off through the integration of diplomatic and economic actions, unconventional and information warfare (social media, false narratives, cyber attacks), and the actual or threatened employment of conventional forces.³ By creating instability within countries and alliances, China and Russia create political separation that results in strategic ambiguity reducing the speed of friendly recognition, decision, and reaction. Through these competitive actions, China and Russia believe they can achieve objectives below the threshold of armed conflict.

c. **China and Russia in armed conflict.** In armed conflict, China and Russia seek to achieve physical stand-off by employing layers of anti-access and area denial systems designed to rapidly inflict unacceptable losses on U.S. and partner military forces and achieve campaign objectives within days, faster than the U.S. can effectively respond. Over the last twenty-five years, China and Russia invested in and developed a systematic approach to “fracture” AirLand Battle by countering the Joint Force’s increasingly predictable use of time-phased and domain-federated operational approaches in armed conflict. The resulting anti-access and area denial systems create strategic and operational stand-off that separates the elements of the Joint Force in time, space, and function. Moreover, both China and Russia are continuing to improve these anti-access and area denial systems and are proliferating the associated technologies and techniques to other states. The Joint Force has not kept pace with these developments. It is still designed for operations in relatively uncontested environments that allow for sequential campaigns based on predictable approaches that assume air and naval supremacy: extensive shaping with air and naval strikes before the final destruction of severely degraded enemy forces through joint combined arms operations.

3. Conducting Multi-Domain Operations.

a. **Central idea.** Army forces, as an element of the Joint Force, conduct Multi-Domain Operations to prevail in competition; when necessary, Army forces penetrate and dis-integrate enemy anti-access and area denial systems and exploit the resultant freedom of maneuver to achieve strategic objectives (win) and force a return to competition on favorable terms.⁴

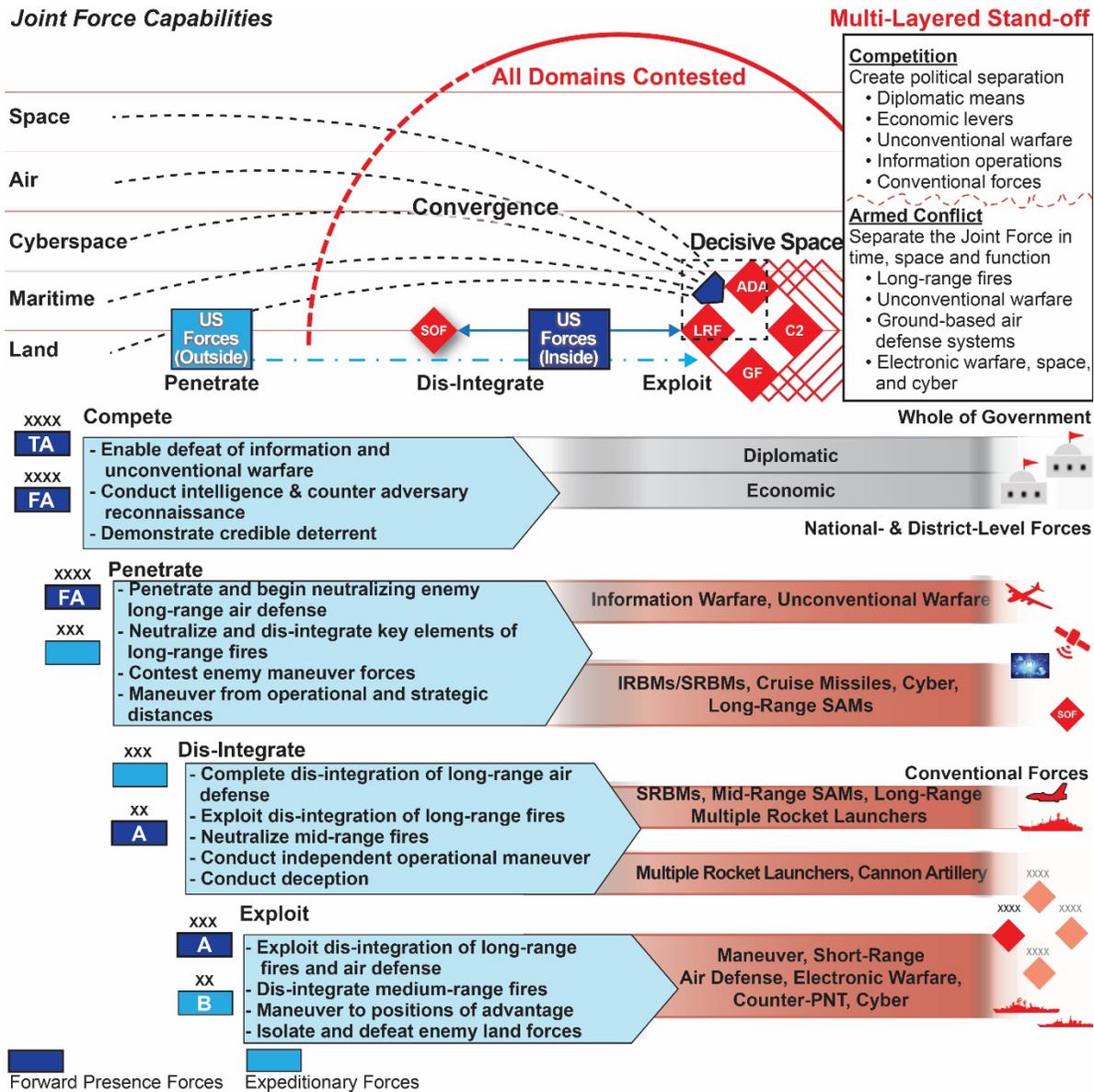
³ Within this document, the term *information warfare* denotes actions taken by an adversary or enemy. The scope and meaning of the term are derived from Russian doctrine. The document refers to friendly actions as *information environment operations*.

