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**Joint Force  
Land Component  
Commander  
Handbook  
(JFLCC)**

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**DECEMBER 2001**

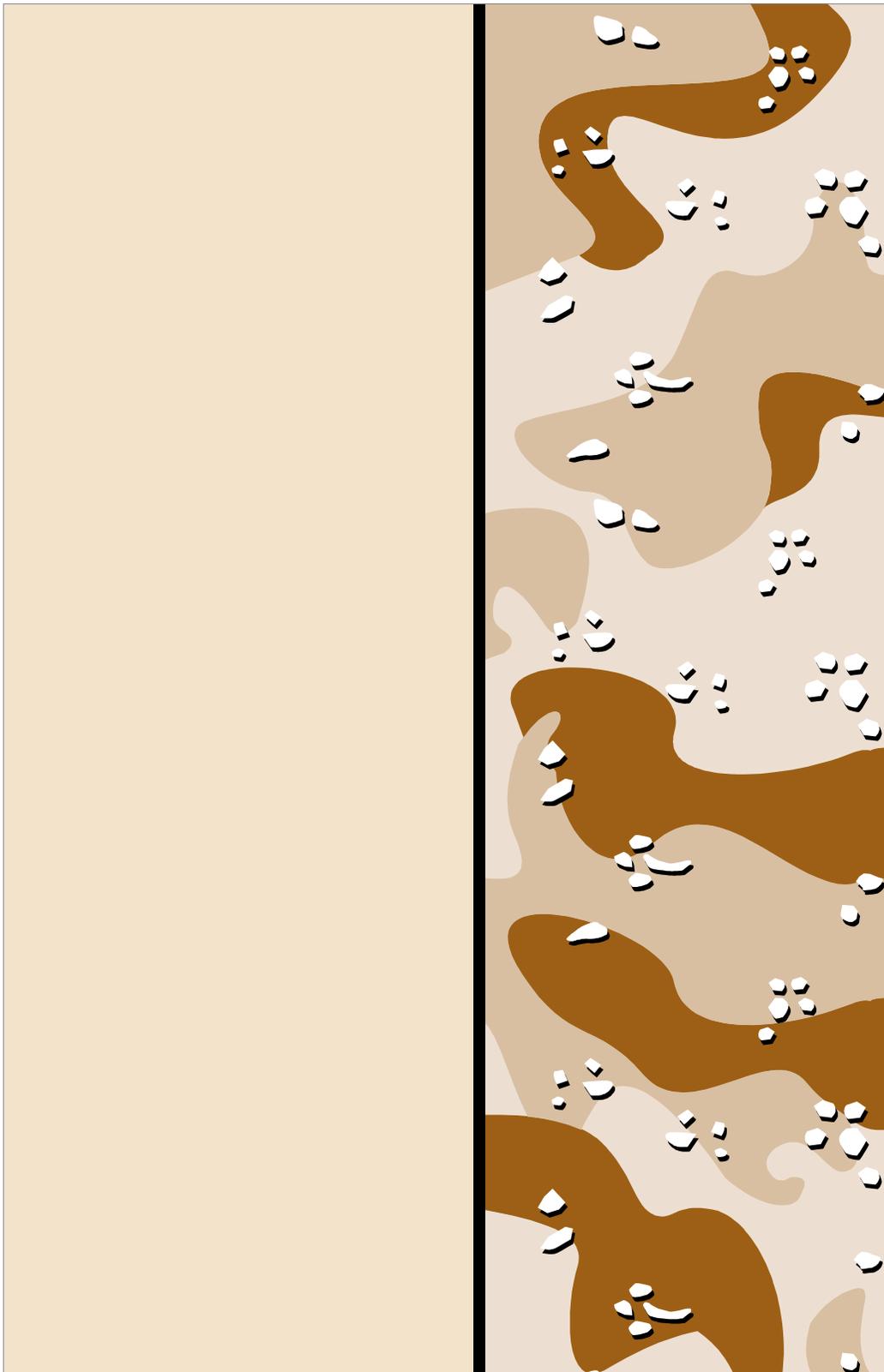
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**FM 3-31M**

**Joint Force Land Component Commander Handbook (JFLCC)**

**2001**



# Preface

## SCOPE

This handbook provides guidance for planning and conducting land operations requiring the close coordination of Army forces and Marine Corps forces under the control of a joint force land component commander within a joint operations area. It presents considerations and options that joint force commanders can employ when designating a joint force land component commander and describes the authority and responsibilities of a joint force land component commander.

