

ADOPTING A SINGLE PLANNING MODEL IN THE BULGARIAN ARMED FORCES
AT THE OPERATIONAL LEVEL OF WAR

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
Command and General Staff College in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE
Joint Planning Studies

by

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Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
2013-01

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
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1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 14-06-2013		2. REPORT TYPE Master's Thesis		3. DATES COVERED (From - To) AUG 2012 – JUN 2013	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Adopting a single planning model in the Bulgarian Armed Forces at the operational level of war				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) CPT Yanko I Panayotkov				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army Command and General Staff College ATTN: ATZL-SWD-GD Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-2301				8. PERFORMING ORG REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for Public Release; Distribution is Unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
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15. SUBJECT TERMS Joint Operation Planning Process, Bulgarian Planning Process, planning models.					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT (U)	b. ABSTRACT (U)	c. THIS PAGE (U)			19b. PHONE NUMBER (include area code)
			(U)	85	

Standard Form 298 (Rev. 8-98)
Prescribed by ANSI Std. Z39.18

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

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ABSTRACT

ADOPTING A SINGLE PLANNING MODEL IN THE BAF AT THE OPERATIONAL LEVEL OF WAR, by Yanko I Panayotkov, 85 pages.

The Bulgarian Armed Forces (BAF) currently use NATO's comprehensive planning process. The validity of the NATO planning process has never been confirmed in a real war while the U.S. Joint Operation Planning Process (JOPP) has. The reliability of these planning processes needed to be assessed and a determination made of which parts from each model will enable Bulgaria to be a more effective coalition partner.

I analyzed the Bulgarian planning model and the JOPP to show how the BAF can become more capable in combined operational planning.

First, I conducted a step-by-step comparison of each step or phase; inputs, the process and outputs of both processes. Second, I identified the differences and similarities within these two planning models and possible areas where synchronization is possible. Third, I compared each planning process--JOPP and Bulgarian--to the evaluation criteria. Fourth, I conducted the interviews limited to four major questions.

My conclusion is that neither NATO's planning process nor the JOPP are sufficient alone to provide the model for BAF planners. The BAF are often engaged in complex coalition operations. The optimum planning process for the BAF is combination of the JOPP and Bulgarian planning model.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First, I would like to thank you of my wife, Nelya, and my sons, Iliya and Yanislav, for their patience during the best year in their lives and most difficult in mine. They provided me invaluable moral support and continuously encouraged me to complete the project. Thank you for encouraging and supporting me.

Second, I want to say “Thank you” to my chair, LTC Andy Creel, and committee members, Dr. Lester Grau and Mr. Edwin Kennedy, because without their professional support, guidance, and editing, my work from beginning to the end would not be possible. Their consistent support gave me power and reason to complete this thesis. Thank you for guiding and supporting me.

Third, let me offer thanks to my instructors, LTC Andy Creel, Mr. Tom Chychota, Dr. Rick Olsen, Dr. Mark Hull, LTC Patrick Lemieux, and Mr. Brad Predmore. They shaped my not-so-extensive amount of knowledge and supported me in accomplishing the project. I got professional advice and a lot of relevant materials from them. Thank you for teaching and supporting me as you did. You are awesome!

Finally, I would like to thank you of my classmate, Ch, Maj. Xolani Kacela, for his editing and moral support as a chaplain during the year--from the beginning to the end of the thesis. Thank you, XK! I wish you a lot of good stuff in the future.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE THESIS APPROVAL PAGE	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vi
ACRONYMS.....	viii
ILLUSTRATIONS	x
TABLES	xi
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
Introduction.....	1
Research Question	2
Assumptions.....	4
Definition of Terms	5
Limitations	5
Scope and Delimitation.....	6
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW	8
Doctrinal Publications.....	9
Thesis and Journal Articles	11
Interview Candidates	15
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	19
Introduction.....	19
Data Collection	20
Qualitative Research	21
Methodology	21
Interviews.....	24
CHAPTER 4 ANALYSIS	28
Introduction.....	28
A Step-by-Step Comparison	29
JOPP Step 1-Planning Initiation	31
BPP Phase 1-Situational Awareness (SA)	35

JOPP Step 2-Mission Analysis	36
BPP Phase 2 Operational Assessments of the Response Options.....	40
BPP Phase 3 Operational Orientation	42
JOPP Step 3-COA Development	44
JOPP Step 4-COA Analysis and Wargaming	46
JOPP Step 5-Course of Action Comparison	48
JOPP Step 6-Course of Action Approval.....	49
BPP Phase 4A Operational CONOPS Development	50
JOPP Step 6-Plan or Order Development	53
BPP Phase 4B OPLAN Developments of JOC.....	54
BPP Phase 5 Execution, Assessment, and Review of OPLAN	55
BPP Phase 6 Transition.....	56
Differences and Possible Synchronization Between The Models	57
Comparison of Evaluation Criteria	59
JOPP and BPP Comparison to Evaluation Criteria	59
Interview results.....	61
CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION.....	68
Introduction.....	68
Answering the Research Question.....	68
Significance of This Study.....	70
Recommendation for Future Research	71
BIBLIOGRAPHY	73

ACRONYMS

ADRP	Army Doctrine Reference Publication
AI	Area of Interest
BAF	Bulgarian Armed Forces
BPP	Bulgarian Planning Process
C2	Command and control
CCIR	Commander's critical information requirement
CGSC	Command and General Staff College
CJTF	Combined Joint Task Forces
COA	Courses of Action
CONOPS	Concept of Operations
COPD	Comprehensive Operations Planning Directive
DIME	Diplomacy, information, military, and economy
DJIMO	Department of Joint and Multinational Operations
FRAGO	Fragmentary order
GOP	Guidelines for Operational Planning
IMS	International Military Students
ISAF	International Security Assistance Forces
JIPOE	Joint Intelligence and Preparation of the Operational Environment
JOC	JOC
JOPG	Joint Operations Planning Group
JOPP	Joint Operation Planning Process
JP	Joint Publication
JPG	Joint Planning Group

JPOG	Joint Planning Operation Group
JTF	Joint Task Forces
MDMP	Military Decision Making Process
MOE	Measure of Effectiveness
MOP	Measure of Performance
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OPDBAF	Operational Planning Directive of the BAF
OPLAN	Operation Plan
OPORD	Operation order
PMESII	political, military, economic, social, information, and infrastructure
PMJEG	Planning and Managing Joint Effect Group
ROE	Rules of engagement
SA	Situational Awareness
SAMS	School of Advanced Military Studies
SecDef	Secretary of Defence

ILLUSTRATIONS

	Page
Figure 1. Evaluation Criteria: Objective	22
Figure 2. Evaluation Criteria: Simplicity	22
Figure 3. Evaluation Criteria: Perseverance	23
Figure 4. Evaluation Criteria: Synchronization.....	23
Figure 5. JOPP.....	30
Figure 6. Bulgarian Planning Process	30
Figure 7. Understand the Operational Environment	32
Figure 8. Define the Problem	33
Figure 9. Developing the Operational Approach	34
Figure 10. Situational Awareness.....	36
Figure 11. Mission Analysis.....	37
Figure 12. Mission Analysis Activities	39
Figure 13. Operational Assessments of the Response Options	40
Figure 14. Operational Orientation	43
Figure 15. Course of Action (COA) Development	46
Figure 16. Course of Action Analysis	47
Figure 17. Course of Action Comparison	49
Figure 18. Course of Action Approval.....	50
Figure 19. Operational CONOPS Development	52
Figure 20. Plan Development Activities	54
Figure 21. Proposed BPP.....	69

TABLES

	Page
Table 1. Planning Processes Comparison	61

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In preparing for battle I have always found that plans are useless, but planning is indispensable.

— General of the Army Dwight D. Eisenhower

Introduction

Bulgaria is a former member of the Warsaw Pact and its armed forces were equipped, trained and indoctrinated in the communist methodology of warfare. Now Bulgaria is a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and needs to integrate its armed forces fully into that alliance. This is not easy and the Bulgarian Armed Forces (BAF) have been reorganizing for more than 14 years. Currently, the BAF are arranged similarly to the forces of other small countries with a Joint Operational Command (JOC), Army, Navy, Air Force, and Logistic Support Command. From 1996 to 2004, Bulgaria downsized its forces approximately 50 percent. However, transition from Soviet to NATO operational planning methods and the United States system of operational design and planning has taken significant time and efforts. Transition includes changing manuals, doctrine, directives, and procedures. The BAF currently have a comprehensive planning process reflecting NATO's Comprehensive Operations Planning Directive (COPD). Their current planning process is prescribed in the Operational Planning Directive of the BAF (OPDBAF).

The BAF must sometimes work in a multinational environment which usually includes U.S. units. Allied joint staffs use the Joint Operation Planning Process (JOPP) which is prescribed by U.S. Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, as the best method for developing

courses of action and operational orders. JOPP in JP 5-0 is the unified model that establishes the “single planning process” within U.S. Joint Task Forces (JTF). After their experiences in the International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) and NATO, the commanders of the BAF are looking for a unified Joint Planning Process that provides the best planning methodology for Bulgarian joint planners.

When I started scrutinizing the Bulgarian planning processes, I discovered that our former and current planning processes were adopted from NATO’s planning processes.

In the beginning, I was striving to identify and adopt a “single planning process.” Consequently, when I found that we had adopted NATO’s planning processes, I decided to compare the current Bulgarian Planning Process (BPP) with JOPP in JP 5-0 of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The BAF planning process should be unified and provide an opportunity to take part and plan in NATO or Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTF) of U.S. lead coalitions. For this is reason, I have tried to analyze these two planning models in my comparative study and develop recommendations to help synergy the current BAF planning process with JOPP in JP 5-0. I have developed my research questions and my comparative study facilitates this effort.

Research Question

The primary research question guiding this study is “Which planning process is optimum for the BAF at the operational level of war?” I have directed my research to answer the question-The small size of the BAF and its possible participation in future CJTF may present issues for the BAF. It is a small armed force and needs to adopt

“single planning process,” such as JOPP or NATO’s planning process. The BAF has already adopted NATO’s planning process but uses the U.S. JOPP in Afghanistan. Therefore, I want to further analyze the Bulgarian planning model and the JOPP, and show how the BAF can be more capable by taking part in combined operational planning. My research will identify the differences and similarities within these two planning models. All participants in joint planning should be on the same page and look in the same direction. The secondary research questions supports the primary question:

1. What are the differences and similarities between JOPP in JP 5-0, and the BPP in the OPDBAF?
2. How do the planning processes deal with mission accomplishment and commander’s intent?
3. How do the planning processes use the operational art and design?
4. How do the planning processes define the problem (new face of warfare), develop evaluation criteria, and aid in decision making?
5. How do these planning processes assist the JOC of the BAF?

In answering these questions, my main considerations are contemplating the steps and phases of the planning process and their inputs and outputs in time, order and space. My purpose is not to create friction between the two planning models, but rather to develop recommendations for synergy between the current BPP and the JOPP in JP 5-0. In doing so, the BPP needs to be compared to the JOPP in JP 5-0, and the reliability of the BAF planning process needs to be assessed. This will enable Bulgaria to be a more effective coalition partner.

Assumptions

The current BPP should be compared to an adaptable and reliable planning process. I assume the operational level of planning by the BAF is insufficient and that Bulgarian Joint Planners are not truly prepared for the joint operational environment.

Similarly, I assume that this is the reason that the BAF has adopted NATO's planning processes.

My next assumption is that the JOPP in JP 5-0 and OPDBAF are methods which "provide a proven process to organize the work of the commander, staff, subordinate commanders and other partners, to develop plans that will appropriately address the problem to be solved."¹ I do not intend to prove the validity of the processes. My main effort is to investigate the utility of processes for the BAF. I assume that there are differences in planning processes, but do these differences impede the BAF and make it incapable of joint planning with the JOPP in JP 5-0. Are both higher and subordinate headquarters able to plan if they have to use two different planning processes? The study will determine if the BAF communications infrastructure and joint operational planning capability are optimum and what BAF has to produce and receive as the inputs and outputs on each of the phases and steps.

My last assumption is that the study is appropriate solely to the operational level on war. The study does not deal with strategic or tactical planning although the interface of the planning models between the strategic and tactical level will be addressed as well as answering ends-ways-means-risk questions and the issue of the appropriate structure of campaigns and operations.²

Definition of Terms

Centers of gravity. “The source of power that provides moral and physical strength, freedom of action, or will to act.”³

Joint Operations Planning Process. “JOPP is an orderly, analytical process, which consists of a set of logical steps to examine a mission; develop, analyze, and compare alternative Courses of Action (COA); select the best COA; and produce a plan or order.”⁴

Line of effort. “In the context of joint operation planning, using the purpose (cause and effect) to focus efforts toward establishing operational and strategic conditions by linking multiple tasks and missions.”⁵

Line of operation. “A line that defines the interior or exterior orientation of the force in relation to the enemy or that connects action on nodes and/or decisive points related in time and space to an objective(s).”⁶

Operational approach. “A description of the broad actions the force must take to transform current conditions into those desired at end state.”⁷

Operational design. “The conception and construction of the framework that underpins a campaign or major operation plan and its subsequent execution.”⁸

Operational level of war. “The level of war at which campaigns and major operations are planned, conducted, and sustained to accomplish strategic objectives within theaters or operational areas.”⁹

Limitations

My main limitation is that I am not able to use the COPD of NATO, because it is classified. I am able to use available alternative resources that are available as articles and presentations, which explain the NATO planning process. My research is limited to

planning processes in JP 5-0, OPDBAF, and NATO's planning process. I am not trying to prove their validity as planning processes. However, I am assessing their utility to the BAF.

Scope and Delimitation

My project is centered on research of the current planning processes of the United States and NATO as well as the Bulgarian planning model. The scope of the comparative study will not focus on the historical development of JOPP in JP 5-0, NATO's planning process or the Bulgarian planning model as the planning processes. This study should define the differences and similarities between the BPP and the JOPP in JP 5-0 at the operational level of war. As the main tools in the planning processes are operational art and design and their interface between JOPP in JP 5-0 and the BPP, these may provide answers to the study's research questions. This study will scrutinize Operational Art and Operational Design in both planning processes. As operational design provides an iterative process that allows for the commander's vision and mastery of operational art to help planners answer ends-ways-means-risk questions and determine the appropriate structure for campaigns and operations.¹⁰

Significance of the study: the study should assist the BAF in developing and improving planning and enable future integration with NATO and the United States.