⁴ *Dis-integrate* refers to breaking the coherence of the enemy's system by destroying or disrupting its subcomponents (such as command and control means, intelligence collection, critical nodes, etc.) degrading its ability to conduct operations while leading to a rapid collapse of the enemy's capabilities or will to fight. This definition revises the current doctrinal defeat mechanism *disintegrate*.

b. Tenets of the Multi-Domain Operations. The Army solves the problems presented by Chinese and Russian operations in competition and conflict by applying three interrelated tenets: calibrated force posture, multi-domain formations, and convergence. Calibrated force posture is the combination of position and the ability to maneuver across strategic distances. Multi-domain formations possess the capacity, capability, and endurance necessary to operate across multiple domains in contested spaces against a near-peer adversary. Convergence is rapid and continuous integration of capabilities in all domains, the EMS, and information environment that optimizes effects to overmatch the enemy through cross-domain synergy and multiple forms of attack all enabled by mission command and disciplined initiative. The three tenets of the solution are mutually reinforcing and common to all Multi-Domain Operations, though how they are realized will vary by echelon and depend upon the specific operational situation.

c. Multi-Domain Operations and strategic objectives. The Joint Force must defeat adversaries and achieve strategic objectives in competition, armed conflict, and in a return to competition. In competition, the Joint Force expands the competitive space through active engagement to counter coercion, unconventional warfare, and information warfare directed against partners.⁵ These actions simultaneously deter escalation, defeat attempts by adversaries to “win without fighting,” and set conditions for a rapid transition to armed conflict. In armed conflict, the Joint Force defeats aggression by optimizing effects from across multiple domains at decisive spaces to penetrate the enemy’s strategic and operational anti-access and area denial systems, dis-integrate the components of the enemy’s military system, and exploit freedom of maneuver necessary to achieve strategic and operational objectives that create conditions favorable to a political outcome. In the return to competition, the Joint Force consolidates gains and deters further conflict to allow the regeneration of forces and the re-establishment of a regional security order aligned with U.S. strategic objectives.

