



THE COMMANDER, AIR FORCE FORCES

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- The title of Commander, Air Force Forces (COMAFFOR) is reserved exclusively to the single Air Force commander of an Air Force Service component command assigned or attached to a joint force commander (JFC) at the unified combatant command, subordinate unified command (subunified command), or joint task force (JTF) level.
- If Air Force forces are attached to a JFC, they should be presented as an air expeditionary task force (AETF).
 - ✦ The AETF becomes the Air Force Service component to the JTF and the AETF commander is the COMAFFOR to the JTF commander. Thus, depending on the scenario, the position of COMAFFOR may exist simultaneously at different levels within a given theater as long as each COMAFFOR is separately assigned or attached to and under the operational control of a different JFC.
 - ✦ The COMAFFOR provides unity of command. To a JFC, a COMAFFOR provides a single face for all Air Force issues. Within the Air Force Service component, the COMAFFOR is the single commander who conveys commander's intent and is responsible for operating and supporting all Air Force forces assigned or attached to that joint force.
 - ✦ The COMAFFOR commands forces through two separate branches of the chain of command: the operational branch and the administrative branch.
- The COMAFFOR should normally be designated at a command level above the operating forces and should not be dual-hatted as commander of one of the subordinate operating units. This allows the COMAFFOR to focus at the operational level of war, while subordinate commanders lead their units at the tactical level of war.

Operational Responsibilities of the COMAFFOR

- When Air Force forces are assigned or attached to a JFC, the JFC normally receives operational control (OPCON) of these forces. This authority is best exercised through subordinate JFCs and Service component commanders and thus is normally delegated accordingly.

- If not delegated OPCON, or if the stated command authorities are not clear, the COMAFFOR should request delegation of OPCON.
- When the COMAFFOR is delegated OPCON of the Air Force component forces, and no [joint force air component commander](#) (JFACC) has been designated, the COMAFFOR has the following operational and tactical responsibilities: (Note: if a JFACC is designated, many of these responsibilities belong to that functional component commander. Refer to Joint Publication 3-30, *Command and Control for Joint Air Operations*, for more complete discussion of the [JFACC's role](#) and the [planning processes](#) that support joint air component employment.)
 - ✦ Make recommendations to the JFC on proper employment of forces in the Air Force component.
 - ✦ Accomplish assigned tasks for operational missions.
 - ✦ Develop and recommend [courses of action](#) (COAs) to the JFC.
 - ✦ Develop a [strategy](#) and [operation plan](#) that states how the COMAFFOR plans to exploit Air Force capabilities to support the JFC's objectives.
 - ✦ Develop a joint air operations plan (JAOP) and air operations directive to support the JFC's objectives.
 - ✦ Establish (or implement, when passed down by the JFC) theater [rules of engagement](#) (ROEs) for all assigned and attached forces. For those Service or functional components that operate organic air assets, it should be clearly defined when the air component ROEs also apply to their operations (this would normally be recommended).
 - ✦ Make [air apportionment](#) recommendations to the JFC.
 - ✦ Plan, coordinate, allocate, and task Service forces and joint forces made available.
 - ✦ Normally serve as the [supported commander](#) for [counterair](#) operations, [strategic attack](#), the JFC's overall [air interdiction](#) effort, most [space control](#) operations, theater airborne [reconnaissance](#) and [surveillance](#), and other operations as directed by the JFC. As the supported commander, the COMAFFOR has the authority to designate the target priority, [effects](#), and timing of these operations and attack targets within the entire [joint operations area](#) (JOA).
 - ✦ Normally serve as the supported commander for the following operations as directed by the JFC. As the supported commander, the COMAFFOR has the authority to designate the target priority, effects, and timing of these operations and attack targets across the entire joint operations area (JOA) in accordance

with JFC guidance, to include coordinated targets within land and maritime areas of operations (AOs).

- Strategic Attack.
 - Counterair (to include integrated air and missile defense).
 - Counterland.
 - Countersea.
 - Space control.
 - Air mobility.
 - Information Operations.
 - Theater airborne intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR).
- ★ Normally serve as supporting commander, as directed by the JFC, for operations such as close air support (CAS), air interdiction within other components' AOs, and maritime support.
 - ★ If so designated, act as [airspace control authority](#) (ACA), [area air defense commander](#) (AADC), and [space coordinating authority](#) (SCA), and electronic warfare control authority, and develop plans and products associated with these responsibilities.
 - ★ Coordinate [personnel recovery](#) operations, including [combat search and rescue](#) (CSAR).
 - ★ Direct [intratheater air mobility](#) operations and coordinate them with [intertheater](#) air mobility operations.
 - ★ Coordinate support for special operations requirements with the joint force special operations component commander or the [joint special operations task force](#) commander.
 - ★ Perform assessments of air component operations at the operational (component) and tactical levels.
 - ★ Conduct joint training, including the training, as directed, of components of other Services in joint operations for which the COMAFFOR has or may be assigned primary responsibility, or for which the Air Force component's facilities and capabilities are suitable.

Administrative Responsibilities of the COMAFFOR

- Commanders of Air Force components have responsibilities and authorities that derive from their roles in fulfilling the Service's [administrative control](#) (ADCON) function.
 - ✦ Within the administrative branch, the COMAFFOR has complete ADCON of all assigned Air Force component forces and specified ADCON of all attached Air Force component forces.
 - ✦ The specified responsibilities listed below apply to all attached forces, regardless of major command or Air Force component (regular, Guard, or Reserve).
 - ✦ The COMAFFOR also has some ADCON responsibilities for Air Force elements and personnel assigned to other joint force components (such as liaisons).
- As the Service component commander to a JFC, the COMAFFOR has the following responsibilities:
 - ✦ Organize, train, and sustain assigned and attached Air Force forces for [combatant commander](#) (CCDR)-assigned missions.
 - Prescribe the chain of command within the Air Force Service component.
 - Maintain [reachback](#) between the Air Force component and other supporting Air Force elements. Delineate responsibilities between forward and rear elements.
 - Provide training in Service-unique [doctrine](#), tactical methods, and techniques.
 - Provide for logistics and mission support functions normal to the command.
 - ✦ Inform the JFC (and the CCDR, if affected) of planning for changes in logistics support that would significantly affect operational capability or sustainability sufficiently early in the planning process for the JFC to evaluate the proposals prior to final decision or implementation.
 - ✦ Provide lateral liaisons with Army, Navy, Marines, special operations forces, and [coalition](#) partners.
 - ✦ Maintain internal administration and discipline, including application of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ).
 - ✦ Establish [force protection](#) and other local defense requirements.

- ✦ Provide Service intelligence matters and oversight of intelligence activities to ensure compliance with laws, executive orders, policies, and directives.
 - At the CCDR level, the Air Force Service component commander also has the following additional responsibilities:
 - ✦ Develop program and budget requests that comply with CCDR guidance on war-fighting requirements and priorities.
 - ✦ Inform the CCDR (and any intermediate JFCs) of program and budget decisions that may affect joint operation planning.
 - ✦ Support the CCDR's theater campaign plans through development of appropriate supporting Service plans.
 - Develop steady-state strategy to support the CCDR's strategy.
 - Contribute to the development of CCDR steady-state campaign plans and security cooperation country plans.
 - Develop campaign support plans in support of CCDR campaign plans.
 - *For more complete discussion of the COMAFFOR, see [Annex 3-30, Command and Control](#).*
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