Military Strategic Communication in Coalition Operations

A Practitioners Handbook

(MilStratCom Handbook)

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Disclaimer

(1) This document does not raise an academic claim. It attempts to provide concise information compiled from various sources. For this purpose, the authors waive the requirement of formally citing references. However, it is recommended to consult relevant publications listed in the Bibliography for additional information in the context of the original source.

(2) Although this document refers to the context of coalition military operations at the operational level of command, its proposed solutions are applicable to both coalition and alliance operations and should be considered at all levels, as appropriate. The term Joint Task Force is used in a generic way to address deployed military forces regardless of their organisational origin; 'Joint Task Force HQ' is the operational-level HQ of the Joint Task Force; the Joint Task Force Commander is referred to as a 4* flag / general officer.\(^1\)

(3) For the purpose of this handbook, specific terms and definitions are introduced and explained in context, which may diverge from current use in NATO policy and/or doctrine. Their operational relevance suggests consequent adaptation.

(4) This document is gender neutral. Depending on the context and if, when referring to members of both sexes, the third person singular cannot be avoided or a gender-neutral noun does not exist, we reserve the right to use the masculine form of the noun and pronoun. This is to ensure that the document remains comprehensible.

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\(^1\) Joint Task Force formations of smaller scope may be commanded by lower ranking officers. In this case, indications of rank, grade or status for StratCom personnel made in this handbook should be interpreted and adapted appropriately.
Audience – Who should read the Handbook?

This handbook is intended for use by commanders and their staff at the operational Joint Task Force (JTF) level, but could be used at any level as a reference. The purpose of the publication is to describe the fundamental operational aspects of Strategic Communication (StratCom) in the military, and propose guidance for the implementation of StratCom in support of a deployed JTF.

The primary audience of this handbook comprises the JTF Command Group and HQ Special Staff; the members of the StratCom staff element(s); the Intelligence staff; the Operations staff; the Plans staff; the Information Operations (Info Ops) staff and Public Affairs Officers (PAOs) at all levels.

Additional audiences include: personnel involved in the UN Integrated Missions Planning Process or similar processes at the inter-governmental or strategic-political level; decision-makers, planners and analysts at the military-strategic level; the operational-level Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) staff; staff members involved in liaison and Joint Military Commission (JMC) activities; and related staff and commanders at the Component Command (CC) level.

Chapter 7 – Guide to Military Strategic Communication for Non-StratCom Personnel – is intended to provide a concise first overview of the subject for anyone not (yet) familiar with or not directly involved in the execution of StratCom tasks. It should also be read by the StratCom staff to derive incentives for discussions with, and education and training of non-StratCom personnel, as required.

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2 Note that by nature human communication involves everybody – "One cannot not communicate!" – and, therefore, this chapter is claimed relevant for everybody! (cf. Introduction and Chapter 1)
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Introduction

"Across all of our efforts, effective strategic communication is essential to sustaining global legitimacy and supporting our policy aims. Aligning our actions with our words is a shared responsibility that must be fostered by a culture of communication throughout government. We must also be more effective in our deliberate communication and engagement and do a better job understanding the attitudes, opinions, grievances, and concerns of peoples—not just elites—around the world. Doing so allows us to convey credible, consistent messages and to develop effective plans, while better understanding how our actions will be perceived. We must also use a broad range of methods for communicating with foreign publics, including new media."

(President Barack Obama)

Commanders, Planners, Operators, Analysts, Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors and Marines—we all—need to understand and internalise that...

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Everything we say, do, or fail to do and say, and that is perceived by others, sends a message. Even things that remain unsaid or things we don’t do may carry messages based on expectations of others, which may be met or not by our behaviour. The fact that one cannot not communicate bears risks and opportunities as others’ perceptions and interpretations are not necessarily always in line with our intentions. Instead of just letting things happen we should proactively attempt to shape our image and design our public appearance in words and deeds so that it supports our objectives.

 Our actions speak louder than words. Talk is cheap—it is easier to say you will do something than to actually do it. However, it is the result of what we do rather than announcements or promises that counts most. People want to see an outcome, an effect that satisfies their needs or at least meets their expectations. There are manifold implications of this for military operations, the first and foremost being the challenge of designing operations in a way that they serve the military purpose while at the same time inducing a spirit of acceptance towards an enduring political end-state.

 There must not be a discrepancy between what we say and what we do. Any say-do gap negatively affects our credibility and thus the effectiveness of our operations. Our actions should be self-explanatory without justification required. Awareness of our mission, the strategic vision, and the commander’s intent for its implementation is key for aligning words and deeds and avoiding a say-do gap. Common awareness and understanding promotes cohesion and a corporate identity of the forces; coherent activity enhances military power and the implementation of political will.
Effective operations require that the military operational environment is reconciled with the
Information Environment and there is no say-do gap.

In today’s information age, through the rapid modernisation of information and
communication processes, military operations are under constant observation of the
media with virtually real-time reporting. As the primary source of information for the global
community, the media influence politics, (governmental) decision-making, and ultimately, public
support for operations. Any uniformed member of the forces, regardless of rank or position, who
responds to media or speaks publicly about an issue, will be perceived as a military spokesperson,
regardless of whether that is technically the case or not.

Strategic Communication is a commander’s tool for policy-making and guidance to improve the
forces’ communication by promoting the appropriate consideration of the above.

“One cannot not communicate. Because every behavior is a kind of
communication, people who are aware of each other are constantly
communicating. Any perceivable behavior, including the absence of
action, has the potential to be interpreted by other people as having some
meaning.”