⁵ Expanding the competitive space is a key idea from the 2018 *National Defense Strategy*, and is a logical extension of the 2017 *Joint Concept for Integrated Campaigning*. Expanding the competitive space refers to taking actions to expand options (diplomatic, information, military, economic, etc.) for the political leadership and extending competition in time while also deterring escalation to armed conflict.



d. **Multi-domain problems and solutions.** To achieve these strategic objectives, the Army—as part of and with the Joint Force and partners—must solve five operational problems:

(1) **How does the Joint Force compete to enable the defeat of an adversary’s operations to destabilize the region, deter the escalation of violence, and, should violence escalate, enable a rapid transition to armed conflict?** In the past, the U.S. military—due to cultural, statutory, and policy reasons—has often remained reactive in competition below armed conflict. Successful competition requires Army forces actively engaging across domains (including space and cyberspace), in the EMS, and in the information environment.

Army forces enable the Joint Force and interagency to seize and sustain the initiative in competition by deterring conflict on terms favorable to the U.S., defeating an adversary's efforts to expand the competitive space below the threshold of conflict, and setting the conditions to enable the Joint Force's rapid transition to armed conflict. The Army's posture, capabilities (to include necessary authorities), and readiness to execute Multi-Domain Operations deter adversaries from escalation, counter their information and unconventional warfare, undermine their efforts to coerce U.S. partners with the threat of armed conflict, and set conditions in the event of conflict. Denying or restricting the support provided by the adversary's conventional forces to proxies allows U.S. partners to more easily counter attempts to destabilize their countries. The demonstrated capability to prevail in armed conflict counters narratives by adversaries who portray the U.S. as a weak or irresolute partner. These actions combine to create a favorable environment for the Joint Force's rapid transition to armed conflict.

(2) How does the Joint Force penetrate enemy anti-access and area denial systems throughout the depth of the Support Areas to enable strategic and operational maneuver? In the event of armed conflict, Army forces immediately penetrate enemy anti-access and area denial systems by neutralizing enemy long-range systems, contesting enemy maneuver forces, and maneuvering from strategic and operational distances. Multi-domain formations converge capabilities with the Joint Force and partners to rapidly strike the enemy's long-range systems. Forward presence forces immediately contest an enemy attack in multiple domains. Forward presence forces also preserve lines of communications by degrading enemy long-range surveillance and reconnaissance and by employing a mixture of deception, dispersion, and protection. The appropriate balance of capabilities across the Total Force provides cohesive, fully capable forward presence forces and expeditionary capabilities able to deploy within strategically relevant time periods.

(3) How does the Joint Force dis-integrate enemy anti-access and area denial systems in the Deep Areas to enable operational and tactical maneuver? The Joint Force must dis-integrate the enemy's anti-access and area denial systems to further the defeat of the enemy's stand-off capabilities, prevent the re-integration of remaining capabilities, and enable freedom of maneuver. Army forces at echelon employ cross-domain fires to defeat the enemy's long-range systems and begin the neutralization of the enemy mid-range systems. Convergence optimizes the employment of capabilities across all domains, the EMS, and the information environment to stimulate, see, and strike the enemy. Convergence also complicates the enemy's attempts to conceal and defend its

long- and mid-range systems by providing the Joint Force with multiple options for attacking the enemy's vulnerabilities. Joint, Army, and partner maneuver forces execute operational maneuver and deception to further stimulate enemy mid-range systems and fix or isolate enemy maneuver forces.

(4) How does the Joint Force exploit the resulting freedom of maneuver to achieve operational and strategic objectives through the defeat of the enemy in the Close and Deep Maneuver Areas? In the Close and Deep Maneuver Areas, Army forces exploit weaknesses in the enemy's command system and their dependence on air defense and ground fires to complete the defeat of the enemy. Army forces employ deception and convergence with other domains to dislocate the enemy defense by physically, virtually, and cognitively isolating its subordinate elements, allowing friendly forces to achieve overmatch and favorable force ratios. The Joint Force continues dis-integrating tactical anti-access and area denial systems to enable further exploitation until it achieves U.S. campaign objectives.

(5) How does the Joint Force re-compete to consolidate gains and produce sustainable outcomes, set conditions for long-term deterrence, and adapt to the new security environment? Army forces consolidate gains and set conditions for a favorable new security environment by maintaining control of key terrain and populations that provide U.S. policymakers with a political advantage. They consolidate gains through three concurrent activities: physically securing terrain and populations for sustainable outcomes; setting conditions for long-term deterrence by regenerating partner and Joint Force capacity and by actively engaging across domains and the information space; and adapting force posture to the new security environment. This provides time for U.S. forces to regenerate regional military structures and continue to provide a credible deterrent.