¹Department of Defense, Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), IV-1.

²Ibid., XXV.

³Ibid., III-22.

⁴Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 1-02, *Operational Terms and Graphics* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2004), 1-138.

⁵Department of Defense, JP 5-0, GL-12.

⁶*Ibid.*

⁷*Ibid.*, GL-13.

⁸*Ibid.*

⁹*Ibid.*, IV-1

¹⁰*Ibid.*, XXV.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Doctrine provides a military organization with a common philosophy, a common language, a common purpose, and a unity of effort

— General of the Army George H. Decker, USA

There is a wide variety of literature available on military planning processes. After conducting an initial analysis, the BAF currently uses NATO's comprehensive planning process. The validity of the NATO planning process has never been confirmed or used in a real wartime environment. The BPP needs to be compared to the JOPP in JP 5-0, and the applicability of this planning process needs to be assessed. Therefore, the literature can be divided into three main subjects. The first main subject, doctrinal publications, explain the current planning models in time, space, sequence, steps, phases, inputs, outputs, purposes and details. The doctrinal publications will be the main resource for this research project.

The second main resource is the earlier thesis by Major James C. Allen titled "Adopting a Single Planning Model at the Operational Level of War." This analysis provides deeper comprehension of the planning processes and provides direction for my research.

The third resource, journal articles, gives me pragmatic and extended information about planning processes. These are supplemented by interviews with American, European, and Bulgarian officers, who have engaged with planning models at the operational level of war.

Doctrinal Publications

Military doctrinal publications are the main references for conducting planning and developing plans at the operational level of war. I will compare JP 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning* and the OPDBAF to determine adapting the BPP for use when participating in CJTF planning.

JP 5-0 describes in detail the operational art and design for joint planning. It also synchronizes these two main domains in the JOPP planning process. It is divided into seven steps, described as inputs and outputs to operational art and design. Together with operational design, JOPP facilitates interaction between the commanders, staff, subordinate and supporting headquarters throughout planning.¹ JOPP can be defined as an American classic problem solving model. The seven steps are Planning Initiation, Mission Analysis, COA Development, COA Analysis and Wargaming, COA Comparison, COA Approval, and Plan or Order Development.² The first two steps are focused on operational art and operational design. Those steps facilitate the commander's and staff's ability to understand the operational environment, define the real problem, and develop an approach to achieve a desired end state.³ The steps from COA development to Plan or Order Development are a detailed planning of the first two steps that are the conceptual planning of the operation.⁴

Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 5-0 is the newest Army doctrinal publication on planning. ADRP 5-0 describes innovative operational art and planning as when "commanders and their staff use a set of intellectual tools to help them communicate a common vision of the operational environment as well as visualizing and describing the operational approach."⁵ The Army design methodology is used in close

conjunction with planning. For example, if there is an ill-defined problem and operational approach, the planning process would focus on solving the symptoms of the problem instead of solving the right problem.⁶ ADRP 5-0 explains how planning connects operational art as a conceptual planning “what to do and why” with a detailed planning really “how to do it.”⁷ Conceptual and detailed planning are two inherent parts of planning that are interconnected during planning of the operation. First is conceptual planning followed by detailed planning and development of conceptual ideas into COA and after that synchronization of the conceptual idea into detailed planning.

JP 3-0, *Joint Operations*, encompasses the principles of Joint Operations that are similar to the joint forces principles of war; e.g.: objective, offensive, mass, maneuver, economy of force, unity of command, security, surprise, simplicity, restraint, perseverance, and legitimacy.⁸ The twelve principles of Joint Operations are one of the domains of developing evaluation criteria for comparison of the JOPP and BPP. They will be further discussed in the next chapters.

The OPDBAF incorporated NATO’s planning process along with NATO’s troop structure for the Armed Forces. NATO and BPPs are absolutely identical.⁹ The BPP has six phases. The phases are Situational Awareness (SA); Operational Assessment of the Options; Operational Orientation; Phase Four (divided of two sub-phases), Phase Four A is Operational Concept of Operations (CONOPS) Development; Phase Four B is Operation Plan (OPLAN) Development of JOC; Assessment of Campaign and OPLAN Review; Transition.¹⁰

SA can be roughly equated to the Joint Intelligence and Preparation of Operational Environment (JIPOE) described in JP 2-01.3.¹¹ Operational Assessment of

the Options can be defined as step one of Planning Initiation and a part of preparation for the second step of the JOPP Mission Analysis. Operational Orientation can be considered as the main part of the second step, Mission Analysis. Phase Four A is Operational CONOPS Development that includes step three, four, five and six COA Development, COA Analysis and Wargaming, COA Comparison, and COA Approval. Phase Four B is Plan or Order Development that is similar to step seven, Plan and Order Development in JOPP. Phase Five is Execution and Assessment of Plan that is also part of the Plan and Order Development of JOPP. Phase Six is Transition that includes withdrawing the forces and conducting handover of responsibilities to other organizations.¹² The BPP can be defined as a classical NATO planning process which is more complicated and difficult to understand and produces more conceptual planning than detailed planning. The first three phases are predominately focused on conceptual planning and only Phase Four and Five are based on detailed planning of the operation or campaign. Operational art and design is an inherent part of the planning process. The first three phases are solely for setting up the operational art and design domains.¹³

Thesis and Journal Articles

When I started my research I was concerned that literature would not be available and relevant to my thesis, but discovered some relevant articles. I focused my attention on articles related to JOPP, Military Decision Making Process (MDMP), and NATO's planning process, and read estimates of these planning processes. Since the BAF adopted NATO's planning process, I researched NATO's planning process instead of Bulgaria's planning process.

Major James C. Allen, in “Adopting a Single Planning Model at the Operational Level of War” compared the JOPP, MDMP, Navy Planning Process, Joint Air Estimate Process, and Marine Corps Planning Process. He did not find any significant differences between the models and argued that “ there is essentially no friction between the planning models that cannot be overcome by experienced officers at the operational level.”¹⁴ Therefore, my initial intent was to include MDMP as another model for this comparative study. However, I decided since MDMP is similar to JOPP and friction between them does not exist, it would only constrain my comparative study. Major Allen’s Chairman concurred.

Dale C. Eikmeier, Assistant Professor in the Department of Joint Interagency and Multinational Operations (DJIMO) U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC), Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, in his publication, *From Operational Art to Operational Plan*, explains the connections between operational art (conceptual planning) and detailed planning in processes as JOPP (JP 5-0) as “two halves of the same whole.”¹⁵ He provided significant information answering my second, third and fifth research questions. *From Operational Art to Operational Plans* uses multiple examples to bridge the gap and show how operational art applies in JOPP as an inherent part of JOPP and the NATO planning process.¹⁶ He states that “Operational design supports commanders and staffs in their application of operational art with tools and a methodology to conceive of, and construct, operations and campaigns.”¹⁷ *From Operational Art to Operational Plans* uses the analogy that the Operational Plan is the house and Operational Art is the underpinning of the house. If the house’s underpinnings are weak or not solid then the whole house will be unstable, unbalanced and insecure. *From Operational Art to*

Operational Plans confirms that operational art is an indispensable part integral to planning.

Hungarian Army Lieutenant Colonel Geza Simon and Turkish Army Major Muzaffer Duzenli write in *NRDC-TTA Magazine* issue 14, in “The Comprehensive Operations Planning Directive,” about adopting a comprehensive approach to develop a crisis plan involving relevant actors or allies of NATO and establishing common crisis management procedures between the partners.¹⁸ NATO Crisis Response Planning is absolutely indistinguishable from the BPP that is adopted with the purpose “to be on the same page,” and to look in same direction with our NATO partners, and “to receive inputs in the form a mission, objectives, effects, actions, and tasks which must be understood two levels above and down.”¹⁹ Lieutenant Colonel Simon and Major Duzenli gave me some partial answers for my primary research question”: Which planning process is optimum for the BAF at the operational level of war?” Additionally, they addressed my fifth secondary research question: “ How do these planning processes assist the JOC of the BAF?”

U.S. Navy Admiral James G. Stavridis, former Supreme Allied Commander, Europe and Commander of European Command and U.S. Army Colonel Bart Howard, Special Assistant to the European Command commander, in *Strengthening the Bridge: Building Partnership Capacity*, highlighted the importance of achieving “NATO standards” and building partnership capacity as critical for success of NATO.²⁰ “The fact that ISAF in Kabul produces operations orders using a standardized NATO planning process, in English, and in formats that staff members are familiar with, is a minor miracle.”²¹ This also assists in answering the primary research question “Which planning

process is optimum for the BAF at the operational level of war?” and the fifth research question “How do these planning processes assist the JOC of the BAF?” As a participant of NATO, adopting hundreds of agreements is mandatory for Bulgaria and achieving “NATO standards,” is crucial in the legacy of NATO for building partnership capacity and interoperability.²²

Nicolae Hanes, in *Specific Methods of Military Decision Making and Elaboration*, defined two methods that are germane to planning in the current operational environment. Anticipation and improvisation are two characteristics. Henes states that “preparation for solving these before. . . . Anticipations allows us to adapt in a methodical and systemic way, by using all resources available.”²³ “improvisation, represents the capacity to take actions that were initially planned, which requires changing of the plans in order to deal with the unexpected circumstances.”²⁴ Anticipation and improvisation fit in my evaluation of the JOPP and BPP.

U.S. Marine Corps General James “Mad Dog” Mattis brought up a significant thought. “In this age, I don’t care how tactically or operationally brilliant you are, if you cannot create harmony—even vicious harmony—on the battlefield based on trust across service lines, across coalition and national lines, and across civilian/military lines, you need to go home, because your leadership is obsolete. We have got to have officers who can create harmony across all those lines.”²⁵ Harmony and balance in planning establishes capabilities and interoperability of the planning process that creates synergy between military, intergovernmental and nongovernmental agencies, and other civil institutions involved in the planning. The planning process ought to be able to assist in establishing harmony and balance in planning.

Interview Candidates

I chose five interview candidates based on their understanding and experience with the JOPP. They are of two retired U.S. Army officers that are instructors in CGSC; two international military students (IMS): a French officer and Australian officer, and a Bulgarian officer a comprehensive understanding of the planning process.

Dr. Dale C. Eikmeier, Assistant Professor in the DJIMO, U.S. Army, CGSC, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, is the author of *From Operational Art to Operational Plans*. He clearly has a relevant background. LTC Andrew Creel, the chairman of my committee, concurred with his selection. Dr. Eikmeier served as a division level planner in an infantry division during Desert Shield and Desert Storm in 1990. He was a strategic level planner in Combined Forces Command in South Korea and was personally responsible for theater missile defense planning. Afterward, he was a planner in U.S. Central Command during operations in Afghanistan in 2004.

Dr. Peter Schifferle is a Director of Advanced Operational Arts Studies Fellowship. Dr. Schifferle has a significant experience in planning having served in a planning office during Desert Shield and Chief of Planning for V Corps U.S. Army's. His primary responsibilities were for strategic and operational level planning in Bosnia and operational and tactical level in Iraq. He also served as an exercise director at the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS). His current position is Director of Advanced Operational Arts Studies Fellowship.

Major Flavien Lanet is a French special operations officer and IMS. Major Lanet's experience is primarily as a special operation planner in Ministry of Defense of France at the strategic level. But, he also served at ISAF headquarters as part of special

operation planning team in Kabul, Afghanistan at the operational level. I chose MAJ. Flavien to take part in this interview for two reasons: first, his significant experience, and second, France is a part of the NATO, and like Bulgaria, is located in Europe. Consequently, as members of NATO, France and Bulgaria share similar visions of the international security environment.

MAJ Michael Buchanan is an Australian infantry officer and IMS. He has held positions as a battalion planner and brigade planner; served on numerous deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan with the U.S. Army; and most recently, held a planner position in Afghanistan. I chose Major Buchanan because Australia is not a member of NATO, and not in Europe but is a close partner of the U.S. His interview provided a different perspective.

Major Anton Ivanov Gachev is a Bulgarian artillery officer. He is working in JOC as a planner in the BAF. He has some experience in the planning of joint operations at the operational level. This includes: Joint Planning Operation Group (JPOG), Targeting group, and Planning and Managing Joint Effect Group (PMJEG). He participated in a number of functional groups which are deployed at different stages of operational planning headquarters of the JOC during joint military command training and exercises. I chose Major Gachev because he provided a current JOC's point of view.

¹Department of Defense, Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), IV-1.

²Ibid., IV-2.

³Dale C. Eikmeier, *From Operational Art to Operational Plan* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, 2012), 18.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Department of the Army, Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 5-0, *The Operations Process* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), 2-4.

⁶*Ibid.*, 2-9.

⁷*Ibid.*, 2-3.

⁸Department of Defense, Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, *Joint Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), A-1.

⁹Hungarian Armed Lieutenant Colonel Geza Simon and Turkish Army Major Muzaffer Duzenli, “The Comprehensive Operations Planning Directive,” *NRDC-TTA Magazine* no. 14.

¹⁰Department of Defense, Joint Publication (JP) 2-01.3, *Joint Intelligence Preparation of Operational Environment* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2009), II-1.

¹¹Bulgarian Department of the Army, Ръководство за планиране на операциите [Operational Planning Directive of the Bulgarian Armed Forces OPDBAF] (Sofia, 2011), 92.

¹²*Ibid.*, 93.

¹³*Ibid.*

¹⁴Major James C. Allen, “Adopting a Single Planning Model at the Operational Level of War” (Master’s thesis, Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2008), 61.

¹⁵Eikmeier, 1.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 21.

¹⁸Simon and Duzenli, 16.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 19.

²⁰Admiral James G. Stavridis and Colonel Bart Howard, “Strengthening the Bridge: Building Partnership Capacity,” *Military Review* (January-February 2010): 2, 4.

²¹*Ibid.*, 4.

²²*Ibid.*

²³Nicolae Hanes, “Specific Methods of Military Decision Making and Elaboration,” *Revista Academiei Fortelor Terestre* 15, no. 2 (June 2010): 173, 174.

²⁴*Ibid.*

²⁵US Joint Force Command, “Mattis Speaks to Close Out 2010 JWC,” <http://www.jfcom.mil/newslink/storyarchive/2010/pa051310.html> (accessed 28 April 2013).