—PAUL WATZLAWICK
Chapter 1 – Integrated Communication

A. The Communication Challenge

Cell phones, smart phones, the Internet, and GPS are increasingly available and are changing the nature of conflict, even in remote areas. Information can now reach out in new ways to global audiences because of the revolution in Information Technology (IT), particularly using cell phones and smart phones. The revival of hybrid warfare manifested in recent developments in the international security environment – such as the Arab Spring, the Ukrainian crisis, the rise of Jihadist-Salafist terrorism, and the European migrant crisis – demonstrates the power of communication, broadly based on IT advantages: messages and perceptions become predominant of physical engagements and strongly impact the behaviour of people. Orchestrated activities carry messages and have a crucial effect on public opinions, decision-making processes, and domestic support.

![Figure 1: Military Communication Challenge](image)

From a communication perspective, military operations are part of a vicious circle (see Figure 1)³: they result from political decisions, are part of state-funded activity, and are under constant observation of the media who strongly affect public opinion, which in turn influences political discussion and decision-making.

³ “War is [ ] a real political instrument, a continuation of political commerce, a carrying out of the same by other means.” (Carl von Clausewitz)
Military success can be either directly aided or challenged by activities in the Information Environment. Military communicators need to convey the message that operations are in line with political decisions and serve the interest of the involved nations and their populace. In this respect, they may act as guardians of the political Narrative, ensuring that political will is reflected in words and deeds throughout operations planning and execution.

Today's military operations are also challenged with a fragmentation of communication capabilities and insufficient integration of communication with operations planning, resulting in fragmented Information Activities by multinational partners, insufficiently harmonised for achieving objectives in the Information Environment that support common strategic objectives. In the last decades the multinational community of communication practitioners struggled for overcoming this challenge by introducing coordination mechanisms. For instance, the military Info Ops function and later StratCom were designed to provide an analysis, advice, coordination and oversight capacity for communication capabilities at various levels.

However, sole coordination of capabilities and actions remains more a cure to the symptom than it constitutes a solution to the underlying problem. In addition, there is still a lack of consideration of the comprehensive scope of non-media activities that may help to create desired effects from a communication perspective.

Coalition partners need to be able to gain enhanced situation awareness in the Information Environment; develop and issue timely, relevant and feasible communication guidance; implement communication plans in a consistent, transparent and flexible manner; and take emerging communication practices and technology into account.

All this finally led to the concept of integrated communication and communication management – an approach to adequately respond to and shape developments in the Information Environment from a multinational coalition and comprehensive approach perspective.

**B. Dimensions of Integrated Communication**

Integrated communication addresses a range of dimensions in order to support the achievement of consistency throughout the levels of involvement, and respond to the expectations of various stakeholders involved.

The first set of dimensions to be integrated refers to legal obligations for public information, the deliberate exert of influence through communication, and the safeguard of own information:
• The **presentational** dimension takes into account a global expectation that some or all elements of JTF activities must be in the public domain, because of (national) freedom of information rights, public information activities, and the need to inform the public about the JTF’s mission, objectives and activities.

• The **targeted** dimension includes agreed elements in the Information Environment towards which Information Activities should be directed in order to affect capabilities and influence perceptions, attitudes, and behaviour favourable to the achievement of own objectives.

• The **protective** dimension refers to existing disclosure policies and Operations Security (OPSEC) requirements. It aims at safeguarding own freedom of manoeuvre in the Information Environment, minimising the opportunity for adversaries to exploit JTF vulnerabilities, and protecting individual partners’ national interests.

Secondly, integrated communication also requires the alignment of internal and external communication for the sake of consistency, credibility, and ultimately effectiveness in support of mission accomplishment.

In general terms, **internal communication** characterises all communication processes within an organisation or set of capabilities, while **external communication** describes communication between organisations or different sets of capabilities, and/or other actors.  

For the purpose of this handbook, internal communication relates to the JTF HQ internal communication processes such as Command and Control (C2), staff routine, troop information, and education and training.

External communication vertically involves communication of the JTF HQ personnel – the Commander and his staff – with Higher Headquarters (HHQ) and subordinate commands to issue, receive and clarify direction and guidance, including plans and orders. In the external horizontal dimension, communication processes involve JTF mission partners as well as local and regional stakeholders to promote JTF objectives and enhance awareness, understanding, and support of JTF operations. External audiences also include – directly or indirectly – the media and the local, regional and domestic public.

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4 By contrast, NATO’s policy for Military Public Affairs defines **internal communication** as communication with and among NATO military and civilian personnel and their families. **External communication** is defined as the function that comprises media relations and outreach activities to address key stakeholders and the public through mass media or other means.
All the internal and external relationships and processes shown in Figure 2 exist at any given time: communication occurs – deliberately or unintentionally, with desired or undesired results. It is therefore advisable to pro-actively exploit this 'communication reality' to benefit own objectives.

C. Principles of Integrated Communication

Communication must be understood as a process of creating and conveying meaning through interaction – verbally or non-verbally, intentionally or unintentionally – with perception and interpretation of actions playing a fundamental role.

Communicators need to understand the strategy or vision of their organisation in order to be able to craft adequate messages and advise effective activity to get these messages across in support of mission objectives.

A systemic and comprehensive understanding of the Information Environment is a condition that enables communication practitioners to tailor communication efforts to audiences and design culturally attuned Information Activities, based on a better comprehension of complex communication situations.

Communication must be integrated throughout all processes from analysis and planning to execution and assessment of activity. Planners and operators; leaders and servicemen – they all...
need to consider the Information Environment and understand the possible informational effects of their actions.

Commanders must accept their key role in their organisation’s communication, assisted by consulting, education and training efforts. When senior leaders ignore the importance of communication – and the necessity of their own active, personal role in it – they seriously undermine the value of major initiatives of their organisation. Ineffective communication can sow dissention, heighten anxiety and confusion, alienate key individuals or groups, and damage the leadership’s credibility with critical audiences both inside and outside the organisation.

