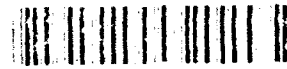
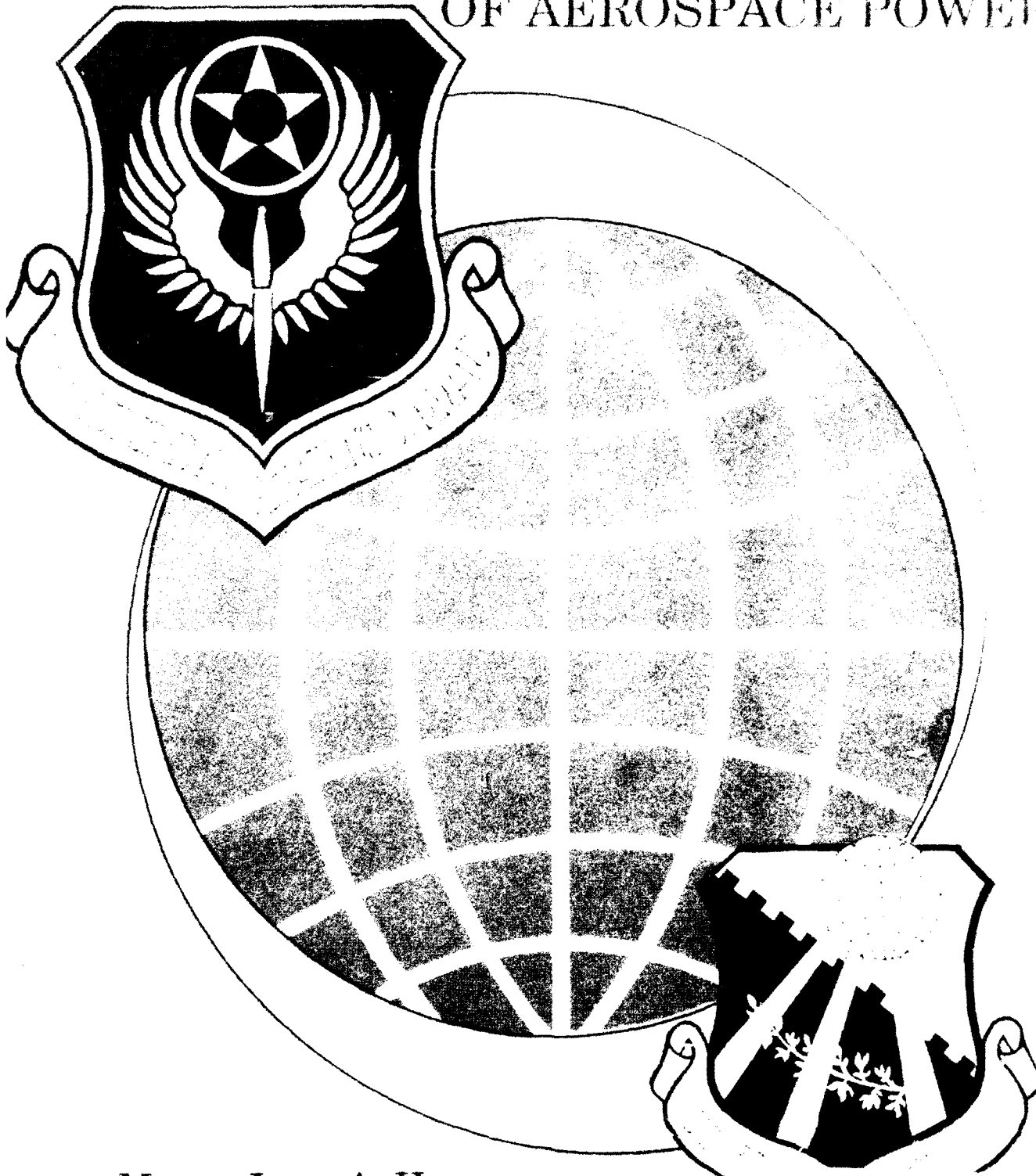


AD-A262 795



2

AFSOF: A UNIQUE APPLICATION OF AEROSPACE POWER



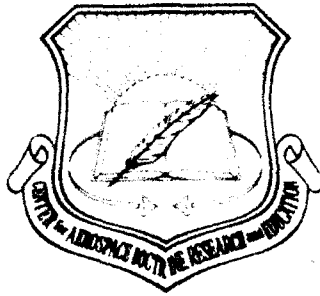
MAJOR JOHN A. HILL

STATEMENT
public release
requested

93-07587



93 7 12 06 1



Research Report No. AU-ARI-92-3

Air Force Special Operations Forces

A Unique Application of Aerospace Power

by

JOHN A. HILL, Major, USAF

DTIC QUALITY DISTRICT

*ARI Command-Sponsored Research Fellow
Air Force Special Operations Command*

Air University Press
Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama 36112-5532

April 1993

Accession For	
NTIS	CRA&I
DTIC	TAB
Unannounced	
Justification	
By	
Distribution/	
Availability Codes	
Dist	Availability for Special
A-1	

Disclaimer

This publication was produced in the Department of Defense school environment in the interest of academic freedom and the advancement of national defense-related concepts. The views expressed in this publication are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the United States government.

This publication has been reviewed by security and policy review authorities and is cleared for public release.

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved
OMB No 0704-0188

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188), Washington, DC 20503.

1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)		2. REPORT DATE		3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE AIR FORCE SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES A Unique Application of Aerospace Power				5. FUNDING NUMBERS	
6. AUTHOR(S) MAJ JOHN A HILL, USAF					
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) AUCADRE/PTPB 401 CHENNAULT CIRCLE MAXWELL AFB AL 36112-6428				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER AU-ARI-92-3	
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER	
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT PUBLIC RELEASE				12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE : "A"	
13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 words)					
14. SUBJECT TERMS				15. NUMBER OF PAGES 76	
				16. PRICE CODE no charge	
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT UNCLAS	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE UNCLAS	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT UNCLAS	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT		

Contents

<i>Chapter</i>		<i>Page</i>
	DISCLAIMER	ii
	FOREWORD	vii
	ABOUT THE AUTHOR	ix
	PREFACE	xi
	INTRODUCTION	xiii
	Notes	xiv
1	WHAT IS AIR FORCE SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES?	1
	AFSOF History	1
	AFSOF Today	4
	Principal Missions	4
	Collateral Activities	8
	AFSOF in Conventional Roles	15
	AFSOF Tomorrow	15
	Summary	16
	Notes	16
2	COMMAND AND CONTROL OF AIR FORCE SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES	19
	AFSOF in a Subunified Command	20
	Joint Special Operations Air Component Commander	21
	Commander, Air Force Special Operations Command	23
	Non-AFSOF under Operational Control of COMAFSOC/JSOACC	25
	Centralized Control/Decentralized Execution of SOF Aviation	25
	Joint Task Force	26
	Joint Special Operations Task Force	27
	AFSOF under Air Force Operational Control	29
	Stateside AFSOF	31
	Overseas AFSOF under an AFFOR (Peacetime)	32
	Overseas AFSOF under JFACC (Contingencies and War)	32
	AFSOF under Air Force Administrative Command and Special Operations Operational Control in the Restructured Air Force	35

<i>Chapter</i>		<i>Page</i>
	CONUS AFSOF Wear the AFSOC Patch	35
	Overseas AFSOF Wear Theater AFFOR Command Patches	36
	Summary	38
	Notes	39
3	RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION	43
	Recommendations	43
	Conclusion	46
	Notes	48
 <i>Appendix</i>		
A	The Roles and Missions of Special Operations and Air Force Basic Doctrine	49
B	Definitions	57
C	Acronyms	71
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	75

Illustrations

<i>Figure</i>		
1	Command Relationship, Theater, with Subunified Command	21
2	Command Relationship when JFC Provides Aviation Forces to the JFSOCC for Discrete Special Operations	22
3	Relationship between JSOACC and JFACC	23
4	Echelons of Command Concerning a Theater AFSOC	24
5	AFSOF Supporting a JSOTF under a JTF	28
6	One SOF Component (AFSOF) Forms the Core of a JSOTF to Perform a Specific Mission for a JFC	29
7	AFSOF in a JSOTF with Command Direction from NCA	30
8	Stateside AFSOF Command Relationship (US Code, Title 10, sec. 167)	31

<i>Figure</i>		<i>Page</i>
9	Overseas AFSOF under an AFFOR (Peacetime)	33
10	Overseas AFSOF under the JFACC (Contingencies and War) . . .	34
11	CONUS AFSOF under Air Force Administrative Command and Special Operations Operational Control in the Restructured Air Force	35
12	Overseas AFSOF in the Restructured Air Force	36
13	Overseas AFSOF under Air Force Administrative Command and Special Operations Control in the Restructured Air Force . . .	37
14	Headquarters Joint Special Operations Aviation Command	47
15	Roles and Typical Missions of Aerospace Power	50
16	Roles and Typical Missions of Aerospace Power (Proposed)	54

Foreword

Air Force special operations forces (AFSOF) has been an integral part of the US special operations capability since the Second World War. The dissolution of the former Soviet Union has drastically reduced the threat of nuclear war, and trends in international geopolitics have created an environment conducive to increased lawlessness, insurgency, and terrorism. US special operations forces (SOF) are uniquely suited to handle these emerging threats which often fall under the rubric "low-intensity conflict." As we enter the twenty-first century, the probability of confrontation at the lower end of the conflict spectrum is greater than at anytime in recent history. As witnessed in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, AFSOF can also play a pivotal role as a force multiplier. This ability to operate in both conventional and unconventional roles provides today's commanders with a flexible, efficient, and cost-effective force option.

Despite the importance of its missions, AFSOF has often been overlooked with respect to its conventional and nuclear counterparts as a result of 30 years of US defense policy focusing on conventional intervention in regional conflicts. In the aftermath of the Iranian hostage rescue attempt, the Air Force made great strides to support and fully integrate the capabilities of Air Force SOF. In this study, Maj John A. Hill takes these initiatives a step further as he presents a comprehensive look at Air Force special operations—its roles, missions, and capabilities. His recommendations on command relationships offer bold new ideas which provide an effective blueprint for use by both conventional and unconventional war fighters. By dispelling myths and identifying principal missions and collateral activities, this monograph leaves the reader with a better appreciation for the capabilities of Air Force special operations.



EARL D. HUTTO
US House of Representatives
State of Florida, First District

About the Author



Maj John A. Hill

Maj John A. Hill is the first Airpower Research Institute research fellow from Air Force Special Operations Command. The research fellowship is conducted through the Air University Center for Aerospace Doctrine, Research, and Education at Maxwell Air Force Base (AFB), Alabama. Major Hill is a 1978 distinguished graduate of the North Dakota State University (NDSU) Air Force ROTC program with a bachelor of science degree in child development and family relations. In 1989, he received a master of science degree in international relations from Troy State University. He is also a graduate of the Air Command and Staff College (residence and correspondence), US Marine Corps Command and Staff College (correspondence), and Squadron Officer School (residence).

After graduating from NDSU, Major Hill immediately entered active duty and attended undergraduate navigator training. He then served as a navigator with the 61st Tactical Airlift Squadron, Little Rock AFB, Arkansas. From January 1980 to January 1983, he was a current operations planner and an MC-130E instructor navigator with the 7th Special Operations Squadron, Rhein-Main Air Base, Germany. From March 1983 until June 1984, he was an evaluator navigator with the 8th Special Operations Squadron, Hurlburt Field, Florida. During October of 1983, Major Hill air-dropped Army Rangers and directed the first fixed-wing aircraft to land during the battle of Point Salinas, Grenada—for Operation Urgent Fury. From June 1984 to June 1987, he returned to the 7th Special Operations Squadron as the chief of aircrew standardization and evaluation. In 1987, Major Hill was assigned to the staff of Twenty-third Air Force as a plans and policy action officer. When Twenty-third Air Force became Headquarters Air Force Special Operations Command in May 1990, he held the position of chief of the Studies and Doctrine Division, and was the author of Air Force Manual 2-10, *Special Operations*. Major Hill is a senior navigator with 3,700 hours flying time in the MC-130E, C-130H, and C-130E. Currently he is assigned to the staff, Headquarters United States Special Operations Command, Directorate of Plans, Policy, and Doctrine.

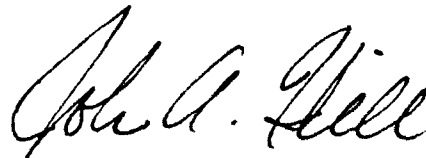
Preface

Ever since I entered the front gate of Hurlburt Field, Florida, the home of Air Force special operations, back in October 1979 to start MC-130E qualification training, I have been a believer in the unique capabilities Air Force special operations forces (AFSOF) provides. The more established I became in the world of Air Force special operations (upgrading to instructor, flight evaluator, staff officer), the more I realized there was a void in Air Force publications concerning AFSOF capabilities—especially in aerospace doctrine. So when I became the chief of doctrine, Headquarters Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC), I ensured that the Air Force had operational doctrine for special operations. The fruit of my labor, Air Force Manual (AFM) 2-10, *Special Operations*, became a reality in October 1991. I also spent a great deal of time trying to keep Air Force basic doctrine, AFM 1-1, *Basic Aerospace Doctrine of the United States Air Force*, consistent with and complementary to joint doctrine for special operations. Following my work in those key doctrine instruments, all I needed was an opportunity to “put the meat on the bones” of my doctrine efforts and to provide illustrations to the Air Force and AFSOF concerning sometimes dogmatic doctrinal terminology.

This monograph provided me the opportunity to tell the world about AFSOF capabilities. Those capabilities are in support of both special operations and conventional operations. I used a great deal of the terminology of doctrine to present the “official” words concerning AFSOF. Also, I added examples to bring the doctrine to life and to show the reader how AFSOF doctrine is an extension of the fundamental beliefs concerning aerospace doctrine.

I wish to thank Maj Gen Thomas Eggers, USAF, first commander of Headquarters AFSOC, for affording me the opportunity to continue my work of spreading the AFSOF word and showing that special operations is indeed a part of aerospace power. I must also thank Col John Bridges, Headquarters AFSOC, deputy chief of staff, Plans and Programs, for giving me a free hand in my writing. Special thanks go to my reading group chairman (and fellow air commando), Jerry Klingaman, and my editor, Dr Doris Sartor. With their help, I stayed on course.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Beverly, and my daughter, Catherine Elizabeth, who keep all of my efforts in perspective, through humility and fairness to all concerned.



JOHN A. HILL, Maj, USAF
Research Fellow
Airpower Research Institute

Introduction

Special operations. Operations conducted by specially organized, trained, and equipped military and paramilitary forces to achieve military, political, economic, or psychological objectives by unconventional means in hostile, denied, or politically sensitive areas. These operations are conducted during peacetime competition, conflict, and war, independently or in coordination with operations of conventional, non-special operations forces. Politico-military considerations frequently shape special operations, requiring clandestine, covert, or low visibility techniques and oversight at the national level. Special operations differ from conventional operations in degree of physical and political risk, operational techniques, mode of employment, independence from friendly support, and dependence on detailed operational intelligence and indigenous assets.¹

A better understanding of Air Force special operations forces (AFSOF) principal missions and collateral activities as well as AFSOF command relationships is needed to ensure proper AFSOF employment in contingencies and theater campaigns. AFSOF participated in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm (Southwest Asia war with Iraq) and Operation Just Cause (Panama). In Operation Desert Shield/Storm, AFSOF supported special operations forces (SOF) commanders and conventional commanders in force multiplier roles. In Just Cause, AFSOF and SOF spearheaded the operation into Panama. In both conflicts, conventional commanders and planners were unsure of AFSOF's role and under whose command AFSOF belonged. Also, many in the AFSOF community were unsure of their relationships with conventional commanders relative to command and control and the missions AFSOF were assigned. In this report I believe I can help clarify those relationships as well as foster a better understanding of AFSOF's principal missions and collateral activities.

This report is based on how AFSOF takes the classic tenets of aerospace power—centralized control/decentralized execution, flexibility, and versatility—and applies them to the unconventional world of special operations.² AFSOF provides the Air Force's "global reach--global power" (summed up by "speed, range, flexibility, precision, and lethality") to the joint, combined arms team that prosecutes special operations.³

My purpose in writing this monograph is to increase the understanding of all concerned (the Air Force, joint community, and special operators) with the world of AFSOF. Personnel involved with doctrine, policy, operations, logistics, budgeting, and planning will benefit from this report. My goals are as follows: to help all war fighters gain an appreciation for AFSOF; to ensure AFSOF capabilities are used to their fullest extent; to knock down the walls of mistrust and animosity that may occur when divergent military disciplines come together; and to emphasize the complementary nature of conventional warfare and special operations. These purposes are best served by shedding unnecessary mysteries concerning SOF and sharing what AFSOF is all about.

My approach is to discuss AFSOF and the various command relationships within which it can function. In chapter 1, I will present a brief history of AFSOF, discuss

its current principal missions and collateral activities, and explore the future for AFSOF. In chapter 2, I will review the many possible command and control relationships for AFSOF—a primary concern for those who do not understand how AFSOF functions at the operational (theater) level of war. Finally, in chapter 3, I will explore some possibilities to increase the capabilities of all SOF aviation at the operational level.

My recommendations and conclusion are based on my operational and staff experiences and on research, including interviews with key conventional Air Force commanders. The recommendations can make AFSOF even more capable. Specifically, my last recommendation—to establish one command for all special operations aviation—is for consideration by United States Special Operations Command, Headquarters US Air Force, and the Department of the Army.

Appendix A provides the reader with the way I believe AFM 1-1 should discuss special operations. I will continue to keep that issue alive until AFM 1-1 accurately reflects the aerospace role of special operations.

My research centered on gaining a conventional and special operations perspective on AFSOF. This was done primarily by reading joint and service publications, open literature, unit histories, congressional documents, and, most importantly, by conducting interviews with senior and midlevel leaders from Congress, the Department of Defense, the Air Force, and SOF.

I take great pride in sharing the world of AFSOF, since this is where I have spent most of my career. I hope this report can assist in bringing about Lt Gen Donald Snyder's goal of focusing on teamwork and trust through "knocking down [some of the] walls of misunderstanding" that occasionally exist between the conventional and SOF war fighters and by illustrating how we all work for that common boss, the joint force commander.⁴ To begin this work, I present what AFSOF is all about and why the Air Force maintains this capability.

Notes

1. Joint Test Pub 3-05, *Doctrine for Joint Special Operations*, October 1990, GL-20.
2. AFM 1-1, *Basic Aerospace Doctrine of the United States Air Force*, vol. 2, March 1992, 113-16.
3. Secretary of the Air Force Donald B. Rice, *The Air Force and U.S. National Security: Global Reach—Global Power*, white paper (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Air Force, June 1990), 1.
4. Lt Gen Donald Snyder, Headquarters Tactical Air Command, Langley AFB, Va., interview with author, 11 September 1991.

Chapter 1

What Is Air Force Special Operations Forces?

This chapter illustrates what Air Force special operations forces (AFSOF) provides to the national command authorities (NCA), the joint community, and conventional and special operations commanders. A historical perspective briefly shows how AFSOF and its capabilities have evolved since World War II. Next, the chapter focuses on AFSOF's capabilities today—providing its unique application of aerospace power to fulfill the principal missions and collateral activities of special operations. Finally, the chapter concludes with AFSOF's role in the future.

AFSOF today is part of a combined arms team of Army and Navy forces, with United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) responsible to organize, train, and equip that team. AFSOF, however, was not always a component of such a team.

Air Force Special Operations Forces History

AFSOF can be traced back to World War II when special US Army Air Forces (AAF) units air-dropped and resupplied agents of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) in the European theater in 1943.¹ Later in 1944, the 1st Air Commando Group (also an AAF organization) supported Gen Orde C. Wingate's Chindit forces in Burma by inserting, resupplying, and exfiltrating them up to 200 miles behind Japanese lines.² In both theaters, what is now known as AFSOF made significant contributions to the campaigns' success. Air Force special operations capabilities were again used during the Korean War with air resupply and communications wings conducting long-range infiltration/exfiltration missions, supply and resupply missions, and psychological operations (PSYOP) missions.³ During the early period of the conflict in Southeast Asia, AFSOF primarily supported counterinsurgency operations, but later focused on support of conventional forces.⁴

Following the conflict in Southeast Asia, "SOF [special operations forces], with the exception of Navy SEAL [sea-air-land] teams, experienced drastic reductions in manpower and organizational scope. . . . The number of active . . . [duty AFSOF] capable aircraft was cut by 90 percent."⁵ "The remaining active duty [AFSOF] units were being considered for transfer to reserve status."⁶

In 1980, the failed Iranian rescue mission was instrumental in maintaining SOF (and AFSOF) as an active duty force. The mission was an attempt to rescue 53 Americans held hostage by Iranian radicals. The Holloway Commission developed a report on the lessons learned from the aborted rescue attempt. SOF was saved based on the actions that followed that report. The commission made two recommendations. First, it "recommended that a Counterterrorist Joint Task Force (CTJTF) be established as a field agency of the Joint Chiefs of Staff [JCS] with permanently assigned staff personnel and certain assigned forces."⁷ "Second, the Commission proposed that the JCS consider the formation of a Special Operations Advisory Panel."⁸ The report highlighted the ad hoc nature of the operation and the lack of any military advisory panel. However, the air component commander for the rescue attempt, Col James H. Kyle, was "deeply troubled by that report—not so much for what it says, but how it says it."⁹ Colonel Kyle stated that such recommendations were not original and that the commission's emphasis should have been on the services increasing their special operations capability.¹⁰ In this regard, I would like to emphasize that it was congressional actions after the report was written, and not the report itself, that brought about the revitalization of SOF.

One of the first major actions was the transfer of AFSOF to the Military Airlift Command (MAC) from the tactical air forces on 1 March 1983. The transfer was brought about by findings from an Air Force functional management inspection (FMI) that highlighted lack of AFSOF readiness.¹¹

Under MAC, AFSOF was integrated along with combat rescue forces into the Twenty-third Air Force. Twenty-third Air Force's second commander, Maj Gen Robert Patterson, developed a concept that brought together like assets from Air Rescue and Recovery Service and AFSOF (both had C-130s and helicopters) and molded them into a force that was "capability-orientated" rather than "mission-orientated."¹² General Patterson's force structure was facing weapon system program cancellations and fiscal constraints, so his melding of AFSOF and combat rescue was to "enable more efficient and effective employment of forces."¹³

In October 1983, AFSOF was tested by Operation Urgent Fury in Grenada. AFSOF spearheaded operations involving the insertion of lead combat elements of the task force, close air support in neutralizing enemy defenses, and emplacement of communications and navigation facilities. Although the operation looked to be a success for the new Twenty-third Air Force, "many of the same problems (command and control, joint operations, participation by all services in the operation, etc.) that had been identified during [the Iranian rescue mission] surfaced again."¹⁴

Another equally significant problem was that there were even fewer AFSOF aircraft available in October 1983 than at the time of the Iranian mission.¹⁵ This item caught the eyes of Congress. Congressional oversight of SOF began in earnest with "funding for SOF and SOF-related programs [becoming] probably the single most important issue among legislators in the early 1980s."¹⁶ Furthermore, the lack of Air Force funding for a new AFSOF

aircraft, the MC-130H, may have been the main reason why AFSOF is now part of a unified command for special operations with its own Air Force major command.