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to identify which planning process is the most useful for the BAF as they work with other NATO allies at the operational level of war. Initially, the study was focused on the JOPP, MDMP, NATO's planning process, and BPP that are used throughout the US military and BAF. The initial intent was to compare and identify which planning process would best support the BAF, but then it became clear that the BAF, as a NATO member, has adopted NATO's planning process in the Guidelines for Operational Planning (GOP) and the current NATO planning process in the COPD.¹ That initially reduced my case study to only three planning processes: JOPP, MDMP, and the BAF's planning process. After reading, Major Allen's "Adopting a Single Planning Model at the Operational Level of War," which discussed the JOPP, and MDMP, I noticed that he did not find any significant friction between MDMP and JOPP. They are actually very similar and there are no so significant differences between them. The main difference is that the MDMP is associated with the tactical level and JOPP is designed for the joint strategic and operational levels.² "Adopting a Single Planning Model at the Operational Level of War" shrank the study to the JOPP in JP 5-0 and the current BPP.

The research questions also identified the differences and similarities to those of the BAF. The BPP will be the base planning model and will be compared to JOPP.

Data Collection

This comparison used primary, secondary, and tertiary sources to answer the research questions. They provided the necessary data, and combined with interviews, answered my primary research question. I used a qualitative research approach through literature review

First, I initiated a research request to the Combined Arms Research Library. It generated more than one hundred publications, articles, and experiences from previous operations in Kosovo, Iraq, and Afghanistan by NATO and the U.S. Army. I also referenced another Masters of Military Art and Science theses.

Second, I did not find any information in my research request in the Combined Arms Research Library for Bulgaria's planning process, so I conducted my own research with the help of my coworkers in Bulgaria about previous and current planning processes. Nor did I find any articles or theses about the current BPP in other databases. The validity of the BPP has neither been confirmed nor used in a real wartime environment.

The primary literature sources were U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff JP 5-0 and the OPDBAF. Data collected framed my study.

The secondary literature sources were master's theses, research projects, the "Concept for Future Joint Operation," and "From Operational Art to Operational Plan." The data that I collected was the framework for NATO's planning process because NATO's planning directive is actually classified. The tertiary literature sources were articles, newspapers, magazines, and interviews.

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research was the predominant methodology used in this case study. Norman Denzi and Yvonna Lincoln define qualitative research as “a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. . . . Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, and phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring them.”³ The qualitative research has been chosen because that is open-ended, derives outcomes in a flexible manner and seeks to explore phenomena.⁴

Methodology

First, comparative study research methods have been used to compare the BPP and the JOPP. Then, using a step-by-step comparison within each step or phase, the input, process, and output of the JOPP, and the BPP provided many answers to the research questions.⁵ Which planning processes are best suited for the BAF at the operational level of war? What differences and similarities are there, as cited in the JOPP, in JP 5-0 and the OPDBAF? How do these processes meet mission accomplishment and commander’s intent? How do these processes define the problem (new face of warfare), and develop evaluation criteria that helps in decision making?

In order to answer the primary research question in the spirit of the joint and planning environment, several evaluation criteria will be used to clarify answers: objective, simplicity, perseverance, and synchronization.⁶ A definition of each evaluation criteria is below.⁷

Evaluation Criteria		
Objective		
The purpose of specifying the objective is to direct every military operation toward a clearly defined, decisive, and achievable goal.JP 3-0, A-1		
Less than desirable	Desirable/ neutral	Optimal
Operational objectives, COA, CONOP, and Plans dictated by doctrine disagree or not directed toward an achievable strategic objective and end state.	Operational objectives, COA, CONOP, and Plans dictated by doctrine agree or directed toward an achievable strategic objective and end state.	Operational objectives, COA, CONOP, and Plans dictated by doctrine agree or directed toward and are nested to better enable achievable strategic objective and end state

Figure 1. Evaluation Criteria: Objective

Source: Created by author, using data from Dr. Jack Kem, *Planning for Action: Campaign Concepts and Tools* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, 2012).

Evaluation Criteria		
Simplicity		
The purpose of simplicity is to increase the probability that plans and operations will be executed as intended by preparing clear, uncomplicated plans and concise orders. JP 3-0, A-3		
Less than desirable	Desirable/ neutral	Optimal
Organization of planning process is hard to understand. Creates ambiguity in how to produce COA, CONOP and plans.	Organization of planning process is intelligible. Produce COA, CONOP and plans that minimize misunderstanding.	Organization of planning process is intelligible. Produce COA, CONOP and plans that clearly outlines how to conduct operations or campaign.

Figure 2. Evaluation Criteria: Simplicity

Source: Created by author, using data from Dr. Jack Kem, *Planning for Action: Campaign Concepts and Tools* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, 2012).

Evaluation Criteria		
Perseverance		
The purpose of perseverance is to ensure the commitment necessary to attain the national strategic end state. JP 3-0, A-4		
Less than desirable	Desirable/ neutral	Optimal
COA, CONOP, and PLANS dictated by doctrine disagree or not compatible and hinder DIME and PMESII	COA, CONOP, and plans dictated by doctrine agree and direct DIME and PMESII.	COA, CONOP, and plans dictated by doctrine agree, direct and are nested DIME and PMESII.

Figure 3. Evaluation Criteria: Perseverance

Source: Created by author, using data from Dr. Jack Kem, *Planning for Action: Campaign Concepts and Tools* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, 2012)

Evaluation Criteria		
Synchronization		
The purpose of synchronization is the arrangement of steps or phases of planning processes in time, space and purpose that are able unit to operate consistently with strategic and tactical levels.		
Less than desirable	Desirable/ neutral	Optimal
Steps or phases of the planning process are not consistent and work against each other, hinder ability to produce COA, CONOP, and plans.	Steps or phases of the planning process are consistent and work in concert with one another, and produce COA, CONOP, and plans.	Steps or phases of the planning process are consistent and work in concert with one another, and produce well-arranged COA, CONOP, and plans.

Figure 4. Evaluation Criteria: Synchronization

Source: Created by author, using data from Dr. Jack Kem, *Planning for Action: Campaign Concepts and Tools* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, 2012).

Each planning process, JOPP and BPP, will be independently compared to the evaluation criteria.⁸ For the determination of a solid evaluation criteria the principles of joint operations are used as a very sophisticated approach.⁹

Interviews

All interviews were conducted with the “informed consent” of the interviewees. I selected a total of five American, Australian, France, and Bulgarian officers. I attempted to scrutinize their application of operational art and design in the planning processes and define their similarities and differences and any significant frictions. I applied subjective evaluation to the answers of my participants. I investigated the current BPP—how reliable it is in wartime and peacetime.

I made an application to conduct an interview survey through the Master of Military Art and Science Program of the CGSC, at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, regarding officers with extensive operational planning. Included in my request were a prospectus and the proposed questions. My main concern was finding people who were familiar with at least two of the three planning processes: JOPP, NATO or Bulgarian. I had collected data for all planning processes and their practical usage in a multinational environment. I then determined which model is most practical for the BAF. I asked interview participants the following questions:

1. What are your experience(s) in the planning processes.
2. How do you consider the operational art and operational design as a key to successful planning?
3. How does operational art and design make planning processes successful?
4. What is the right way of using operational art and design?

5. Have you found any shortcomings in the JOPP, Bulgarian, and NATO planning processes?
6. How do JOPP, Bulgarian, and NATO planning processes work together?
7. What is the best way to implement the planning process for a country, such as Bulgaria or similar NATO members?
8. Do you think that adopting NATO's procedures and doctrine provides enough capability and interoperability for NATO participants (such as Bulgaria and Romania)?
9. How do these planning processes assist the JOC of the BAF?
10. How do you determine the presence of strategic level planning in JOPP of the operational level? Do you think that it can be classified as a weakness of the JOPP?
11. Is JOPP a sufficiently open-ended process? Or is it too rigid? What might improve the process?
12. Do you think that the COPD planning process supports primary strategic level planning and is NATO's planning process not focused on the operational level and does provide a relevant connection between the strategic to tactical level?
13. Do you think that the steps or phases of the planning processes have to be connected: such as in JOPP where the outputs of the previous step are inputs on the next step; or as in simultaneous planning where the strategic and tactical level inputs and outputs are connected with the strategic and tactical level as well?

14. How would you describe the concept of planning at the operational level in two sentences?
15. Do you think that adopting NATO's procedures and doctrines provides enough capacity and interoperability for NATO's participants (Bulgaria and Romania)?
16. Do NATO's doctrines, procedures and directives cover the expectations of the U.S. Army and increase the NATO countries' capacity to work shoulder-to-shoulder with U.S. forces?

Through these question, I attempted to scrutinize the application of operational art and design in the planning processes and to define their similarities and differences, while keying on some significant friction points. I applied a subjective evaluation to my participants' answers. I investigated the current BPP to determine how reliable it is in both wartime and peacetime.

Using this research methodology, I reached significant conclusions that are provided in this study.

¹Hungarian Armed Lieutenant Colonel Geza Simon and Turkish Army Major Muzaffer Duzenli, "The Comprehensive Operations Planning Directive," *NRDC-TTA Magazine* no. 14: 16.

²Major James C. Allen, "Adopting a Single Planning Model at the Operational Level of War" (Master's thesis, Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2008).

³Norman K. Denzi and Yvonna S. Lincoln, eds., *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2005), 3.

⁴Family Health International, Module 1, "Qualitative Research Methods Overview," <http://www.ccs.neu.edu/course/is4800sp12/resources/qualmethods.pdf> (accessed 11 May 2013).

⁵Allen, 18.

⁶U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, *Joint Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), A-1 — A-5.

⁷Dr. Jack D. Kem, *Planning for Action: Campaign Concepts and Tools* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, August 2012), 222-224.

⁸*Ibid.*, 223.

⁹*Ibid.*

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

Introduction

This chapter provides a broad analysis of JOPP as described in the JP 5-0 and BPP as described in the OPDBAF. Comparative study research methods were used to analyze the BPP and the JOPP.

First, I compared both planning processes through a step-by-step evaluation within each step or phase, input, process, and output of the JOPP and BPP.¹ The step-by-step comparison provided answers to several of my research questions. These questions include:

1. What are the differences and similarities between the JOPP in JP 5-0 and the BPP in the OPDBAF?
2. How do the planning processes deal with mission accomplishment and commander's intent?
3. How do the planning processes use the operational art and design?
4. And partly, how do the planning processes define the problem (new face of warfare), develop evaluation criteria, and aid in decision making?

Second, each planning process—the JOPP and Bulgarian—was independently compared to evaluation criteria established in chapter 3. The purpose of this assessment was to provide a sophisticated approach for answering of the primary research question “Which planning process is optimal for the BAF at the operational level of war?” This comparison used solid evaluation criteria based on the principles of joint operations.²

After that, I recapped the differences between the models and presented a detailed explanation of differences and similarities. I based this section on the outcomes of a step-by-step comparison of the JOPP and BPP. This highlighted the differences between the planning processes.

The next section of the chapter provides a possible synchronization of the JOPP in JP 5-0 and BPP in the OPDBAF. This work reinforces my primary question and develops answers to the secondary research question: “How do these planning processes assist the JOC of the BAF?”

Finally, I summarized my interviews that confirm or dispute my assessments of both planning processes. In order to avoid bias, I conducted the interviews after finalizing my assessment of the planning processes.

A Step-by-Step Comparison

In order to make a step-by-step comparison as objective as possible, I compared inputs, processes, and outputs by steps and phases. In the beginning, my intention was to use the BPP as a primary planning process. However, initial analysis of the BPP disclosed its complexity, and thereby, made it inappropriate as a primary model for comparison since this would create more ambiguities and misunderstandings in answering the research questions. For this reason, I used the JOPP as the primary planning process. Each phase of the BPP was depicted in the same figures as JOPP in JP 5-0.

The main steps and phases of JOPP and the BPP are depicted in figure 5 and figure 6.

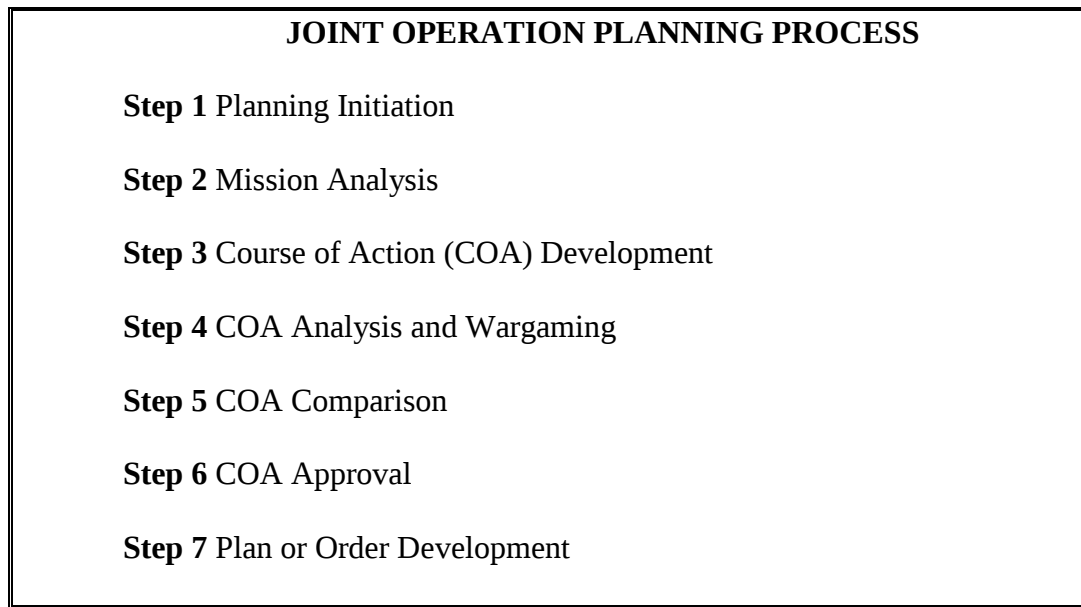


Figure 5. JOPP

Source: U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, *Joint Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), IV-2.