Harmonisation of internal and external communication efforts is paramount for the development of both a common identity and a desired image of the organisation, and is thus a major prerequisite for effectiveness and ultimately for the achievement of objectives and mission accomplishment.

### D. Current Doctrine and Best Practices

This handbook supports the deduction of practical recommendations for the application of proposed solutions from multinational Concept Development and Experimentation (CD&E) and identifies implications for military Public Affairs (PA), Info Ops and StratCom doctrine. These implications are primarily relevant for NATO, but also for multinational JTF HQs in a coalition context and national contributions thereto.

Key doctrinal elements under consideration are:

- the PA role in ensuring the public’s right to obtain information from government agencies *(Freedom of Information)*;
- the requirement of the PA staff / spokesperson to have direct access to the commander for fulfilling their function;
- separate functional reporting hierarchies of PA and the chain of command;
- functional barriers or restrictions that impair collaboration of the PA and Info Ops staffs;
- the positioning of PA as part of a military HQ’s Special Staff;
- the positioning of the Info Ops staff within the J3 Operations division of a military HQ;
- the scope of functional responsibilities of the Info Ops staff related to PA with respect to operationalizing communication guidance (i.e., Information Objectives, themes and master messages);
- the scope of functional responsibilities of the Info Ops staff related to J2 Intelligence (INTEL) with respect to the analysis of the Information Environment and targeting;
• the scope of functional responsibilities of the Info Ops staff related to J5 Plans respective the integration of communication planning and operations planning (including respective planning products);
• the relationship of communication planning, effects development and activity planning;
• the introduction of a project management approach to the staff organisation of a military HQ (e.g., administrative and functional reporting relationships).

For all these considerations it is important to acknowledge the operational focus on deployed multinational joint forces in a coalition context: the proposals for the adjustment or modification of processes and organisational structures made in this handbook neither refer to the NATO Command Structure (NCS) nor the NATO Force Structure (NFS) and their related peacetime establishments.\footnote{For the purpose of this handbook a traditional J-staff organisation is taken as an example, acknowledging that there are multiple options for organising a JTF HQ.}

However, national and organisational military structures may adapt and evolve based on operational best practices, international developments and events, and the constant interaction between political and military authorities. Additionally, the permanent exchange of information and specialized knowledge and experience between military experts and political actors is a constant and continual means of mutual education.

E. Innovation – A New Mind-Set

Integrated communication requires a new mind-set on the part of all actors involved in StratCom. It cannot be achieved by just superimposing new procedures and organisational structures on extant settings. Consequently, in order to facilitate the practical implementation of this approach, existing doctrine and best practices from contemporary military operations have been considered and appropriate plug-ins identified for accepting and developing a mutually beneficial attitude.

The authors suggest that multinational joint exercises be used as platforms for training and education of practitioners, testing the proposed solutions, and deducing modifications, as appropriate. The new StratCom mind-set should develop through the practitioners in action!

This handbook is designed as a living document, taking into account lessons learned from exercises and operations as they occur. Proposed changes can be submitted to the authors at any time.
Chapter 2 – Military Strategic Communication

A. Key Terms and Definitions in Context

1. Communication

Communication is the process by which information, meanings and feelings are shared by people through an exchange of verbal and non-verbal messages.

The use of the plural – communications – appears often, confusingly, in tandem with the singular – communication. In the military, the plural is predominantly used in the Signals / C2 Support area, where "strategic communications" for instance means satellite links or HF radio broadcast. The singular reflects a broader concept to describe the exchange of thoughts, messages, or information, as by speech, signals, writing, or behaviour. Furthermore, communication in its singular form makes the expression 'Strategic Communication' into an abstract noun, where as its plural makes it into a verb. The focus needs to be on the idea of establishing StratCom as a principle of thought, and therefore a noun. Hence, placing the emphasis on strategy first and foremost and only then on the action of communicating, leads to the singular use of the term in this handbook.

2. Communication Management

The term communication management is used here in the broadest sense to include planning, approval and implementation of communication guidance. It corresponds with the terms operational design and operational management introduced in NATO’s Allied Joint Doctrine to embrace analysis, planning, execution and assessment.

Chapter 3 details the tasks and organisation involved in communication management.

3. Information Environment

The Information Environment is the virtual and physical space, in which information is received, processed and conveyed. It consists of the information itself and information systems.6

The Information Environment is the domain that facilitates the exchange of information between people, and where C2 of military forces is exercised.

Principal characteristics of the Information Environment are:

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6 According to NATO’s Military Policy for Info Ops, the Information Environment comprises the information itself, the individuals, organizations and systems that receive, process and convey the information, and the cognitive, virtual and physical space in which this occurs.
• The nature of the Information Environment is global, overarching and multi-facetted, and does not belong to anyone.

• There are no physical boundaries that limit the worldwide flow of information.

• Digital media involve data sets that are so large and complex that traditional data processing applications become more and more inadequate (big data).

• As a consequence of the digital communication revolution – including high-speed information transmission capability and the role of media users as prosumers –, traditional news reporting lost importance and reliability.

• Modern information systems comprise an emerging and diverse infrastructure posing increased challenge to standardisation and interoperability, and are also subject to high dynamics of technical development.

• Means to create effects on information and/or information systems are available to everybody, independent of budget resources.

• It is increasingly difficult to differentiate between intended and unintended effects in the Information Environment.

• Actors in the Information Environment are able to act anonymously, making it difficult to identify the originators and determine their intent.

• In the Information Environment compliance with legal norms – if such exist at all – is difficult to enforce.