Congress in the mid-1980s was adamant about correcting the US military's shortfalls in low-intensity conflict, special operations, and counterterrorism capabilities. Airlift capability provided by the MC-130H Combat Talon II was instrumental in correcting those shortfalls. Col James Roberts, who served at the Joint Special Operations Agency in the mid-1980s, related to me that Congress continuously funded the MC-130H only to have the money reprogrammed by the Air Force and MAC at the last minute—leaving the aircraft as the number one unfunded program.¹⁷ Such unfunded programs for AFSOF and the rest of SOF frustrated members of Congress and had them believing that the Department of Defense (DOD) and the services had no intention of revitalizing SOF.

Therefore, in October 1986, an amendment to the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act (hereafter called "the legislation") created a unified command for SOF, United States Special Operations Command, to "prevent further neglect by DOD and the services."¹⁸ One of the critical aspects of the congressional action "was the improvement and enhancement of SOF resourcing [and programming] to see that no more funds were diverted from SOF programs to service requirements."¹⁹ A new major force program (category 11) of the DOD's future years defense program was created for resourcing and programming for SOF.²⁰

Thus, with the legislation, Twenty-third Air Force became the Air Force component for USSOCOM—under the combatant command (COCOM) of the commander in chief, USSOCOM (USCINCSOC), and under the administrative control of MAC and the Air Force. Twenty-third Air Force again went to war in December 1989 as the spearhead of Operation Just Cause in Panama, part of a plan that conducted "27 separate and simultaneous raids, airdrops, or attacks against eleven different locations."²¹ Although AFSOF was successful in its operations, there remained many underlying problems with a command arrangement which had Twenty-third Air Force reporting to two bosses—CINCMAC and USCINCSOC.

USCINCSOC, Gen James Lindsay, worked with the chief of staff of the Air Force, Gen Larry D. Welch, and agreed to end the "somewhat awkward" command relationship that existed.²² The Air Force established Headquarters Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) as a major command on 22 May 1990, replacing Twenty-third Air Force. "The elevation of AFSOC to MAJCOM status [served] to institutionalize the special operations warfare specialty in the Air Force, and . . . provide the opportunity [for AFSOF] to focus more directly on joint and service responsibilities."²³

In October of 1990, AFSOC forces deployed to Turkey and Iraq in support of Operation Desert Shield. When the operation became Desert Storm, AFSOF performed a variety of tasks including clandestine airlift and resupply of special forces teams on direct action missions in Iraq. Deployed AFSOF also supported conventional forces through personnel recovery, special reconnais-

sance, psychological operations, and counterterrorist operations.²⁴ This brief history brings us to AFSOF today.

Air Force Special Operations Forces Today

The legislation mandates current AFSOF responsibilities to USCINCSOC, and the secretary of defense directs responsibilities to AFSOF. AFSOF conducts five principal missions and other collateral activities. These operations influence the accomplishment of strategic and tactical objectives normally through low visibility, covert, or clandestine military actions.²⁵ A description of AFSOF's special operations principal missions and collateral activities illustrates AFSOF's role in aerospace power today.

Principal Missions

AFSOF conducts operations in the five principal missions of special operations: counterterrorism (CT), unconventional warfare (UW), foreign internal defense (FID), direct action (DA), and special reconnaissance (SR). I present these missions through examples of joint and Air Force doctrine.

Counterterrorism. A cornerstone of why there is AFSOF today is tied to its responsibilities to support and conduct counterterrorism operations—offensive measures taken to prevent, deter, and respond to terrorism. AFSOF's aircraft have the capability to conduct low visibility or clandestine infiltration and exfiltration of other specially trained SOF. Also, "AFSOF gunships [have the capability to] provide highly accurate and mobile firepower" and to assess a terrorist situation from a standoff position.²⁶ Lastly, almost all AFSOF aircraft are air refuelable. AFSOF's total capabilities provide the essential aspects of the Air Force's "global reach—global power" theory—"speed, range, and flexibility"—to rapidly apply combat power (i.e., counterterrorist forces) against elements of an enemy's structure (i.e., including hostage rescue, recovery of sensitive items, or neutralization of the terrorist infrastructure).²⁷

Much of this mission area remains classified and is often called "the worst kept secret in DOD."²⁸ AFSOF's possible participation in CT operations is where misunderstandings with conventional forces usually occur. Those misunderstandings center around the classified and compartmented nature of certain AFSOF operations.

Unconventional Warfare. Unconventional warfare "includes guerrilla warfare and other direct offensive, low visibility, covert or clandestine operations, as well as the indirect activities of subversion, sabotage, intelligence collection, and evasion and escape."²⁹ AFSOF would support Army Special Forces units or Navy SEALs in UW activities in two possible scenarios.

In a conventional warfare/regional conflict scenario, AFSOF would provide the airlift of UW teams deep into the enemy rear area. For example, MH-53s

would take UW teams deep into an enemy's heartland to "provide advice, training, and support" to an armed resistance or underground battling (including partisan warfare) the regime fighting the US or its allies.³⁰ Another example of AFSOF support to UW would be HC-130s providing refueling support to Army MH-47Ds as they infiltrate UW teams to train insurgents to "disrupt the enemy lines of command, control, and communication in order to influence the conventional battle . . . tying up as many enemy units as possible in the struggle for control [of the enemy's] own rear area."³¹



HC-130P Combat Shadow assigned to the 9th Special Operations Squadron (1st Special Operations Wing), Eglin AFB, Florida, refuels two CH-47Ds of the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, Fort Campbell, Kentucky.

Unconventional warfare support of US government-backed insurgencies in a low-intensity conflict setting, however, is generally what people think of when they hear of UW. Many people view such scenarios negatively, for example, the unpopularity of US military support to the Contra rebels. However, to ensure US foreign policy objectives are met, Army Special Forces personnel are still trained in UW insurgency/counterinsurgency operations. AFSOF support to these UW trainers will often be in the form of airlift and close air support. AFSOF's capabilities in support of UW will increase as its FID capabilities increase.

Foreign Internal Defense. Foreign internal defense is a mission that has evolved from what was previously known as counterinsurgency (COIN). "FID

operations support a friendly government facing a threat to its internal stability and security" in the forms of subversion, lawlessness, or an insurgency.³² "The primary role of [AFSOF] in the US Government interagency [FID] activity is to train, advise, and otherwise assist host nation military and paramilitary forces."³³ I want to emphasize the "train," "advise," and "assist" aspect of FID. Many think of FID as counterinsurgency operations led and conducted by US ground forces, with close air support by A-10s and AC-130s. Such a situation is the "last" resort for helping a government. FID's emphasis is on helping governments through peaceful training and nation-building efforts and, if at all possible, never having US forces carrying weapons or engaging in another nation's internal conflict. That worst-case scenario of direct involvement of AFSOF's support to FID was at its peak in the 1960s during the conflict in Southeast Asia. Following that conflict, AFSOF's FID capability was lost and only functioned on an ad hoc basis until 1990.

In 1990 Headquarters USSOCOM and AFSOC began extensive work to rekindle the Air Force's FID capability. The original Headquarters AFSOC FID concept was to provide "an organization of language-trained and culturally and politically astute aviation experts who can advise, train, and assist foreign governments in the employment and sustainment of their aviation assets in support of their internal defense and development strategies."³⁴ Today, Headquarters AFSOC deputy chief of staff, Plans and Programs (XP), has a FID directorate (XPF) dedicated to organizing AFSOF's FID capability. That capability is scheduled to grow in three phases. Phase I consists of validation surveys, participation in ongoing FID programs, development of doctrine and education programs, and budgeting for the expanding organization.³⁵ Phase II (fiscal years 1994-96) will bring about an independent AFSOF FID organization that will "survey and validate FID requirements, assembling and supervising mobile training teams (MTT), and advising and assisting deployments for training (DFT)."³⁶ Phase III (fiscal year 1998-99) will add short takeoff and landing (STOL) aircraft to the AFSOF FID organization to achieve the desired capability.³⁷

Probably the greatest challenge to this organization is what is taking place now in phase I. FID takes place mostly on an ad hoc basis. The problem is that lessons learned by other Air Force FID training teams are not shared, and there is no continuity in personnel when another FID situation occurs. These factors adversely affect both FID providers and the nation that sought US assistance. The AFSOF FID organization will be (and should be) the "Air Force" proponent for all service FID requirements. It has the expertise in organizing a FID effort—making sure the actual FID trainers are organized properly for the FID request, are trained in cultural sensitivities, and are capable of providing physical presence to monitor FID activities. Using the AFSOF FID organization will mean that lessons learned will not be lost and can be put to use for future deployments.

Currently, Headquarters AFSOC/XPF provides an organization with language-trained (Spanish) pilots, a maintainer, a logistician, an intelligence specialist, and a political/military expert. The greatest advantage of depend-

ing on this organization is that there will be only one place to turn for Air Force FID. There will no longer be a need for ad hoc arrangements. Turning from FID activities, I now focus on the primary AFSOF and SOF missions that will most likely fall under a combatant commander's deep operations during a theater campaign.

Direct Action and Special Reconnaissance. Direct action and special reconnaissance missions are part of a combatant commander's overall theater campaign. AFSOF participation in these missions is very similar, so I will discuss them together. Using Operation Desert Storm as an example, SOF started out that war in support of the theater air campaign, and then assumed its force multiplier role as part of the conventional air-ground joint operation when the ground war started. Before continuing I will explain the DA and SR missions.

DA missions are short-duration strikes and other small scale offensive operations principally taken by [SOF] to seize, destroy, or inflict damage on a specified target; or to destroy, capture, or recover designated personnel or material.³⁸

[SR] consists of reconnaissance and surveillance actions conducted by [SOF] to obtain or verify, by visual observation or other collection methods, information concerning the capabilities, intentions, and activities of an . . . enemy . . . [SR] includes target acquisition, area assessment, and post-strike reconnaissance.³⁹

Examples from Operation Desert Storm illustrate AFSOF capabilities in direct action and special reconnaissance. On the first night of the air campaign in Operation Desert Storm, AFSOF MH-53J Pave Low helicopters led a DA mission of Army AH-64 Apache attack helicopters to "[destroy] key Iraqi radars [which created] a 10-kilometer wide air corridor . . . used by . . . coalition air forces to pass through enroute to key targets."⁴⁰ But that was not the end of Pave Low involvement in Desert Storm DA missions because Pave Lows were constantly in use to "get the shooters in and out."⁴¹ It is unfortunate that the whole story of all Pave Low involvement in Operation Desert Storm—the very exciting, low-level (skimming above the sand dunes) night flying operations—cannot be told here because of security classification. What can be told is that the ground units they often employed—other SOF—were involved in DA missions that "targeted command and control objectives and lines of communications."⁴² Pave Lows were also involved with SOF ground units in support of SR operations. Those missions included "testing for soil trafficability to assist the pending ground offensive and overwatching key enemy avenues of approach to the US forces sector."⁴³

Throughout Operation Desert Storm, "AC-130 Spectre gunships were involved in [DA] missions in their armed reconnaissance and fire support roles."⁴⁴ Some of the armed reconnaissance missions were in support of Scud-hunting efforts, though such fire support missions are better known to the Air Force as close air support missions.⁴⁵

AFSOF and SOF direct action and special reconnaissance missions illustrate what SOF can provide to a combatant commander. SOF is a force multiplier in all aspects of a theater campaign, and perhaps more so to the air campaign. For example, AFSOF, as part of the SOF combined arms team, is



MH-53J Pave Low III assigned to the 20th Special Operations Squadron (1st Special Operations Wing), Hurlburt Field, Florida.

able to achieve the same effect on some targets as conventional air power—freeing up that same conventional air power for other missions it would be better apportioned for. The rationale for conventional planners using SOF centers around special requirements in “servicing” a target. If required, AFSOF and SOF ground units can remain on the scene and can give real-time, “eyeball” battle-damage assessment of a target, or perhaps servicing the target means rendering it unusable for the enemy, but preserving it for friendly operations. For example, SOF could be employed to shut down an enemy power plant for 30 to 60 days, then turn it over to friendly forces for future use in a ground campaign. AFSOF and SOF provide a unique capability and more imaginative options for a joint force commander than just destroying all targets.

Collateral Activities

All aerospace forces have inherent capabilities that allow them to employ in ways other than those for which they are principally organized, trained, and equipped. National command authorities, a combatant commander, or a joint force commander may also call upon AFSOF's other capabilities at all levels of conflict. “Collateral mission activities in which AFSOF, by virtue of its inherent capabilities, may be tasked to participate [include] security assistance [SA], humanitarian assistance [HA], antiterrorism, counternarcotics [CN]



AC-130H Spectre gunship assigned to the 16th Special Operations Squadron (1st Special Operations Wing), Hurlburt Field, Florida, shown here departing on a combat mission during Operation Just Cause, 30 December 1989.

operations, search and rescue/personnel recovery [SAR/PR], special activities, and [psychological operations] PSYOP.⁴⁶

Security Assistance. "Security assistance is a group of programs authorized by the Foreign Assistance Act, the Arms Export Control Act, or other related US statutes. The US government provides defense articles and services, including training, to eligible foreign countries and international organizations that further US national security objectives."⁴⁷ AFSOF aids in security assistance primarily by providing mobile training teams (MTT) and other forms of training assistance, much like the training that could be called for in FID operations. A hypothetical example of AFSOF in security assistance would be members of a special operations combat control team helping a country set up air traffic control operations at border airfields, with equipment provided under US security assistance funds. A recent actual example of AFSOF helping in an SA effort occurred in January 1992. Members of USSOCOM and the 1st Special Operations Wing (SOW) provided training to a cadre of the El Salvadorian air force in tactics using countermeasure systems to defeat shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles.⁴⁸ In an earlier (1982) example, an Air Force team made up of former AFSOF members who were experts in A-37s, O-2s, and C-123s (aircraft that belonged to AFSOF in the 1960s and

1970s) deployed as part of an MTT to El Salvador to train its air force in counterinsurgency tactics.⁴⁹

Humanitarian Assistance. AFSOF participates in humanitarian assistance programs which are "principally designed to promote non-military objectives within a foreign civilian community [including] disaster relief, medical, veterinary and dental aid, rudimentary construction, water and sanitation assistance, and support to or resettlement of displaced civilians (refugees or evacuees)."⁵⁰ Operation Provide Comfort, following Operation Desert Storm, illustrated AFSOF's flexibility to participate in HA operations.

On 6 April 1991, "the national command authorities ordered immediate humanitarian assistance to civilian refugees fleeing persecution in northern Iraq."⁵¹ The 39th SOW provided airlift, search and rescue, rotary-wing air refueling, combat control, and pararescue for emergency trauma medical care.⁵² On 14 April 1991, MC-130E Combat Talons from the 7th Special Operations Squadron (SOS) were the first to air-drop emergency assistance items to the Kurds in Northern Iraq.⁵³ One of those AFSOF "inherent capabilities" that allowed AFSOF to conduct humanitarian assistance was the ability of the MC-130 to fly in mountainous terrain, in bad weather, and at low altitudes (250 feet above the ground based on terrain-following radar) to air-drop emergency relief items. "Many of the [refugee] camp locations [were] in austere terrain, and aerial delivery [was] the only means of survival until land routes and ground personnel [could] assume [the humanitarian assistance effort]."⁵⁴ The MC-130, based on its pathfinding capability, also became the airborne mission commander's aircraft, directing subsequent airdrops and reconnoitering for unknown groups of refugees.⁵⁵

Other AFSOF deployed to Operation Provide Comfort played equally important roles in this humanitarian assistance effort. MH-53Js (21st SOS) provided search and rescue and emergency aeromedical airlift.⁵⁶ HC-130s (67th SOS) provided air refueling support to all US rotary-wing aircraft and air-dropped humanitarian aid.⁵⁷ Special tactics personnel (Detachment 1, 1723d Special Tactics Squadron) provided emergency medical care as well as control of the airspace in and around the multiple drop zones in northern Iraq and Turkey.⁵⁸ Humanitarian assistance operations are not what AFSOF trains to perform, but it remains ever capable of conducting such activities.

Antiterrorism. AFSOF activities in antiterrorism center around providing training and advice on reducing vulnerability to terrorism and other threats.⁵⁹ AFSOF activities often replicate activities that might threaten facilities and personnel that are to be evaluated or trained for defensive capabilities. AFSOF special tactics teams provide an excellent training cadre for such operations, and when incorporated with AFSOF aviation elements, can undertake infiltration, sabotage, or hostage-taking missions to test the defense capabilities of a base or a facility. My experience with the 7th SOS provides an example. In 1980, our MC-130 performed an unannounced "black-out" landing at Ramstein Air Base (AB), Germany, and off-loaded a special tactics team that proceeded to destroy (simulated) most of the flight line and fuel and ammunition storage facilities. Such missions can show

weaknesses in air base defenses and highlight where training should be emphasized. In addition to this capability to evaluate and train, "when directed, [AFSOF] can augment existing security forces to protect important persons and events."⁶⁰

Counternarcotics. AFSOF's ability to operate at low altitudes, at night, and with forces from other countries yields great capability for counternarcotics operations, principally in training forces. "Counternarcotics measures are interagency activities taken to disrupt, interdict, and destroy illicit drug activities [with] the primary [AFSOF] role . . . to support US and host-nation counternarcotics efforts abroad by advising, training, and assisting host-nation military, paramilitary and when specifically authorized, police operations targeted at the sources of narcotics."⁶¹ AFSOF support in training and advising could take shape in a foreign internal defense operation or as part of a security assistance effort. Examples of any ongoing AFSOF assistance in CN efforts would be classified, restricted information. However, from the not so distant past I can relate the counternarcotics efforts of members of the 20th SOS.

On 1 May 1983, the 20th SOS deployed two UH-1N helicopters and 18 personnel to Nassau in the Bahamas to assist with Operation Bahamas and Turks (OPBAT) as part of the US war on drugs. "The objective of [OPBAT] was to interdict the trafficking of illegal drugs into the US through routes transiting the area of the Bahamas. The [US] and Bahamian governments cooperated to detect drug smuggling and apprehend guilty persons. . . . [20th SOS] transported the Bahamian police to and from locations where the smugglers were thought to be located." Actual arrests were conducted by the Bahamian police or the US Coast Guard.⁶² OPBAT duty ended for 20th SOS 30 September 1987 with the following results: 293 individuals arrested; 23,175 pounds of cocaine and 314,327 pounds of marijuana seized; and 42 vessels, 61 aircraft, 15 vehicles, and 23 weapons seized. In addition 17 aircraft involved in drug operations crashed.⁶³

Search and Rescue/Personnel Recovery. AFSOF's and SOF's role in rescue operations has been one of the most controversial special operations issues since Headquarters USSOCOM was activated in 1987. At issue has been whether AFSOF should be involved in rescue operations not related to special operations activities. The controversy may have reached its peak in Operation Desert Shield/Storm when SOF forces were tasked to be the primary combat search and rescue forces in both the European and Central Command areas of responsibility.

AFSOF and SOF have the "inherent capability to accomplish search and rescue (SAR) missions."⁶⁴ This capability was recognized in the legislation that established USSOCOM, when it listed "theater search and rescue" as a special operations activity, insofar as it related to special operations forces.⁶⁵ What this phrase has meant is that SOF would "normally" conduct SAR in relation to its own forces. All services are to maintain their own SAR capability, and SOF is treated as its own service in relation to SAR doctrine.

"There may be situations however, when the specialized capabilities of AFSOF may be required by the operational environment to recover isolated personnel whose recovery is beyond the on-scene capabilities of Air Force or other service combat rescue forces."⁶⁶ This was the case in Operation Desert Shield/Storm with SOF providing combat search and rescue capabilities to the combatant commander. Controversy arose over this employment because "AFSOF is not organized, equipped, or trained to conduct SAR or combat search and rescue (CSAR) as a continuing mission."⁶⁷

In spite of the lack of training daily for CSAR operations, AFSOF prepared and participated in CSAR operations in Operation Desert Storm. One of the success stories was the 21 January 1991 rescue of a US Navy F-14 pilot by a 20th SOS MH-53J.⁶⁸

If, as just noted, AFSOF can be successful in CSAR operations, why the controversy? Primarily because performing ongoing CSAR is outside SOF doctrine. The collateral activity of SAR/PR is to be carried out along classic special operations lines. SOF doctrine calls for such operations to resemble its own direct action missions. As such they would be "characterized by detailed planning, preparation, rehearsal, and thorough intelligence analysis."⁶⁹ Examples of operations under such doctrine would be the Son Tay Raid during the conflict in Southeast Asia and the previously mentioned Iranian hostage rescue attempt. If AFSOF and SOF were to take on all CSAR for combatant



MH-60G Pave Hawk assigned to the 55th Special Operations Squadron (1st Special Operations Wing) Eglin AFB, Florida.

commanders on a continuing basis, all service CSAR policy and budget requirements would have to be changed. Service CSAR force structure and support budgets would have to be provided to SOF.

As AFSOF stands today, it can perform CSAR if so tasked by the combatant commander, but theater planners must realize that AFSOF trains to conduct special operations—not CSAR—on a continuing basis. CSAR is a service responsibility, yet AFSOF will continue to be the force most capable of CSAR missions deep in enemy territory until service CSAR capabilities are able to relieve AFSOF from this mission.

Special Activities. AFSOF involvement in special activities is highly compartmented (classified) and centrally managed and controlled. According to AFM 2-10:

Special activities are governed by Executive Order 12333 and require Presidential approval and Congressional oversight. These are activities conducted abroad in support of national foreign policy objectives [and] in such a manner that US government participation is neither apparent nor publicly acknowledged. Whether supporting or conducting a special activity, AFSOF may perform any of its primary wartime missions [previously described], subject to the limitations imposed on special activities.⁷⁰

Psychological Operations. AFSOF has a history of supporting psychological operations. That support has been in the form of leaflet drops, airborne speaker operations, or airborne broadcasting on radio and television.



EC-130E Volant Solo II assigned to the 193d Special Operations Group, Pennsylvania ANG, Middleton, Pennsylvania.