4. Implications for the Army.

a. **Enhanced and broader need for combined arms maneuver.** The emerging operational environment and the challenges posed by China and Russia, particularly their capability to create political and military stand-off, demand that the Joint Force apply the proven principles of combined arms maneuver and massing of effects at decisive spaces. What is different is the idea that Army forces must apply these joint capabilities more comprehensively (earlier, in greater capacity, and at lower echelons) and in new ways (faster and with greater agility). Multi-domain formations provide the Joint Force with additional means to

stimulate, see, and strike key components and vulnerabilities within enemy systems. Army forces also continue to conduct the traditional tasks of seizing terrain, destroying enemy forces, and securing friendly populations. Army forces retain the ability to overmatch the enemy, despite reduced friendly capacity, by converging capabilities from across all domains, the EMS, and the information environment.

b. Operating at echelon. Army forces execute Multi-Domain Operations with echeloned formations that conduct intelligence, maneuver, and strike activities across all five domains (air, land, maritime, space, and cyberspace) as well as the information environment and the EMS.⁶ The ability of Army formations at echelon to converge capabilities in multiple ways and sequences provide the Joint Force Commander with options to impose additional complexity on the enemy. The echeloning of forces prevents the isolation of forward positioned forces within the stand-off range of enemy anti-access and area denial systems at the beginning of a conflict and enables strategic and operational maneuver by forces from outside the range of anti-access and area denial systems. Maneuver at echelon by Army forces then enables the Joint Force to overwhelm Chinese and Russian military systems with multiple dilemmas and massed effects, creating windows of superiority to enable freedom of maneuver.⁷

c. Converging cross-domain capabilities. Convergence has two advantages over single-domain alternatives: cross-domain synergy creates overmatch and multiple forms of attack create layered options across domains to enhance friendly operations and impose complexity on the enemy. The ability to converge cross-domain capabilities enables the Joint Force to stimulate, see, and strike vulnerabilities in the Chinese and Russian systems and defeat their efforts to create stand-off.⁸ Currently, the Joint Force converges capabilities through the episodic synchronization of domain-federated solutions, but will have to conduct continuous and rapid integration of multi-domain capabilities enabled by mission command and disciplined initiative against near-peer threats in the future.

⁶ The *U.S. Army Functional Concept for Movement and Maneuver, 2020-2040* defines cross-domain maneuver as “the employment of mutually supporting lethal and nonlethal capabilities in multiple domains to generate overmatch, present multiple dilemmas to the enemy, and enable Joint Force freedom of movement and action.”

⁷ As an example, Army formations can maneuver—or assist Joint Force maneuver—as a reconnaissance action, fighting to gain intelligence, key terrain, and set conditions that enable strikes, rather than maneuvering only after passive intelligence collection, deliberate analysis, and precision strikes have prepared the battlefield for maneuver.

⁸ The *U.S. Army Concept for Multi-Domain Combined Arms at Echelons Above Brigade, 2025-2045* calls for formations able to integrate, synchronize, and converge all elements of combat power across all domains to execute cross-domain maneuver; provide essential linkage to the expanded instruments of national power; and operate ubiquitously with joint, interagency, and multinational partners to overmatch any threat in any future environment.

d. **Maximize human potential.** The Army builds and sustains multi-domain formations through the selection, training, and education of the leaders, Soldiers, and teams in them. Employing multi-domain capabilities requires the Army to attract, retain, and employ leaders and Soldiers who collectively possess a significant breadth and depth of technical and professional expertise. The Army must exercise careful talent management to make the most of these high-quality personnel and integrate them into trusted teams of professionals who are able to thrive in ambiguity and chaos. Improving the resilience of leaders and Soldiers—the Army’s most valuable capability—requires training, educating, equipping, and supporting them to execute Multi-Domain Operations in all of its intensity, rigor, and complexity.

e. **Required Army capability sets.** *The U.S. Army in Multi-Domain Operations* concept requires the Army to develop or improve capabilities to contribute cross-domain options within the Joint Force by:

(1) Calibrating force posture geographically and across all the Army components to defeat Chinese and Russian offensive operations in competition and to deter escalation to armed conflict.⁹

(2) Preparing the operational environment by building partner capacity and interoperability and setting the theater through such activities as establishing basing and access rights, prepositioning equipment and supplies, conducting preparatory intelligence activities, and mapping EMS and computer networks.¹⁰ (Supported by Army Materiel Modernization Priorities: Army Network)

(3) Building partners’ and allies’ capacities and capabilities to defeat increasingly sophisticated Chinese and Russian-sponsored unconventional and information warfare.