The security environment is a complex political-military web of regional, cultural, and political competitions and conflicts, involving threats to vital interests posed by a variety of actors. Once a crisis has been identified through conflict analysis and/or political decision-making, specific attention will be focused on a defined operational environment by relevant actors. An operational environment constitutes a composite of the elements, conditions and influences that affect the employment of resources and capabilities, and that bear on operational decisions.

In modern societies the creation, distribution, diffusion, use, and manipulation of information is a significant economic, political, and cultural activity. The information factor evolved to become a substantial element of security-related capabilities and is critical to all areas of activities. Information is pervasive across the areas of activity. It spans the scope of civil and military, national and multinational, as well as governmental and non-governmental activities, and involves the consideration of both the deliberate and inherent informational impact of actions. The nature of information is global, overarching and multi-facetted in a sense that it cannot be owned by anyone.
once open in the public domain. Despite state-controlled technical and procedural systems to deny access and limit consumption of information to audiences, it is extremely difficult to restrict the worldwide flow of information for an extended period of time.

The Information Environment must by nature be recognised in global dimensions and cannot be limited to a specific security or operational environment.

Planning for crisis management within a comprehensive approach needs to consider the operational environment as a system of systems, focused within the context of an overarching security environment and embedded in the Information Environment (see Figure 3).

Assessment of the Information Environment is a crucial task in support of national and multinational strategic assessments; it complements other assessments provided from areas of activities or functional views with considerations concerning the information factor.

The assessment of the Information Environment contributes to the development of mission objectives in general and of Information Objectives in particular.

4. Information Activities

Information Activities are actions designed to generate an effect in the Information Environment, performed by any actor.
Information Activities include direct and indirect communication, and comprise the whole scope of actions and operations conducted to impact the Information Environment. They may involve kinetic and non-kinetic actions, and include protective measures.

The delineation between what constitutes Information Activities and what constitutes *mainstream* military activity is becoming increasingly blurred as effects-based thinking is pursued. In today’s information age commanders need to consider all means for creating effects from the outset, and they must be as familiar with information as with the traditional operational factors: force, space and time. Ideally, the *4th operational factor* information (i.e., options in the Information Environment) will be fully integrated with traditional warfighting.

It is the aim of the conceptual approach to integrated communication that military commanders consider operations in the Information Environment to be as important as those traditional operations conducted on the land and sea as well as in the air, space, and cyberspace.

Information Activities will most often be employed in conjunction with other activities to ideally form a synergetic whole across all activity (see Figure 4). These efforts must be closely coordinated in
order to portray a consistent image of the actors in multinational crisis management and enhance their effectiveness.

Resources to conduct Information Activities can be as varied and extensive as the complexity of the Information Environment. The scope and scale of possible Information Activities also relates to the basic features of information – development of knowledge, communication, and automation – and covers a multitude of kinetic and non-kinetic actions to create lethal and non-lethal effects on understanding, will and capabilities, including human as well as technical system elements.

While Information Activities focusing on preserving and protecting JTF freedom of manoeuvre in the Information Environment should take place at all times, Information Activities focused on influence and counter command may only take place as part of an Operation Plan (OPLAN) and thus with strategic approval, including definition of adversaries and potential adversaries.

Information Activities are generally planned under the authority of the J5 Plans section and executed under the authority of J3 Operations section. However, they are part of the wider StratCom effort to ensure coherence of all information and communication activities and capabilities, both civilian and military.

5. Communication Capabilities and Functions

The term communication capabilities and functions stands for the force capabilities and staff functions the primary role of which is to execute communication management tasks, to conduct communication planning and/or to create effects in the Information Environment.

It is a collective term and placeholder used whenever the precise naming of a capability or function is impractical or inappropriately limiting, for instance if the scope of involved parties in generating an effect is indefinite.

Communication capabilities execute Information Activities to generate desired effects in the Information Environment. Examples include Public Affairs, Psychological Operations (PSYOPS), and Computer Network Operations (CNO), but also commanders involved in Key Leader Engagement (KLE) or C2. The term communication capability not only applies to force capabilities that are able to or actually conduct Information Activities on a case-by-case basis, e.g., combat units involved in physical destruction of critical infrastructure causing psychological effect on adversaries.

Examples for communication functions are StratCom and Info Ops. They assist, coordinate, guide, direct, plan, liaise, network and moderate communication processes (including staff development and education and training programs) but do not perform Information Activities themselves. A future
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319 (standing) decision-making or working body for communication planning or Information Strategy development may also qualify as a communication function.
321 Expert representatives of communication capabilities and functions are called 'communication specialists'.

6. The Military Levels of Involvement and Command & Control

324 The strategic level is defined as the level at which a nation or group of nations determines national or multinational security objectives and deploys national, including military, resources to achieve them. From a national perspective, the strategic level concerns applying the full range of national resources, across all instruments of power, to achieve policy objectives. It is the responsibility of the head of government and ministers. Within NATO, the strategic level concerns applying Alliance resources to achieve strategic objectives set out by the North Atlantic Council (NAC). Operations by allied joint forces are directed at the military-strategic level and planned and executed at the operational and tactical levels. The geographic space associated with the strategic level is called Theatre of Operations (TOO) or theatre. It includes areas deemed to be of political, diplomatic and/or military importance, designated by political and/or military authorities, where an operation may take place.

335 The operational level is the level at which campaigns (sets of operations) are planned, conducted and sustained to achieve strategic objectives. The operational level links strategic objectives to tactical military activity. At the operational level and within a designated Joint Operations Area (JOA), armed forces are deployed and employed in accordance with a strategy to achieve military-strategic objectives. A JOA is defined as a temporary area defined by the strategic authorities, in which a designated joint commander plans and executes a specific mission. A JOA and its defining parameters, such as time, scope of the mission and geographical area, are contingency- or mission-specific and normally associated with JTF operations.