Even though "PSYOP and [special operations] are separate and distinct activities . . . there may be situations where PSYOP will be required to support [special operations], and vice versa."⁷¹ Such has been the case in the modern era of special operations, with the primary airborne broadcast platform being the EC-130 Volant Solo of the Pennsylvania Air National Guard (193d Special Operations Group). The EC-130 is force structured as a special operations asset and is continuously used to support the joint force commander's conventional PSYOP requirements. In Operation Desert Storm, "[EC-130] broadcast efforts supplemented the [PSYOP] leaflet campaign and enabled coalition forces to reach Iraqi soldiers and civilians with more sophisticated messages."⁷²

AFSOF plays a key role in disseminating a less sophisticated form of PSYOP—leaflets. For example, AFSOF MC-130s along with conventional strike aircraft and bombers delivered 29 million leaflets (approximately 29 tons) between 30 December 1990 and 28 February 1991.⁷³

In Operation Desert Storm, the combination of leaflet drops and PSYOP broadcasts followed by the massive military operations were key in the "destruction of enemy morale and contributed to the large-scale surrender and desertion of Iraqi soldiers."⁷⁴ The ability of AFSOF to support such successful PSYOP operations will continue as an important collateral activity.



MC-130E Combat Talon I assigned to the 8th Special Operations Squadron (1st Special Operations Wing), Hurlburt Field, Florida.

AFSOF in Conventional Roles

AFSOF can function in a variety of conventional aerospace power roles outside of its special operations principal missions and collateral activities. Probably the most notable example is the use of AFSOF fixed-wing gunships (AC-130s) by conventional force commanders in a close air support, interdiction, armed reconnaissance, or rear-area security role.

Another example of AFSOF performing in a conventional role is the use of MC-130s to drop 15,000-pound bombs. Such missions can be flown as part of a strike package including EF-111 Ravens, F-4 Wild Weasels, and EC-130s to suppress enemy threats the MC-130 could not defeat. The MC-130 is currently the only Air Force aircraft whose crews are regularly trained to deliver the largest conventional weapon in the Air Force inventory. They delivered them successfully 11 times during Operation Desert Storm.⁷⁵

Since AFSOF is involved in so many different types of principal missions and collateral activities, it truly epitomizes the flexibility and versatility tenets of aerospace power. In conventional roles, an AFSOF crew can one day deliver the mail to a combatant commander's headquarters, and the next day can deliver 15,000 pounds of explosives that are deadly or incapacitating within a three-mile radius.

Air Force Special Operations Forces Tomorrow

In the aftermath of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, we are likely to experience indirect aggression . . . threatening American lives and property, and undermining institutions and values that promote democracy and civil liberties.⁷⁶

Look how the world has changed, there are ever increasing roles for special operations forces. Because of the change from a bipolar to a multipolar world, with increased ethnic and regional threats, conventional forces will have limited capabilities. As the world changes, their [conventional forces] capability must be much more flexible in their forward presence.⁷⁷

These words from James Locher III, the assistant secretary of defense for Special Operations and Low-intensity Conflict, succinctly summarize the US military's current environment, and the one it is heading for in the future.⁷⁸ In the 1990s the enemy is likely to be terrorists, reactionaries, and drug traffickers. These potential enemies will be the product of increasing nationalism, ethnic tensions, religious fundamentalism, disease, economic stagnation, overpopulation, and urbanization; and they will have access to more sophisticated weapons.

Gen Carl W. Stiner, USCINCSOC, testified that "special operations forces constitute a low cost but exceptionally effective force, whose expertise and flexibility are applicable to both conventional and unconventional conflict."⁷⁹ General Stiner emphasizes that through military-to-military exchanges (e.g., FID and security assistance efforts) which employ SOF, it is possible to iden-

tify future "potential crises and seek peaceful solutions, yet at the same time maintain the capability to respond if peaceful solutions fail."⁸⁰

The future of AFSOF will continue to be in the principal missions and collateral activities of today. However, the move to a multipolar world will mean a greater emphasis on those activities that support nation building and stability. For AFSOF, this change will mean more emphasis on FID capabilities, but if those FID activities fail to help a country or region, AFSOF will be needed in its combat roles.

Summary

AFSOF provides special operations (and USSOCOM) the "global reach—global power" capability that is the essence of aerospace power. A basic reason for having Air Force officers as part of the special operations/combined arms team is that they are schooled in aerospace power principles. And like other typical missions of the Air Force, applications of special operations are a lifetime study.⁸¹ That study starts with the five principal missions and seven collateral activities that constitute AFSOF today and continues with applications in support of conventional operations.

Such a versatile force, able to perform in a variety of roles and missions, will be subject to a wide variety of command relationships. Each command relationship, in turn, will depend upon the specific role and mission in which AFSOF will be used. The next chapter provides a description of those command relationships for AFSOF.

Notes

1. Maj Bernard Moore II, "The Secret Air War over France, USAAF Special Operations in the French Campaign of 1944" (Paper presented at the Society for Military History Convention, Fredricksburg, Va., 10 April 1992), 6–13.

2. Maj Gen Thomas Eggers, "Today's Air Commandos: Air Force Special Operations Command," *Military Review* 71, no. 6 (June 1991): 15.

3. Maj Bernard Moore II, Air Command and Staff College, School of Advanced Airpower Studies, Maxwell AFB, Ala., interview with author, 7 January 1992.

4. Robert F. Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Southeast Asia: The Advisory Years to 1965* (Washington, D.C.: Office of Air Force History, 1981), 63–268. For further information read William A. Buckingham, Jr., *Operation Ranch Hand: The Air Force and Herbicides in Southeast Asia, 1961–1971* (Washington, D.C.: Office of Air Force History, 1982), 45–68; and Jack S. Ballard, *Development and Employment of Fixed-Wing Gunships, 1962–1972* (Washington, D.C.: Office of Air Force History, 1982), 28–125. The last two books present other aspects of AFSOF aviation during the conflict in Southeast Asia.

5. Andrew J. Harris, "Executive and Congressional Efforts to Reorganize Special Operations Force" (Paper presented to the Annual Conference, International Studies Association, 1 April 1988), 26.

6. Ibid.; quoted in Jim Wotten, "Special Operations Forces: Issues for Congress," CRS Foreign Affairs and National Defense Division, Report No. 84-227, 14 December 1984, 2–3.

7. Adm James Holloway Commission Report, "Rescue Mission Report" (U), August 1990, 61.

8. Lt Col Jerry Thigpen, "AFSOC: The Air Force's Newest Command" (Unpublished paper, Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: US Army War College, 8 March 1991), 34.
9. Col James H. Kyle, *The Guts to Try: The Untold Story of the Iran Hostage Rescue Mission by the On-Scene Desert Commander* (New York: Orion Books, 1990), 324.
10. Ibid.
11. Thigpen, 38-39.
12. Maj Gen Robert Patterson, commander, Twenty-third Air Force, to all units of Twenty-third Air Force, letter, subject: Basis for Forward Look, 7 August 1986.
13. Ibid.
14. Thigpen, 41.
15. Ibid.
16. Col William G. Boykin, "Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict Legislation: Why Was It Passed and Have the Voids Been Filled?" (Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: US Army War College, 12 April 1991), 17.
17. Col James Roberts, Special Operations Command Europe, Stuttgart-Vaihingen, Germany, interview with author, 27 September 1991. Colonel Boykin's paper also mentions this, 19.
18. James R. Locher III, assistant secretary of defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict, the Pentagon, interview with author, 23 October 1991.
19. Boykin, 36.
20. *Congressional Record*, 100th Cong., 1st sess., 17 November 1987, H10160 (daily edition).
21. Thigpen, 56.
22. Ibid., 56-57.
23. Message, 051920Z Jun 90, commander in chief, United States Special Operations Command to the secretary of defense, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, service chiefs of staff, and combatant commanders, 5 June 1990.
24. Department of Defense (DOD), *Conduct of the Persian Gulf Conflict: An Interim Report to Congress*, white paper, July 1991, 5-1 through 5-6.
25. Air Force Manual (AFM) 2-10, *Special Operations*, 25 October 1991, 3.
26. Ibid., 20.
27. Secretary of the Air Force Donald B. Rice, *The Air Force and U.S. National Security: Global Reach—Global Power*, white paper (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Air Force, June 1990), 1.
28. Col Ben Josey, 39th Special Operations Wing, Royal Air Force (RAF) Woodbridge, UK, interview with author, 20 September 1990.
29. AFM 2-10, 9.
30. Maj Glenn Harned, "Bridging the Gap: Special Forces as a Member of the Combined Arms Team," *Special Warfare*, October 1988, 6.
31. Maj Robert Brady, "Mass Strategy: A Different Approach to Unconventional Warfare," *Special Warfare*, Summer 1989, 27.
32. AFM 2-10, 10.
33. Ibid.
34. Headquarters Air Force Special Operations Command, deputy chief of staff for Plans and Programs, "Background Paper on AFSOC Foreign Internal Defense (FID) Initiative," 11 February 1992.
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid.
38. AFM 2-10, 9.
39. Ibid.
40. DOD, *Conduct of the Persian Gulf Conflict*, 5-4.
41. Lt Col Richard Comer, commander, 20th Special Operations Squadron, Hurlburt Field, Fla., interview with author, 8 August 1991.
42. Lt Gen Edward M. Flanagan, Jr., "Hostile Territory Was Their AO in Desert Storm," *Army* 41, no. 9 (September 1991): 16.
43. Ibid., 14.

44. DOD, *Conduct of the Persian Gulf Conflict*, 5-4.
45. Headquarters Air Force Special Operations Command, Office of the Historian, "Air Force Special Operations Command in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm," undated, 31.
46. AFM 2-10, 9.
47. Ibid., 11.
48. Lt Col Robert Cockey, United States Special Operations Command, MacDill AFB, Fla., interview with author, 19 February 1992.
49. Ibid.
50. AFM 2-10, 11.
51. Capt Greg S. Butterbaugh, "Operation Provide Comfort" (Unpublished history of the 39th Special Operations Wing), 1.
52. Ibid.
53. Lt Col Norman McCaslin, commander, 7th Special Operations Squadron, Rhein-Main AB, Germany, interview with author, 23 September 1991.
54. Butterbaugh.
55. McCaslin interview.
56. Lt Col Robert Zdenk, commander, 21st Special Operations Squadron, deployed to Incirlik AB, Turkey, interview with author, 25 September 1991.
57. Lt Col Bruce Bortner, commander, 67th Special Operations Squadron, deployed to Incirlik AB, Turkey, interview with author, 25 September 1991.
58. Maj Manuel Gonzalez, 1723d Special Tactics Squadron, Rhein-Main AB, Germany, interview with author, 23 September 1991.
59. AFM 2-10, 11.
60. Ibid.
61. Ibid.
62. History, Headquarters Twenty-third Air Force, 1 January 1986-31 December 1987, vol. 1, 120.
63. Ibid., 121.
64. AFM 2-10, 11.
65. *United States Code*, Title 10, sec. 167.
66. AFM 2-10, 11.
67. Ibid.
68. History, Headquarters Air Force Special Operations Command, "Air Force Special Operations Command in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm," undated, 28-30.
69. AFM 2-10, 11.
70. Ibid.
71. Ibid., 12.
72. DOD, *Conduct of the Persian Gulf Conflict*, 5-3.
73. Fourth Psychological Operations Group (Airborne), "Leaflets of the Persian Gulf War," Fort Bragg, N.C., undated, 1.
74. DOD, *Conduct of the Persian Gulf Conflict*, 5-3.
75. History, Headquarters Air Force Special Operations Command, 33.
76. James R. Locher III, "Low-Intensity Conflict—Challenge of the 1990s," *Defense*, July-August 1991, 18.
77. Locher interview.
78. The White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, April 1991), 1-6.
79. Gen Carl W. Stiner, commander in chief, United States Special Operations Command, Witness Statement before the House Armed Services Committee, Readiness Subcommittee, March 1991.
80. Ibid.
81. Lt Col Charles Westenhoff, Center for Aerospace Doctrine, Research, and Education, Maxwell AFB, Ala., interview with author, 29 October 1991.

Chapter 2

Command and Control of Air Force Special Operations Forces

No other area concerning AFSOF stirs the emotions of conventional Air Force and AFSOF commanders as the issue of who should be in control of Air Force special operations assets. There are a multitude of possibilities in the command and control equation and as Joint Test Publication 3-05, *Doctrine for Joint Special Operations*, states "circumstances may require operational control (OPCON) be exercised [over SOF] by a joint special operations task force (JSOTF) commander reporting directly to the NCA [national command authorities] through the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. Further, OPCON of SOF may be exercised directly by a unified, subordinate unified, joint force, or service or functional component commander without intervening levels of command."¹ So based on joint doctrine, almost anything appears to be possible concerning AFSOF command relationships. As far as the Air Force is concerned, however, the problem with this "anything is possible" situation is that it runs contrary to a traditional tenet of aerospace power—centralized control and decentralized execution.

When discussing this master tenet, the new AFM 1-1, *Basic Aerospace Doctrine of the United States Air Force*, states, "Centralized control is the oldest formal tenet of American aerospace power [and] the most effective and efficient scheme is control of all aerospace assets by a single joint force air component commander [JFACC] responsible for integrating employment of all aerospace forces within a theater of operations."² Lt Gen Charles Horner, JFACC during Operation Desert Shield/Storm, believes in that tenet. He states that all Air Force aviation assets, including AFSOF, should fall under such OPCON during theater war.³ Lt Gen Charles Boyd, former Air University commander and a top proponent for the new AFM 1-1, echoes this precept, "either one believes in the centralized control of all air power, or one doesn't."⁴

In this chapter I will present the most likely AFSOF command relationships, explore the possibility of AFSOF working directly for an Air Force component commander (peacetime) or a JFACC (war or contingency), and present a possible arrangement that allows for Air Force administrative command and special operations operational control. Relatively new joint and service publications provide the doctrinal basis for current organizations and

command relationships in which AFSOF functions. For example, Joint Test Pub 3-05 prefaces the possible relationships that AFSOF could find itself in by stating, "the choice of organization for employment of SOF should depend upon specific objectives, security requirements, and the operational environment. Therein lies the flexibility of SOF."⁵

Air Force Special Operations Forces in a Subunified Command

Almost all AFSOF activities take place under a combatant commander's subunified command for special operations. Overseas AFSOF units are assigned to either Special Operations Command Europe (SOCEUR), Stuttgart-Vaihingen, Germany, or Special Operations Command Pacific (SOCPAC), Camp Smith, Hawaii. Stateside AFSOF elements could find themselves supporting either of those commands or supporting the other subunified commands of Special Operations Command South (SOC SOUTH), Albrook AFS, Panama; Special Operations Command Central (SOCCENT), MacDill AFB, Florida; or Special Operations Command Atlantic (SOCLANT), Norfolk Naval Air Station, Virginia. The existence of these subunified commands, let alone the mechanics of how and why they exist, is not well known. Joint Pub 0-2, *Unified Action Armed Forces* (UNAAF), discusses a subunified command as follows:

When so authorized through the Chairman, commanders of unified commands may establish subordinate unified commands to conduct operations on a continuing basis in accordance with the criteria set forth for unified commands. Commanders of subordinate unified commands have functions, authority, and responsibilities similar to those of the commanders of unified commands. Such authority applies within the area of responsibility of the commander of the subordinate unified command and is subject to modification by the commander of the unified command. *The commanders of Service components of subunified commands have responsibilities and missions similar to those listed for Service component commanders within a unified command. The service component commanders of a subordinate unified command will normally communicate directly with the commanders of the service components of the unified command on service-specific matters [emphasis added] and inform the commander of the subordinate unified command as that commander directs.*⁶

Figure 1 illustrates a notional subunified command relationship, which happens to mirror both SOCPAC and SOCEUR.

AFSOF, acting as the Air Force component of a subunified command, will find itself under the OPCON of the subunified commander for special operations, that is, the special operations command (SOC) commander. The SOC commander (COMSOC) is more appropriately known as the joint force special operations component commander (JFSOCC). Also, the JFSOCC is at an

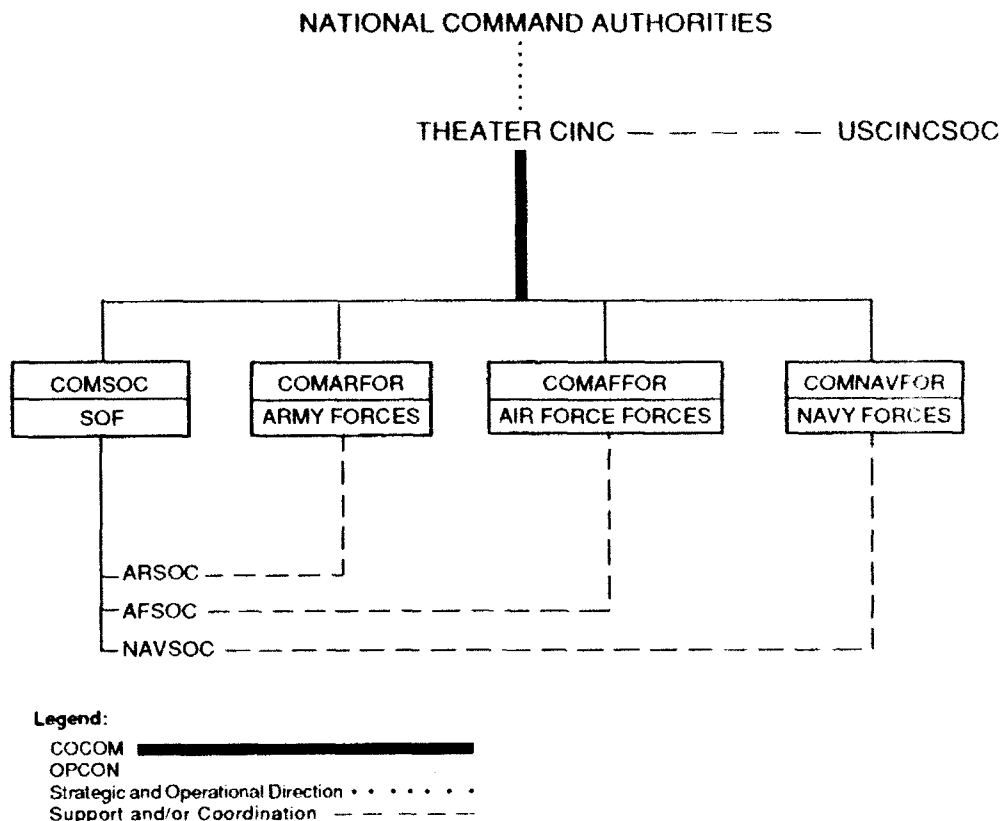


Figure 1. Command Relationship, Theater, with Subunified Command

equal level with the other service component and functional component commanders. The

SOC normally would . . . be assigned broad continuing missions and areas uniquely suited to SOF capabilities that are of strategic and operational importance to the CINC [JFC]. The . . . JFC, then, may assign or attach to the SOC those conventional non-SO or SOF necessary for either a specific mission or for the conduct of sustained operations. Depending on the mission, the . . . JFC may delegate OPCON or tactical control (TACON) of conventional non-SO air assets to the SOC commander or provide them, less OPCON, in support of discrete SOC operations.⁷

Figure 2 illustrates these possible relationships. Those non-SO, AFSOF, and Army and Navy SOF aviation assets will then be under the OPCON, TACON, or discrete mission control of the air component of the JFSOCC—the joint special operations air component commander (JSOACC).

Joint Special Operations Air Component Commander

AFSOF's joint role is highlighted by its participation as part of the aviation component of the combined arms team of SOF. The joint aviation commander

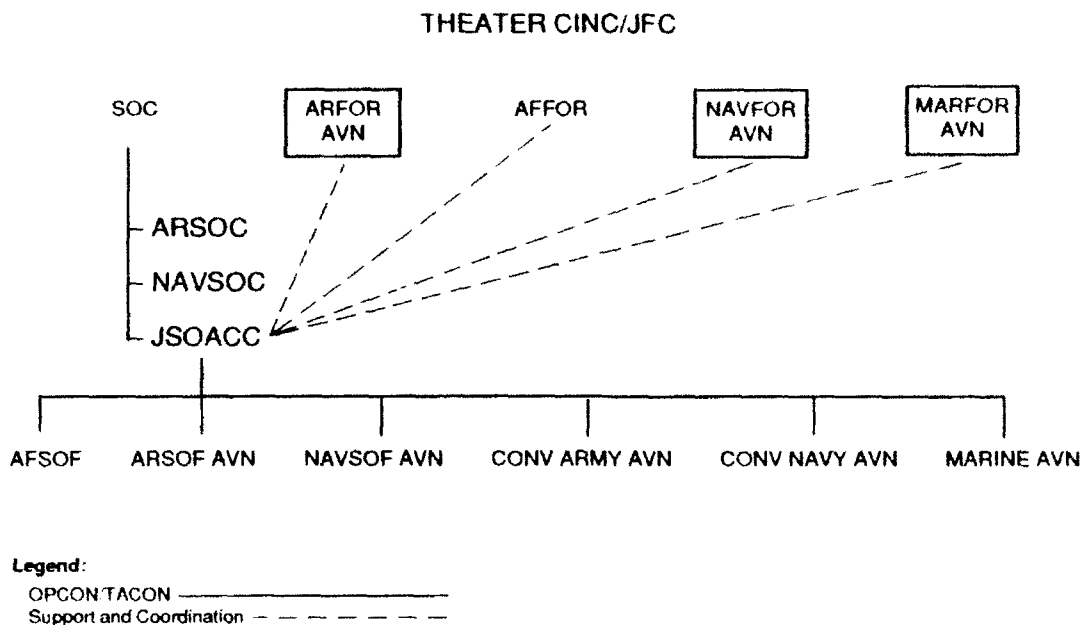


Figure 2. Command Relationship when JFC Provides Aviation Forces to the JFSOCC for Discrete Special Operations

of this combined arms team is doctrinally known as the joint special operations air component commander. "The JSOACC is the commander within a SOC . . . responsible for planning and executing joint special operations aviation missions and for coordinating and deconflicting SOF air operations with conventional air operations."⁸ This coordination and deconfliction responsibility of the JSOACC is most important when integrating with the JFACC in an overall theater air campaign. Figure 3 shows the command relationship between the JSOACC and the JFACC. Lt Gen Donald Snyder, vice-commander of Tactical Air Command, emphasized this doctrinal point in stating, "SOF recognizes the absolute imperative of coordinating operations—to include full cooperation with the JFACC."⁹ General Snyder's watchwords are "teamwork and trust" when it comes to the relationship between the JFACC and the JSOACC.¹⁰ To further enhance that teamwork and trust, Headquarters AFSOC has developed a theater liaison cell (Unit Type Code 9AATA) to assist the JFACC and the theater air control center (TACC).¹¹ This liaison cell, led by a colonel, provides the TACC with SOF aviation inputs to the air tasking order (ATO) and air coordination order. The liaison cell also provides real-time mission support, and it works all airspace management/deconfliction issues directly with the JFACC staff at the TACC. This arrangement enables the JFSOCC and JSOACC to employ their forces with unity of effort, and at the same time, allows the JFACC to maintain centralized control of



COCOM _____
OPCON/TACON _____
Support, Coordination, and/or Deconfliction — —

aerospace activities through the ATO. The most important aspect of this liaison cell is that the senior officer represents the JFSOCC to the JFACC and his staff. The senior officer provides the "one belly button to push" that Col Rudolph Peksens, USAFE assistant deputy chief of staff for operations, considers so important when AFSOF is working with conventional air forces.¹²

In most instances in a subunified command, the JSOACC will be the commander of the Air Force Special Operations Command (COMAFSOC) for the theater because: AFSOF will normally have the preponderance of SOF aviation assets; or the theater COMAFSOC will be "most capable of conducting, commanding, and controlling special operations (aviation) missions."¹³ This relationship is very similar to the relationship between the commander of Air Force forces (COMAFFOR) for a theater and the JFACC, when COMAFFOR is the JFACC.