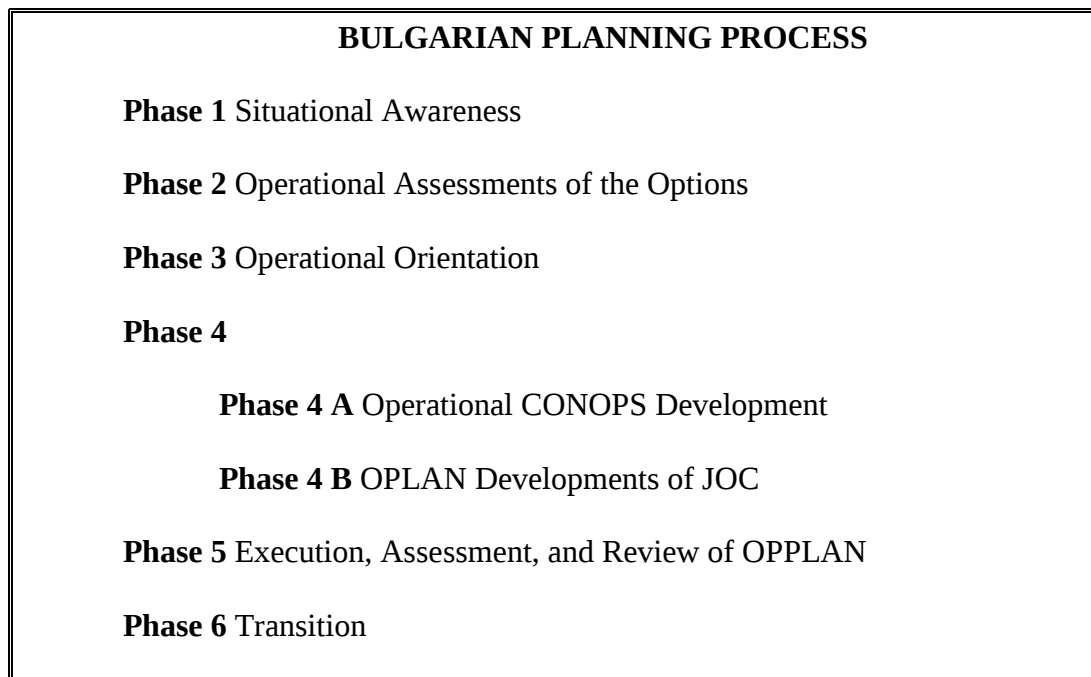


Figure 6. Bulgarian Planning Process

Source: Created by author, using data from Bulgarian Department of the Army, *Ръководство за планиране на операциите* [Operational Planning Directive of the Bulgarian Armed Forces OPDBAF] (Sofia, 2011), 93.

JOPP Step 1-Planning Initiation

The first step of the JOPP is Planning Initiation. “Joint operation planning begins when an appropriate authority recognizes potential for military capability to be employed in response to a potential or actual crisis.”³ After initiation, the commander forms a Joint Planning Group (JPG). The “JPG consists of staff representatives from main staff section, functional representatives, and subordinates unit or agency liaisons and are led by the chief plans officer of the J3 or J5.”⁴ The key elements that have to be accomplished through planning initiation constitute an organizational learning methodology which includes understanding the strategic direction, understanding the operational environment, defining the problem, and developing an operational approach.⁵ Principally, planning initiation is part of conceptual planning coupled with operational art and design to provide an iterative process that allows for the commander’s vision to help planners answer ends-ways-means-risk questions and appropriately structure campaigns and operations.⁶

The first, sub-step of planning initiation encompasses “understanding the strategic direction.” The key input is strategic guidance. The key outputs are the strategic end state and military end state.⁷

The second sub-step of planning initiation encompasses “understanding the operational environment.” Basically, understanding the operational environment focuses on describing the current operational environment and developing a description of the desired operational environment when the operation ends or, is in accordance with the desired military end state.⁸ The primary tools are the JIPOE and political, military, economic, social, information, and infrastructure (PMESII) analytical framework. The

key inputs and outputs of understanding the operational environment are depicted in figure 7.

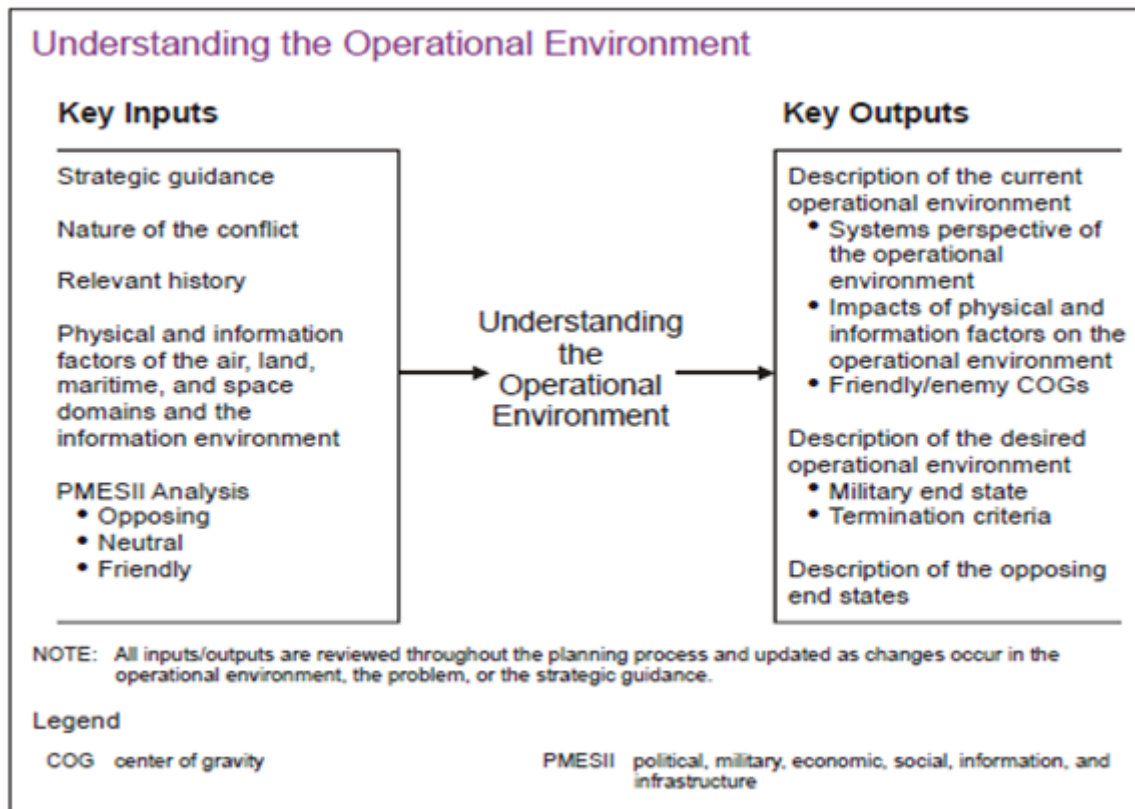


Figure 7. Understand the Operational Environment

Source: U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), Figure III-4, III-8.

The third sub-step of planning initiation is “defining the problem.” The main product of this step is a problem statement. In identifying the problem, planners must broadly consider, in connection with current operational environment, what is “the issue or set of issues that impede commanders from achieving their desired end state . . . and solving the right problem, instead of solving the symptoms of the problem.”⁹The key inputs and outputs of defining the problem are depicted in figure 8.

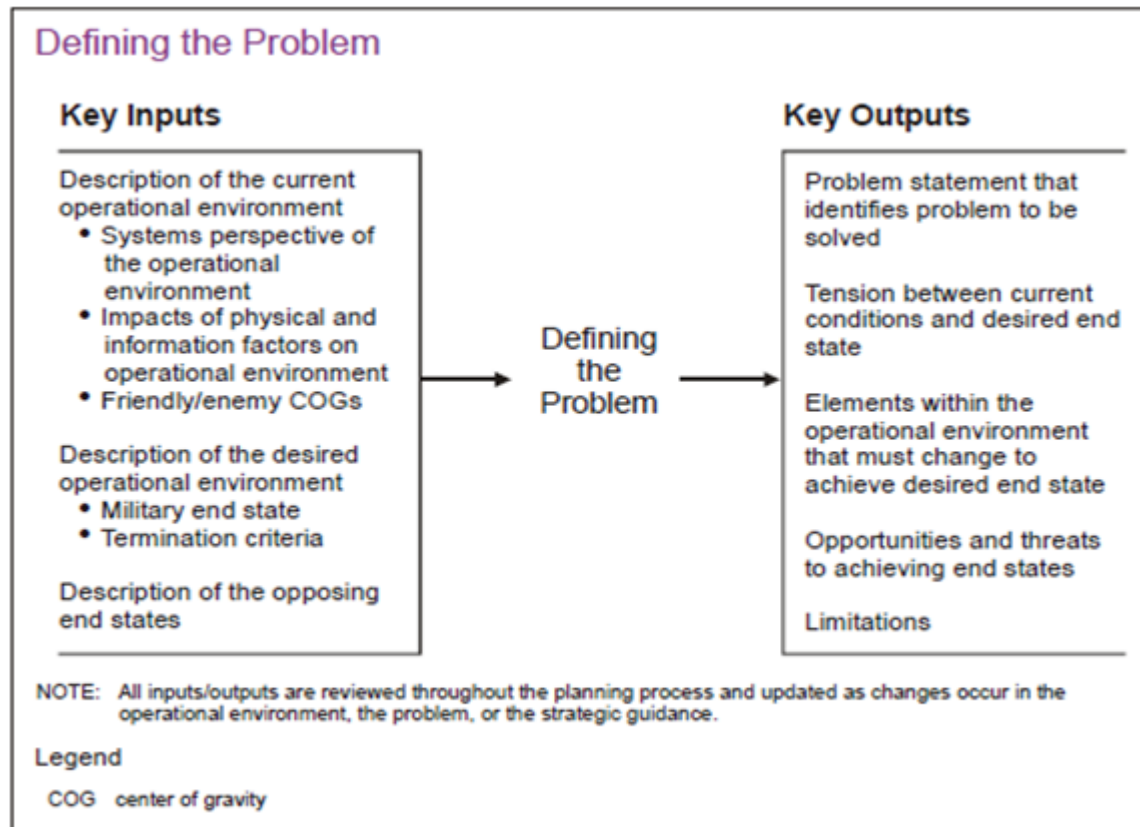


Figure 8. Define the Problem

Source U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), Figure III-6, III-12.

The fourth sub-step of planning initiation is “developing an operational approach.” Developing an operational approach is crucial for further detailed planning. An operational approach is the foundation for the commander’s planning guidance, commander’s initial intent, and a model for executing the campaign or operation.¹⁰ The key inputs and outputs of developing an operational approach are depicted in figure 9.

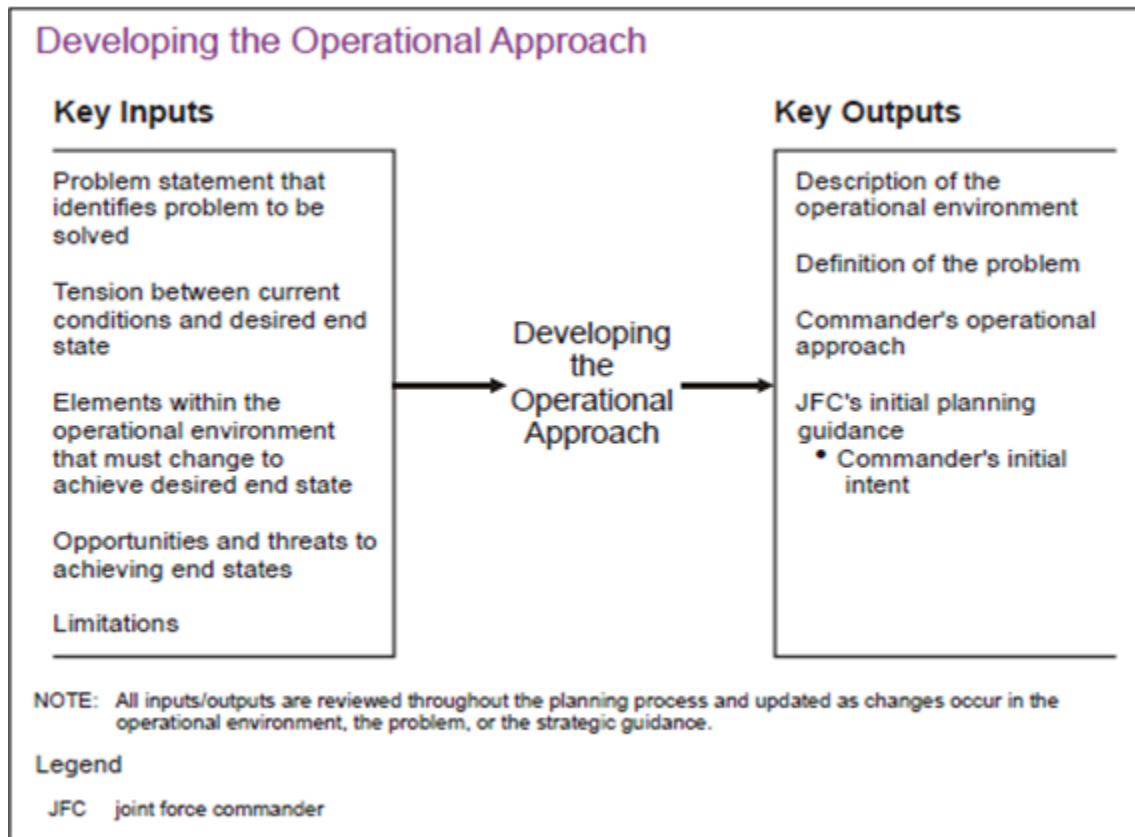


Figure 9. Developing the Operational Approach

Source: U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), Figure III-7, III-14.

The key inputs of planning initiation are strategic guidance; nature of the conflict; relevant history; physical and information factors of the air, land, maritime, and space domains and the information environment; and PMESII analysis of opposing, neutral, and friendly forces. The key outputs are an understanding the operational environment, defining the problem, developing an operational approach, commander's initial intent, and commander's planning guidance.