## PURPOSE

This handbook describes guidance for establishing the command relationship based on the joint force commander's concept of operations. It addresses formation, functions, and organization of the joint force land component commander. It also discusses the operational questions of who, what, when, and how of operations in support of major operations or campaigns by a joint force commander. It is not the intent of this handbook to supplant approved joint doctrine; nor is it the intent to restrict the authority of the joint force commander from organizing the force and executing the mission in a manner he deems most appropriate to ensure unity of effort in the accomplishment of the overall mission.

## APPLICATION

The guidance in this handbook applies to combatant commanders, sub-joint task forces, and subordinate components of these commands. This handbook is used for guidance and reference only. If conflicts arise between the contents of this publication and the contents of joint publications, the joint publications will take precedence for the activities of joint forces.



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**Joint Force  
Land Component Commander Handbook  
(JFLCC)  
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**Chapter I**

**Authority and Functions  
of  
Joint Force Land Component Commander**

**SCOPE**

I-1. This handbook is designed for planning and conducting land operations requiring the close coordination of Army forces (ARFOR) and Marine Corps forces (MARFOR) under the control of a joint force land component commander (JFLCC) within the joint operations area (JOA). Joint force land component (JFLC) command operations addressed are primarily those involving large forces to include Army divisions and Marine expeditionary forces (MEFs) and the conduct of operations outside of an amphibious objective area (AOA), if designated. This handbook is also useful for planning and conducting land operations across the range of military operations and in multinational environments.

**PURPOSE**

I-2. Formation, functions, and organization of the JFLC command are addressed herein. Also discussed are the operational questions of who, what, when, and how of JFLC command operations in support of a campaign by a joint force commander (JFC). Joint doctrine establishes that the JFLCC option is available to the JFC. However, the doctrine necessary for planning and executing the JFLCC concept is still evolving. This United States Army (USA)/United States Marine Corps (USMC) handbook provides information and guidance to assist readers in the forming, planning, training, and execution of the JFLCC concept.

Functional component commands can be appropriate when forces from two or more Military Departments must operate in the same dimension or medium or there is a need to accomplish a distinct aspect of the assigned mission.

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## **ROLE AND AUTHORITY OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDER**

I-3. Unified action demands maximum interoperability. The forces, units, and systems of all Services achieve interoperability through collective efforts to develop and use joint doctrine; joint tactics, techniques, and procedures; and through the conduct of joint training. Joint forces can be established on either a geographic or functional basis. JFCs have the authority to organize forces to best accomplish the assigned mission based on their concept of operations (CONOPS). The organization should be sufficiently flexible to meet the planned phases of the campaign or major operation and any development that necessitates a change in plan. It should also optimize the capabilities of each component while maintaining the requisite unity of effort to attain the military objectives.

## **FUNCTIONS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS**

I-4. Unless otherwise directed by the President or the Secretary of Defense (SecDef), the authority, direction, and control of the commander of a combatant command (COCOM), with respect to the commands and the forces assigned to that command, are shown in Figure I-1.

- Giving authoritative direction to subordinate commands and forces necessary to carry out missions assigned to the command, including authoritative direction over all aspects of military operations, joint training, and logistics.
- Prescribing the chain of command to the commands and forces within the command.
- Organizing commands and forces within that command as necessary to carry out missions assigned to the command.
- Employing forces within that command as necessary to carry out missions assigned to the command.
- Assigning command functions to subordinate commanders.
- Coordinating and approving those aspects of administration, support (including control of resources and equipment, internal organization, and training), and discipline necessary to carry out missions assigned to the command.
- Exercising the authority with respect to selecting subordinate commanders, selecting combatant command staff, suspending subordinates, and convening courts-martial as delineated in Chapter 6, title 10, US Code.