(4) Preparing the operational environment for competition and conflict by building understanding of and capabilities in select urban areas of particular operational or strategic importance.

(5) Establishing precision logistics that provides a reliable, agile, and responsive sustainment capability necessary to support rapid power projection, Multi-Domain Operations, and independent maneuver from the Strategic Support

⁹ The idea of calibrating and re-calibrating force posture globally aligns with the idea of “forming operationally coherent forces” as described in the Joint Concept for Rapid Aggregation.

¹⁰ “Setting the theater” encompasses the actions to establish and maintain conditions to seize the initiative and retain freedom of action for a specific theater. These actions may occur outside of the theater as well.

Area to the Deep Maneuver Area. (Supported by Army Materiel Modernization Priorities: Future Vertical Lift, Army Network)

(6) Establishing necessary authorities and permissions normally reserved for conflict or to higher echelons to operate in competition and rapidly transition to conflict effectively.

(7) Improving the capability to conduct Multi-Domain Operations in dense urban terrain at all echelons through the development of tactics and capabilities to increase the accuracy, speed, and synchronization of lethal and nonlethal effects. (Supported by Army Materiel Modernization Priorities: Long-Range Precision Fires, Next Generation Combat Vehicle, Army Network, Soldier Lethality)

(8) Supporting a credible U.S. information narrative through cross-domain actions that communicate and counter threats by Chinese and Russian reconnaissance, strike, combined arms, and unconventional warfare capabilities.

(9) Enabling commanders and staffs at each echelon to visualize and command a battle in all domains, the EMS, and the information environment, converging organic and external capabilities at decisive spaces. This requires new tools to more rapidly converge capabilities across the Joint Force, shifting training paradigms, and changing personnel and talent management practices. This also requires that Army formations be trained, manned, and equipped to leverage all available information, from national, joint, commercial, and Service repositories and libraries, or directly from collection assets seamlessly and in a time dominant manner. (Supported by Army Materiel Modernization Priorities: Army Network, Soldier Lethality, Synthetic Training Environment)

(10) Providing to the Joint Force Commander multi-domain formations and systems that can converge capabilities to attack specific vulnerabilities in Chinese and Russian multi-layered, mutually reinforcing military forces and systems. This means creating commanders and staffs who have the means and ability to access and employ capabilities that reside across the Joint Force. (Supported by Army Materiel Modernization Priorities: Long-Range Precision Fires, Next Generation Combat Vehicles, Future Vertical Lift, Soldier Lethality)

(11) Providing to the Joint Force Commander with multi-domain formations that have systems, leaders, and Soldiers that are durable, can operate in a highly contested operational environment, cannot easily be isolated from the rest of the Joint Force or from partners, and are able to conduct independent maneuver and

employ cross-domain fires. This requires extended sustainability of systems and formations, and leaders and Soldiers who continue to operate effectively in austere environments and conditions. (Supported by Army Materiel Modernization Priorities: Long-Range Precision Fires, Next Generation Combat Vehicles, Future Vertical Lift, Army Network, Air and Missile Defense, Soldier Lethality)

(12) Consolidating gains through clear demonstrations of U.S. security commitments to partners through combined exercises, training, information exchanges, and other presence activities.