Dr. Dale C. Eikmeier, argues that the boundaries between Planning Initiation and Mission Analysis are not solid. Many activities from conceptual planning may likely be developed during mission analysis.¹¹ The main application of operational design and methodology is during the planning initiation step of JOPP.¹²

BPP Phase 1-Situational Awareness (SA)

SA begins with designating an Area of Interest (AI) by the Minister of Defense that is passed to the JOC of the BAF. This usually corresponds to a developing crisis that the JOC will monitor and collect information on as a priority.¹³ Initiating both JOPP and BPP are very similar. The main goal of the Phase 1 SA is to collect, analyze, and generalize the information for the operational environment, in order to prepare an operational assessment.¹⁴ The goal of SA is the same as the goal of the understanding of operational environment in Planning Initiation in JOPP. Both processes use the same operational variables of PMESII.

After initiating the process, the commander of the JOC has to decide which elements form the planning process he wants to employ: Joint Operations Planning Group (JOPG), General Planning Group, JPOG, Intelligence planning Group, PMJEG, Joint Coordination Center or Joint Operational Center, or the Sustainment Planning Group.¹⁵ The key inputs and outputs of situational awareness are predominately based on understanding the operational environment in Planning Initiation. The key inputs and outputs are depicted in the same way as JOPP in figure 9.

Key inputs		Key outputs
• Nature of the conflict • Previous Strategic estimate • Relevant history • Additional information (request from JOPG to Strategic Planning Group)	Situational Awareness	• Commander's critical information requirements (CCIR) • Risk and threats assessment • Condition, direction, and tendency in AI, display changes in situation • PMESII analysis • Initial JIPOE • Outlook for development of AI

Figure 10. Situational Awareness

Source: Created by author, using data from Bulgarian Department of the Army, *Ръководство за планиране на операциите* [Operational Planning Directive of the Bulgarian Armed Forces OPDBAF] (Sofia, 2011), 96, 98, 99.

Initially, the outlook for the development of AI may create a misunderstanding. The outlook for development of AI has to: define and assume responsibility for an area of interest, include an assessment of the risk and threats, and define the main participants. These three domains are included in JIPOE and in JOPP.

JOPP Step 2-Mission Analysis

Mission Analysis is the second step of the JOPP in JP5-0. Mission Analysis must provide “the restated mission for the commander’s approval . . . for higher headquarters’ concurrence” and “focus effectively on the problem on hand.”¹⁶ The key inputs are the higher headquarters’ planning directive, other strategic guidance, and commander’s

planning guidance. The commander's planning guidance includes a description of the operational environment, definition of the problem, commander's operational approach, and initial intent, and JIPOE.¹⁷ The key outputs are staff estimates, the mission statement, a refined operational approach, the commander's intent statement, updated planning guidance, and CCIR.¹⁸ The key inputs and outputs are depicted in figure 10. The key outputs of planning initiation and the key inputs of mission analysis are closely nested and overlap with each other. Conceptual planning provides an iterative process for the commanders to understand and visualize the operational environment “to conduct and apply critical thinking and reasoning necessary for the application of operational art” and develop the best operational approach.¹⁹

Mission Analysis

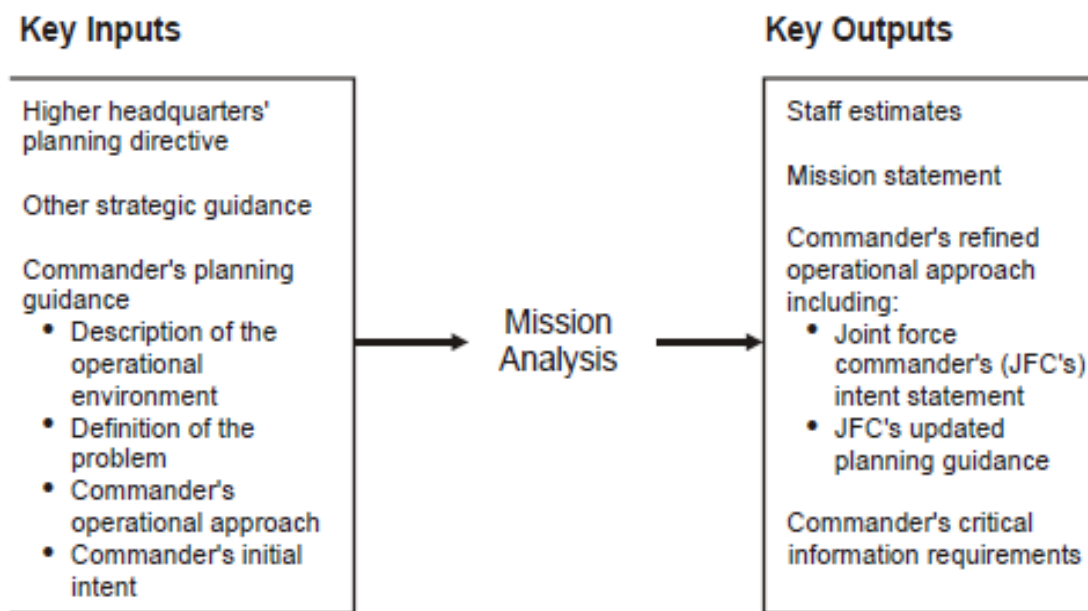


Figure 11. Mission Analysis

Source: U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), Figure IV-3, IV-5.

Mission analysis is composed of 13 sub-steps that are depicted in figure 11. Operational design and methodology are predominately part of mission analysis activities. Elements of the operational design that must be accomplished, analyzed or refined are; objectives and effects, center of gravity, decisive points, lines of operation and effort, and direct or indirect approach. Planners should use the operational methodology and design as “a set of intellectual tools to help them communicate a common vision of the operational environment as well as visualizing and describing the operational approach.”²⁰

Mission analysis finalizes conceptual planning and provides an explicit vision “to understand the major themes and guiding principles for the operation and develop detailed COAs for action.”²¹ The first two steps of JOPP are well-synchronized and methodical. CCIR and risk and threat assessment that are key outputs from the SA step of the BPP, are part of mission analysis in the JOPP.

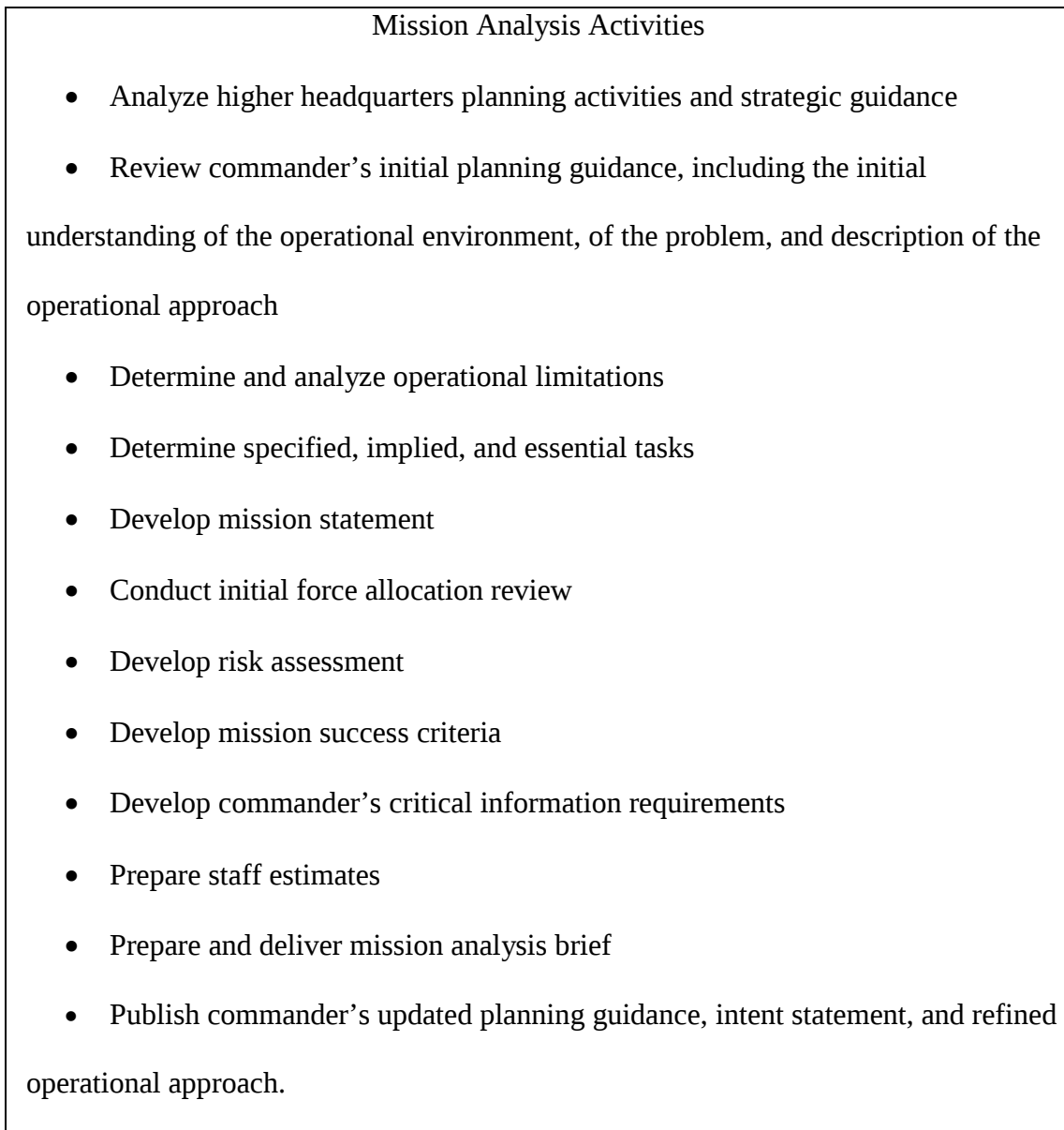


Figure 12. Mission Analysis Activities

Source: U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), Figure IV-4, IV-6.

BPP Phase 2 Operational Assessments of the Response Options

Operational assessment of the response options facilitates strategic level input to develop military responses.²² This phase has two sub-phases: conclusions of the strategic estimate and assessment of response options. The key inputs are a warning order by the Minister of Defense or other orders, strategic estimates, and draft of the response options. The key outputs are a warning order, initial JIPOE, draft operational estimate to subordinate commanders, and operational estimate of the commander's JOC to the strategic level.²³ These inputs and outputs are depicted in figure 12.

Key inputs	Operational Assessments of the Response Options	Key outputs
- Warning order by Minister of Defense - Strategic estimate - Draft of the response options		- Warning order - Initial JIPOE - Draft operational estimate to subordinate commanders - Operational estimate of the commander's JOC to the strategic level

Figure 13. Operational Assessments of the Response Options

Source: Created by author, using data from Bulgarian Department of the Army, *Ръководство за планиране на операцията* [Operational Planning Directive of the Bulgarian Armed Forces OPDBAF] (Sofia, 2011), 101.

The first sub-phase provides the conclusions of the strategic estimate. The staff uses these to produce a warning order and an initial JIPOE. The main processes that are accomplished through this phase are an examination of the strategic estimate; elaboration of the operational assessment of the crisis; assessment of the level and scope of

international engagement; and analysis of the desired end state, strategic and military objectives, and strategic and military effects.²⁴ The first step, derived from the strategic estimate allows the JOPG to produce the commander's initial guidance, and initial JIPOE. The JOPG focuses on understanding and assessing the main factors, scale, scope, and participants in the crisis and assessing potential risks and threats. The assessment of the level and scope of the international engagement are predominately focused on review of international legal aspects, international media and public opinion. The last section, the conclusions of the strategic estimate, provides analysis of the desired end state, strategic and military objectives, and strategic and military effects. Through this process, the JPOG analyzes the strategic context, desired end state, strategic and military objectives, and strategic and military effects. This is very similar to "understanding the strategic direction" and "understanding operational environment" in the Planning Initiation of the JOPP.

The second sub-phase is an assessment of response options. Through this sub-phase, two steps have to be accomplished: analysis of response options and recommendation to the operational level. The main analysis of response options is to assess the desired end state, strategic and military objectives and effects, rules of engagement (ROE), military action and force capability requirements. Through the recommendations at the operational level, the staff has to develop conclusions and identify critical operational requirements.

The main goal of the operational assessment of the response options is to facilitate a strategic level response by developing military response options, and assessing their feasibility, acceptability, and suitability.

Operational assessment of the response options partly overlaps the first two planning steps: Planning Initiation and Mission Analysis in the JOPP. This phase possesses an assessment of the strategic level's intent in the BPP. Assessment is also an integral part in the JOPP. The processes provide an iterative approach to understanding and visualizing the operational environment, military response options, and operational approach. However, the BPP does not possess the necessary synergy in the phases. The first two phases lack precise connection and overlap in inputs and outputs. The primary inputs are from the strategic level.

BPP Phase 3 Operational Orientation

Operational Orientation is the third phase of the BPP. The primary purpose is to analyze the mission and tasks, define the key factors that influence the commander's freedom of action, develop the complete operational design and methodology, and issue the commander's planning guidance to staff and subordinates.²⁵

The key strategic inputs are strategic estimates, planning guidance, and response options. The other key inputs are an initial JIPOE, and operational estimate. The key outputs are the JIPOE, operational design, mission analysis briefing, commander's planning guidance to his staff for developing COAs, commander's planning guidance to his subordinates, a warning order, and a request to the Strategic Planning Group for defining ROE and additional Crisis Response Measures. The key inputs and outputs are depicted in figure 13.

Key inputs		Key outputs
• Strategic estimate • Planning guidance • Response options • Initial JIPOE • Operational estimate	Operational Orientation	• Warning order • JIPOE • Operational design • Mission analysis briefing • Commander's planning guidance to his staff for developing COAs • Commander's planning guidance to his subordinates • Request to Strategic Planning Group for defining ROE and additional Crisis Response Measures

Figure 14. Operational Orientation

Source: Created by author, using data from Bulgarian Department of the Army, *Ръководство за планиране на операциите* [Operational Planning Directive of the Bulgarian Armed Forces OPDBAF] (Sofia, 2011), 110.

The OPDBAF breaks operational orientation into ten sub-phases, although many of these occur simultaneously within the different planning groups. These sub-phases are initial operation orientation, review of the strategic conditions, operational environment and main actors, analysis of the mission, analysis the center of gravity, evaluation of operational conditions, elaboration of operational design and methodology, initial request for forces/capabilities and command and control (C2), planning and conduct of reconnaissance in the area of operations, and mission analysis briefing.