343 The tactical level is defined as the level at which activities, battles and engagements are planned and executed to achieve military objectives assigned to tactical formations and units. Successfully achieving these objectives will contribute to success at the operational and strategic levels. The geographic space associated with the tactical level is called Area of Operations (AOO); it is defined by the operational commander.

7 All of the means available to the government in its pursuit of national objectives (political, military, economic, and civil; diplomacy, development and defence).
The distinction between the military-strategic, operational and tactical levels of joint operations is not always clearly defined. This is because even if a force is only of small tactical value, its employment may have a political context in relation to the providing nation. Conversely, the pursuit of strategic objectives will not always require deploying large and heavily equipped forces. Furthermore, the commander of the JTF may not have C2 of all military assets engaged within the JOA. Some assets, such as forces held in reserve for strategic engagement and special operations forces, may be controlled at the military-strategic level.

In stability operations the levels of operations are often compressed or blurred. This happens because stabilization is inherently political at all levels and nations' instruments of power are employed not just at the strategic and operational level, but also at the tactical level. This enables the security effort to be synchronized with economic development and governance. Although the characteristics of the operational level may now manifest themselves at the tactical level, the nature of operational-level command has not changed; it is still defined by complexity not scale.

7. The Mandating and Coalition Building Process

It is assumed that coalition operations will be conducted in accordance with a mandate recognized under international law originating with such an authority as the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). This recognized civil authority will most likely act to initiate or approve the coalition activity under consideration, as well as to define overarching objectives and the desired end-state. It is further assumed that this same entity would designate, or accept the offered services of a Lead Nation. The mandating and coalition building processes will virtually occur in parallel, as a political mandate without physical resources is unlikely to be issued.

The Lead Nation is that nation with the will and capability, competence, and influence to provide the essential elements of political consultation and military leadership to coordinate the planning, mounting, and execution of a coalition military operation. Within the overarching organizational framework provided by the Lead Nation, other nations participating in the coalition may be designated as Functional Lead Agent(s) to provide and/or coordinate specific critical sub-functions of the operation and its execution, based on national capability. These constructs may apply at the strategic, operational, and/or tactical levels.

The Lead Nation must be willing and capable of assuming the role. It must be able to organize consultation on and the development of the coalition's political objectives, act as sponsor and spokesman for the coalition's operations in the world community, lead coordination and building of consensus during the coalition's planning and execution phases, and be competent to carry out the
anticipated operation. It must above all be a politically acceptable choice for the other coalition partners. The latter is likely to include consideration of the Lead Nation's ties to and interests in the specific region or conflict and its acceptability to the regional actors involved. International political consultation and control of the operation needs to be carried out through an appropriate council of national leaders duly empowered by their respective governments. A preponderance or operationally significant share of the overall force contribution is a clear factor in selection of a Lead Nation; however, that nation must also possess the strategic and political attributes required to sustain a coalition, or the coalition effort is likely to fail.

8. Operations Planning and Communication Planning

Operations planning is the planning of military operations at the strategic, operational or tactical levels. Operational-level planning is the military planning at the operational level to design, conduct and sustain operations in order to accomplish strategic objectives within a given JOA.

Communication planning involves the development of direction and guidance to communication capabilities and functions, and the provision of advice to the decision-making process on how to consider the Information Environment in plans and operations.

![Figure 5: Operations Planning and the Information Environment](image-url)
Operations planning without consideration of the Information Environment is pointless, and in turn, communication planning separated from operations planning will rather provoke an opening of the say-do gap than prevent it. Therefore, in order to fully integrate communication planning and operations planning at the operational level, there must not be any parallel, segregated planning process for communication (see Figure 5). Instead it is required that communication capabilities and functions play an integral part in the operational-level planning process.

An integrated and corporate approach to communication suggests that an Information Strategy – developed at the earliest stage of crisis response planning as strategic-political guidance for activities to affect the Information Environment – be considered as additional planning guidance at the operational level. The Information Strategy initially serves to complement the Strategic Planning Directive (SPD) and the strategic Concept of Operations (CONOPS), and would be further developed and updated during the subsequent planning process and the conduct of operations, as required by changes in the mandate, mission or situation.

Chapter 4 details the communication planning process and its integration with operations planning at the operational level.

9. Strategic Communication

NATO’s Policy of 2009 defines Strategic Communications (StratCom) as the coordinated and appropriate use of NATO communications activities and capabilities – Public Diplomacy, Public Affairs, Military Public Affairs, Information Operations and Psychological Operations, as appropriate – in support of Alliance policies, operations and activities, and in order to advance NATO’s aims.

Military Committee advice on the 2009 Policy states that it is important to underline that StratCom is first and foremost a process that supports and underpins all efforts to achieve the Alliance’s objectives; an enabler that guides and informs our decisions, and not an organization in itself. It is for this reason that StratCom considerations should be integrated into the earliest planning phases – communication activities being a consequence of that planning.

NATO’s Military Concept on StratCom of 2010 proposes that StratCom is not an adjunct activity, but should be inherent in the planning and conduct of all military operations and activities. NATO StratCom is a leadership-driven process focussed on enhancing the Alliance’s ability to coherently articulate its Narratives, themes, and messages to external and internal audiences. NATO StratCom provides strategic-political and military guidance and direction based on a NAC-approved Information Strategy.
The current draft Military Policy of 2016 defines StratCom, in the context of the NATO military, as the integration of communication capabilities and information staff functions with other military activities, in order to understand and shape the Information Environment, in support of NATO aims and objectives.

Based on the evolving NATO definition of StratCom, we are using the term to describe the integration of military communication capabilities and functions with other military capabilities in order to understand and shape the Information Environment, inform, persuade or influence audiences in support of mission objectives, and to implement political will.

