



CURTIS E. LEMAY CENTER

FOR DOCTRINE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION



ANNEX 3-04 COUNTERSEA OPERATIONS

LIAISON OFFICERS AND THE AIR OPERATIONS CENTER

Last Updated: 7 November 2014

Liaisons are an important aspect of joint force planning and employment. Liaison teams or individuals may be dispatched from higher to lower, lower to higher, laterally, or any combination. They generally represent the interests of the sending commander to the receiving commander, but can greatly promote understanding of the [commander's intent](#) at both the sending and receiving headquarters and should be assigned early in the planning stage of joint operations (JP 3-0, [Joint Operations](#)).

Naval and amphibious liaison element (NALE), Marine liaison officer (MARLO) and [special operations liaison element](#) (SOLE) provide the necessary face-to-face contact between Navy, Marine, and special operations planners and the [joint force air component commander](#) (JFACC) or [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR) and the respective planning staff. Direct communication between these individuals will help ensure mutual understanding and unity of effort, reducing friction between Services. The Navy, Marine, and special operations liaison officers participating in the air operations center planning process represent their respective component commanders, and are not assigned or attached to the COMAFFOR or JFACC staff.

The NALE, MARLO, battlefield coordination detachment, and SOLE provide the JFACC or COMAFFOR with timely information on non-familiar forces, assets, and planning opportunities to further the collective coordination and integration between components/Services. **Due to the inherently joint nature of most countersea operations, liaisons serve a vital and active role in coordinating and planning effects in the maritime domain.**

One liaison element offers coordination between the JFACC and other component or Service commanders. The joint air component coordination element (JACCE) director is the JFACC's primary operational-level conduit to the supported/supporting component. The mission of the JACCE is to enable the director to personally and effectively represent the JFACC to his counterpart component commander. The JACCE works to ensure the director has all requisite knowledge, understanding, and background information to facilitate this mission. The JACCE also can provide component-to-command level presence in the forward headquarters. It provides operational level assessment and coordination of JFACC planning and execution to ensure integration with the operations plan and operational intent to meet joint force commander guidance.

Air Force members can be expected to be liaisons to the joint force maritime component commander and/or COMNAVFOR during joint maritime operations. These Air Force liaisons within the staff(s) of the respective maritime commander offer tactical expertise,

operational guidance, proper doctrinal implementation, and real-time coordination of operations with Air Force forces.