Through the sub-phases of the operational orientation, the Bulgarian planners will accomplish all the processes of the JOPP in planning initiation to include: understanding the operational environment, defining the problem, developing an operational approach and mission analysis, and refining the commander's operational approach. There are

some differences between the terminology of the BPP and the JOPP. The operational design in the BPP includes both the operational design and methodology of the JOPP. Both processes use the elements of the operational design to develop their operational approaches and planning guidance.

Conceptual planning is a dominant part of operational orientation. It finalizes conceptual planning in the BPP and, like mission analysis, allows the planner “to understand the major themes and guiding principles for the operation and develop detailed COAs.”²⁶ Mission analysis and operational orientation are both planning processes requiring a solid understanding of the operational environment and other elements. There is little friction between the planning processes.

JOPP Step 3-COA Development

COA development is the third step of the JOPP. This step is a bridge from conceptual planning to detailed planning.²⁷ The inputs of COA development of JOPP are the outputs of the mission analysis: staff estimates, mission statement, commander’s refined operational approach, and CCIR. The commander’s refined operational approach includes the JFC’s intent statement, and updated planning guidance. All mission analysis outputs are scrutinized during COA development and explained in different COAs.

In accordance with JP 5-0, an explanation of COA development states that “Since the operational approach contains the JFC’s broad approach to solve the problem at hand, each COA will expand this concept with additional details that describe who will take the action, what type of military action occurs, when the action will begin, where the action will occur, why the action is required (purpose), and how the action will occur (method of employment of forces).”²⁸ The main processes that must be accomplished in COA

development are: reviewing information; determining the COA development techniques; reviewing operational objectives and tasks and developing ways to accomplish tasks; developing tentative COAs to focus on the center of gravity and decisive points; identifying the sequencing; identifying main and supporting efforts; identifying component-level missions and tasks; developing information operation requirements; identifying the tasking organization; developing the sustainment concept; developing the deployment concept; defining the operational area; developing initial COA sketches and statements; testing the validity of each tentative COA; conducting a COA development brief to the commander; seeking guidance from the JFC on COAs; and continuing the staff estimate process.²⁹

The key outputs of COA development are revised staff estimates, COA alternatives with a concept narrative, a sketch of COA alternatives with a concept narrative, and a sketch including objectives, key tasks, major capabilities required, task organization, main and supporting efforts, the deployment concept, the sustainment concept, information operation support themes, identification of the reserve, and identification of required supporting interagency tasks.³⁰

COA development inputs and outputs are depicted in figure 14. “A COA is a potential way (solution, method) to accomplish the assigned mission.”³¹ Each COA must meet the screening criteria: adequate, feasible, acceptable, distinguishable, and complete.³² COA development is predominately a cognitive process that establishes the ways for accomplishing restated mission statement from mission analysis.³³

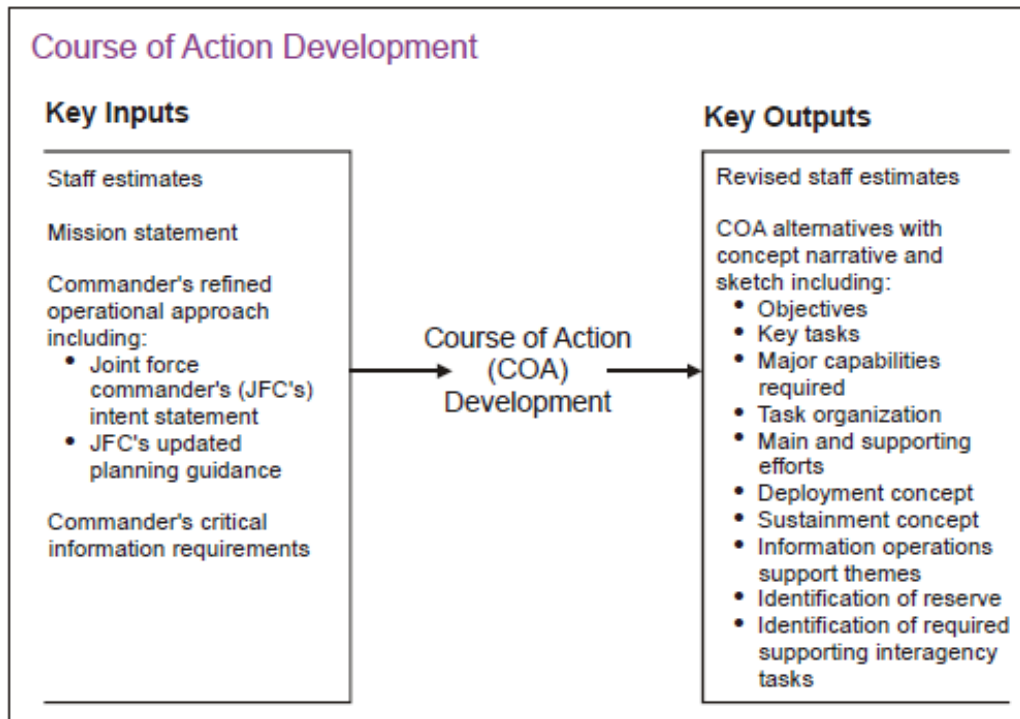


Figure 15. Course of Action (COA) Development

Source: U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), Figure IV-7, IV-17.

JOPP Step 4-COA Analysis and Wargaming

The fourth step of JOPP is COA Analysis and Wargaming. The primary purpose of COA analysis and wargaming is defining the advantages and disadvantages of each COA in order to “visualize the flow of the operation.”³⁴ Conveniently, the inputs of COA analysis are the outputs of COA development: revised staff estimates, and COA alternatives with concept narrative and sketch. COA alternatives with concept and narrative and sketch comprise objectives, key tasks, task organization, main and supporting efforts, etc. The steps of the JOPP are nested and in logical sequence. There should be no gaps or seams in the conceptual and detailed planning.

The key processes of COA analysis and wargaming are COA analysis considerations and conducting the wargame. During COA analysis, considerations are evaluation criteria and critical events. Evaluation criteria indicate the main aspects that the staff must focus on during the wargaming efforts. Critical events are critical tasks conducted at determined periods of time.³⁵ Conducting the war game includes three main steps: running the wargame, assessing results, and preparing products. The wargame is focused on action, reaction, and counteraction with clearly defined rules and products.

The key outputs of COA analysis and wargaming are potential decision points, evaluation criteria, potential branches and sequels, refined COAs and revised staff estimates. The staff must be able to fill out a CONOP, or order, after finishing this COA analysis.

Key inputs		Key outputs
• Revised staff estimates • COA alternatives with concept narrative and sketch including: • Objectives • Key tasks • Major capabilities required • Task organization • Main and supporting efforts • Deployment concept • Sustainment concept • Information operations support themes • Identification of reserve • Identification of required supporting interagency tasks	Course of Action Analysis	• Potential decision points • Evaluation criteria • Potential branches and sequels • Refined COAs • Revised staff estimates

Figure 16. Course of Action Analysis

Source: U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), Figure IV-10, IV-28.

JOPP Step 5-Course of Action Comparison

The fifth step of JOPP is COA Comparison. Here also the inputs of the COA comparison are the outputs of COA analysis and wargaming: advantages and disadvantages, wargaming results, evaluation criteria, and revised staff estimates. All COAs are individually evaluated according to evaluation criteria that are set by commander and staff. “The goal is to identify and recommend the COA that has the highest probability of success against the enemy COA that is of the most concern to the commander.”³⁶

The most important element of COA comparison is the determination of why one COA is preferred over another. The main step is determining evaluation criteria and making them measurable in a way to avoid bias. The next step is to determine the comparison methods. The last step is conducting COA comparison and depicting results.

The key outputs of COA comparison are: evaluated COAs, recommended COA, COA selection rationale, revised staff estimates, and refined commander’s critical information requirements. The key inputs and outputs are depicted in figure 16.

COA comparison is an orderly, arranged planning process of the JOPP that considers balancing the end, means, ways, and risk of each COA, then explains why and how well a COA accomplishes defined, measurable evaluation criteria.³⁷

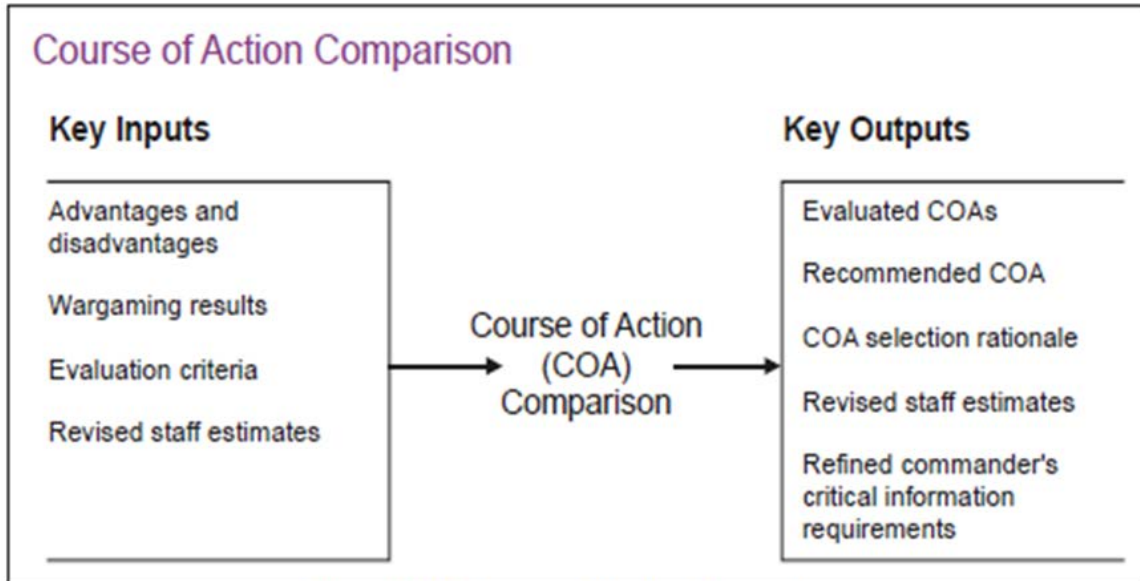


Figure 17. Course of Action Comparison

Source: U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), Figure IV-13, IV-37.

JOPP Step 6-Course of Action Approval

The sixth step is COA approval. The primary goal of COA approval is to determine, select, and modify the nominated COA or COAs. The key inputs are from the previous steps--COA analysis and comparison: refined COAs, staff recommendation, and the JFC's personal analysis. This step may be considered as a last review and assessment of a COA and important information.

During this step, the commander must be briefed on the COA decision. In the next, the commander must select the COA. After selecting a COA, the staff has to refine the selected COA. Something important in this step is that "even a commander's selected COA is normally briefed to and approved by President or Secretary of Defence

(SecDef).”³⁸ After that, the commander and staff must prepare a commander’s estimate that is developed after approval of the CONOP for the plan.

The key outputs in COA approval are COA modification, JFC’s COA selection, commander’s estimate, and refined commander’s intent. The key inputs and outputs are depicted in figure 17.

The staff briefs the commander on the COA and the commander approves it. The COA also has to be approved by a higher headquarters. The selected COA becomes a CONOPS and provides necessary information for developing the Plan and Order.³⁹

Key inputs	Course of	Key outputs
• Refined COAs • Staff recommendation • JFC’s personal analysis	Action	• COA modification • JFC’s COA selection • Commander’s estimate • Refined commander’s intent
	Approval	

Figure 18. Course of Action Approval

Source: U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), Figure IV-15, IV-40.

BPP Phase 4A Operational CONOPS Development

Phase four in the BPP is divided into two phases. Phase 4A is the Operational CONOPS Development and Phase 4B is the OPLAN Development of JOC. Operational CONOPS Development is viewed after COA approval of the JOPP because this phase includes all the steps beginning with COA development to approval of the JOPP. The main goal is to develop a CONOPS that complies with strategic guidance and carries out

the mission optimally.⁴⁰ The inputs are operational and strategic. Operational inputs are derived mainly from the Operational Orientation: JIPOE, operational design, mission analysis briefing, and commander's planning guidance to his staff for developing COAs, operational estimate, and input from subordinates and other organizations. Strategic inputs are strategic planning guidance, and the strategic estimate. The key operational inputs are approximately the same inputs as those of COA development. The difference between the BPP and JOPP is that the BPP has strategic inputs.

The Operational CONOPS Development has six sub-steps: preparation for development of the CONOP; analysis of opposing COAs and factors that influence development; COA development; COA analysis; COA comparison and selection; CONOP development; and development of the lists for force, and capabilities requirements. The first three sub-steps are COA development in JOPP. COA analysis in the BPP is the same as COA analysis and wargaming in JOPP. COA comparison and selection is COA comparison and COA approval in JOPP. CONOP development is part of COA approval in JOPP. Development of the lists for forces and capabilities requirements is a step that is required at the strategic level of the BPP. NATO assumes that there are enough forces and capabilities to accomplish that mission. There are no significant differences between the steps in the JOPP and the BPP. Even their approaches of developing, analyzing and approving COA are very similar. There is no significant friction between the planning processes.

The key outputs are the CONOPS of the commander's JOC; a high pay-off target list, and target categories; proposed ROE; requirements for joint and combined capabilities; critical capabilities requirements; and unit requirements. The products have

to provide an opportunity for the staff to develop a plan in the next phase. The JOPP has a commander's estimate as the main product for developing plans and orders, and the BPP has CONOPS as a main product for developing plans and orders. Thus both planning processes provide a product that may be the basis of a plan or order.

Conducting all detailed planning in one phase may create confusion among the staff and some important consideration may be missed. The borders between the six sub-steps in Operational CONOPS Development are not so clearly defined and connected in inputs and outputs; only the processes are fully described. The strong points of the BPP in this step are that there are solid connections with the strategic planning group and subordinate units. This is the main advantage of the BPP. Figure 18 depicts key inputs and outputs of operational CONOPS development:

Key inputs		Key outputs
• JIPOE • Operational design • Mission analysis briefing • Commander's planning guidance towards his staff for developing COAs • Operational estimate • Strategic planning guidance • Strategic estimate • Suggestion of subordinates and other organizations	Operational CONOPS Development	• CONOPS of JOC • High pay-off target list, and target categories • Proposed ROE • Requirements for joint combined capabilities • Requirements for critical capabilities • Requirements for units

Figure 19. Operational CONOPS Development

Source: Created by author, using data from Bulgarian Department of the Army. *Ръководство за планиране на операциите* [Operational Planning Directive of the Bulgarian Armed Forces OPDBAF] (Sofia, 2011), 123,124.