B. Strategic-political Communication Guidance

1. Purpose

Coalitions in multinational crisis management operations require versatile, agile capabilities to project combined forces into an operational area with sufficient freedom of action to accomplish their mission. Relevant scenarios and operation/mission types range from low-intensity operations that assist populations, groups or individuals—such as Non-combatant Evacuation Operations (NEO) or Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HA/DR)—to high-intensity combat operations against a broad spectrum of adversaries—from global competitors to belligerent regional powers to networked violent extremist organizations. These operations may also involve situations, in which there are no specific adversaries but where operations take place in highly unstable areas where little or no governmental or societal authority exists, aside from armed civil populations and criminal groups. It is important that coalition partners coordinate all activities across all instruments of power from the earliest stages of the coalition building and strategic planning process.8

The Information Strategy outlines the interagency and multinational approach to crisis/conflict prevention and resolution in the Information Environment. It constitutes mission-specific strategic and political communication guidance for multi-agency activity of coalition partners across all levers of power in support of mission objectives.

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8 In multinational coalition operations it is unlikely that permanent working bodies could be established at the strategic-political level (as they exist in standing organisations like NATO or the EU) to develop relevant and feasible communication guidance, and ensure multinational coordination and strategic-political endorsement. This issue is, however, not subject of this handbook. For StratCom we demand that strategic-political communication guidance is provided; we assume that coalition partners would sign up to respective guidance of the coalition lead nation or organisation; and we propose that this guidance would require a minimum content in the format of an Information Strategy as outlined in this handbook.
An Information Strategy prompts leadership at all levels to understand how activities will be / should be perceived by key audiences, ensuring alignment with overarching strategic objectives. It shall be used as guidance to fully integrate communication in operations planning.

Operational-level commanders define tasks for subordinates that are designed to set desired conditions thus ensuring that tactical actions achieve operational objectives that nest within strategic objectives. Focusing on the relationship between the operational environment and the Information Environment and recognizing the risk to the mission that a *say-do gap* entails is an important part of the operational StratCom process.

2. **Scope**

The development of an Information Strategy informs strategic planning and, vice versa, is integrated with and guided by the development of strategic plans and objectives. The first version of an Information Strategy should be ready and approved by the political authorities prior to mission planning is concluded to ensure that strategic planners appropriately consider effects in the Information Environment. On the other hand, development of an Information Strategy needs to await the approval of strategic objectives for integration with Information Objectives.

![Figure 6: Development of an Information Strategy](image-url)
Figure 6 shows a generic example of the analysis and planning process that leads to a multinational Information Strategy. The process of developing an Information Strategy may start even before a mandate is agreed on. On the other hand, the strategic Narrative needs to refer to the mandate and, therefore, an Information Strategy cannot be formally issued prior to the mandate. Thus, the mandating process may inform the development of the strategic Narrative.

It takes into account available national and multinational assessments of the crisis situation, and builds on relevant political agreements and strategic directives. In order to meet situation requirements in theatre as well as consider possible adjustments to the mandate and mission, an Information Strategy must be periodically reviewed – in line with strategic plan review.

The scope of required guidance from the strategic-political level demands that an Information Strategy be produced as an internal document in the first place, with no pro-active external distribution. However, in order to meet the principles of transparency, credibility and authenticity, it should only contain unclassified information and should be written in a way that it could be shared with partners and public disclosure would not jeopardise mission accomplishment. An unclassified, sharable Information Strategy is the ideal situation. However, there may be instances that require classified content in order to conform to operational security and/or maintain diplomatic options.

3. Content

The coalition Information Strategy sets out the Narrative, Information Objectives, key themes, messages and audiences, which shape the general approach and the conduct of specific activities, both physical and psychological. It must be based on a sound understanding of the Information Environment. Individual nations will have full responsibility for then implementing these activities affecting their domestic audiences. Nations may also undertake additional Information Activities independently, provided they are consistent with the agreed strategic-political guidance.

For a complete overview of suggested content, see Supplement V.1.

a. The Narrative

To achieve sustained outcome, the short-term communication focus of targeted messaging has to be coherent with the long-term goals of an organisation. Sustainable support for any campaign is founded on both logic and instinct. The coalition therefore needs to ensure that, firstly, it has a core Narrative that resonates with its audiences, and, secondly, its operations and actions are consistent with that Narrative.
The core element of an Information Strategy is the Narrative. It is the structured expression of a thematic story about the rationale, intent and aims – the why – of the coalition. It reflects the vision and strategy of the coalition, and, like a script or score, guides its mission conduct – the how of its general activity. It provides the overall concept (Leitbild) and guiding theme (Leitmotiv) for the coalition and its mission, and supports the development of a corporate identity and corporate image.

The pursuit of a corporate idea is a prerequisite for integrating words and deeds, and thus creating desired effects.

In order to achieve this corporate idea, the Narrative should – in simple language: easy to remember, easy to understand, and easy to communicate – provide answers to three fundamental questions:

(1) Who are we / where are we coming from? (2) What benefits are we bringing to whom? and (3) Where are we going to / what is next?

The strategic Narrative of an Information Strategy directly refers to the mission mandate, for instance a UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR). The coalition’s Narrative should be the compelling foundation of all its communication efforts. It is the common reference point that should guide the development of all of the coalition’s kinetic and non-kinetic plans. It ultimately portrays the coalition identity and provides an important foundation for achieving a desired image.