23

AFSOF is forward deployed. The AFSOC is formed for purposes of exercises, contingencies, or wartime situations.

[COMAFSOC] normally directs, coordinates, and integrates the AFSOF air effort through control of assigned and attached Air Force forces. . . . He is responsible for AFSOF command and control, operations, logistics, transportation, intelligence, communications, medical, maintenance, and security. . . . He maintains liaison with the other SOF components and ensures the close effective coordination of AFSOF activities with the . . . (JFACC) through the . . . (TACC).¹⁴

The combatant command a COMAFSOC is assigned to is usually added as a suffix to the title. For example, COMAFSOPAC would signify the Air Force special operations commander for SOCPAC. In joint and service doctrine manuals, the term may be shown as COMAFSOCXXX for notional AFSOC command relationships. Of special note, in the European Command, when the 39th Special Operations Wing assumes its JSOACC role, it is known as commander, Air Special Operations Command Europe (COMAIR-SOCEUR), with the "air" signifying its joint role.

Figure 4 illustrates the echelons of command below the AFSOC. An Air Force special operations detachment (AFSOD) is a "squadron-size AFSOF headquarters, which could be a composite organization composed of different Air Force special operations assets."¹⁵ The AFSOD is the command element for the squadron-size operational units—the flying organizations. An Air

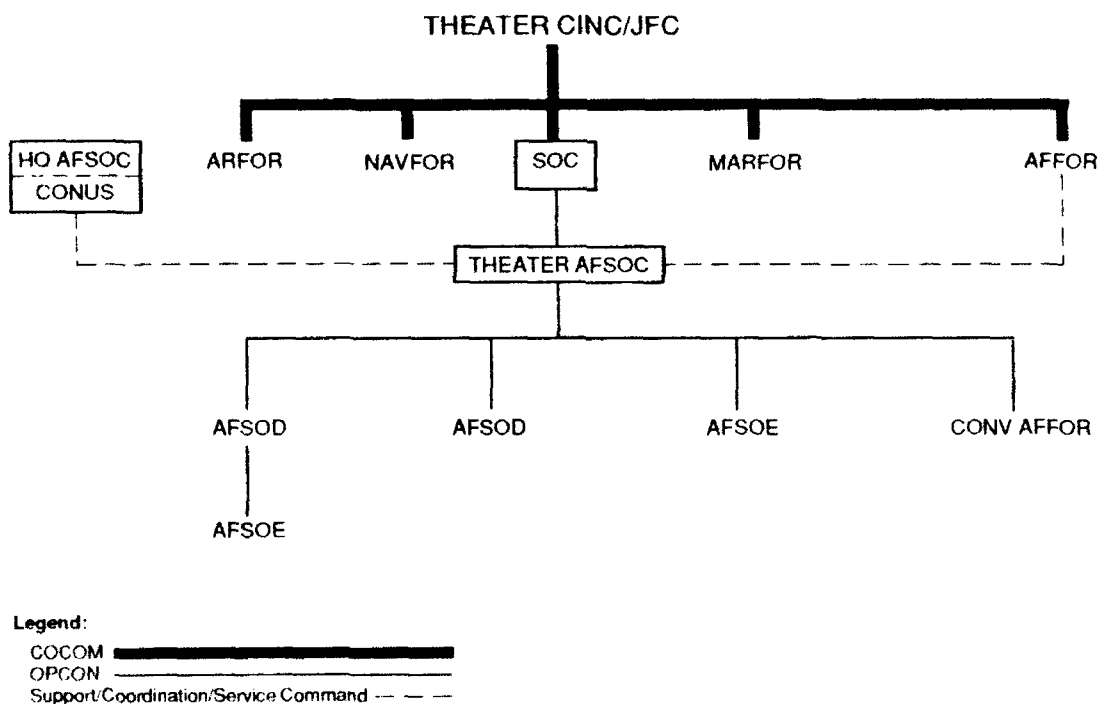


Figure 4. Echelons of Command Concerning a Theater AFSOC

Force special operations element (AFSOE) is "an element-size Air Force special operations headquarters. It is normally subordinate to an [AFSOC] or detachment, depending upon size and duration of the operation."¹⁶ For example, an AFSOE of two MH-53J Pave Low helicopters and one HC-130 Combat Shadow tanker could be forward deployed near the forward edge of the battle area to conduct direct action missions. This arrangement provides centralized control, decentralized execution of SOF aerospace power. Execution takes place at the AFSOD and AFSOE levels.

Non-AFSOF under Operational Control of COMAFSOC/JSOACC

As previously stated, other aviation assets may be under operational or tactical control of COMAFSOC/JSOACC. Conventional Air Force and sister-service assets (i.e., A-10s, C-130s, C-141s, KC-10s, KC-135s, EC-3As, AV-8s) may be attached by the JFC to the subunified command for special operations, which in turn passes control to COMAFSOC/JSOACC (see fig. 2). These conventional assets may be assigned "for either the duration of the mission or a predetermined period of time."¹⁷ A reason for such an arrangement may be operational security. Missions may have to be conducted clandestinely from forward-based AFSODs. In such cases, the only liaison with conventional forces (other than those assigned to COMAFSOC/JSOACC) would take place at the TACC or sister-service equivalent. This liaison would ensure airspace deconfliction and prevent fratricide.

AFSOC/JSOACC may also control SOF aviation assets from the Army and Navy. Parochial service rivalries should not hinder operations when this occurs. All SOF aviation assets must function as one component for the SOF combined arms team. Of special note for AFSOF, there may be instances when the preponderance of SOF aviation comes from another component. "This [situation] presents the opportunity for the JSOACC to be an officer of another service. For example, if most of the SOF aviation comes from an Army Special Operations Aviation . . . regiment, the JSOACC may be an Army officer."¹⁸ Much of the staff and support, however, would probably come from the theater AFSOC staff because of the organic communications and combat support capabilities of theater AFSOC organizations.

Centralized Control/Decentralized Execution of SOF Aviation

Doctrinal possibilities in command of aviation assets in the subunified command provide for centralized control and decentralized execution for SOF aviation. AFSOF is part of a subunified command for one objective—conducting special operations. As previously stated, AFSOF aviation assets are viewed as being an integral part of its joint service partners in that command (the SOF combined arms team). Using this view of a SOF combined arms team, AFSOF cannot be separated from that team just as carrier aviation of the Navy cannot be broken away from the fleet. Each has its responsibilities to its component, which in turn has responsibilities to the joint force commander. With that in mind, AFSOF, with only situational exceptions,

upholds the basic aerospace tenet of centralized control/decentralized execution for "SOF aviation." In the case of exceptions, "the JFSOCC may need to conduct a range of discrete operations or support extended special operations," and the JFSOCC may be required to tailor aviation packages from the JSOACC's overall aviation pool.¹⁹ Whether the JFSOCC maintains centralized control or decentralized execution, the JFSOCC will have an aviation component commander. Discussion of this situation and the specific organization, the joint special operations task force, is presented later in this chapter.

AFSOF and SOF aviation do not "go it alone" when it comes to flying in a theater of operations. COMAFSOC and/or the JSOACC realize(s) that the responsibilities for airspace control/deconfliction and area air defense lie with the JFACC, and there must be an extensive AFSOF liaison cell present at the theater air control center (or service equivalent).

There is probably one bottom line on why AFSOF and other SOF aviation usually are not under the control of either the COMAFFOR or JFACC. While it can be argued that the JFACC must have operational control over all aviation assets, it can equally be argued that the JFSOCC must have operational control over SOF assets, including AFSOF. The combatant commanders have decided to keep SOF aviation under SOC because in their view, this is the best way to accomplish their special operations missions. US-CINCSOC, Gen Carl Stiner, reaffirmed this position which has been taken by all combatant commanders.²⁰ He stated that the commanders in chief (CINC) [the combatant commanders] are dedicated to their theater special operations commands, and that they need them for a multitude of peacetime military activities—counterterrorism, foreign internal defense, and counterinsurgency operations.²¹ General Stiner further stated that the CINCs want the AFSOF under OPCON of the SOC because AFSOF units have dedicated communications, train with the other components daily, and most importantly, are totally prepared to meet their everyday commitments.²² The possibilities of having AFSOF under the AFFOR/JFACC are discussed later.

Joint Task Force

AFSOF will often find itself part of a joint task force (JTF) to pursue a specific mission, such as the attempted hostage rescue in Iran. Joint Pub 0-2 defines a JTF as "a force composed of assigned or attached elements of the Army, the Navy or the Marine Corps, and the Air Force or two or more of these services, that is constituted and so designated by the Secretary of Defense, by a CINC [combatant commander], or by the commander of a subordinate unified command or an existing task force."²³ The JTF is organized for a specific mission and dissolved when the mission is complete.²⁴

The JTF commander has operational control over all assigned and attached forces. AFSOF and sister-service SOF aviation elements could find themselves holding the preponderance of aviation assets available to the JTF com-

mander. In such cases, the special operations forces aviation commander may be cast as the joint force air component commander. When SOF aviation has the majority of assets needed to accomplish the assigned JTF mission and/or the mission is a classic special operation, General Horner states that the JFACC must be an SOF aviator.²⁵ In this case, General Horner believes that it would be up to the Air Force community to support the JFACC and to provide whatever conventional assets and expertise are required to accomplish the JTF mission.²⁶ I further interpret his comments to mean all doctrinally required combat and combat service support must be provided by the appropriate service—the Air Force to AFSOF, Army to Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF), and so on. To emphasize this point, General Horner states that the JFACC for the entire Just Cause operation in Panama should have been an AFSOF officer with conventional support.²⁷

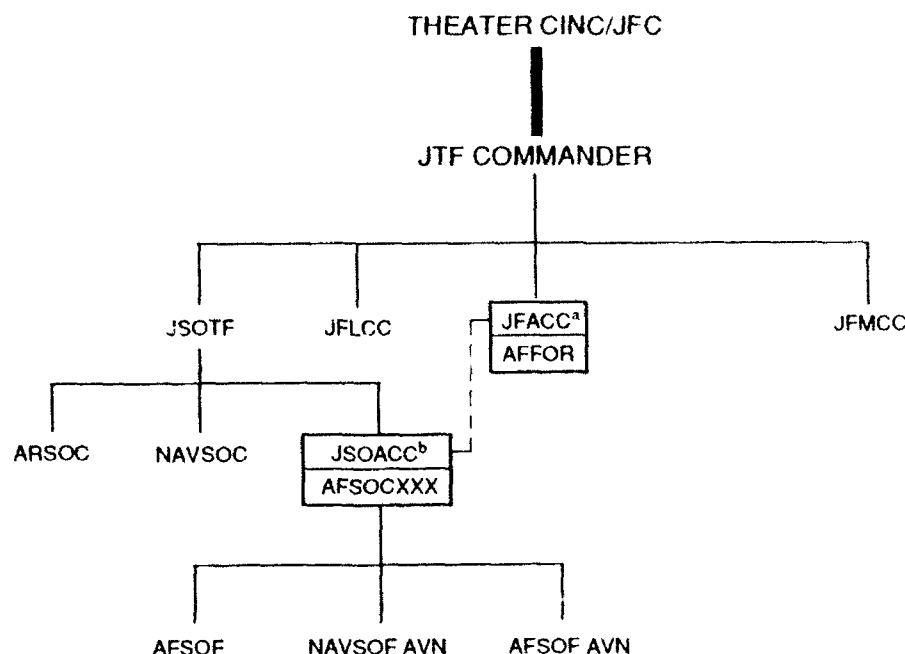
Where AFSOF fits in the organization of a JTF will be based on the nature of the mission and the desires of the JTF commander. AFSOF would probably find itself organized as illustrated in the previous examples (see figs. 2, 3, and 4).

Joint Special Operations Task Force

Of all the organizations that AFSOF could be a part of, the joint special operations task force (JSOTF) is probably the least understood by both SOF and conventional war fighters. Joint Test Pub 3-05 defines a JSOTF as, "a joint task force composed of special operations units from more than one service, formed to carry out a specific special operation or prosecute special operations in support of a theater campaign or other operations. The [JSOTF] may have conventional non-special operations units assigned or attached to support the conduct of specific missions."²⁸ AFSOF's humanitarian assistance support to Operation Provide Comfort illustrates one JSOTF possibility.

Headquarters European Command established Combined Task Force (CTF) Provide Comfort to undertake the humanitarian relief effort in southeast Turkey and northern Iraq. Part of this CTF was JTF-A, a JSOTF under the command of COMSOCEUR. The 39th Special Operations Wing provided the tailored AFSOF.²⁹

For CTF Provide Comfort, AFSOF was under the OPCON of the JSOTF, which was under the OPCON of the overall CTF commander, Maj Gen James Jamerson. General Jamerson believes that the most effective way to employ AFSOF is to have it work for a special operations commander. He stated, "AFSOF and ARSOF [and NAVSOF] have to be glued together. This is fundamentally how SOF fights a war [and conducts its operations]. Special operations is a separate entity, and must stay together [to be effectively employed]."³⁰ Figure 5 illustrates this command relationship. The AFSOF portion of such a JSOTF would probably just be a scaled-down version of what would appear in the subunified command AFSOC or JSOACC.



^aAssumes AFFOR has preponderance of aviation assets.

^bAssumes AFSOF has preponderance of aviation assets.

Legend:

COCOM **—————**
 OPCON —————
 Support, Coordination, and/or Deconfliction - - -

Figure 5. AFSOF Supporting a JSOTF under a JTF

In another variation of the JSOTF, one SOF "theater component might be directed to form the core of a JSOTF when the preponderant force comes from that component."³¹ For example, if AFSOF provides the only combat rescue/personnel recovery capability to a theater or JTF commander, then that overall joint force commander (JFC) designates the AFSOF as the combat rescue/personnel recovery force, and the AFSOF commander will be dual-hatted as the JSOTF commander. Other service SOF and conventional forces would then augment to accomplish the JFC directed mission. Figure 6 shows this command relationship. (This example is for illustrative purposes. I am not endorsing AFSOF for the role of theater search and rescue/personnel recovery on a continuing basis.)

A final JSOTF relationship in which AFSOF may find itself is in a JSOTF that in effect reports directly to the national command authorities. In such an

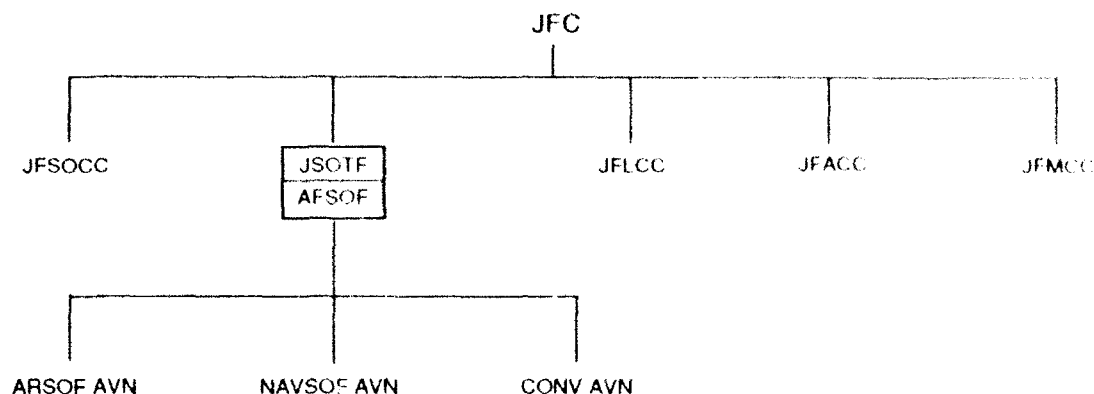


Figure 6. One SOF Component (AFSOF) Forms the Core of a JSOTF to Perform a Specific Mission for a JFC

arrangement, AFSOF aviation joins with its sister-service SOF aviation units to support other SOF. The commander of that JSOTF's SOF aviation will be under the OPCON of that JSOTF commander. Joint Test Pub 3-05 provides the doctrinal authority for such arrangements in its discussion on assignment of special operations forces to the commander in chief, United States Special Operations Command:

In certain situations, the NCA may direct USCINCSOC to plan and conduct a special operation autonomously or as the supported commander. In this situation, USCINCSOC normally would employ a task-organized JSOTF to plan, rehearse, and execute the operation, regardless of geographic location. When acting as a supporting commander, USCINCSOC may again establish a task-organized JSOTF and then [change operational control of] the force to a theater CINC [JFC] for execution based on command arrangements as established by the NCA. The NCA, however, could choose to exercise OPCON directly over a JSOTF without any intervening levels of command, depending upon urgency or political sensitivity.³²

Figure 7 illustrates the above mentioned possibilities.

AFSOF under Air Force Operational Control

Based on experience from World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and Operation Desert Storm, the most effective and efficient scheme is control of all aerospace assets by a single joint force air component commander responsible for integrating employment of all aerospace forces within a theater of operations.³³

Command relationships in which AFSOF may find itself will not always fall within the principles of its own service doctrine.³⁴ Such an occurrence is not necessarily right or wrong; it reflects the way joint force commanders have decided to organize within the aviation branch of their SOF. However, SOF

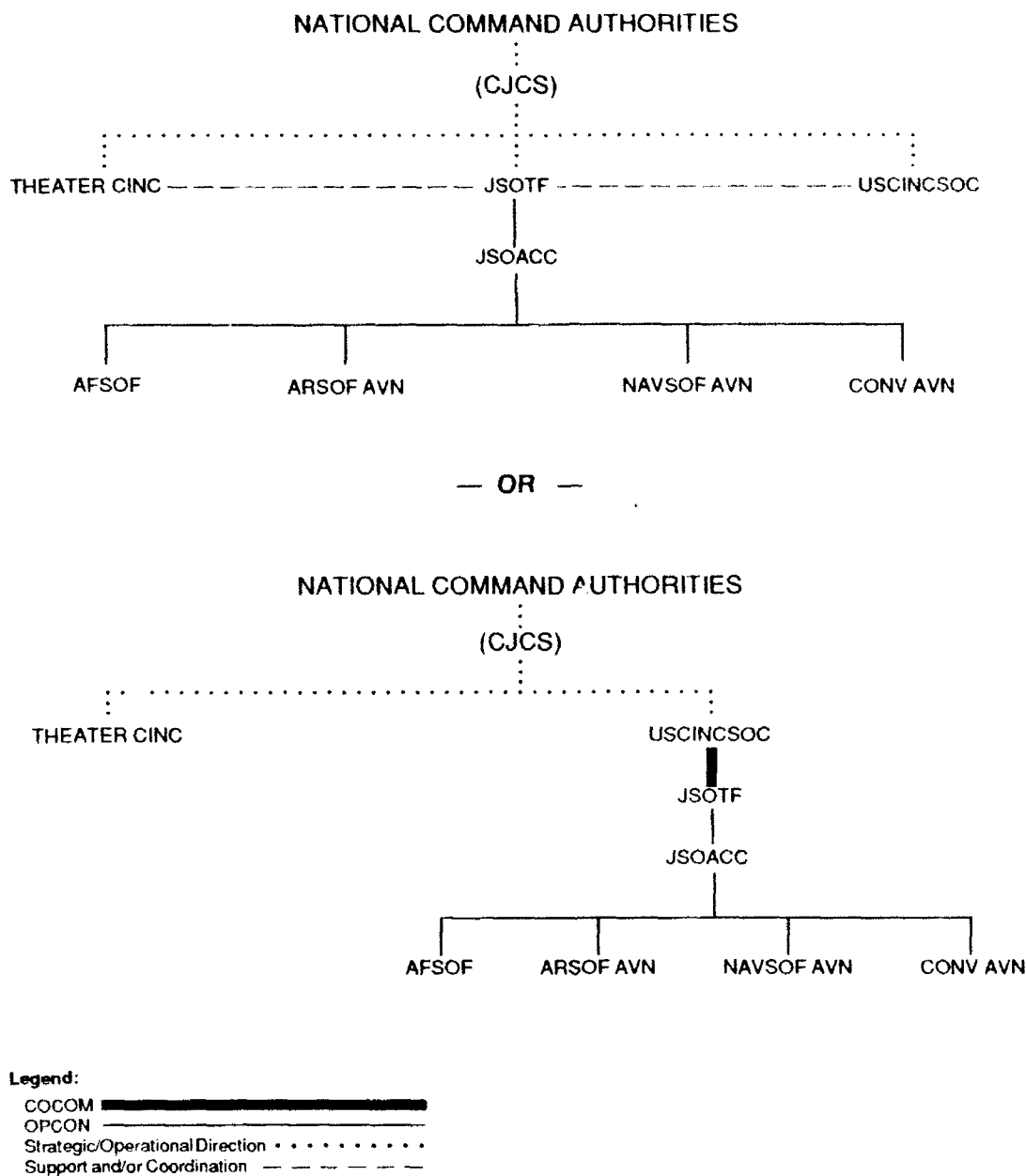


Figure 7. AFSOF in a JSOTF with Command Direction from NCA

and AFSOF doctrine state it is possible for AFSOF to be under the OPCON of a theater Air Force component commander and a JFACC. This arrangement occurs when the joint force commander (theater combatant commander) decides that is where AFSOF belongs. At one time, European AFSOF worked for United States Air Forces Europe (USAFE), Pacific AFSOF worked for

Pacific Air Forces (PACAF), and stateside AFSOF worked for Headquarters Tactical Air Command (TAC), all through respective numbered air forces.

When asked how he would like to see AFSOF function in peacetime and wartime, General Horner responded, "to facilitate war fighting, I would put AFSOF under the JFACC—and not let it be split off away from the rest of the service. The JFACC is the one man who knows best how to employ air power . . . but in peacetime, you need to have an organization to protect the advocacy, budget, and quality of training [of AFSOF]."³⁵ With that type of command relationship in mind, I present possible Air Force OPCON relationships. My proposals for overseas AFSOF take into account my interview with General Horner and are consistent with the Air Force composite/objective wing reorganization.

Stateside AFSOF

All AFSOF based in the continental United States (CONUS) "are assigned to USCINCSOC who exercises combatant command (command authority) (COCOM) over those forces [fig. 8]. OPCON of [AFSOF] is exercised by USCINCSOC through subordinate JFCs, service component commanders, or functional component commanders [US Code, Title 10, sec. 167]."³⁶ Today, stateside AFSOF is under the OPCON of a service component command—Headquarters AFSOC. Any change to the AFSOF OPCON relationship, relative to USCINCSOC, would require a change in the law—US Code, Title 10.