**Figure I-1. General Functions of a Combatant Commander**

## **AUTHORITY OVER SUBORDINATE COMMANDERS**

I-5. Unless otherwise directed by the President or the SecDef—

- Commanders of commands and forces assigned to a combatant commander are under the authority, direction, and control of, and are responsible to, the combatant commander.
- The subordinate commander communicates with other elements of the Department of Defense (DOD) on matters the combatant commander is assigned authority for in accordance with procedures, if any, established by the combatant commander.
- Other elements of DOD communicate with the subordinate commander on matters the combatant commander is assigned authority for in accordance with established procedures.
- The subordinate commander advises the combatant commander, if so directed, of all communications to and from other elements of DOD on matters the combatant commander has not been assigned authority for.

A joint force commander (JFC) is a combatant commander, subunified commander, or joint task force (JTF) commander authorized to exercise combatant command (command authority) or operational control over a joint force.

## **FUNCTIONAL COMPONENT COMMAND AUTHORITY**

I-6. Combatant commanders and commanders of subordinate unified commands and JTFs have the authority to establish functional component commands to control military operations. Functional component commands may be established across the range of military operations to perform operational missions that may be of short or extended duration. The JFC has the authority to establish and designate a JFLCC. Functional component commands do not constitute a “joint force” with the authorities and responsibilities of a joint force as described in the United Action Armed Forces (UNAAF). Normally, the Service component commander with the

majority of forces, and requisite command and control (C<sup>2</sup>) capabilities, is designated as the functional component commander. However, the JFC considers the mission, nature and duration of the operation, force capabilities, and the C<sup>2</sup> capabilities in selecting a commander.

I-7. The responsibilities and authority of a functional component command are assigned by the establishing JFC. The establishment and designation of a functional component commander must not affect the command relationships between Service component commanders and the JFC.

I-8. The JFC must designate the military capability and forces that will be made available for tasking by the functional component commander and the appropriate command relationship(s) the functional component commander exercises over the forces provided.

I-9. When a functional component command will employ forces from more than one military department, the staff should be representative of the land forces that comprise the land component command.

### **COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS**

I-10. The authority vested in a commander is commensurate with the responsibility assigned. Forces, not command relationships, are transferred between commands. When forces are transferred, the command relationship the gaining commander exercises (and the losing commander relinquishes) over those forces must be specified. The four levels of command relationships used for US military forces are—

- Combatant command.
- Operational control (OPCON).
- Tactical control (TACON).
- Support.

These command relationships are discussed in detail in Chapter II.

## Chapter II

# Command, Control, and Command Relationships

### COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS

II-1. The four levels of command relationships used for US military forces are described below.

#### COMBATANT COMMAND (COMMAND AUTHORITY)

II-2. COCOM is the command authority over assigned forces vested only in the commanders of COCOMs by title 10, US Code, Section 164, or as directed by the President in the Unified Command Plan (UCP), and cannot be delegated or transferred. The combatant commander normally exercises OPCON over forces attached by the National Command Authority (NCA). Forces are attached when the transfer of forces is temporary. Establishing authorities for subordinate unified commands and JTFs will normally direct the delegation of OPCON over forces attached to those subordinate commands.

II-3. COCOM is the authority of a combatant commander to perform those functions of command over assigned forces to include—

- Organizing and employing commands and forces.
- Assigning tasks.
- Designating objectives.
- Giving authoritative direction over all aspects of military operations, joint training (or in the case of US Southern Command, training of assigned forces).
- Logistics.

II-4. COCOM should be exercised through the commanders of subordinate organizations. Normally, this authority is exercised through subordinate JFCs and Service and/or functional component commanders. COCOM provides full

authority to organize and employ commands and forces as the combatant commander considers necessary to accomplish assigned missions.

### **OPERATIONAL CONTROL**

II-5. OPCON is the command authority exercised by commanders at any echelon at or below the level of COCOM and can be delegated or transferred.