JOPP Step 6-Plan or Order Development

The final step of the JOPP is the Plan or Order Development. In accordance with JP 5-0, there are no specifically designated inputs in this step. The commander's estimate in COA approval becomes the tentative CONOPS, the other inputs are: refined commander's intent, JFC's selection, revised staff estimates, JIPOE, refined commander's critical information requirements, etc. The planners will use all necessary products from previous steps as inputs.⁴¹

The following has to be accomplished during Plan and Order development: CONOPS production; developing supporting concepts; expanding the CONOPS into a Base Plan with Annexes; planning review and approval; supporting plan development; issuing the OPLAN or Operation order (OPORD) and reviewing the plan periodically.⁴² Plan and Order Development consists of: force planning, support planning, nuclear strike planning, deployment and redeployment planning feasibility analysis, etc. The plan development activities are depicted in figure 19. The main purpose of Plan and Order Development is to "produce a complete plan for execution by subordinate commanders."⁴³

Plan and Order Development provides the JOPP with a methodical approach toward developing the desired end-products: OPLAN or OPORD with periodically updated estimates, JIPOE, commander's intent, and CONOPS. Even though the inputs are not designated in the JOPP, many of the products derived through planning are used in plan and order development.

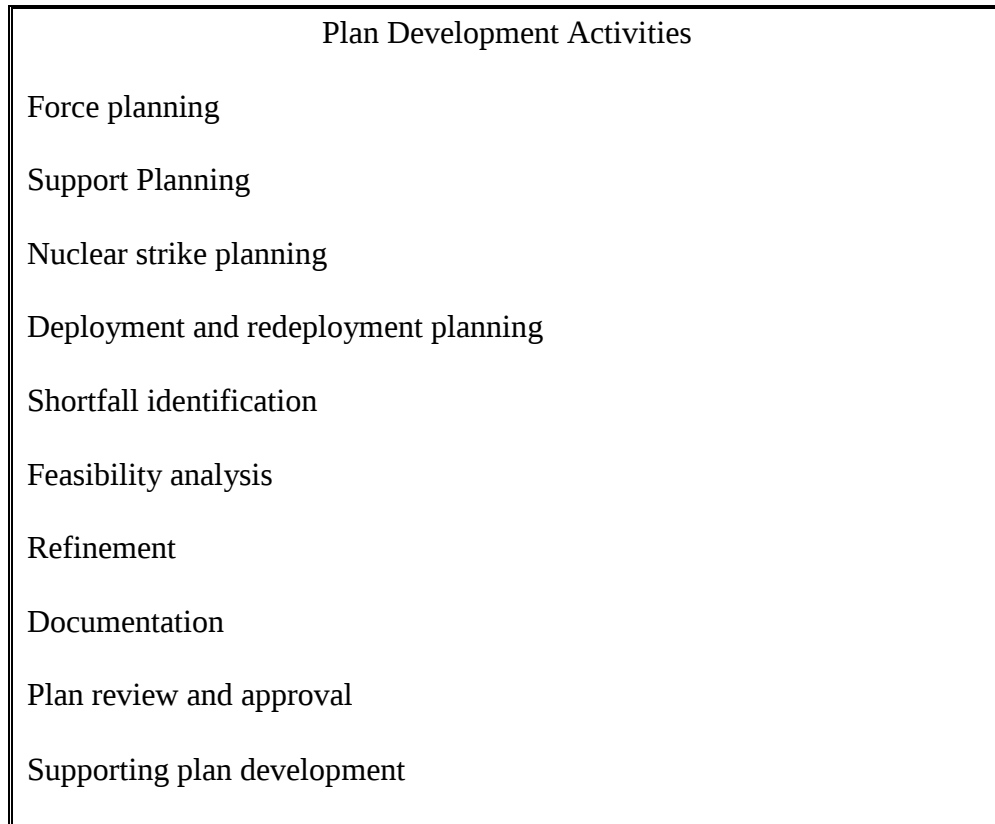


Figure 20. Plan Development Activities

Source: U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), Figure IV-18, IV-47.

BPP Phase 4B OPLAN Developments of JOC

OPLAN Developments of JOC is the second part of phase 4. The goal of this phase is to produce a developed and detailed OPLAN that is based on approved CONOPS by JOC and provide opportunity of subordinates to develop their plans. Conveniently, the key inputs of OPLAN Developments of JOC are the outputs of Operational CONOPS Development: CONOPS of the commander's JOC; a high pay-off target list, and target categories; proposed ROE; requirements for joint and combined

capabilities; critical capabilities requirements; and unit requirements. The inputs are also the CONOPS of subordinates.

Though development of the OPLAN, the following have to be accomplished: initiation of development of the OPLAN of JOC; planning for employment of coalitional forces; plan for C2; plan for preparation and comprehensive sustainment; plan for deployment, plan for force protection; and synchronization, endorsement, and dissemination of the OPLAN.⁴⁴ This phase is very similar to Plan and Order Development of the JOPP. The main difference is that JOPP develops CONOP and OPLAN in the same step. The BPP develops CONOPS in the previous phase. The both processes produce a detailed OPLAN. The key output is an approved OPLAN from the strategic level that is sent to subordinates.

The BPP keeps working in close connection with the strategic and tactical level through parallel planning with them. The BPP and JOPP are very similar at this stage as both produce approved OPLANs at the strategic level. There is no significant friction between these processes.

BPP Phase 5 Execution, Assessment, and Review of OPLAN

The main goal of this phase is to assess the success achieved during the execution of the OPLAN and initiate a rapid update of the OPLAN to reflect the changes in the current environment.⁴⁵

There are three main events during this phase: execution, assessment, and review. Execution of the OPLAN focuses on coordination and interaction among military and civilian actors. The key to execution is the ability to determine those successes achieved

and the rapid adaptation and adjustment of the OPLAN in the AI. Assessment of OPLAN includes control and assessment of activities in the AI. Assessment is a continuous process. Review of the OPLAN may occur by using fragmentary orders (FRAGO), orders for coordination and interaction, or a review of the OPLAN and its branches.

The JOPP does not have Execution, Assessment, and Review of OPLAN as a separate step, although the JOPP includes: shortfall identification, feasibility analysis, and supporting plan development as part of Plan and Order Development. The JOPP conducts these activities before execution of the plan or order unlike the BPP. Assessment in the JOPP is conducted using Measures of Performance (MOP) and Measures of Effectiveness (MOE). Execution, Assessment, and Review of the OPLAN is a very robust portion of the execution of planning that, again, provides a solid connection between the strategic and tactical levels.

BPP Phase 6 Transition

The last phase of the BPP is Transition. The main goal of transition is to develop and coordinate an OPLAN that specifies the responsibilities of other authorities or organizations. There is a very close connection between the Transition; and Execution, Assessment, and Review of the OPLAN phases. Transition may be a consequence of continuous assessments of the operational environment. The main activities are: reduction of risk and negative consequences from the disengagement of the force; coordination with external participants; coordination among the strategic, operational,

and tactical levels; control of the process of disengagement at the operational level; and an assessment of the possible results of disengagement.⁴⁶

Throughout these activities, the JOC has to issue commander's planning guidance; to develop CONOPS; and the OPLAN. The plan and order development in the JOPP also has a transition step, but it is very different from the transition step in BPP. Transition of the JOPP is connected to the execution of the plan while conducting a transition brief to subordinates, "a confirmation brief is given by a subordinate's commander after receiving the order or plan,"⁴⁷ and transition drills.

Differences and Possible Synchronization Between The Models

Determination of strengths, weaknesses and differences of the two processes helps determine which process is optimum for the BAF. Adoption of the main differences and strengths of one planning process may improve the other process and correct its weaknesses. Synchronization between the models is also possible. The main difference between the JOPP planning initiation and the BPP SA is an organizational learning methodology. The JOPP methodology includes understanding the strategic direction, understanding the operational environment, defining the problem, and developing an operational approach. SA should adopt this orderly and iterative operational methodology and design for an initial approach. This methodology facilitates the next phase Operational Assessment of the Options of the BPP.

The second main difference occurs in the BPP Operational Assessment of Options. Here, the BPP establishes a solid connection between the strategic and tactical level during early planning and issues a warning order. JOPP does not have this close connection with the strategic and tactical level during the initial steps. JOPP may be

improved by using the outputs from the developing operational approach and sending them to the strategic level for approval while issuing a warning order to subordinate tactical units. Conversely, the JOPP could adopt the BPP second phase Operational Assessment of Options.

The outputs from the commander's planning guidance to his subordinates and a warning order are the third main operational orientation differences between the Operational Orientation of the BPP and the Mission Analysis of the JOPP. These two outputs provide a solid connection between the operational and tactical levels. Adaptation of and providing these two outputs would be very easy during mission analysis of the JOPP. JOPP has all of the information needed to create these products.

Fourth, the JOPP steps for COA development, COA analysis and wargaming and COA comparison differ from the Bulgarian model. COA approval is accomplished in the BPP during Operational CONOPS development. That provides some confusion, so important considerations may be missed. The BPP has to divide this phase similarly to that of the JOPP to allow the Bulgarian planners to create sophisticated COAs and CONOPS.

Sixth, the BPP has two more phases Execution, Assessment, and Review of OPLAN; and Transition. These two phases are conducted during execution of the OPLAN by subordinates. JOPP has to add these two phases if it wants to synchronize JOPP and BPP. These two phases allow a tight connection among planning, execution, accomplishment, and disengagement.

JOPP and BPP have their strong points and weaknesses. "JOPP is an orderly, analytical process, which consists of a set of logical steps to examine a mission; develop,

analyze, and compare alternative COA; select the best COA; and produce a plan or order.”⁴⁸ BPP is a compound process, which establishes a solid connection and allows simultaneous planning among strategic, operational and tactical levels.

Comparison of Evaluation Criteria

This section compares JOPP and BPP using evaluation criteria defined in chapter 3. In order to avoid bias, the evaluation criteria were developed before beginning the analysis of the planning processes: objective, simplicity, perseverance, and synchronization.⁴⁹ The principles of the joint operations in JP 3-0 are used as an approach for the determination of evaluation criteria.⁵⁰ All evaluation criteria have identical weight. There are ratings for each criterion: less than desirable; desirable or neutral; optimal. Less than desirable is equal to one point. Desirable or neutral is equal to two points. Optimal is equal to three points. The planning process that has the highest score is the most appropriate.⁵¹

JOPP and BPP Comparison to Evaluation Criteria

Objective is the first comparison. In accordance with JP 3-0, “the purpose of specifying the objective is to direct every military operation toward a clearly defined, decisive, and achievable goal.”⁵² JOPP gets “desirable or neutral,” because there is no solid connection during planning among strategic, operation and tactical levels. BPP gets “desirable or neutral.” There is very solid connection with strategic level. However, BPP’s phases are not so well arranged to enable achievable strategic objectives and end states. BPP is not as consistent, and does not “direct every military operation toward a clearly defined, decisive, and achievable goal.”⁵³

Simplicity is the second comparison. JOPP gets “optimum” because the organization of the planning process is intelligible and produces COAs, CONOPs and plans that clearly outline how to conduct operations or campaign. JOPP issues concise and uncomplicated plans and orders.⁵⁴ BPP gets “desirable or neutral.” Organization of the planning process is intelligible and it produces COAs, CONOPs and plans that minimize misunderstanding.

The third comparison is perseverance. The JOPP’s COAs, CONOPs, and plans are dictated by doctrine and consider the diplomacy, information, military, and economy (DIME) parameters and PMESII. The JOPP gets “desirable or neutral,” because there is not a solid connection during planning between the strategic, and operation levels. The BPP gets “desirable or neutral.” There are very solid connections between the strategic and operational levels. COAs, CONOPs, and plans are dictated by doctrine and consider DIME and PMESII

The fourth comparison is synchronization. The purpose of synchronization is the arrangement of steps or phases of the planning processes in time, space and purpose that enable a unit to function within strategic and tactical levels. The JOPP’s steps of the planning process are consistent and work in concert with one another, and produce COAs, CONOPs, and plans. Its inputs and outputs are nested from beginning to the end of planning. JOPP gets “desirable or neutral” because there is not a solid connection during planning between the strategic, and operation levels. The BPP gets “desirable or neutral.” The BPP allows a unit to function within strategic and tactical levels. However, there are not firm connections between inputs and outputs of the phases of the BPP. The outcome of the comparison is depicted in table 1.

Table 1. Planning Processes Comparison

Evaluation criteria	JOPP	BPP
Objective	Desirable-2	Desirable-2
Simplicity	Optimum-3	Desirable-2
Perseverance	Desirable-2	Desirable-2
Synchronization	Desirable-2	Desirable-2
	9	8

Source: Created by author.

Interview results

The author conducted interviews after analyzing the planning process in order to confirm or disprove conclusions and highlight certain areas. The interviews show that Bulgaria cannot use a planning process that is different from that used by allied armed forces. The BPP must conduct planning using the JOPP as a model. The BAF has to adopt the JOPP as a foundation and build the solid connections between the strategic and tactical levels.

The interviews were limited to four major questions: Is operational art and design the key to the success of the JOPP; Is the lack of solid connections between strategic and tactical levels a weakness of the JOPP; where does friction occur in planning; and which planning process is optimum for the BAF at the operational level of war?

Is operational art and design the key to the success of the JOPP? Dr. Dale C. Eikmeier explained why operational art and design are so important in the planning,

while insisting that all planning processes are “problem solving process.” However, the complex strategic and operational environments require that the processes incorporate the ability to define the problem. Such an ability is provided by operational art and design. “We may create a great COA, plan, or order, but if we don’t solve the real or right problem, our products are worthless.”⁵⁵ Major Flavien Lanet described operational art and design as a great tool to define the problem that fills in the gap between desired and current conditions.⁵⁶ Major Michael Buchanan also defined operational art and design as a great methodology for defining the problem and changing the current environment to the desired environment.⁵⁷ Dr. Eikmeier, Maj. Lanet, and Maj. Buchanan had very similar answers regarding operational art and design as a comprehensive tool in this complex strategic and operational environment. They all insisted that planners must use this tool to define the problem and to transform the current environment to the desired environment. Even adopting operational art and design from NATO would assist in laying out a common language, especially among NATO’s European countries and other countries, such as the U.S. and Australia.