Short of having the law rewritten, the Air Force would probably prefer that AFSOF be redistributed in conjunction with the Air Force reorganization. For example, as a voice of aerospace power, former Air University commander

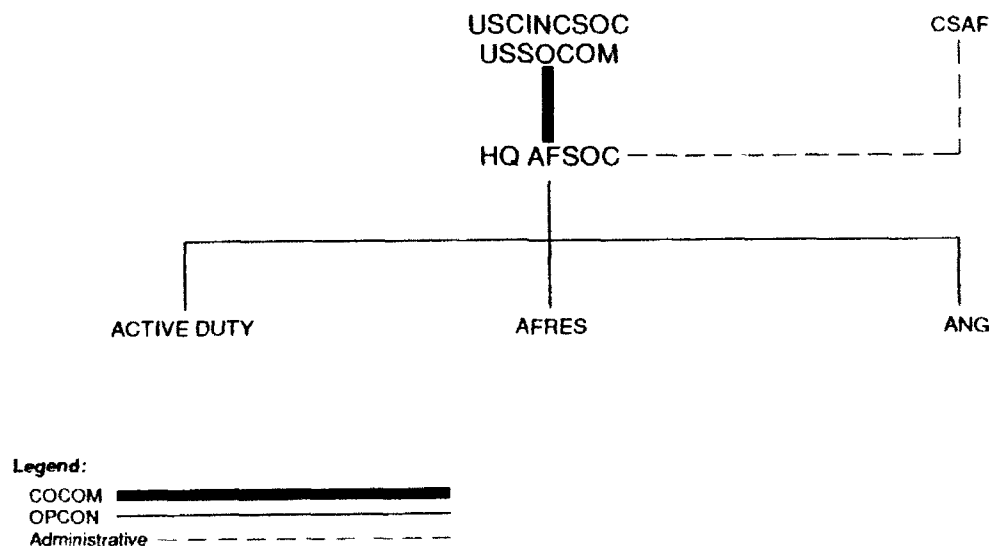


Figure 8. Stateside AFSOF Command Relationship (US Code, Title 10, sec. 167)

General Boyd stated that AFSOF gunships would be more appropriately placed under Air Combat Command, and the rest of AFSOF (airlift aircraft) would be more appropriate under Air Mobility Command.³⁷ Redistribution of AFSOF assets to the new Air Force major commands (MAJCOM) and the deactivation of Headquarters AFSOC would probably bring about a rapid response from Congress, and possibly additional legislation to ensure that Headquarters AFSOC remain an Air Force MAJCOM.³⁸ Overseas, however, command relationships are set by the theater combatant commander/JFC and AFSOF could find itself under the Air Force forces (AFFOR).

Overseas AFSOF under an AFFOR (Peacetime)

Overseas AFSOF is today under the theater SOC's. However, it could be assigned to a theater AFFOR as its own special operations objective wing or group, or as part of another Air Force objective wing.

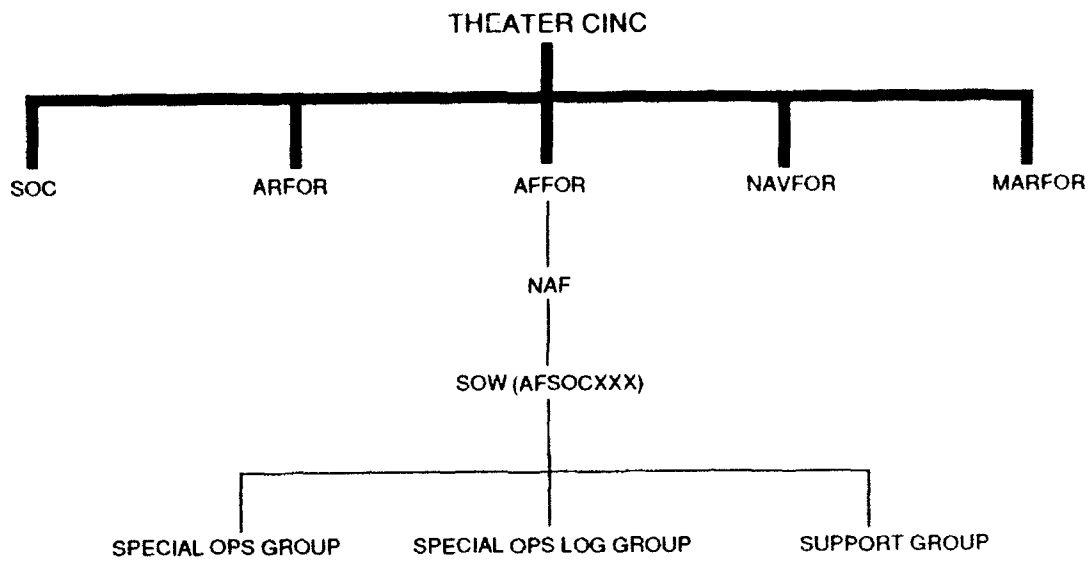
Figure 9 shows these possibilities. The top example shows a case where the preponderance of forces at a base are special operations in nature. Therefore, the objective wing could be a special operations wing. That wing would respond to taskings for AFSOF through its respective numbered air force to the theater AFFOR. The theater AFFOR would provide appropriate aviation assets, in this case AFSOF, to respond to a tasking.

The bottom example illustrates the situation in which a small number of AFSOF assets (perhaps two squadrons with their own maintenance) could make up a special operations group. The group would function alongside an objective wing's operations group. (If there were only one special operations squadron located at a base, it would become part of the operations group.) Decentralized execution of Air Force special operations would take place at these lower levels.

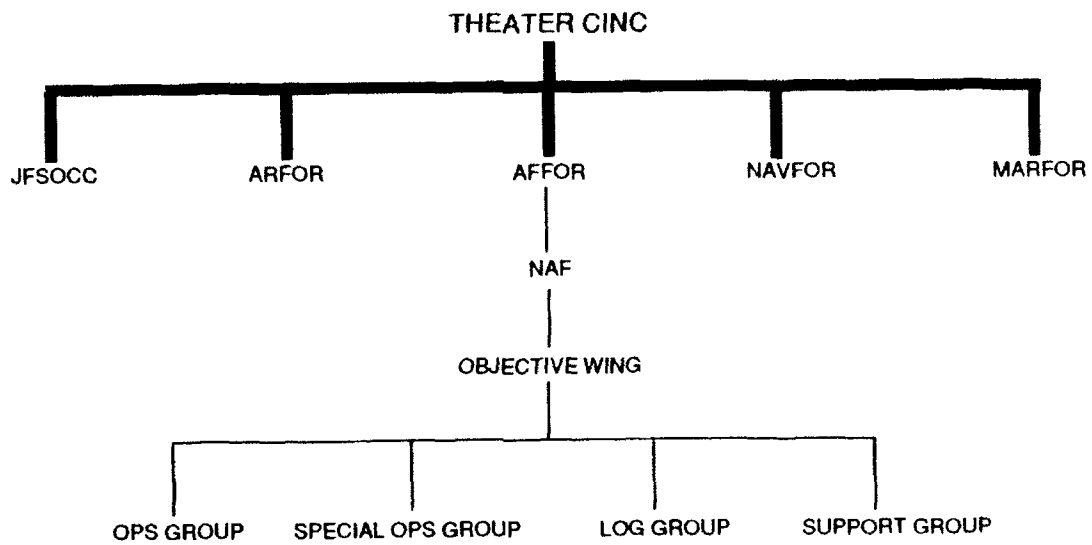
Whether the overseas AFSOF units were in their own wing or group, or part of some other objective wing, they would be available for whatever air power mission the theater AFFOR commander orders. This embracing of centralized control of air power allows the theater Air Force commander to best employ AFSOF as appropriate. Aerospace power unity of command supporters would say that the arrangement does away with multiple liaison cells at various levels of command. Thus, it provides the simplicity necessary for conducting the AFSOF air power part of the puzzle for contingency operations and provides integration into a theater air campaign plan. This leads to AFSOF falling under the orchestrator of those air campaign plans—the JFACC.

Overseas AFSOF under JFACC (Contingencies and War)

Having AFSOF under the JFACC would provide unity of command by putting "all" air assets under one air boss. It would prevent dual command post situations at the same base and allow the one air boss to know the entire picture of air operations. It would lessen the possibilities of fratricide and ease the completion of the air tasking order. The greatest advantage would be



— OR —



Legend:

COCOM
OPCON

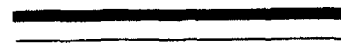


Figure 9. Overseas AFSOF under an AFFOR (Peacetime)

that the JFACC senior representative for AFSOF would no longer be the liaison officer for the special operations command, but rather a senior member of the JFACC staff, whose inputs on the tasking of AFSOF resources would not be filtered by layers of command.

Figure 10 illustrates how AFSOF would function under the JFACC. Within such an organization, the AFSOF provides forces to what is now known as the joint special operations air component coordinator (vice the commander). In this role, the JSOACC handles all special operations aviation activities for the JFACC, and as Gen Charles L. Donnelly, Jr., former commander in chief, United States Air Forces in Europe, stated, "he [the JSOACC] would have the entire view of the total air effort, and see where his forces integrate into the air campaign."³⁹ This arrangement totally embraces the centralized control/decentralized execution aspect of the basic air power tenet by having the JFACC assign special operations tasks to the JSOACC and by having the JSOACC be the delegated authority for execution of special operations missions—to include the command of all joint special operations aviation units.⁴⁰

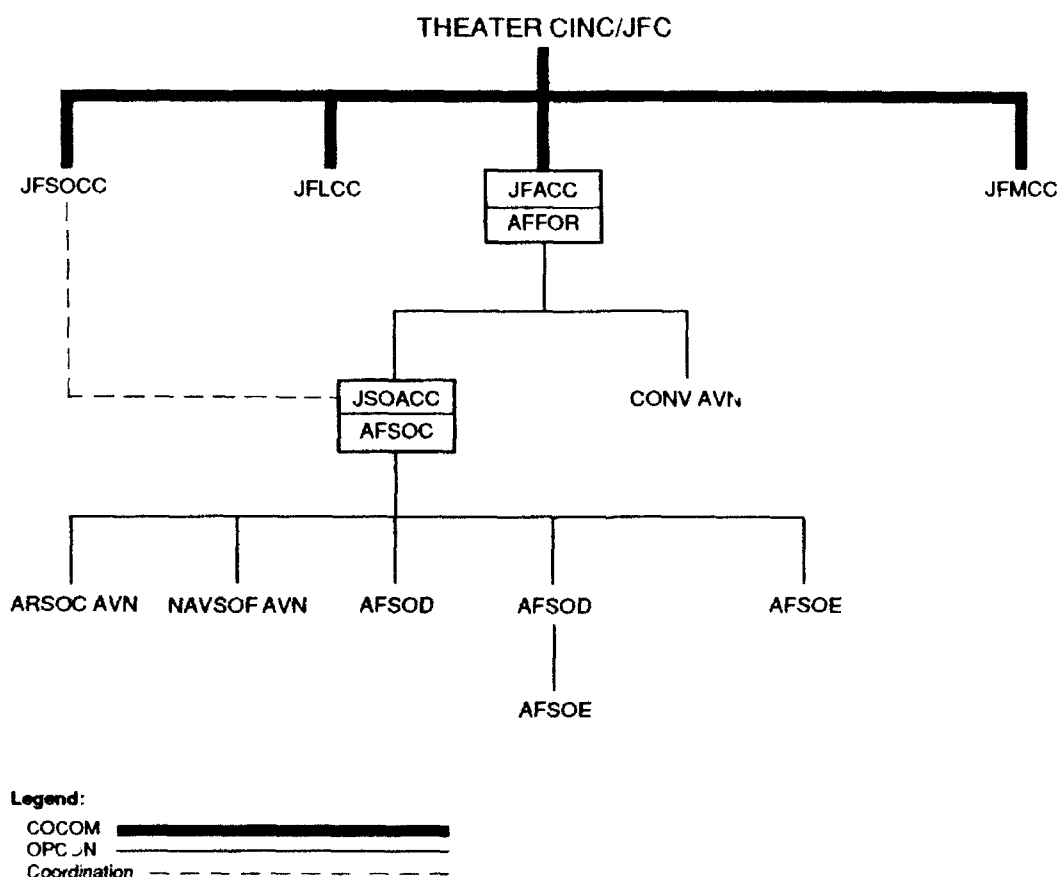


Figure 10. Overseas AFSOF under the JFACC (Contingencies and War)

As noted previously, the drawback to this organizational pattern is that it does not provide an arrangement whereby the SOC can exercise centralized operational control over all SOF assets.

AFSOF under Air Force Administrative Command and Special Operations Operational Control in the Restructured Air Force

Air Force administrative command and special operations operational control of AFSOF are what exist today. USSOCOM has combatant command over stateside AFSOF and exercises operational control through the Headquarters AFSOC commander, who is also responsible to the chief of staff, Air Force (CSAF) in the administrative and support chain of command (fig. 11).⁴¹

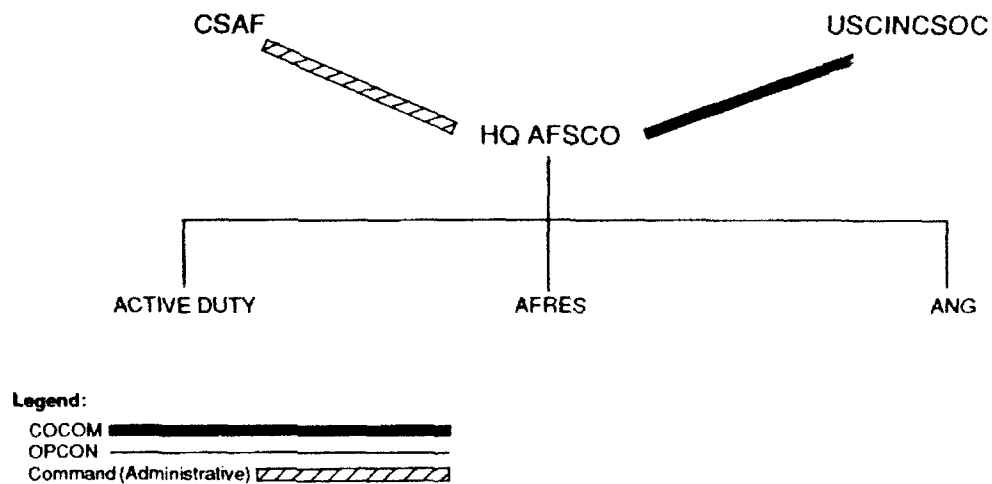
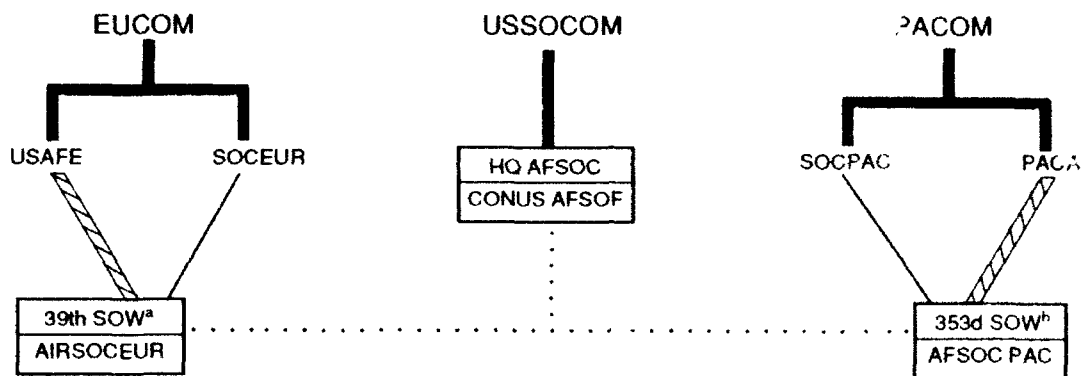


Figure 11. CONUS AFSOF under Air Force Administrative Command and Special Operations Operational Control in the Restructured Air Force

“Additionally, the commander AFSOC has administrative command authority over all overseas-assigned AFSOF” (fig. 12).⁴² The concept I explore here aligns AFSOF with the Air Force reorganization and new composite/objective wing structures. This concept will have a significant impact on overseas AFSOF administrative command relationships.

CONUS AFSOF Wear the AFSOC Patch

CONUS command and control relationships do not face a great deal of change. Headquarters AFSOC still functions as the Air Force MAJCOM for special operations, with administrative command back to CSAF. Combatant command remains with USCINCSOC, who would be responsible for providing



^a39th SOW became 352d Special Operations Group (SOG), 1 December 1992.

^b353d SOW became 353d SOG, 1 December 1992.

Legend:

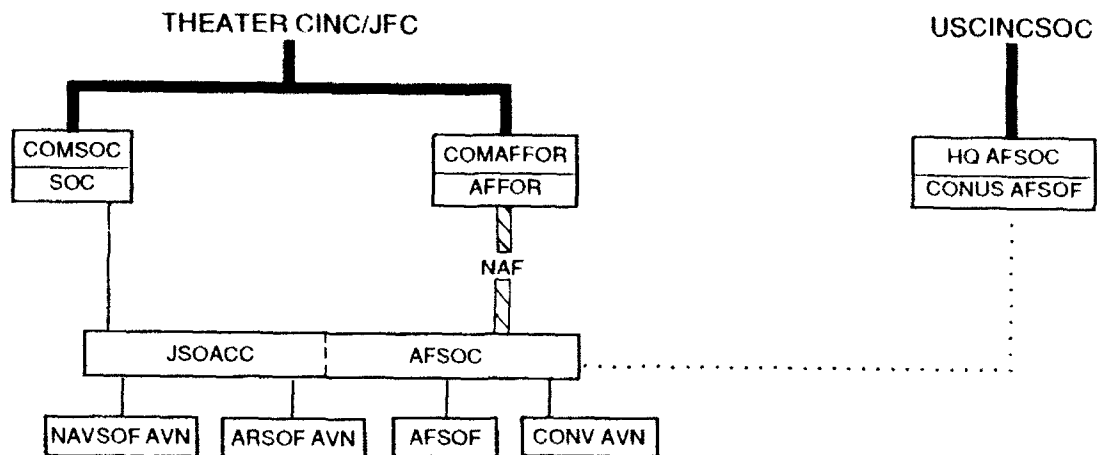
COCOM
 OPCON
 Command (Administrative)
 Budgeting, Doctrine, Policy, Personnel Actions

Figure 12. Overseas AFSOF in the Restructured Air Force

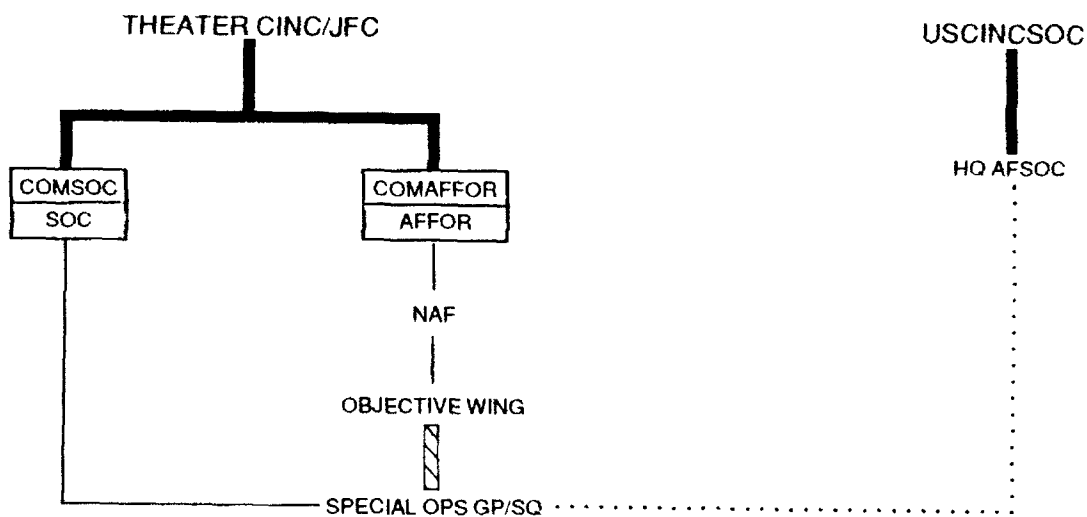
AFSOF to the appropriate combatant commander. The most significant change required by stateside AFSOF would be in the organization at the wing level. The "one base, one boss" theory would require that stateside AFSOF bases be under AFSOF commanders. Those AFSOF commanders would be responsible to the Air Force, through Headquarters AFSOC, for unique air base functions (public affairs, safety, judge advocate, command post, chaplain, comptroller, manpower) as well as logistic and support group functions common to every air base.⁴³ Going into any greater depth is beyond the scope of this monograph. However, under Air Force administrative command, the AFSOF wing commander ensures the wing functions as an Air Force composite/objective wing. Under USSOCOM combatant command, the AFSOF wing commander provides the fighting force to fulfill the Air Force aviation requirements of Headquarters AFSOC. The stateside AFSOF would wear the "AFSOF" patch.

Overseas AFSOF Wear Theater AFFOR Command Patches

Overseas at the wing level and below there will be immediate differences (figs. 12 and 13). For example, in Europe the 39th Special Operations Wing commander would be required to report to USAFE (or theater AFFOR) through a numbered air force for those unique air base functions discussed



— OR —



Legend:

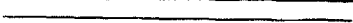
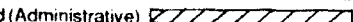
COCOM 
 OPCON 
 Command (Administrative) 
 Budgeting, Doctrine, Policy, Personnel Actions • •

Figure 13. Overseas AFSOF under Air Force Administrative Command and Special Operations Control in the Restructured Air Force

previously.⁴⁴ When it comes to combat and contingencies, however, the wing commander will be under the OPCON of Special Operations Command Europe and assume the role as the JSOACC—COMAIRSOCEUR. His relationship back to Headquarters AFSOC would concern matters of personnel assignments and AFSOF-unique budget items for consideration by USSOCOM.

Another aspect of this relationship occurs if AFSOF is part of a conventional composite/objective wing. In such a situation, there could be a special operations group alongside the conventional operations group, or a special operations squadron would be part of the operational group (fig. 13). The special operations group/squadron commander would be under the administrative command of the wing for Air Force matters. But when the theater special operations command calls, the group/squadron responds under its OPCON. The relationship back to Headquarters AFSOC is also one primarily concerned with personnel matters and budgeting for AFSOF-unique items.

So, whether AFSOF has its own wing or is part of a conventional wing, it is following the Air Force "one wing/one boss" policy. Detractors of such thinking say AFSOF is trying to "have its cake and eat it too" in such an arrangement. How can AFSOF be under blue-suit command one minute, then when it's time to go to war go back under the special operations umbrella? An answer would be that AFSOF would not be the first force to be in such a dual relationship. For example, the Air Force portions of the strategic nuclear forces will be under the administrative command of the Air Combat Command, but if they were to be employed, they would be under operational control of the Strategic Command.⁴⁵ Thus, both AFSOF and strategic nuclear forces would be under the OPCON of the functional commands for combat employment.