II-6. OPCON is inherent in COCOM and is the authority to perform those functions of command over subordinate forces involving—

- Organizing and employing commands and forces.
- Assigning tasks.
- Designating objectives.
- Giving authoritative direction necessary to accomplish the mission.

II-7. OPCON includes authoritative direction over all aspects of military operations and joint training necessary to accomplish missions assigned to the command. It should be exercised through the commanders of subordinate organizations; normally, this authority is exercised through subordinate JFCs and Service and/or functional component commanders. OPCON normally provides full authority to organize commands and forces and employ those forces necessary to accomplish assigned missions. It does not include authoritative direction for logistics or matters of administration, discipline, internal organization, or unit training. The combatant commander delegates these elements. OPCON does include the authority to delineate functional responsibilities and geographic JOAs of subordinate JFCs.

II-8. The superior commander gives commanders of subordinate commands and JTFs OPCON of assigned or attached forces.

### **TACTICAL CONTROL**

II-9. TACON is the command authority over assigned or attached forces or commands, or military capability or forces made available for tasking. It is limited to the detailed and usually local direction and control of movements or maneuvers necessary to accomplish assigned missions or tasks.

II-10. TACON may be delegated to and exercised by commanders at any echelon at or below the level of COCOM. TACON is inherent in OPCON.

## **SUPPORT**

II-11. Support is a command authority. A support relationship is established by a superior commander between subordinate commanders when one organization should aid, protect, complement, or sustain another force.

II-12. Support may be exercised by commanders at any echelon at or below the level of COCOM. This includes the NCA designating a support relationship between combatant commanders as well as within a COCOM. The designation of supporting relationships is important as it conveys priorities to commanders and staffs who are planning or executing joint operations. The support command relationship is a flexible arrangement. The establishing authority is responsible for ensuring that both the supported and supporting commanders understand the degree of authority granted the supported commander.

II-13. The supported commander should ensure that the supporting commander understands the assistance required. The supporting commander provides the assistance needed, subject to the supporting commander's existing capabilities and other assigned tasks. When the supporting commander cannot fulfill the needs of the supported commander, the establishing authority is notified by either the supported or supporting commander. The establishing authority is responsible for determining a solution.

II-14. An establishing directive is normally issued to specify the purpose of the support relationship, the effect desired, and the action to be taken.

II-15. See JP 0-2 for additional information on command relationships.

## **JFLC COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS**

II-16. Unity of command and effort is a primary consideration when establishing a JFLC command. The JFLC command gives the JFC another option for managing the operations of land forces by reducing his span of control. JFCs may elect to centralize selected functions within the joint force, but should avoid reducing the versatility, responsiveness, and initiative of subordinate forces. The JFLCC must understand his relationship with the JFC, the other components (Service and functional), and the forces/capabilities made available. The JFLCC may provide support to other components and may similarly receive support from other Service or functional components. Likewise, as a Service component commander, the JFLCC also has

responsibilities associated with Service component command for those assigned forces.

II-17. The type of command relationship given the JFLCC is based on the JFC's CONOPS and guidance. Functional component commanders typically exercise TACON over military capability or forces made available for tasking. The authority given to a functional component commander is based on mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops and support available, and time available (METT-T). The JFC designates the military capability available to the functional component commander, and he specifies the appropriate command relationships the functional component commander exercises. Once the JFC decides to form a JFLC command, he determines both the command relationships between the JFLC command and the components (Service and functional).

II-18. The JFLCC is the focal point for planning and executing the land operations portion of the JFC's campaign plan. The JFLCC prepares a supporting joint land operations plan that provides the intent, CONOPS, and the supporting details. The JFLCC directs current land operations while continuing to plan and prepare for future land operations.

### **COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE JFC**

II-19. The JFLCC reports directly to the JFC and advises the JFC on the proper employment of land forces. The JFC has the full authority to assign missions, redirect efforts, and direct coordination among subordinate commanders. JFCs should allow Service tactical and operational assets and groupings to function as they are designed. The intent is to meet the needs of the JFC while maintaining the tactical and operational integrity of the Service organizations.