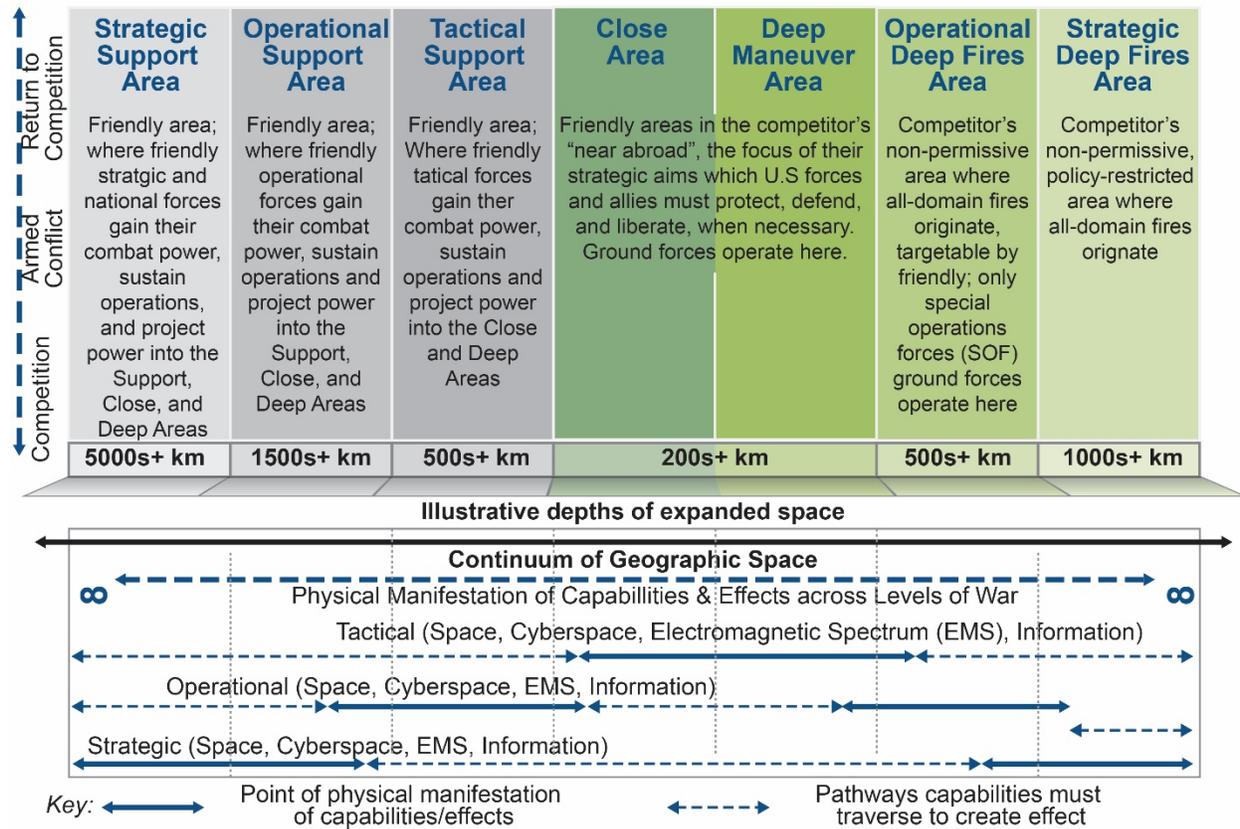
(13) Enabling and complementing land, air, and maritime capabilities with operations in space, cyberspace, and the EMS to support the opening of and exploitation of windows of superiority that create dilemmas for the enemy while protecting the ability to conduct friendly operations in degraded, disrupted, and/or denied operational environments.

(14) Attracting, retaining, and making maximum use of high-quality, physically fit, mentally tough Soldiers who have the skills and expertise to conduct Multi-Domain Operations.

f. Success in Multi-Domain Operations requires these capabilities be sufficiently developed, trained, and practiced within the Army, with the remainder of the Joint Force, and with allies and partners.

Multi-Domain Operations (MDO) Framework

The MDO framework illustrates the breadth of activities, spaces, distances, and interrelationships for which Multi-Domain Operations must account. This concept uses this framework throughout to illustrate friendly as well as an adversary's actions in and across spaces.



Despite the linear depiction, the areas are not defined by fixed geographic relationships or dimensions but by the operational context, the interplay of friendly and enemy capabilities, and terrain. The areas are not self-contained.