The strategic Narrative comprises the whole scope of the political and military nature of a coalition. For the purpose of implementing it through military StratCom at the operational level, it needs to be focused and operationalised for military activity during operational-level planning. In order to promote awareness of the political will and consistency throughout all levels, the resulting JTF Narrative should always refer to the strategic Narrative in any related operational planning product.

b. Information Objectives

With Information Objectives, an Information Strategy should offer a clear description of the desired conditions to be created in the Information Environment linked to the Narrative and strategic objectives. As the information factor is relevant for all activity and because the operational environment is an integral part of the Information Environment, Information Objectives cannot be isolated from strategic objectives nor be considered strategic objectives themselves. Information Objectives propose a different layer for looking at desired system states and must be fully integrated and supportive to strategic objectives (see Figure 7).
Figure 7: Information Objectives In Support of Strategic Objectives

Information Objectives only exist at the strategic level and support strategic objectives by providing the focused view on the Information Environment. Information Objectives will guide subsequent planning at all levels (e.g., decisive conditions, operational effects). Operational effects support the achievement of operational objectives. Thereby communication planning will concentrate on desired changes in the Information Environment and clearly indicate the operating direction of the effect.

c. Themes and Messages

Themes provide the unifying subject or idea of a message or set of messages. They guide message development at all levels and express the context to be conveyed to audiences by Information Activities. Themes are *headlines* that indicate the issue of concern for associated master messages.

Messages express the substance of communication, i.e., the intended content of information exchange. They directly relate to audiences and targets of Information Activities and inform the development of operational effects from a communication perspective, as they articulate desired perceptions (as states of systems or system elements in the Information Environment).

Master messages listed in the Information Strategy present initial, immediate guidance for national initiatives and Information Activities at higher multinational levels.

All personnel involved in planning and execution of operations should be aware of the master messages (and other Information Strategy content) in order to support the alignment of messaging by JTF activity.
d. Audiences and Targets

The Information Strategy should also provide a list of audiences and targets, considering political sensitivities of mission partners and the public.

Information Activities may be aimed at individuals, groups, populations (audiences) as well as technical components of information systems (targets):

- **Audiences** for non-kinetic Information Activities could be (potential) adversary decision-makers, supporting opinion leaders and opinion formers, and their followers.

- **Targets** for kinetic Information Activities could be the information infrastructure, IT and information-based processes of (potential) adversaries; ultimately also humans may become targets, if non-kinetic action is ineffective.

Internal and domestic audiences, as well as multinational organisations (such as NATO, the EU, UN, etc.) with a leading representation of partner nations, may be addressed by multinational Information Activities. Identification of these audiences will require political consent amongst partners or allies. International community audiences include other countries and individual actors abroad, in particular from neighbouring countries to the host country, local influential countries, International Organisations (IOs) and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) involved in the region, to whom the messages sent by the coalition need to be coordinated. Another category of audiences covers the wider population of the host country, local media, formal and informal authorities, including the local government(s) and affiliated opinion leaders and opinion formers.

Information Activities against targets, i.e., (kinetic) actions to create a deliberate effect on adversary key leaders, physical components of information systems, or the Internet, may have strategic impact as well and must, therefore, be subject to strategic-political guidance.
Chapter 3 – Communication Management at the Military Operational Level

A. The Commander’s Responsibility

"The art of communication is the language of leadership." (James Humes)

Senior leaders have a pivotal role in communication efforts at all levels. Common guidance for coalition Information Activities issued by strategic-political authorities intends to minimise the risk of contradictory messaging by coalition partners, as it would result in a loss of credibility and, subsequently, ineffectiveness of operations. It is a leadership responsibility to implement superior communication guidance so that it becomes effective throughout all levels of involvement.

Integrated communication must build on helping the JTF senior leadership achieve their objectives by identifying important audiences, developing strategic and consistent messages and delivering those messages with maximum effectiveness. In this respect, it is utmost important to understand that, although personnel with assigned StratCom tasks may act on behalf of the Commander, the ultimate responsibility for JTF communication rests with the senior leadership.

Any separation of communicators and operators must be avoided in order to promote a common JTF identity and achieve coherent activity that contributes to a desired image of the JTF as a unified and capable organisation. Communication capabilities and functions must get actively involved in all analysis, planning, execution/management, and assessment/evaluation activity. Communication specialists should be key actors in the senior leadership’s decision-making process.

The development of a corporate identity and image needs to be driven by the senior leadership who not only own, but naturally represent their organisation to external actors. If corporate identity constitutes the persona of the JTF, leaders are the face. Integrated communication incorporates several processes that need to be taken care of by the senior leadership and appropriate assisting functions in order to be implemented consistently and become effective. These processes materialise in so-called 'communication management tasks'.

B. Communication Management Tasks

The following tasks describe the scope of communication management involving a multitude of actors, including and beyond StratCom staff (see Chapter 4).

1. Command and Control

Command and Control (C2) constitutes an Information Activity in itself: designated superiors wield power and exercise authority and direction over subordinates through communication (e.g., issue
orders, instruct and motivate, explain the tactical situation, present a role model). Communication is a leadership function to support unity of effort of the JTF. Commanders are the supreme communicators and drivers of integrated communication of the JTF. Those involved in communication management should be authorised to issue direction and guidance to communication capabilities and functions, as required to ensure their integration with operations analysis, planning, execution and assessment.

2. Analysis of the Information Environment

Situation awareness and understanding the Information Environment are inextricably entwined. Analysis of the Information Environment enables the identification of action requirements, opportunities and risks, and provides the baseline for the assessment of effects. It is a cross-dimensional, transdisciplinary and continuous task, which needs to be performed by a highly qualified staff. Analysis results must be translated and operationalized in order to benefit communication capabilities and functions as well as operations planners, operators, and – finally – the Commander.