In the overseas theaters, AFSOF wears the overseas AFFOR patches. This arrangement would be consistent with conventional AFFOR that traditionally wear the patches of their CONUS Air Force commands (i.e., TAC/Air Combat Command and MAC/Air Mobility Command) but are under the administrative command of the overseas AFFOR.

Summary

As I began this chapter, my goal was to show the most likely command relationships for AFSOF and to explore others that are doctrinally possible. I have provided 13 command wiring diagrams that stir up many notions of optimal command relationships. All of these command relationships are possible, but AFSOF is most likely to be part of a subunified command, a JTF, or a JSOTF. The overriding question remains—is there one clean, nonconfusing method to command AFSOF?

I believe the answer is directly related to the unity of command principle of war. According to AFM 1-1, "*Unity of Command*—Ensure unity of effort for every objective under one responsible commander . . . emphasizes that all efforts should be directed and coordinated toward a common goal . . . best achieved by vesting a single commander with the requisite authority to direct all forces employed in pursuit of a common goal."⁴⁶ Joint Test Pub 3-05 adds the following note to a joint definition: "To achieve unity of effort, SOF [including AFSOF] organize with clean, uncluttered chains of command. Layering between the headquarters assigning the mission and the operational unit that conducts it is strictly avoided."⁴⁷ Based on those quotes, how does unity of command relate to command and control of AFSOF? Air Force doctrine calls for centralized control (read OPCON) of all air power—including AFSOF. Joint doctrine for special operations allows for differences in command relationships—making the relationship a situation-based decision by a joint force commander. I believe the latter provides the flexibility required for AFSOF and SOF to perform their missions.

If AFSOF finds itself in a large theater campaign and the theater JFC envisions few opportunities for special operations missions, the logical choice "may" be to have AFSOF under the OPCON of the JFACC to provide unity of command for the objective—the air campaign. However, if the joint force commander envisions extensive special operations, requiring one special operations boss to ensure their success, AFSOF must fall under a commander for special operations (JFSOCC) to allow for unity of command for this objective—special operations. The question is best answered by placing AFSOF in the command relationship appropriate to the way in which they most likely will be employed.

In peacetime, AFSOF most likely will be employed in support of counterterrorism and contingency operations. The present organizations (Headquarters USSOCOM, Headquarters AFSOC, and the theater subunified commands) facilitate a command relationship emphasizing the day-to-day unity of command in pursuing counterterrorism and contingency operations.

When AFSOF finds itself in higher intensity operations (theater warfare and beyond), it may fall under the OPCON/TACON of a JFACC—if such an arrangement is best suited for the joint force commander's objectives. Otherwise, AFSOF will be under the OPCON of a JFSOCC, who reports directly to the joint force commander—and the Air Force and AFFOR must be prepared to support this arrangement.

Notes

1. Joint Test Pub 3-05, *Doctrine for Joint Special Operations*, October 1990, III-1.
2. AFM 1-1, *Basic Aerospace Doctrine of the United States Air Force*, vol. 2, March 1992, 113-14.
3. Lt Gen Charles A. Horner, commander, Headquarters United States Central Command, Air Force, Shaw AFB, S.C., interview with author, 12 September 1992.

4. Lt Gen Charles G. Boyd, former commander, Air University, Maxwell AFB, Ala., interview with author, 4 December 1991.
5. Joint Test Pub 3-05, III-13.
6. Joint Pub 0-2, *Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF)*, 1 December 1986, 3-24.
7. Joint Test Pub 3-05, III-6.
8. AFM 2-10, *Special Operations*, 25 October 1991, 13.
9. Lt Gen Donald Snyder, Headquarters Tactical Air Command, Langley AFB, Va., interview with author, 11 September 1991.
10. Ibid.
11. Headquarters Air Force Special Operations Command, proposal for headquarters liaison unit type codes (UTC), Hurlburt Field, Fla., 10 October 1991.
12. Col Rudolph Peksens, United States Air Forces in Europe, Ramstein AB, Germany, interview with author, 19 September 1991.
13. AFM 2-10, 13.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid., 26.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid., 14.
18. Ibid., 13.
19. Joint Test Pub 3-05, III-10.
20. Gen Carl W. Stiner, commander in chief, United States Special Operations Command, MacDill AFB, Fla., interview with author, 6 December 1991.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. Joint Pub 0-2, 3-27.
24. Ibid.
25. Horner interview.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid.
28. Joint Test Pub 3-05, GL-13.
29. Capt Greg S. Butterbaugh, "Operation Provide Comfort" (Unpublished history of the 39th Special Operations Wing).
30. Maj Gen James Jamerson, commander, Combined Task Force Provide Comfort, Incirlik AB, Turkey, interview with author, 25 September 1991.
31. Joint Test Pub 3-05, III-7.
32. Ibid., III-1 through III-2.
33. AFM 1-1, vol. 2, 114.
34. Stiner interview.
35. Horner interview.
36. Joint Test Pub 3-05, III-1.
37. Boyd interview.
38. Edward J. Holten, senior staffer, US House of Representatives Committee on Armed Services, Washington, D.C., interview with author, 24 October 1991.
39. Gen Charles L. Donnelly, Jr., United States Air Forces in Europe, interview with author at Maxwell AFB, Ala., 4 March 1992.
40. AFM 1-1, vol. 2, 114.
41. Air Force Regulation (AFR) 23-9, *Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC)*, 1 August 1991, 3.
42. Ibid.
43. Col John Bridges, deputy chief of staff (DCS), Plans and Programs, Headquarters Air Force Special Operations Command, to all DCSs and AFSOC wing and agency commanders, letter, subject: Objective Wing, 23 October 1991.

44. Message, 032000Z Apr 92, Headquarters Air Force Special Operations Command, to overseas joint and Air Force special operations commands, 3 April 1992. On 1 December 1992, overseas special operations wings became independent groups. The 39th Special Operations Wing was redesignated the 352d Special Operations Group, and the 353d Special Operations Wing became the 353d Special Operations Group.

45. Donald B. Rice, secretary of the Air Force, address to the Air Force Association National Symposium, Los Angeles, Calif., 25 October 1991.

46. AFM 1-1, vol. 2, 12.

47. Joint Test Pub 3-05, E-5.

Chapter 3

Recommendations and Conclusion

My monograph has presented no earthshaking revelations concerning the world of Air Force special operations forces. My intention was to put some meat on the bones of current joint and Air Force doctrine concerning special operations. My goals were to have all war fighters (including special operators) gain an appreciation for AFSOF and to knock down walls of misunderstanding concerning the world of special operations.

In chapter 1, I gave a brief history of AFSOF, told of today's capabilities, and presented tomorrow's requirements. In chapter 2, I discussed the many possibilities in AFSOF command relationships. I prepared these chapters so they could "stand alone" and be used by Air Force and sister-service schools for their special operations curriculum.

Recommendations

As my first recommendation, I believe the Air Force and its service schools (Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps, United States Air Force Academy, noncommissioned officer academies, and officer professional military education schools) must devote more time and energy to SOF education. As an example, the SOF portion of the Air University curriculum for Air War College and Air Command and Staff College consists of one guest speaker from USSOCOM (usually the CINC). Headquarters AFSOC, the Air Force major command for special operations, and special operations doctrine are minimally represented in presentations, briefings, or in text (none of which is testable, implying that it isn't really that important). I do not believe this is adequate instruction on special operations, which in basic aerospace doctrine is listed as a typical mission of the Air Force and whose forces are either the spearhead of a contingency operation or an integral part of an air campaign.¹ More importantly, service schools should not tie discussion of special operations to low-intensity conflict (LIC) studies. As I have documented in this monograph, SOF participates in activities and missions throughout the operational continuum and is a force that can be used for much more than LIC-related activities. Air Force service schools should recognize the broader implications of SOF, and should study special operations by itself or in conjunction with war-fighting studies—not with LIC.

The theme of this research report has been the misunderstanding of AFSOF and its missions, and my research this past year shows that this misunderstanding is, at least in part, the product of the way members of AFSOF often present themselves. The conventional flag officers and their staffs that I interviewed all commented about personal experiences in which AFSOF members displayed an "I've got a secret" or "I can tell you, but I'll have to shoot you" mentality. Worse yet were those instances where AFSOF crew members carried a "ninja warrior" theme to excess in the company of conventional aircrews. As the saying goes, you can only make one first impression, and unfortunately, many conventional Air Force leaders only remember AFSOF "cowboys," or poorly thought-out letters to magazines that they interpret as nothing more than whining. Throughout my interviews, I heard of cases where conventional war fighters asked questions about AFSOF capabilities or requested a presentation on AFSOF (from a desire to better support special operations) but were met with the "we can't tell you, it's secret" attitude. One of the more dangerous occurrences was when conventional TACC planners were locked out of a SOF command center when trying to ensure airspace deconfliction. Such behavior is not smart and I know it is not true all of the time, but when it does occur, the wall between the conventional side and AFSOF grows higher. The products of such situations are lack of trust, lack of war-fighting interoperability, and most probably, omission from an operation or misuse of resources based on a misunderstanding of AFSOF capabilities.

Thus, my second recommendation is that the SOF and AFSOF community be as mature and open as possible when dealing with conventional forces—they probably do not understand your world but may be trying to. Don't let intraservice rivalry (i.e., fighter versus AFSOF) make you embarrass your command. Also, it makes no sense to play the "secret squirrel game" with conventional forces because much of what we do can be explained in an unclassified fashion, as in this monograph. Moreover, there are classified items that can and should be shared with your war-fighting counterparts on conventional staffs and in operational units—in peacetime and especially in combat. Of course, some aspects of AFSOF missions must remain classified and compartmented. But even in such cases, conventional forces must be read-in when they become part of the mission or provide some sort of support. The SOF motto—quiet professionals—doesn't mean we shut out the conventional world from where we all came. It means SOF does its job, quietly, professionally, without seeking publicity. I believe it is in the best interest of SOF to counter the conventional war-fighters' view of SOF being a unilateral fighting force that just does "SOF stuff" with no connection to conventional war fighting. As Operation Desert Storm highlighted, learning to interface AFSOF with conventional war fighting is very important. During this operation, AFSOF came into more contact than ever before with a JFACC and the theater air control center. AFSOF's knowledge of TACC operations is much

less than desirable and is often the product of operating and exercising alone or of always sending the same people to conventional command post exercises.

My third recommendation is that AFSOF officers who are heading to command positions or to AFSOF staffs that will place them in a supporting role to a TACC attend the Battle Staff Course at the Air Ground Operations School (AGOS), Hurlburt Field, Florida. Also, senior AFSOF leaders (colonels and above) should attend the Senior Tactical Battle Commander's Course, also at AGOS, to see what is involved in planning an air campaign. They would be taught what is important in an air campaign, and they could see how SOF is an integral part of an air campaign—through the previously mentioned direct action and special reconnaissance missions.

My fourth recommendation is that conventional war fighters and commanders learn as much as possible about SOF: what capabilities SOF provides and how it can complement their campaigns. AFM 2-10, *Special Operations*, and Joint Test Pub 3-05, *Doctrine for Joint Special Operations*, are good places to begin. AFSOF personnel tend to know more about conventional air operations than conventional aviators know about special operations simply because most AFSOF personnel started out in conventional air operations. As previously noted, the world will continue to be a dangerous place, with multiple threats to be faced by conventional air forces and AFSOF. The sooner walls of mistrust and misunderstanding between the conventional side of aerospace power and AFSOF fall, the sooner joint force commanders will have a much more capable fighting force.

My fifth recommendation is for establishing one voice, one command for all SOF aviation—Headquarters Joint Special Operations Aviation Command (JSOAC). Throughout this monograph I felt I should be including the Army side of SOF aviation since Army assets are an integral part of the SOF combined arms team. In addition, it is difficult to discuss SOF aviation without discussing the component which has the preponderance of rotary-wing aircraft. The fact that two services are engaged in SOF aviation often leads to the previously mentioned confusion in the conventional Air Force. To end this confusion about SOF aviation, and who is really in charge, I propose putting all SOF aviation under one joint aviation component.

Headquarters JSOAC would institutionalize the joint aviation aspect of SOF and at the same time allow the Air Force to close its MAJCOM for SOF—Headquarters AFSOC. The new joint headquarters would subsume most of what is encompassed by Headquarters AFSOC at Hurlburt Field, Florida, and would become the headquarters of the aviation component for USSOCOM.²

Headquarters JSOAC, commanded by an Air Force three-star general (known as JSOACC), with an Army one-star general as deputy commander would organize similar mission assets of the joint special operations aviation community. Also, it would ensure the following:

- Provide standardized tactics, training, and procedures. Air Force and Army aviators have different flying regulations, though they may train to the same tasks, conditions, and standards. To make them truly interoperable, they should all fly by the same rules.

- Provide an administrative headquarters for Army and Navy SOF aviation. Such an organization would focus on being a professional staff organization, free of flying duties, except for key personnel.

- Centralize doctrine, policy, and planning.³

- Plan for all future SOF aviation.⁴ One headquarters could plan for future assets, reducing service rivalry clouding the issue of follow-on aircraft.

After all Army SOF aviation came together in May 1990, Maj Gen James A. Guest, commander of the 1st Special Operations Command, stated, "What we needed [and now have] was a headquarters to exert command and control over all [stateside Army] SOF aviation."⁵ Specifically, General Guest was referring to the consolidation of all Army SOF aviation assets under the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (SOAR), which is under the stateside command and control of US Army Special Operations Command (USASOC), the Army component of USSOCOM. My recommendation would bring together Army, Air Force, and Navy SOF aviation so that one really does have command and control over "all" SOF aviation. Figure 14 is a proposed Headquarters JSOAC organizational chart.

Overseas we have the beginnings of such an organization. The 39th SOW, acting as COMAIRSOCEUR, represents US Army SOF aviation interests relative to logistics and planning. Further, during exercises and contingencies, COMAIRSOCEUR has operational control over Army SOF aviation assets.⁶ By institutionalizing stateside we could do likewise overseas, providing each theater SOC with a joint operational aviation component. Full unity of command of SOF aviation under a joint force special operations commander would be achieved in CONUS and overseas.

Formation of Headquarters JSOAC would not solve the classic Air Force problem of centralized control/decentralized execution relative to command of AFSOF. But it would clean the Air Force's plate of trying to explain those AFSOF organizations (Headquarters AFSOC and the overseas SOWs) that don't fit into the new Air Force vision of one wing, one boss. In reality, Headquarters JSOAC would be the joint aviation organization the Air Force aspires to have through the JFACC concept.

Conclusion

I wrote this monograph to answer the most often asked questions about what AFSOF does and how it fits into a multitude of command relationships. When I began my fellowship year, my goal was to evaluate AFSOF as simply another player on the aerospace team, with an emphasis on the Air Force. As the year progressed and the number of my interviews with conventional force

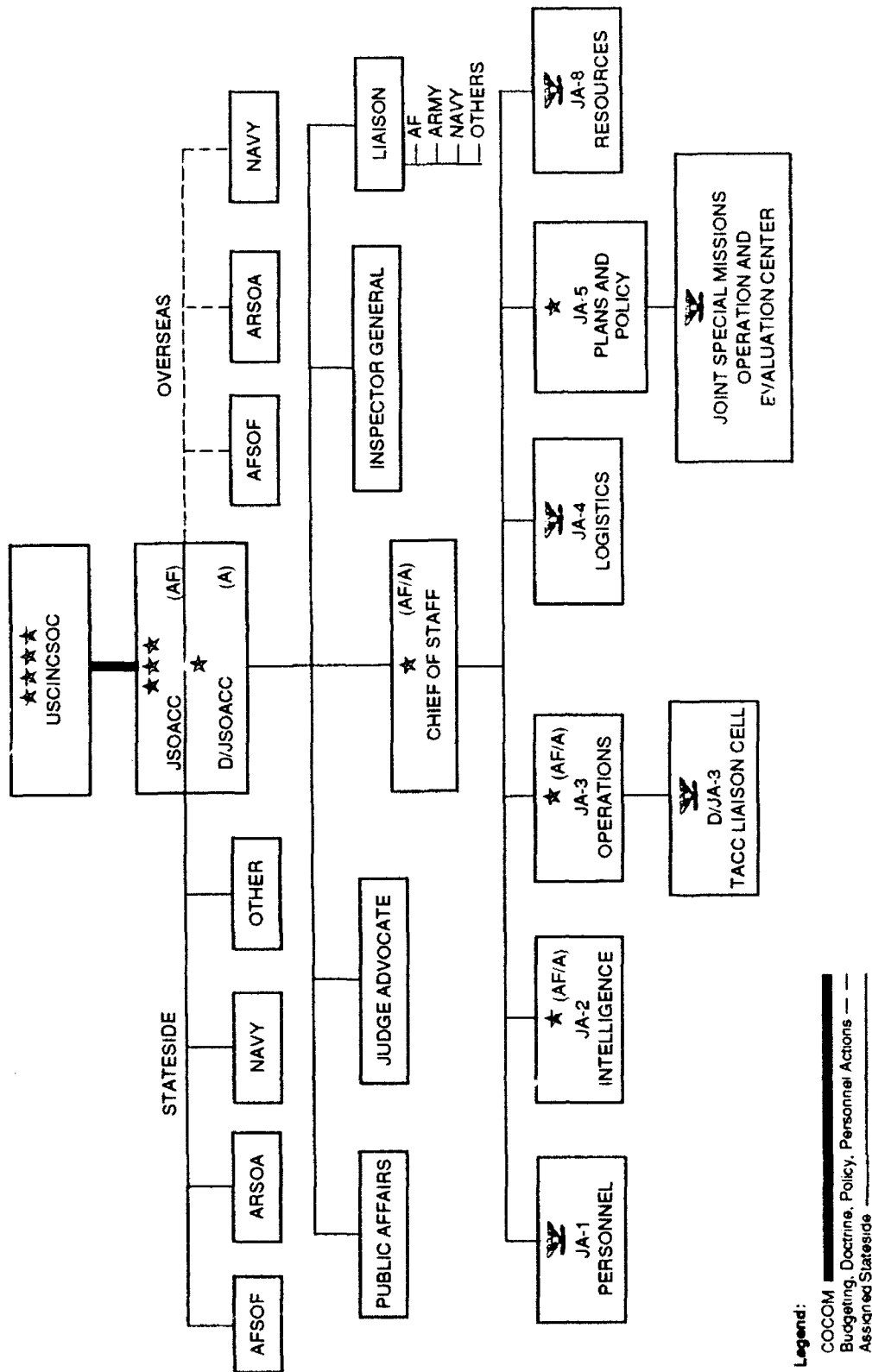


Figure 14. Headquarters Joint Special Operations Aviation Command

and special operations leaders grew, I reaffirmed my fundamental belief that AFSOF is much more than a simple player on the aerospace team because of its versatility in performing many aerospace roles—predominately as part of a joint combined arms team. AFSOF is organized, trained, and equipped to apply the basic tenets of aerospace power to the world of special operations on behalf of the national command authorities or a joint force commander. But, as proven in Operation Desert Storm, AFSOF also can apply those basic tenets of aerospace power conventionally on behalf of a joint force air component commander. Hence, the title, *Air Force Special Operations Forces: A Unique Application of Aerospace Power*.

Notes

1. AFM 1-1, *Basic Aerospace Doctrine of the United States Air Force*, vol. 1, March 1992, 7, 13–14.
2. Lt Col Gordy Ettenson, USSOCOM, interview with author, 6 December 1991.
3. Maj Gen James A. Guest and Maj T. Michael Ryan, "The SOF Aviation Regiment," *Army Aviation*, 31 July 1990, 20.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Col Eugene Ronsick, 39th SOW, Rhein-Main AB, Germany, interview with author, 26 September 1991.

Appendix A

The Roles and Missions of Special Operations and Air Force Basic Doctrine

I am confident that most Air Force professionals not only will read our new doctrine with care, but will devote themselves to making it better. . . . I expect that the publication of our revised basic doctrine—the first documented doctrine we have ever had—will stir debates and challenges, reexamination of the evidence, and new reasoning.

Lt Gen Charles G. Boyd
Airpower Journal, Fall 1991

Perhaps the main reason for confusion over what special operations is all about is the fact that Air Force special operations and its missions have never been articulated in Air Force basic doctrine in terms that can be understood by “both” conventional forces and special operators. Over the past 30 years, terms and definitions for special operations activities have evolved along considerably different lines from “traditional notions of aerospace roles and missions.” One of the reasons for this difference is that special operations missions have been closely linked to Army and Navy terminology and to unconventional activities that fall outside conventional operations. Also, certain operations or activities that are considered merely as scenarios (e.g., counterterrorism operations) in the conventional world are, in fact, primary missions of the special operations community.

The principal missions of special operations are direct action, unconventional warfare, special reconnaissance, foreign internal defense, and counterterrorism. Collateral activities include security assistance, humanitarian assistance, antiterrorism, counternarcotics, and search and rescue/personnel recovery.

Another issue clouding our understanding of Air Force special operations has been the question of whether special operations constitutes, with respect to aerospace power, a mission in its own right. Most AFSOF members would argue that special operations is a discrete mission with characteristics that differ significantly from, say, offensive counterair, interdiction, and tactical airlift.

To others, special operations is a “capability” to perform a variety of missions (e.g., an MC-130E inserting a special forces team into a denied area would merely be performing a form of tactical airlift). In this sense, AFSOF operations are often viewed as merely incorporating traditional aerospace

roles and missions, that is, aerospace control (counterair), force application (strategic attack, interdiction, and close air support), and force enhancement (airlift, air refueling, and surveillance and reconnaissance). See figure 15. Accordingly, special mission designators would be superfluous.

ROLES AND TYPICAL MISSIONS OF AEROSPACE POWER (See notes below and refer to vol. II, essay L.)	
ROLES	TYPICAL MISSIONS
AEROSPACE CONTROL (Control the Combat Environment)	Counterair Counterspace
FORCE APPLICATION (Apply Combat Power)	Strategic Attack Interdiction Close Air Support
FORCE ENHANCEMENT (Multiply Combat Effectiveness)	Airlift Air Refueling Spacelift Electronic Combat Surveillance and Reconnaissance Special Operations
FORCE SUPPORT (Sustain Forces)	Base Operability and Defense Logistics Combat Support On-Orbit Support

NOTES:

1. Role and mission matchups are not exclusive. A strategic attack (e.g., bombing an aircraft factory) can be a vital part of the aerospace control role.
2. The development of capabilities in space depends on technological advancements and national policy.
3. Aerospace forces and platforms are not limited to particular roles or missions. For example, heavy bombers can perform close air support, fighter-bombers can attack strategic targets, and special operations forces can perform a variety of roles and missions.

Source: AFM 1-1, *Basic Aerospace Doctrine of the United States Air Force*, vol. 1, March 1992, 7.

Figure 15.