### **COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS WITH FUNCTIONAL COMPONENTS**

II-20. The JFC may also establish supporting and supported relationships between components. The JFC determines not only how to organize the joint force into components, but also how each component relates to the others. Support relationships afford an effective means to weight (and ensure unity of effort for) the main effort of various operations, each component typically receiving and providing support at the same time.

II-21. As with all other authority within a joint force, support authority is directed by the JFC. There are four support relationships directed by the JFC: general support, mutual support, close support, and direct support.

- General Support. Support given to the supported force as a whole and not to any particular subdivision thereof.
- Mutual Support. Support units render each other against an adversary. This is based on, because of their assigned tasks, their position relative to each other and to the adversary, and their inherent capabilities.
- Close Support. Action of the supporting force against targets or objectives which are sufficiently close to the supported force. This requires detailed integration or coordination of the supporting action with the fire, movement, or other actions of the supported force.
- Direct Support. A mission requiring a force to support another specific unit. This authorizes the supporting unit to answer directly to the supported force's request for assistance.

II-22. Regardless of the organizational and command arrangements within joint commands, Service component commanders are responsible for certain Service-specific functions and other matters affecting their forces, including internal administration, training, logistics, and Service intelligence operations.

Combatant commanders, commanders of subordinate unified commands, and joint task forces (JTFs) have the authority to establish functional component commands to control military operations.

JP 0-2

## **FUNCTIONAL COMPONENT SUPPORT RELATIONSHIPS**

II-23. The JFLC command can be in either a supporting or supported relationship or both. The JFC's needs for unity of command and unity of effort dictate these relationships. Support relationships will be established by the JFC in appropriate campaign plans and orders. Similar relationships can be established among all functional and Service component commanders, such as the coordination of deep operations involving the JFLC command and the joint force air component commander (JFACC). Close coordination is necessary when the JFLCC provides joint suppression of enemy air defenses

II-5

in support of JFACC operations. Examples are attack helicopters or multiple-launched rocket systems in Operation DESERT STORM as well as seizing and holding ports and airbases for friendly air and sea forces (such as in Operation JUST CAUSE). The JFLCC can also expect support to include airlift, close air support (CAS), and interdiction strikes from the JFACC.

II-24. The JFC may task the JFLCC to conduct operations outside of the land AO. Land-based elements may conduct air and missile defense operations to protect the force and critical assets from air and missile attack and surveillance. These may include operational maneuver and/or operational fires against enemy ports and airbases outside of the land area of operations (AO). Similarly, the JFLCC can request from the JFC air support from other components to attack or isolate enemy land forces in the land AO. Figure II-1 illustrates a simultaneous support relationship scenario between the JFLCC and JFACC.

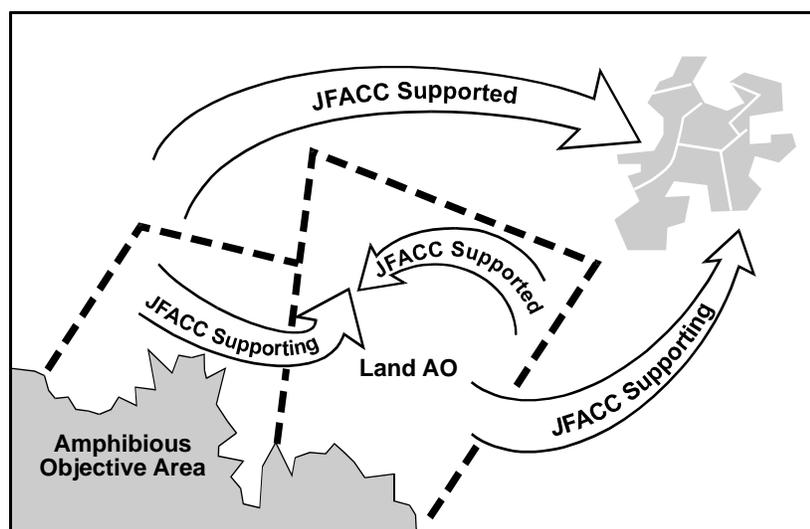


Figure II-1. JFLCC and JFACC Support Relationships

## COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS WITH SERVICE COMPONENTS

II-25. The JFLC command functional component responsibility is normally assigned to a commander already serving as a Service component (e.g.,