MDO Framework Definitions

Deep Fires Areas: The Operational and Strategic Deep Fires Areas comprise the Deep Fires Areas. These areas are defined as the areas beyond the feasible range of movement for conventional forces but where joint fires, special operations forces, information, and virtual capabilities can be employed. Operational and Strategic Deep Fires Areas are differentiated by the types of capabilities that can, or are authorized, to operate in each area. These areas are either too far (beyond operational reach) for conventional maneuver forces to enter or they are prohibited by policy (such as an international border). Therefore, operations in the Deep Fires Areas are limited to whatever physical and virtual capabilities are permitted by law or policy and that can

operate in the heart of enemy defenses. This limited accessibility and the inherent difficulty of operating deep within enemy territory place a premium on the ability to combine and employ whatever capabilities are available from across all domains.

Deep Maneuver Area: This area is the highly contested area where conventional maneuver (ground or maritime) is possible, but requires significant support from multi-domain capabilities; commanders must make a concerted effort to “break into” the Deep Maneuver Area. Because more friendly capabilities possess the range and survivability to influence or operate within this space than in the Deep Fires Areas, and because commanders can take advantage of the combination of fire and movement, there are many more options for Joint Force employment than in the Deep Fires Areas. Moreover, the persistence of ground and maritime maneuver forces allows operations to persist for far longer than in the Deep Fires Areas, where effects will often be more transitory. In most anticipated campaign designs, many operational objectives are in the Deep Maneuver Area.

Close Area: The Close Area is where friendly and enemy formations, forces, and systems are in imminent physical contact and will contest for control of physical space in support of campaign objectives. The Close Area includes land, maritime littorals, and the airspace over these areas. The new operational environment and improved enemy and friendly capabilities have expanded the Close Area. Operations in the Close Area require tempo and mobility in order to overcome these enemy capabilities through sufficiently integrated and concentrated combat power at the critical time and place. Characteristics of the Close Area present challenges to integrating cross-domain capabilities because of the reduced time available to access and employ enablers, such as centrally controlled, low-density capabilities. Commanders employ capabilities from all domains, organic and external, in the Close Area to generate complementary effects of combined arms, but speed of action, coordination, and synchronization of effects place a premium on organic capabilities. Operations in the Close Area are designed to create windows of superiority for maneuver to defeat enemy forces, disrupt enemy capabilities, physically control spaces, and protect and influence populations.

Strategic Support Area: This area is the area of cross-Combatant Command coordination, strategic sea and air lines of communications, and the homeland. Most friendly nuclear, space and cyberspace capabilities, and important network infrastructure are controlled and located in the Strategic Support Area. Joint logistics and sustainment functions required to support Multi-Domain Battle campaigning throughout competition and armed conflict emanate from the Strategic Support Area. The enemy will attack the Strategic Support Area to disrupt and degrade deployments and reinforcements attempting to gain access to the Operational Support Area and move to the Close Area, taking advantage of the reach of strategic lethal and nonlethal weapons, as well as UW reconnaissance and strikes. Enemy engagements in the Strategic Support Area will drive a rapid tempo of friendly operations in other areas to seek decision and limit enemy options for escalation.

Operational Support Area: This is the area where many key Joint Force mission command, sustainment, and fires/strike capabilities are located; these can be land or sea-based. This area normally encompasses many entire nations, thus making the Operational Support Area an important space for friendly political-military integration. Due to the political and military importance of the Operational Support Area, the enemy targets this area with substantial reconnaissance, information warfare, and operational fires capabilities. Friendly units maneuvering in the Operational Support Area, therefore, are never out of contact. The Joint Force will enable friendly operations in this area by dedicating significant capacity during armed conflict to open windows of superiority in the Operational Support Area that enable friendly operations.

Tactical Support Area: This is the area that directly enables operations in the Close, Deep Maneuver, and Deep Fires Areas. Many friendly sustainment, fires, maneuver support, and mission command capabilities are in the Tactical Support Area. The enemy directs information warfare, unconventional warfare, tactical fires, maneuver forces, and even operational fires at friendly forces, populations, and civil authorities in the Tactical Support Area. Friendly units in the Tactical Support Area must be prepared to endure threat fires and defeat enemy ground force infiltration through and penetrations of the Close Area. Mobility and survivability are key requirements for friendly forces operating in or rapidly transiting this area.



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