Some AFSOF operations can, indeed, be described in traditional aerospace terms. In terms of tasks and objectives, however, certain unique aspects of special operations do not fit the traditional roles and missions mold. Counterterrorism and unconventional warfare are examples. In the past, these unique aspects were recognized, or at least accommodated, in basic doctrine by simply listing special operations as an air power mission. This arrangement did not pose a problem in earlier versions of AFM 1-1 because, for one thing, roles were never defined or even distinguished from missions. Missions, moreover, were anything but "basic." In the current AFM 1-1, however, special operations does not find an easy resting place within a classification matrix that matches roles with typical missions (see fig. 15).¹ Special operations is too broad (encompasses too many unique aspects) to fit the AFM 1-1 criteria for "mission," that is, "define[d] [by] specific tasks . . . and objectives."² In addition, special operations can be performed throughout a broad range of traditional missions within all listed roles. This suggests that we may be looking for something other than a mission as a means of classifying special operations.

A brief review of special operations in basic doctrine helps us understand how after 28 years we finally arrived at a situation where special operations no longer finds a comfortable home in the missions listing. Before the current AFM 1-1, special operations capabilities were described in basic aerospace doctrine through the use of jointly developed special operations mission designators (e.g., unconventional warfare, counterinsurgency, etc.). Special operations activities have been a part of aerospace power since World War II and were developed under the watchful eyes of two famous air power advocates—Gen Henry H. ("Hap") Arnold and Gen Ira C. Eaker.

The 1964 version of AFM 1-1 devoted a chapter to the employment of aerospace forces in counterinsurgency. That version stated, "The Air Force can contribute to counterinsurgency most effectively by providing training assistance to the indigenous forces to enable them to secure the loyalty of the people and to insure that these forces can protect the people from insurgent attack."³ That statement succinctly summarizes one aspect of AFSOF support in FID today. Further, a discussion of "direct air action against insurgent forces" in the same chapter provided a parallel to the special operations direct action mission of today.⁴

In 1971, AFM 1-1 included a chapter on Air Force special operations: "[Such] operations include [FID], psychological operations, unconventional warfare and related activities."⁵ This version contained the first basic guidance for what AFSOF was to do: "conduct their own special operations and provide orientation and training for other US Air Force and personnel as required."⁶ The text on unconventional warfare that appeared later in the quoted chapter is as valid today as it was then: "Air power is used to infiltrate or exfiltrate unconventional warfare forces, to keep them supplied, and to strike targets."⁷

Special operations became one of the nine basic operational missions in 1979. The text of that AFM 1-1 spoke of two facets of special operations—

unconventional warfare and FID. Unconventional warfare had now evolved into "evasion and escape, guerrilla warfare, sabotage, direct action missions, and other covert or clandestine operations."⁸ FID consisted of "forces . . . sent into unstable areas to help the host country prevent low level conflict from expanding into hostility."⁹ From this text we have a direct correlation to the unconventional warfare and FID missions as described by joint doctrine today.

The 1984 AFM 1-1 still listed special operations as one of nine Air Force basic missions, and the definition was very accurate for the time it was published:

Special operations objectives are to influence the accomplishment of strategic or tactical objectives normally through the conduct of low visibility, covert, or clandestine military actions. Special operations are usually conducted in enemy controlled or politically sensitive territories and may complement general purpose force operations.

Virtually all aerospace forces have the potential for employment in special operations. Additionally, the Air Force organizes, trains, and equips unique units [AFSOF] to conduct special operations as their primary mission. To execute special operations, forces are normally organized and employed in small formations capable of both supporting actions and independent operations, with the purpose of enabling timely and tailored responses throughout the spectrum of conflict. Special operations forces may conduct and/or support unconventional warfare, counter-terrorist operations, collective security, psychological operations, certain rescue missions, and other mission areas such as interdiction or offensive counter air operations.¹⁰

This definition came close to describing AFSOF's role today. All that would be needed is to change the wording to reflect current special operations joint terminology.

In 1989, special operations' position in Air Force basic doctrine drastically changed. It was deleted as a basic mission of the Air Force in an Air Staff-developed draft. Special operations was discussed as a form of warfare and became a supporting task.¹¹ The feeling in the Air Staff doctrine world was that special operations was a capability, not a mission. However, US-CINCSOC and CINCMAC "weighed in" with support for special operations as a basic mission in November of 1989.¹² After that, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen Larry D. Welch proclaimed that special operations was to be retained as a core mission of the Air Force.¹³ But things changed before the Air Staff version of AFM 1-1 could be published.

In 1990, the Air University Center for Aerospace Doctrine, Research, and Education (CADRE) assumed responsibility for Air Force basic doctrine and developed a much different version of AFM 1-1. Aerospace power was now couched in terms of aerospace roles and typical missions. The roles were aerospace control, force application, force enhancement, and force support. Under each of those roles were the typical missions of aerospace power (counterair, counterspace, strategic attack, interdiction, close air support, etc.). Special operations was not even considered a typical mission, because, again, it was viewed as a capability, not a mission.¹⁴

There was a continuing dialogue between the Air Staff, Air University, USSOCOM, and Headquarters AFSOC concerning whether or not special operations was a mission. The stalemate was finally broken in January 1992 with the decision to include special operations as a typical mission under the force enhancement role of aerospace power.

Designating special operations as a force enhancement mission misses the mark. Special operations was forced into the new AFM 1-1 as a force enhancement mission in the role/mission format. As you recall from chapter 1 examples, when I reviewed AFSOF capabilities in the context of its special operations missions, AFSOF conducts more aerospace control and force application activities than enhancement activities. The new AFM 1-1 states that "[aerospace] *roles* define the broad purposes or functions of aerospace forces."¹⁵ Special operations defines a broad purpose and a set of functions for aerospace forces to conduct by either covert, clandestine, or low visibility means to carry out the orders of the national command authorities or a joint force commander. The specific tasks (and therefore typical missions) of the aerospace role of special operations are unconventional warfare, direct action operations, special reconnaissance operations, counterterrorism operations, and foreign internal defense. Furthermore, "special operations are not the exclusive domain of AFSOF," and the special operations community has never made such a claim. Previous Air Force basic doctrine has been straightforward in stating that "virtually all aerospace forces have the potential for employment in special operations."¹⁶

Volume 1 of the new AFM 1-1 should include special operations as an aerospace role. "Roles and Typical Missions of Aerospace Power" should look like my figure 16.¹⁷ The rationale is best understood by reviewing the following proposed change to AFM 1-1, volume 1. The role of special operations should appear as a separate numbered paragraph, 3-6, and written as:

Special operations consists of aerospace operations to influence the accomplishment of strategic and/or tactical objectives through the conduct of covert, clandestine, or low-visibility military actions. As in the role of force application, aerospace forces conduct special operations at any level of war, but special operations also includes operations in a peacetime engagement environment. Special operations missions are almost exclusively conducted by joint forces and may be conducted independently or in support of conventional operations. Aerospace special operations is normally under the control of a joint special operations air component commander (JSOACC), who ensures that centralized control/decentralized execution is maintained over all aerospace forces in support of the joint force special operations component commander (JFSOCC). The JFSOCC may be a commander of a subunified command, a joint task force, or a joint special operations task force. The JFSOCC is responsible to the national command authorities or a joint force commander to conduct the following activities:

a. Unconventional warfare involves aerospace forces in peacetime advising, training, and assisting indigenous forces against a hostile power; and in war, directly supporting and participating in activities with an indigenous resistance force. These activities would be in the form of guerrilla warfare, subversion, sabotage, intelligence collection, and evasion and escape efforts.

ROLES	TYPICAL MISSIONS
AEROSPACE CONTROL (Control the Combat Environment)	Counterair Counterspace
FORCE APPLICATION (Apply Combat Power)	Strategic Attack Interdiction Close Air Support
SPECIAL OPERATIONS (Covert, Clandestine, or Low-visibility Military Actions)	Unconventional Warfare Direct Action Operations Special Reconnaissance Operations Counterterrorist Operations Foreign Internal Defense
FORCE ENHANCEMENT (Multiply Combat Effectiveness)	Airlift Air Refueling Spacelift Electronic Combat Surveillance and Reconnaissance
FORCE SUPPORT (Sustain Forces)	Base Operability and Defense Logistics Combat Support On-Orbit Support

Figure 16. Roles and Typical Missions of Aerospace Power (Proposed)

b. **Direct action missions are similar to classic aerospace power interdiction missions as far as destroying or damaging a specific target, but different in that they may also involve capturing or recovering designated personnel or materiel.** They are also characterized by the joint force tactics of employment—raid, ambush, or direct assault—in which aerospace forces either conduct or support the operations.

c. **Special reconnaissance operations are actions that place the human element in direct contact with a potential or actual enemy.** The human element achieves intelligence information that cannot be achieved through high technology devices—constant meteorological conditions and detailed hydrographical, geographic, or demographic conditions. Special reconnaissance also includes target acquisition, area assessment, and immediate poststrike reconnaissance.

d. **Counterterrorism operations involve many conventional and unconventional means to prevent, deter, and respond to terrorism.** The speed, range, and flexibility of aerospace power are paramount to responding to terrorist situations. This response is either in support of specially trained counterterrorism forces or by direct involvement in counterterrorist operations.

e. **Foreign internal defense operations support a friendly government which faces a threat to its internal stability and security.** US aerospace forces provide assistance in training, advising, and equipping a host nation's military aerospace forces. The presence and active support of US aerospace forces demonstrate firm US resolve and provide a base for further US aerospace force involvement as required.

Volume 2 of AFM 1-1 contains the essays that support the basic doctrine in volume 1.¹⁸ To truly be complete, volume 2 would have to include material supporting the proposed special operations paragraphs. The basis for such a supporting essay is contained in chapter 1 of this monograph. Also, aerospace participation in special operations should be interwoven throughout volume 2, but such an undertaking is beyond the scope of this document. Nevertheless it is one I would truly enjoy.

Notes

1. AFM 1-1, *Basic Aerospace Doctrine of the United States Air Force*, vol. 1, March 1992, 7.
2. Ibid., 6.
3. AFM 1-1, *Aerospace Doctrine, United States Air Force Basic Doctrine*, 14 August 1964, 6-1.
4. Ibid., 6-2.
5. AFM 1-1, *Aerospace Doctrine, United States Air Force Basic Doctrine*, 28 September 1971, 6-1.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. AFM 1-1, *Functions and Basic Doctrine of the United States Air Force*, 14 February 1979, 2-19.
9. Ibid.
10. AFM 1-1, *Basic Aerospace Doctrine of the United States Air Force*, 16 March 1984, 3-4.
11. Lt Gen Michael Dugan, deputy chief of staff, Plans and Operations, Headquarters United States Air Force, letter, subject: AFM 1-1, 31 March 1989.
12. Message, 011840Z Nov 89, commander in chief, United States Special Operations Command to chief of staff, United States Air Force, 1 November 1989; message, commander in chief, Military Airlift Command to chief of staff, United States Air Force, 1 November 1989.
13. Message, 060845Z Nov 89, chief of staff, United States Air Force to commander in chief, United States Special Operations Command; and commander in chief, Military Airlift Command, 6 November 1989.
14. AFM 1-1, "Basic Aerospace Doctrine of the United States Air Force," draft, August 1990. The comment about special operations being a capability was shared with me by the CADRE staff on numerous occasions.
15. AFM 1-1, vol. 1, March 1992, 6.
16. AFM 1-1, 16 March 1984, 3-4.
17. AFM 1-1, vol. 1, March 1992, 7.
18. AFM 1-1, vol. 2, March 1992.

Appendix B

Definitions

Knowing joint- and service-approved definitions is essential for commanders, air campaign and special operations planners, crew members, and staff officers. Most of these words and phrases appeared in this monograph, and this list should not be considered an all-inclusive glossary of Air Force special operations forces terminology. This list of definitions is based on current Department of Defense, joint, and Air Force documents, with sources appearing in parentheses.

Aerospace. Of, or pertaining to, earth's envelope of atmosphere and the space above it; two separate entities considered as a single realm for activity in launching, guidance, and control of vehicles that will travel in both entities. (AFM 1-1)

Aerospace control. The role that encompasses all actions taken to secure and control the aerospace environment and to deny the use of that environment to the enemy. (AFM 1-1)

Air campaign. A connected series of operations conducted by air forces to achieve joint force objectives within a given time and area of operations. (AFM 1-1 and AFM 11-1)

Air component commander. An airman in command of a joint task force's air component. (AFM 1-1)

Air Force special operations base. The base, airstrip, or other appropriate facility that provides physical support to USAF special operations forces. The facility may be used solely to support Air Force special operations forces or may be a portion of a larger base supporting other operations. As a supporting facility, it is distinct from the forces operating from or being supported by it. Also called AFSOB. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Air Force Special Operations Command. The Air Force special operations component of a unified or subordinate unified command, or joint special operations task force. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Air Force special operations detachment. A squadron-size headquarters, which could be a composite organization composed of different Air Force special operations assets. The detachment is normally subordinate to an Air Force special operations command, joint special operations task force, or joint task force, depending upon size and duration of the operation. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Air Force special operations element. An element-size Air Force special operations headquarters. It is normally subordinate to an Air Force special

- operations command or detachment, depending on size and duration of the operation. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)
- Air Force special operations forces.** Those active and reserve component Air Force forces designated by the secretary of defense that are specifically organized, trained, and equipped to conduct and support special operations. Included under AFSOF management and service proponentcy are reserve component PSYOP [psychological operations] units. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)
- Air interdiction.** Air operations conducted to destroy, neutralize, or delay the enemy's military potential before it can be brought to bear effectively against friendly forces at such distance from friendly forces that detailed integration of each air mission with the fire and movement of friendly forces is not required. (Joint Pub 1-02 and AFM 1-1)
- Airlift.** Operations conducted to transport and deliver forces and material in support of military objectives through the air and space. (AFM 1-1)
- Air refueling.** The capability to refuel combat and combat support aircraft in flight, which extends presence, increases range, and allows air forces to bypass areas of potential trouble. (AFM 1-1 and USAF Report to Congress, FY 1990)
- Antiterrorism.** Defensive measures used to reduce the vulnerability of individuals and property to terrorism. *See also* counterterrorism. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, and AFM 2-10)
- Armed reconnaissance.** A mission with the primary purpose of locating and attacking targets of opportunity (i.e., enemy materiel, personnel, and facilities) in assigned general areas or along assigned ground communications routes, and not for the purpose of attacking specific briefed targets. (Joint Pub 1-02 and AFM 1-1)
- Army Special Operations Command.** The Army special operations component of a unified or subordinate unified command or joint special operations task force. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)
- Army special operations forces.** Those active and reserve component Army forces designated by the secretary of defense that are specifically organized, trained, and equipped to conduct and support special operations. Also those active reserve component Army forces designated by the secretary of the Army that are capable of supporting and sustaining special operations forces. Also called ARSOF. (Joint Test Pub 3-05)
- Bare base.** A base that has a runway, a taxiway, a parking area, and a source of water that can be made potable. (AFM 2-10 and AFM 11-1)
- Campaign plan.** A plan for a series of related military operations aimed to accomplish a common objective, normally within a given time and space. (Joint Pub 1-02 and Joint Test Pub 3-05)
- Capability.** The ability to execute a specified course of action. (A capability may or may not be accompanied by an intention.) (Joint Pub 1-02 and Joint Test Pub 3-05)
- Cell.** Small group of individuals who work together for clandestine or subversive purposes (Joint Pub 1-02) and whose identity is unknown by members

of other cells within the overall organization. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Clandestine operation. Activities sponsored or conducted by governmental departments or agencies in such a way as to assure secrecy or concealment. (It differs from covert operations in that emphasis is placed on concealment of the operation rather than on concealment of sponsor.) In special operations, an activity may be both covert and clandestine and may focus equally on operational considerations and intelligence-related activities. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Close air support. Air action against hostile targets which are in close proximity to friendly forces and which require detailed integration of each air mission with the fire and movement of those forces. (Joint Pub 1-02 and AFM 1-1)

Collateral mission activity. Missions, other than those for which a force is principally organized, trained, or equipped, that can be accomplished by virtue of the inherent capabilities of that force. For special operations forces, these activities include humanitarian assistance, security assistance, personnel recovery, counternarcotics, antiterrorism, and other security activities. (Joint Test Pub 3-05)

Combatant command (command authority). Nontransferable command authority established by Title 10, *United States Code*, Section 164, exercised only by commanders of unified or specified combatant commands. Combatant command (command authority) is the authority of a combatant commander to perform those functions of command over assigned forces involving organizing and employing commands and forces, assigning tasks, designating objectives, and giving authoritative direction over all aspects of military operations, joint training, and logistics necessary to accomplish the missions assigned to the command. Combatant command (command authority) should be exercised through the commanders of subordinate organizations; normally this authority is exercised through the service component commander. Combatant command (command authority) provides full authority to organize and employ commands and forces as the commander in chief considers necessary to accomplish assigned missions. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, and AFM 2-10)

Combat control team. A team of Air Force personnel organized, trained, and equipped to establish and operate navigational or terminal guidance aids, communications, and aircraft control facilities within the objective area of an airborne operation. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, and AFM 2-10)

Combat recovery. The act of retrieving resources while engaging enemy forces. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Combat search and rescue. A specific task performed by rescue forces to effect the recovery of distressed personnel during wartime or contingency operations. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, AFM 1-1, and AFM 2-10)

Combatting terrorism. Actions, including antiterrorism (defensive measures taken to reduce vulnerability to terrorist acts) and counterter-

rorism (offensive measures taken to prevent, deter, and respond to terrorism), taken to oppose terrorism throughout the entire threat spectrum. (Joint Pub 1-02 and Joint Test Pub 3-05)

Compartmentation. Establishment and management of an intelligence organization so that information about the personnel, organization, or activities of one component is made available to any other component only to the extent required for the performance of assigned duties. (Joint Pub 1-02) In special operations, compartmentation extends beyond only intelligence organizations to the division of any organization or activity into functional segments or cells to restrict communication between them and prevent knowledge of the identity or activities of other segments except on a need-to-know basis. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Contingency. An emergency involving military forces caused by natural disasters, terrorists, subversives, or by required military operations. Due to the uncertainty of the situation, contingencies require plans, rapid response, and special procedures to ensure the safety and readiness of personnel, installations, and equipment. (Joint Pub 1-02 and AFM 1-1)

Conventional forces. Those forces capable of conducting operations using nonnuclear weapons. (Joint Pub 1-02 and AFM 1-1) Also, those forces not specially trained, equipped, and organized to conduct special operations. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Counterair. A United States Air Force term for air operations conducted to attain and maintain a desired degree of air superiority by the destruction or neutralization of enemy forces. Both air offensive and air defensive actions are involved. The former range throughout enemy territory and are generally conducted at the initiative of the friendly forces. The latter are conducted near to or over friendly territory and are generally reactive to the initiative of the enemy air forces. (Joint Pub 1-02 and AFM 1-1)

Counterinsurgency. Those military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological, and civic actions taken by a government to defeat insurgency. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, AFM 1-1, and AFM 2-10)

Counternarcotics. Those active measures taken to detect, monitor, and counter the production, trafficking, and use of illegal drugs. Special operations forces responsibilities include training host-nation counternarcotics forces; gathering intelligence; and when directed, conducting specific direct action operations. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Counterterrorism. Offensive measures taken to prevent, deter, and respond to terrorism. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, and AFM 2-10)

Cover. (Military) Actions to conceal actual friendly intentions, capabilities, operations, and other activities by providing a plausible, yet erroneous, explanation of the observable. (Joint Pub 1-02 and Joint Test Pub 3-05)

Covert operations. Operations which are so planned and executed as to conceal the identity of or permit plausible denial by the sponsor. They differ from clandestine operations in that emphasis is placed on concealment of identity of sponsor rather than on concealment of the operation.