Is the lack of solid connections between strategic and tactical levels a weakness of the JOPP? Dr. Eikmeier did not confirm that a weakness exists, but he agreed that a problem statement and operational approach must be approved and confirmed by the strategic level. He also said that dialogue between high and subordinate headquarters was imperative.⁵⁸ Dr. Peter Schifferle highlighted that maintaining dialogue with the strategic and tactical level may be challenging due to cultural differences among the services and civilians. Dr. Schifferle stated that the planning process is not prescriptive.⁵⁹ MAJ Buchanan stated that the function of liaison officers was to maintain connections among

the different planning levels. He said that the best understanding of the intent would be provided by liaison officers because they would be able to confirm the real intent of high or subordinate commanders and provide a solid permanent connection.⁶⁰

Where does friction in planning occur? Dr. Schifferle has been involved in planning for more than 20 years. He determined that friction in planning did not exist and the issues of planning were in education, training, culture awareness and experience.⁶¹ Dr. Eikmeier said that friction in planning was created by planners, time, education, personalities, and experience.⁶² Dr. Schifferle and Dr. Eikmeier confirmed that friction has to be addressed during the education and training of the planners. But a question remains as to why there is not a better process for educating Bulgarian planners.

Which planning process is optimum for the BAF at the operational level of war? The author asked Dr. Schifferle and Dr. Eikmeier: “Do you think that adopting NATO’s procedures and doctrine provides enough capabilities and interoperability for NATO participants, such as Bulgaria and Romania?” Their answers were similar. Dr. Schifferle just said, “Why not? But Bulgaria has to consider the policy of the great powers.” Dr. Eikmeier said, “The first answer is yes. NATO is predominant in COA planning process for Bulgaria.” He also asserted that few countries are able to allow fulfilling an independent planning process. MAJ Lanet’s position is that NATO provides enough guidance in order to use the same tool to have a common understanding and planning process. MAJ Buchanan explained that JOPP has more than a decade of battle experience and as a NATO country; Bulgaria must be able to plan with the main contributors. MAJ Gachev answered that adopting NATO’s procedures and directives significantly enhanced interoperability of the nations.⁶³ In accordance with the

respondents' answers, NATO's planning process is a reasonable approach. However, the author does not think that adopting a single NATO planning process is a sophisticated and comprehensive approach. The BPP has to be able to plan in conjunction with NATO and U.S. contingencies.

¹Major James C. Allen, "Adopting a Single Planning Model at the Operational Level of War" (Master's thesis, Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2008), 18.

²Dr. Jack D. Kem, *Planning for Action: Campaign Concepts and Tools* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, August 2012), 223.

³U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Publication 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), IV-2.

⁴Dale C. Eikmeier, *From Operational Art to Operational Plan: A Joint Planning Primer* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, 2012), 50.

⁵Department of Defense, JP 5-0, III-7.

⁶*Ibid.*, IV-1.

⁷*Ibid.*, III-7.

⁸*Ibid.*, III-8.

⁹U.S. Department of the Army, ADRP 5-0, *The Operations Process* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office 2012), 2-9.

¹⁰Department of Defense, JP 5-0, III-13.

¹¹Eikmeier, 50.

¹²Department of Defense, JP 5-0, IV-1.

¹³Bulgarian Department of the Army, Ръководство за планиране на операциите [Operational Planning Directive of the Bulgarian Armed Forces OPDBAF] (Sofia, 2011), 96.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 96.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 93.

- ¹⁶Department of Defense, JP 5-0, IV-4.
- ¹⁷Ibid.
- ¹⁸Ibid.
- ¹⁹Eikmeier, 13.
- ²⁰U.S. Department of the Army, ADRP 5-0, 2-4.
- ²¹Eikmeier, 61.
- ²²Bulgarian Department of the Army, OPDBAF, 100.
- ²³Ibid., 101.
- ²⁴Ibid., 102, 103, 104, 105, 106.
- ²⁵Ibid., 109.
- ²⁶Eikmeier, 61.
- ²⁷Ibid., 62.
- ²⁸Department of Defense, JP 5-0, IV-17.
- ²⁹Ibid., IV-19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26.
- ³⁰Ibid., IV-17.
- ³¹Ibid.
- ³²Eikmeier, 62.
- ³³Kem, 148.
- ³⁴Department of Defense, JP 5-0, IV-27.
- ³⁵Ibid., IV-31.
- ³⁶Ibid., IV-36.
- ³⁷Eikmeier, 83.
- ³⁸Department of Defense, JP 5-0, IV-43.
- ³⁹Eikmeier, 84.

- ⁴⁰Bulgarian Department of the Army, OPDBAF, 122.
- ⁴¹Department of Defense, JP 5-0, IV-44, 45.
- ⁴²Eikmeier, 86, 87, 90, 91.
- ⁴³Allen, 43.
- ⁴⁴Bulgarian Department of the Army, OPDBAF, 138.
- ⁴⁵*Ibid.*, 144.
- ⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 145.
- ⁴⁷Department of Defense, JP 5-0, IV-57.
- ⁴⁸U.S. Department of the Army, Field Manual 1-02, *Operational Terms and Graphics* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2004), 1-138.
- ⁴⁹Kem, 222, 223, 224.
- ⁵⁰*Ibid.*, 223.
- ⁵¹Department of Defense, JP 5-0, G-2.
- ⁵²U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, *Joint Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), A-1.
- ⁵³U.S. Department of Defense, JP 3-0, A-3.
- ⁵⁴*Ibid.*, A-1.
- ⁵⁵Dr. Dale C. Eikmeier, interview by author, Fort Leavenworth, 1 April 2013.
- ⁵⁶Major Flavien Lanet, interview by author, Fort Leavenworth, 2 April 2013.
- ⁵⁷Major Michael Buchanan, interview by author, Fort Leavenworth, 5 April 2013.
- ⁵⁸Eikmeier, interview.
- ⁵⁹Dr. Peter Schifferle, interview by author, Fort Leavenworth, 8 April 2013.
- ⁶⁰Buchanan, interview.
- ⁶¹Schifferle, interview.

⁶²Eikmeier, interview.

⁶³Major Anton I. Gachev, electronic correspondence to author, 4 April 2013.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Introduction

This chapter answers the research question and provides a proposed planning process for the BAF. It discusses the outcomes of this comparative case study and provides some recommendations for future research.

Answering the Research Question

The intent of this study was to determine which planning process best fit the needs of the BAF: the current BPP or JOPP. Both have strong and weak points. The comparison study considered the planning processes from several viewpoints: step-by-step comparison; synchronization; using the criteria of objectivity, simplicity, and perseverance; and the experience of the interviewees.

The BAF should adopt a planning model that facilitates participation in both the European NATO planning process and JOPP when the U.S. is the main actor in the theater. Although the US is a member of NATO, it does not use the NATO planning model, even in ISAF where NATO and the US are principle players. For this reason, neither NATO's planning process nor the JOPP are sufficient alone to provide for the model for the BAF planning. The BAF is often engaged in a complex and fragile environment. The optimum planning process of JOPP can serve as a foundation integrated with some phases of the BPP, because the JOPP does not have solid links among the strategic, operational and tactical levels as does the BPP.

The proposed planning process retains the following from the BPP: Phase 2-Operational Assessment of the Options; Phase 5-Execution, Assessment, and Review of the OPLAN; and Phase 6-Transition. There are some additions, such as a warning order during Planning Initiation and Mission Analysis; commander's planning guidance during Mission Analysis; and a warning order and CONOPS, during the COA approval.

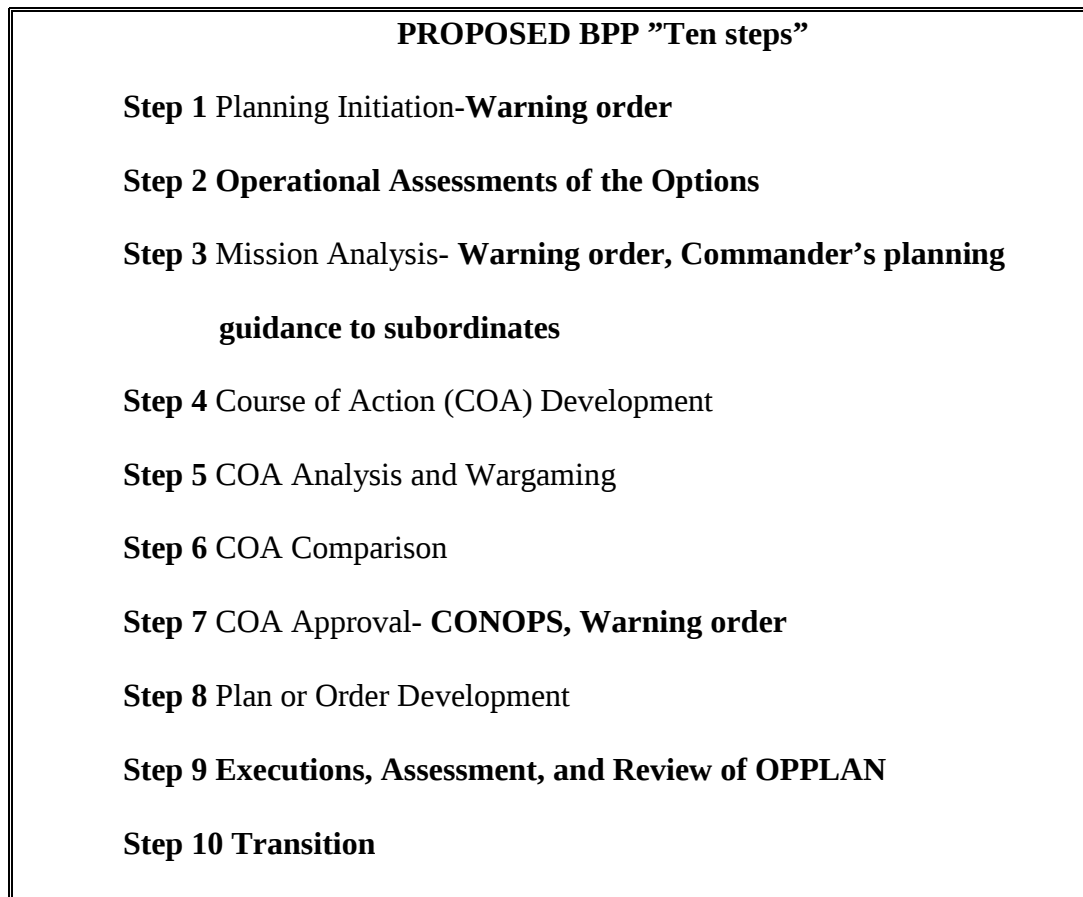


Figure 21. Proposed BPP

Source: Created by author using data from Bulgarian Department of the Army. *Ръководство за планиране на операцията* [Operational Planning Directive of the Bulgarian Armed Forces OPDBAF] (Sofia, 2011); U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011).

This planning process will assist the JOC of the BAF in planning within a complex environment. Bulgarian planners would be able to participate in NATO's planning teams while avoiding some of its shortcomings. Adoption of this proposed planning process requires additional staff training, but increases critical and creative thinking, understanding of the operational art and design. The BAF is suitable for small NATO countries that require flexibility and adaptability when integrating into leading nations planning processes. Ideally, the BAF planners should speak the same language as other nations. That is an important point. Solely adopting NATO's planning process or JOPP does not insure the desired end state of "capability of planning with all NATO participants."

The proposed planning process establishes conditions for solving problems that arise between the BAF and other NATO participants. That said, "No single approach is correct"¹ or provides enough capability, flexibility and agility for the planners. The BAF should be mindful of its objective of balancing two concurrent goals: increasing interoperability with international partners and achieving "NATO standards."² The proposed planning process is designed to facilitate accomplishing of both goals.

Significance of This Study

Adapting a single planning model in the BAF at the operational level of war has several significant advantages. First, the study achieves a significant conclusion: neither the NATO planning process nor JOPP is a sufficient enough framework that encompasses everything necessary for the BAF to work with its NATO allies. Second, the comparison study provides insight to the current BPP and JOPP. It emphasizes both strong and weak

points along with similarities and differences between the planning processes in order to derive a comprehensive proposed planning process for the BAF.

The economic situation of the most countries in the world requires more a “joint and agile” adaptation to the complex environment. In order to be joint, partners should use similar planning processes to build trust among each other. Trust must be created. The proposed planning process is a commitment towards achieving that goal. In terms of being agile in the complex environment, the BAF must be flexible and tighten the connections among the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war in its planning process.

This study benefited from the unique military environment at the CGSC where its instructors are experienced planners, and international military students bring their own unique backgrounds to the classroom. This environment provided the opportunity to examine the planning processes from many different perspectives. This aided in the determination of an optimum problem-solving model that increases the BAF planning capabilities, and offers a comprehensive approach toward dealing with a complex operating environment.

Recommendation for Future Research

This study scrutinized the JOPP and BPP in detail and recommended a new planning model. Dr. Eikmeier and Dr. Schifferle determined that, most of the times, planning mistakes result from the efforts of poorly- educated planners. Future research may be conducted to determine the optimum education of Bulgarian planners. Education in CGSC may be used as a base line when compared to military education in some other

NATO countries. Speaking NATO languages (English, French) and using the same terminology is probably part of the education requirement for officers and services.

The study has confirmed that operational art and design is comprehensive, yet sophisticated, in its approach to conceptual planning. For this reason, additional research is necessary to determine how the BAF might incorporate this planning tool in its procedures and doctrines. Future research may entail a survey of how many European and other nation's armies use the operational art and design in their planning processes.

The BAF doesn't currently have a comprehensive tactical-level planning process. Research may determine how many countries have adopted the MDMP and how MDMP fits tactical level planning in the BAF. There is little friction and significant difference between MDMP and JOPP.³ JOPP serves as a foundation for the proposed planning process. Additional research could improve the planning approach of the BAF.

¹U.S. Navy Admiral James G. Stavridis and U.S. Army Colonel Bart Howard, "Strengthening the Bridge: Building Partnership Capacity," *Military Review* (January-February 2010): 3.

²Ibid., 4.

³Major James C. Allen, "Adopting a Single Planning Model at the Operational Level of War," (Master's thesis, Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2008), 60.

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