ARFOR, MARFOR) to a JTF or subordinate unified command. Additionally, the JFC may use one of his Service components (e.g., Army Service component or Marine Service component) as the JFLCC reporting to him directly. The JFLCC retains Service component responsibility for assigned or attached forces but does not assume Service component responsibility for forces made available by other Service components. TACON is the normal relationship with these Service forces. In those cases in which the JFLC command is not formed from a Service component headquarters, the JFLCC has no Service component responsibilities. (See Figure II-2.)

II-26. Once the JFLC command is established, the operational requirements of the JFLCC subordinate commands are prioritized and presented to the joint force headquarters by the JFLCC. However, Service component commanders remain responsible for their military department Title 10 responsibilities, such as logistics and personnel support. See Appendix C for details.

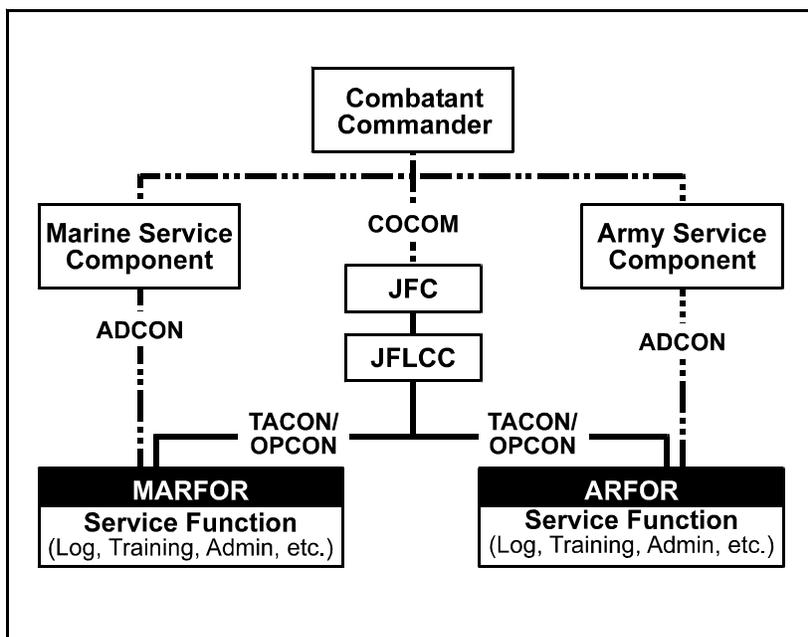


Figure II-2. Service Functions

## LIAISON

II-27. Command relationships and mission accomplishment determine LNO requirements.

Liaison officers (LNOs) facilitate the communication maintained between elements of a JTF to ensure mutual understanding and unity of purpose and action....Typically, LNOs are exchanged between higher, lower, and adjacent units....Additionally, LNOs may be provided from government agencies, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), international organizations, or private voluntary organizations (PVOs).

ALSA JTF Liaison Handbook

## ORGANIZATION

II-28. The JFLC command establishes liaison with other components to facilitate supporting and supported command relationships and to coordinate the planning and execution of land operations. The JFLC command considers existing liaison requirements from ARFOR and MARFOR when establishing liaison requirements with the JFACC for joint fire support. The JFLC command must be prepared to receive and integrate other component liaison teams, such as Joint Force Maritime Component Command (JFMCC) and Joint Force Special Operations Component Command (JFSOCC).

II-29. The JFC determines whether LNOs will be provided by both Service components (ARFOR and MARFOR) and JFLC command headquarters or to simply have the JFLC command perform the liaison role for the total land force.

II-30. In those cases where the JFLCC is representing the total land force, the LNO team should include both Army and Marine officers. The JFLCC should also designate a senior LNO from the team as the official spokesperson for the JFLCC.