- (Joint Pub 1-02) In special operations, an activity may be both covert and clandestine. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)
- Denied area.** An area under enemy or unfriendly control in which friendly forces cannot expect to operate successfully within existing operational constraints and force capabilities. (AFM 2-10)
- Direct action mission.** Short-duration strikes and other small-scale offensive actions principally taken by special operations forces to seize, destroy, or inflict damage on a specified target; or to destroy, capture, or recover designated personnel or material. In the conduct of these operations, special operations forces may employ raid, ambush, or direct assault tactics; emplace mines and other munitions; conduct standoff attacks by fire from air, ground, or maritime platforms; provide terminal guidance for precision-guided munitions; and conduct independent sabotage. (Joint Test Pub 3-05, AFM 1-1, and AFM 2-10)
- Electronic combat.** Action taken in support of military operations against the enemy's electromagnetic capabilities. Electronic combat includes electronic warfare (EW), elements of command, control, and communications countermeasures (C³CM), and suppression of enemy air defenses (SEAD). (AFM 1-1 and AFM 11-1)
- Evasion and escape.** The procedures and operations whereby military personnel and other selected individuals are enabled to emerge from an enemy-held or hostile area to areas under friendly control. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, and AFM 2-10)
- Exfiltration.** The removal of personnel or units from areas under enemy control. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, and AFM 2-10)
- Force application.** The Air Force role that consists of operations that apply firepower against surface targets, exclusive of missions whose objective is aerospace control. (AFM 1-1)
- Force enhancement.** The Air Force role that embodies aerospace operations that add to military capability but that do not apply firepower. (AFM 1-1)
- Force multiplier.** An element which, when added to and employed by a combat force, significantly increases the combat potential of the force above that which is inherent in its numerical size, thereby enhancing the probability of successful mission accomplishment. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)
- Force support.** The Air Force role that is made up of the varied operations that support and sustain the aerospace combat roles of aerospace control, force application, and force enhancement. (AFM 1-1)
- Foreign internal defense.** Participation by civilian and military agencies of a government in any of the action programs taken by another government to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, and insurgency. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, AFM 1-1, and AFM 2-10)
- Forward operations base.** In special operations, a base usually located in friendly territory or afloat that is established to extend command and control or communications or to provide support for training and tactical opera-

tions. Facilities may be established for temporary or longer duration operations. They may include an airfield or an unimproved airstrip, an anchorage, or a pier. A forward operations base may be the location of special operations component headquarters or a smaller unit that is controlled and/or supported by a main operational base. Also called FOB. (AFM 2-10)

Forward operating location. A temporary base of operations for small groups of personnel established near or within the joint special operations area to support training of indigenous personnel or tactical operations. The forward operating location may be established to support one or a series of missions. Facilities are austere; they may include an unimproved airstrip, a pier, or an anchorage and may be supported by a main operations base or a forward operations base. Also called FOL. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Functional component command. A command normally, but not necessarily, composed of forces of two or more services which may be established in peacetime or war to perform particular operational missions that may be of short duration or may extend over a period of time. (Joint Pub 1-02 and Joint Test Pub 3-05)

Guerrilla force. A group of irregular, predominantly indigenous personnel organized along military lines to conduct military and paramilitary operations in enemy held, hostile, or denied territory. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Guerrilla warfare. Military and paramilitary operations conducted in enemy held or hostile territory by irregular, predominantly indigenous forces. (Joint Pub 1-02) Guerrilla warfare may also be conducted in politically denied areas. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Humanitarian assistance. Programs conducted to mitigate the results of natural or man-made disasters or other endemic conditions by helping to reduce human pain, disease, suffering, hunger, hardship, or privation that might present a serious threat to life or that can result in great damage to or loss of property. Humanitarian assistance provided by US forces is limited in scope and duration. The assistance provided is designed to supplement or complement the efforts of the host-nation civil authorities or agencies that have primary responsibility for providing such assistance. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

In extremis. A situation of such exceptional urgency that immediate action must be taken to minimize imminent loss of life or catastrophic degradation of the political or military situation. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Infiltration.

a. The movement through or into an area or territory occupied by either friendly or enemy troops or organizations. The movement is made, either by small groups or by individuals, at extended or irregular intervals. When used in connection with the enemy, it [implies] that contact is avoided.

b. In intelligence usage, placing an agent or other person in a target area in hostile territory. Usually involves crossing a frontier or other guarded line. Methods of infiltration are black (clandestine); grey (through legal crossing point but under false documentation); and white (legal). (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, and AFM 2-10)

Insurgency. An organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through use of subversion and armed conflict. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, AFM 1-1, and AFM 2-10)

Interdiction. An action to divert, disrupt, delay, or destroy the enemy's surface military potential before it can be used effectively against friendly forces. (Joint Pub 1-02 and AFM 1-1)

Irregular forces. Armed individuals or groups who are not members of regular armed forces, police, or other internal security forces. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, and AFM 2-10)

Joint force air component commander. The joint force air component commander derives his authority from the joint force commander who has the authority to exercise operational control, assign missions, direct coordination among his subordinate commanders, [and] redirect and organize his forces to ensure unity of effort in the accomplishment of his overall mission. The joint force commander will normally designate a joint force air component commander. The joint force air component commander's responsibilities will be assigned by the joint force commander (normally these would include, but not be limited to, planning, coordination, allocation, and tasking based on the joint force commander's apportionment decision). Using the joint force commander's guidance and authority, and in coordination with other service component commanders and other assigned or supporting commanders, the joint force air component commander will recommend to the joint force commander apportionment of air sorties to various missions or geographic areas. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, and AFM 1-1)

Joint force commander. A general term applied to a commander authorized to exercise combatant command (command authority) or operational control over a joint force. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Joint force land component commander. The commander within a unified command, subordinate unified command, or joint task force responsible to the establishing commander for making recommendations on the proper employment of land forces, planning and coordinating land operations, or accomplishing such operational missions as may be assigned. The joint force land component commander is given the authority necessary to accomplish missions and tasks assigned by the establishing commander. The joint force land component commander will normally be the commander with the preponderance of land forces and the requisite command and control capabilities. Also called the JFLCC. (Joint Test Pub 3-0 and Joint Test Pub 3-05)

Joint force maritime component commander. The commander within a unified command, subordinate unified command, or joint task force respon-

sible to the establishing commander for making recommendations on the proper employment of maritime forces and assets, planning and coordinating maritime operations, or accomplishing such operational missions as may be assigned. The joint force maritime component commander is given the authority necessary to accomplish missions and tasks assigned by the establishing commander. The joint force maritime component commander will normally be the commander with the preponderance of maritime forces and the requisite command and control capabilities. Also called JFMCC. (Joint Test Pub 3-0 and Joint Test Pub 3-05)

Joint force special operations component commander. The commander within a unified command, subordinate unified command, or joint task force responsible to the establishing commander for making recommendations on the proper employment of special operations forces and assets, planning and coordinating special operations, or accomplishing such operations missions as may be assigned. The joint force special operations component commander is given the authority necessary to accomplish missions and tasks assigned by the establishing commander. The joint force special operations component commander is normally the commander with the preponderance of special operations forces and requisite command and control capabilities. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Joint special operations air component commander. The joint special operations air component commander derives authority from the joint special operations component commander who has authority to exercise operational control, assign missions, direct coordination among subordinate commanders, and redirect and organize his forces to ensure unity of effort in the accomplishment of assigned special operations missions. The joint force special operations component commander will normally designate a joint special operations air component commander. The joint special operations air component commander's responsibilities will be assigned by the joint force special operations component commander (normally these would include, but not be limited to, planning, coordination, allocation, and tasking). Using the joint force special operations component commander's guidance and authority, the joint special operations air component commander will deconflict special air operations with other joint force operations. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Joint special operations area. A restricted area of land, sea, and airspace assigned by a unified or subordinate unified commander or the commander of a joint task force to the commander of joint special operations forces to conduct special operations activities. The commander of joint special operations forces may further assign a specific area or sector within the joint special operations area to a subordinate commander for mission execution. The scope and duration of the special operations force's mission, friendly and hostile situation, and politico-military considerations all influence the number, composition, and sequencing of special operations forces deployed into a joint special operations area. It may be limited in size to accommodate a discrete direct action mission or may be extensive enough to allow

a continuing broad range of unconventional warfare operations. Also called JSOA. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Joint special operations task force. A joint task force composed of special operations units from more than one service, formed to carry out a specific special operation or prosecute special operations in support of a theater campaign or other operations. The joint special operations task force may have conventional nonspecial operations units assigned or attached to support the conduct of specific missions. Also called JSOTF. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Joint task force. A force composed of assigned or attached elements of the Army, the Navy or the Marine Corps, and the Air Force, or two or more of these services, which is constituted and so designated by the secretary of defense or by the commander of a unified command, a specified command, or an existing joint task force. (Joint Pub 1-02 and AFM 1-1)

Low-intensity conflict. Political-military confrontation between contending states or groups below conventional war and above the routine, peaceful competition among states. It frequently involves protracted struggles of competing principles and ideologies. Low-intensity conflict ranges from subversion to the use of armed force. It is waged by a combination of means employing political, economic, informational, and military instruments. Low-intensity conflicts are often localized, generally in the third world, but contain regional and global security implications. Also called LIC. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, AFM 1-1, and AFM 2-10)

Low-visibility operations. Sensitive operations wherein the political/military restrictions inherent in covert and clandestine operations are either not necessary or not feasible; actions are taken as required to limit exposure of those involved and/or their activities. Execution of these operations is undertaken with the knowledge that the action and/or sponsorship of the operation may preclude plausible denial by the initiating power. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, and AFM 2-10)

Main operations base. A designated base established by a unified or sub-unified command's special operations command, a joint special operations task force, or a component force in friendly or neutral territory that provides sustained command and control, administration, and logistics to support operations in designated areas, including forward operating bases and forward operating locations. Also called MOB. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Mobile training team. A team consisting of one or more US military or civilian personnel sent on temporary duty, often to a foreign nation, to give instruction. The mission of the team is to train indigenous personnel to operate, maintain, and employ weapons and support systems, or to develop a self-training capability in a particular skill. The national command authorities may direct a team to train either military or civilian indigenous personnel, depending upon host-nation requests. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

National command authorities. The president and the secretary of defense or their duly deputized alternates or successors. Commonly referred to as NCA. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, and AFM 2-10)

Naval Special Operations Command. The naval special operations component of a unified or subunified command or joint special operations task force. Also called NAVSOC. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Naval special operations forces. Those active and reserve component naval forces designated by the secretary of defense that are specifically organized, trained, and equipped to conduct and support special operations. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Naval special warfare. A specific term describing a designated naval warfare specialty and covering operations generally accepted as being unconventional in nature, and in many cases covert or clandestine in character. These operations include utilization of specially trained forces assigned to conduct unconventional warfare, psychological operations, beach and coastal reconnaissance, operational deception operations, counterinsurgency operations, coastal and river interdiction, and certain special tactical intelligence collection operations which are in addition to those intelligence functions normally required for planning and conducting special operations in a hostile environment. Naval special operations forces are a component of naval special warfare. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Objective wing. An operational wing that is organized to give the wing commander and the squadron commanders more control over those elements which contribute to or affect the wing's operational mission. (Lt Col William L. Egge, "Logistics Implications of Composite Wings" [Unpublished AU-ARI report, Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air University Press, 1992])

Operational control. Transferable command authority which may be exercised by commanders at any echelon at or below the level of combatant command. Operational control is inherent in combatant command (command authority) and is the authority to perform those functions of command over subordinate forces involving organizing and employing commands and forces, assigning tasks, designating objectives, and giving authoritative direction necessary to accomplish the mission. Operational control includes authoritative direction over all aspects of military operations and joint training necessary to accomplish missions assigned to the command. Operational control should be exercised through the commanders of subordinate organizations; normally this authority is exercised through the service component commanders. Operational control normally provides full authority to organize commands and forces and to employ those forces as the commander in operational control considers necessary to accomplish assigned missions. Operational control does not, in and of itself, include authoritative direction for logistics or matters of administration, discipline, internal organization, or unit training. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, and AFM 2-10)

Overt operation. The collection of intelligence openly, without concealment. (Joint Pub 1-02) Operations which are planned and executed without at-

tempting to conceal the operation or identity of the sponsoring power. (AFM 2-10)

Paramilitary forces. Forces or groups which are distinct from the regular armed forces of any country, but resembling them in organization, equipment, training, or mission. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, and AFM 2-10)

Pararescue team. Specially trained personnel qualified to penetrate to the site of an incident by land or parachute, render medical aid, accomplish survival methods, and rescue survivors. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, and AFM 2-10)

Psychological operations. Planned operations to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence their emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals. The purpose of psychological operations is to induce or reinforce foreign attitudes and behavior favorable to the originator's objectives. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, and AFM 2-10)

Raid. An operation, usually small-scale, involving a swift penetration of hostile territory to secure information, confuse the enemy, or to destroy his installations. It ends with a planned withdrawal upon completion of the assigned mission. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, and AFM 2-10)

Rangers. Rangers are rapidly deployable, airborne, light infantry organized and trained to conduct highly complex joint direct action operations in coordination with or in support of special operations units of all services. Rangers also can execute direct action operations in support of conventional nonspecial operations missions conducted by a combatant commander and can operate as conventional light infantry when properly augmented with other elements of combined arms. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Role. The specific function assigned to or performed by a military force in contributing to the support or attainment of a broader, more generally defined mission. (AFM 1-1 and AFM 11-1)

Sabotage. An act or acts with intent to injure, interfere with, or obstruct the national defense of a country by willfully injuring or destroying, or attempting to injure or destroy, any national defense or war material, premises, or utilities, to include human and natural resources. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, and AFM 2-10)

Sea-air-land (SEAL) team. A group of officers and individuals specially trained and equipped for conducting unconventional and paramilitary operations and to train personnel of allied nations in such operations including surveillance and reconnaissance in and from restricted waters, rivers, and coastal areas. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, and AFM 2-10)

Search and rescue. The use of aircraft, surface craft, submarines, specialized rescue teams and equipment to search for and rescue personnel in distress on land or at sea. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, AFM 1-1, and AFM 2-10)

Security assistance. Group of programs authorized by the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and the Arms Export Control Act of 1976, as amended, or other related statutes by which the United States provides defense articles, military training, and other defense-related services, by grant, loan, credit, or cash sales, in furtherance of national policies and objectives. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, and AFM 2-10)

Special activities. Activities conducted in support of foreign policy objectives that are planned and executed so that the role of the US government is not apparent or acknowledged publicly. They are also functions in support of such activities, but are not intended to influence United States political processes, public opinion, policies, or media and do not include diplomatic activities or the collection and production of intelligence or related support functions. (Executive Order 12333, Joint Test Pub 3-05, and AFM 2-10)

Special forces. Military personnel with cross training in basic and specialized military skills, organized into small, multiple-purpose detachments with the mission to train, organize, supply, direct, and control indigenous forces in guerrilla warfare and counterinsurgency operations, and to conduct unconventional warfare operations. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, and AFM 2-10)

Special operations. Operations conducted by specially organized, trained, and equipped military and paramilitary forces to achieve military, political, economic, or psychological objectives by unconventional military means in hostile, denied, or politically sensitive areas. These operations are conducted during peacetime competition, conflict, and war, independently or in coordination with operations of conventional, nonspecial operations forces. Politico-military considerations frequently shape special operations, requiring clandestine, covert, or low-visibility techniques, and oversight at the national level. Special operations differ from conventional operations in degree of physical and political risk, operational techniques, mode of employment, independence from friendly support, and dependence on detailed operational intelligence and indigenous assets. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Special operations combat control team. A team of Air Force personnel organized, trained, and equipped to conduct special operations. Under clandestine, covert, or low-visibility conditions they: establish and control air assault zones; assist aircraft by verbal control, positioning, and operating aircraft terminal navigation aids; conduct limited offensive direct action and demolition operations; assist in extraction of forces; and provide human intelligence, airfield reconnaissance, and limited weather observations. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Special Operations Command. A subordinate unified or other joint command composed of designated special operations forces that is established by a unified or other joint force commander to prepare for, plan, and execute, as directed, joint or single-service special operations within the joint

force commander's assigned area of operations, or as directed by the national command authorities. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Special operations pararescue personnel. Specially trained individuals whose primary special operations forces mission in joint operations or personnel recovery tasking is to conduct initial mass casualty triage, emergency medical treatment, and to implement evacuation plans/actions. If aircraft direct access recovery is not possible, special operations forces pararescuemen can provide survivor assistance en route to an alternate extraction and exfiltration point. Despite adverse operating conditions or hostilities, special operations forces pararescuemen possess the technical knowledge to meet the survivor's (patient's) medical needs from initial contact until the actual transfer occurs. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Special reconnaissance operations. Reconnaissance and surveillance actions conducted by special operations forces to obtain or verify, by visual observation or other collection methods, information concerning the capabilities, intentions, and activities of an actual or potential enemy, or to secure data concerning the meteorological, hydrographic, geographic, or demographic characteristics of a particular area. These operations include target acquisition, area assessment, and poststrike reconnaissance. (Joint Test Pub 3-05, AFM 1-1, and AFM 2-10)

Special tactics team. An Air Force team composed primarily of special operations combat control and pararescue personnel. The task of the team is to support joint special operations air and ground/maritime missions by selecting, surveying, and establishing assault zones; providing assault zone terminal guidance and air traffic control; conducting direct action and personnel recovery missions; providing medical care evacuation; and coordinating, planning, and conducting air, ground, and naval fire support operations. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Special tactics units. Units which provide the joint special operations air component commander with positive control of the terminal or objective area aviation environment and management of all joint air and ground and maritime operations within the joint special operations air component commander's assigned area of responsibility. Further, special tactics personnel may provide joint task forces and all assigned or attached units with direct action personnel recovery, medical treatment, and evacuation. To rapidly accomplish these tasks under covert, clandestine, or low-visibility conditions, special tactics units must organize, train, and equip selected US Air Force special operations personnel to provide terminal guidance and air traffic control to assault zones; select, survey, and establish assault zones; provide direct action medical care, recovery, and evacuation; and conduct, coordinate, and plan fire support operations. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Subversion. Action designed to undermine the military, economic, psychological, political strength, or morale of a regime. (Joint Test Pub 3-05 and AFM 2-10)

Tactical control. The detailed and, usually, local direction and control of movements or maneuvers necessary to accomplish missions or tasks assigned. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, and AFM 2-10)

Terrorism. The unlawful use or threatened use of force or violence against individuals or property to coerce or intimidate governments or societies, often to achieve political, religious, or ideological objectives. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, and AFM 2-10)

Unconventional warfare. A broad spectrum of military and paramilitary operations conducted in enemy-held, enemy-controlled, or politically sensitive territory. Unconventional warfare includes, but is not limited to, the interrelated fields of guerrilla warfare, evasion and escape, subversion, sabotage, and other operations of a low-visibility, covert, or clandestine nature. These interrelated aspects of unconventional warfare may be prosecuted singly or collectively by predominantly indigenous personnel, usually supported and directed in varying degrees by (an) external source(s) during all conditions of war or peace. (Joint Pub 1-02, Joint Test Pub 3-05, AFM 1-1, and AFM 2-10)

Appendix C

Acronyms

This list includes acronyms encountered when working with special operations aviation, Air Force special operations, and the Air Force.

ACC	air component commander
AFCC	Air Force component commander
AFFOR	Air Force forces
AFRES	Air Force Reserve
AFSOB	Air Force special operations base
AFSOC	Air Force Special Operations Command
AFSOD	Air Force special operations detachment
AFSOE	Air Force special operations element
AFSOF	Air Force special operations forces
AIRSOCEUR	Air Special Operations Command Europe
ANG	Air National Guard
AOR	area of responsibility
ARFOR	Army forces
ARSOA	Army special operations aviation
ARSOC	Army Special Operations Command
ARSOF	Army special operations forces
AT	antiterrorism
AVN	aviation
CAS	close air support
CCT	combat control team
CINC	commander in chief
CJCS	chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
CN	counternarcotics
COCOM	combatant command (command authority)
COMAFSOC	commander, Air Force Special Operations Command
COMARFOR	commander, Army forces
COMJTF	commander, joint task force
COMNAVFOR	commander, naval forces
COMSOC	commander, Special Operations Command
CONV	conventional
CSAF	chief of staff, Air Force
CSAR	combat search and rescue
CT	counterterrorism

DA	direct action
DOD	Department of Defense
DZ	drop zone
E&E	evasion and escape
EUCOM	European Command
FID	foreign internal defense
GW	guerrilla warfare
HA	humanitarian assistance
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
JFACC	joint force air component commander
JFC	joint force commander
JFLCC	joint force land component commander
JFMCC	joint force maritime component commander
JFSOCC	joint force special operations component commander
JSOACC	joint special operations air component commander
JSOTF	joint special operations task force
JTF	joint task force
LIC	low-intensity conflict
LOG	logistics
LZ	landing zone
MARFOR	Marine forces
MOB	main operating base
MTT	mobile training team
NAF	numbered air force
NAVFOR	naval forces
NAVSOC	Naval Special Operations Command
NAVSO	naval special operations forces
NCA	national command authorities
NSW	naval special warfare
NSWG	naval special warfare group
NSWU	naval special warfare unit
OCA	offensive counterair
OPCON	operational control
OPS	operations
PACOM	Pacific Command
PJ	pararescue (acronym used in reference to individual)

PSYOP	psychological operations
SA	security assistance
SAR	search and rescue
SBU	special boat unit
SEAL	sea-air-land (team)
SF	Special Forces
SFG	Special Forces group
SFOD-A/B/C/D	Special Forces detachment
SO	special operations
SOC	Special Operations Command
SOCCE	special operations contingency communications elements
SOCCT	special operations combat control team
SOF	special operations forces
SOG	special operations group
SOPJ	special operations pararescue personnel
SOS	special operations squadron
SOW	special operations wing
SR	special reconnaissance
STT	special tactics teams
TACC	theater air control center
TACON	tactical control
TACS	theater air control system
USCINCSOC	commander in chief, United States Special Operations Command
USSOCOM	United States Special Operations Command
UW	unconventional warfare

Bibliography

- Air Force Manual (AFM) 1-1. *Basic Aerospace Doctrine of the United States Air Force*. 2 vols. March 1992.
- . *Basic Aerospace Doctrine of the United States Air Force*. 16 March 1984, superseded.
- . *Functions and Basic Doctrine of the United States Air Force*. 14 February 1979, superseded.
- . *Aerospace Doctrine, United States Air Force Basic Doctrine*. 28 September 1971, superseded.
- . *Aerospace Doctrine, United States Air Force Basic Doctrine*. 14 August 1964, superseded.
- AFM 2-5. *Aerospace Operational Doctrine, Tactical Air Operations—Special Air Warfare*. 10 March 1967, rescinded.
- AFM 2-10. *Special Operations*. 25 October 1991.
- Air Force Regulation 23-9. *Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC)*. 1 August 1991.
- Ballard, Jack S. *The Development and Employment of Fixed-Wing Gunships, 1962–1972*. Washington, D.C.: Office of Air Force History, 1982.
- Boykin, Col William G. "Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict Legislation: Why Was It Passed and Have the Voids Been Filled?" Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: US Army War College, 12 April 1991.
- Brady, Maj Robert G. "Mass Strategy: A Different Approach to Unconventional Warfare." *Special Warfare*, Summer 1989.
- Buckingham, William A., Jr. *Operation Ranch Hand, The Air Force and Herbicides in Southeast Asia, 1961–1971*. Washington, D.C.: Office of Air Force History, 1982.
- Department of the Air Force. *Air Force Restructure*. White paper. September 1991.
- . *The Air Force and U.S. National Security: Global Reach—Global Power*. White paper. June 1990.
- Department of Defense. *Conduct of the Persian Gulf Conflict: A Final Report to Congress*. White paper. April 1992.
- . *Conduct of the Persian Gulf Conflict: An Interim Report to Congress*. White paper. July 1991.
- . *Annual Report to the President and the Congress*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, January 1991.
- . *Rescue Mission Report*. Report prepared by Adm James L. Holloway III. Unclassified version. 23 August 1980.
- Eggers, Maj Gen Thomas E. "Today's Air Commandos: Air Force Special Operations Command." *Military Review*, June 1991.

- Flanagan, Lt Gen Edward M., Jr., Retired. "Hostile Territory Was Their AO in Desert Storm." *Army*, September 1991.
- Fourth Psychological Operations Group (Airborne). "Leaflets of the Persian Gulf War." Fort Bragg, N.C., undated.
- Futrell, Robert F. *The United States Air Force in Southeast Asia: The Advisory Years to 1965*. Washington, D.C.: Office of Air Force History, 1981.
- Guest, Maj Gen James A., and Maj T. Michael Ryan. "The SOF Aviation Regiment." *Army Aviation*, 31 July 1990.
- Harned, Maj Glenn M. "Bridging the Gap: Special Forces as a U.S. Army Member of the Combined Arms Team." *Special Warfare*, October 1988.
- Joint Publication (Pub) 0-2. *Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF)*. 1 December 1986.
- Joint Test Pub 3-0. *Doctrine for Unified and Joint Operations*. January 1990.
- Joint Test Pub 3-05. *Doctrine for Joint Special Operations*. October 1990.
- Kyle, James H. *The Guts to Try: The Untold Story of the Iran Hostage Rescue Mission by the On-Scene Desert Commander*. New York: Orion Books, 1990.
- Locher, James R., III. "Low Intensity Conflict—Challenge of the 1990s." *Defense 91*, July–August 1991.
- McPeak, Gen Merrill A. "For the Composite Wing." *Airpower Journal*, Fall 1990.
- Thigpen, Lt Col Jerry L. "AFSOC: The Air Force's Newest Command." Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: US Army War College, 8 March 1991.
- Tilford, Earl H., Jr. *Setup: What the Air Force Did in Vietnam and Why*. Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air University Press, June 1991.
- United States Code*, Title 10, Section 167.
- U.S. Congress. House. *Congressional Record*. 100th Cong., 1st sess., 17 November 1987. H10160, daily edition.
- Uttaro, Gerald J., and Gary C. Vycital. "USAF Special Operations Forces (AFSOF): A Road Map into the Future." Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air War College, May 1988.
- The White House. *National Security Strategy of the United States*. April 1991.