Applying the traditional PMESII systematic (Political, Military, Economic, Social, Infrastructure and Information) can be useful to structure thought processes and the involvement of functional experts. Compared to the other PMESII analysis areas there is no single academic field of knowledge to comprehensively cover Information. Analysis of the Information Environment includes a variety of different subjects such as the media, IT, leadership and social networks, and it also significantly overlaps the other areas, e.g., political propaganda, military C2 structures, media industries, social communication relations, and information infrastructure. Therefore, Information Analysts should involve various Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) and establish flexible expert networks that are linked with the other analysis areas and fully integrated in the overall systemic analysis effort. They should also ensure that results from digital media analysis, other Open Source Intelligence (OSINT), and classified information are fused, as required.

Analysis of the Information Environment always requires considering two dimensions in order to appropriately advise operations planning, execution and assessment: (1) Most obviously, JTF actors need to understand the potential perception of relevant audiences regarding JTF messages conveyed by any means, kinetic or non-kinetic; (2) in addition, JTF actors need to understand the expectations towards JTF activity, i.e., the potential consequences of inactivity or silence. Both dimensions and related analysis results are equally important for designing Information Activities and choosing between alternative options for action.
3. Effects Development

An effect is the physical and/or behavioural state of a system that results from a military or non-military action or set of actions. An effect can be thought of as an intermediate state, created by actions, between the current state and the military objectives that support the end-state.

Effects provide a bridge of reason between end state and actions; the context for interagency collaboration; and the basis for continuous assessment of the success of an operation. In order to assure this functionality, it is paramount to accurately and succinctly convey the meaning of desired effects to all involved in planning, execution and assessment. Effects statements should therefore describe the conditions resulting from desired changes in the operational environment (or intermediate system states – between current and end-state) in a comprehensive and comprehensible way, following standard rules for verbalisation.

The text must consist of a concise statement identifying the who or what (system element(s)) is to be affected and the desired state as a consequence of actions being undertaken. Importantly, the requirement to focus on outcomes rather than activity necessitates that effects should be enunciated as a past participle; they should not be referred to as transitive verbs which are more suited to describe actions. Effect statements should also not infer how the effect is to be realised.

Effects must be measurable and allow to quantify observable system and attribute changes. Finally, effects must be feasible, i.e. achievable in terms of timing and resources, and assignable to a functional lead for their creation.

To impart the explicit meaning, the effects statement should conform to the following criteria:

• Express one idea, in passive voice, in simple language, and without adverbs.

• Address one or more systems at the operational level to identify what elements and/or relationships need to change.

• Describe how the desired system state differs from the system state that precedes it.

• Do not suggest how the effect is to be realised.

• Include a time duration factor that indicates when the effect needs to exist.

Within the framework of StratCom, the same principles must be observed to describe effects to be created in the Information Environment. The most important requirement in this respect is that effects contributed through integrated communication must refer to information and/or information systems, in particular Communications and Information Systems (CIS) and Command and Control Systems (C2S), in order to fully integrate relevant communication aspects in the planning process.
Effects are developed to describe the physical or behavioural states that the JTF must cause to create the desired military (operational) objectives. The purpose of this activity is to keep the staff focused on the objectives, rather than actions and resources, drafting Courses of Action (COAs) via effects, i.e., multiple effects paths to reach a single end-state through decisive conditions and military objectives. Operational effects shouldn’t be developed into sub-effects since this process would complicate the planning process while providing no additional value.

The development of effects in the Information Environment in support of operational objectives and, in particular, Information Objectives is a key task that collectively involves analysis, plans and operations personnel. It must be based on a profound understanding of the Information Environment, the mandate and mission objectives, as well as the available capabilities able to create respective effects. The development of effects in the Information Environment needs to be guided from a commander’s perspective and fully integrated with and phrased as operational effects.

Effects development requires meetings of the CCB and the IACB prior to respective JTF HQ planners’ meetings to include all relevant functional and capability expertise and viewpoints.

4. Contribution to Targeting

All actions, kinetic and non-kinetic, have an effect on the Information Environment (lethal or non-lethal), either in a positive manner – in closing the say-do gap – or negatively by contradicting the JTF’s message to audiences within and outside the JOA. Negative effects from such things as collateral damage and especially civilian casualties have the potential to significantly damage support for the JTF’s mission. For this reason, the potential effect of actions should be taken into consideration from the outset of the joint targeting cycle. Information analysts and planners, as well as Info Ops and PA staffs, should be included at every level of the targeting process.

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9 NATO defines "information effects" as desired conditions created in the Information Environment as a result of Information Activities. This terminology does not conform with effects-based language (an effect is a change in the state of a system) and confuses the definition and understanding of Information Objectives, which are considered necessary elements of strategic-political communication guidance. Furthermore, integration of communication in operations planning forbids the introduction of separate terms in addition to operational effects. This handbook, therefore, does not use the term "information effect". Instead, the phrase effects in the Information Environment is applied to specify operational effects resulting from activities in this engagement space.
5. Activity Planning

Activity planning constitutes the lower end of operations planning. Its aim is to examine the range of possible (and probable) cause-and-effect relationships between potential actions and desired effects in order to identify the actions needed to cause the desired effects.

Subsequently – but still within the activity planning process – the staff must identify and continuously review the resources to be used in the conduct of each military action (match resources to actions). Further, the staff must determine whether any military resources might be necessary to support other coalition/government organization (non-military) actions. It is likely that while the planning staff will provide guidance on the actions, it will be the decision of the subordinate commands to develop actions in more detail and allocate the resources. As a result, the level of effort during this step at the CC level will likely be greater than that at the JTF HQ.

Planning of Information Activities is an original task and competence of capabilities that are able to create effects in the Information Environment themselves. Planning may be guided by StratCom and advised by communication functions (such as Info Ops); the ultimate responsibility, however, to decide on the concrete employment of means and assets rests with the force capabilities that are cognizant, trained and equipped for their specific scope of activities.

Activity planning requires meetings of the CCB and the IACB prior to respective JTF HQ planners meetings to develop and de-conflict possible actions that can be conducted by the relevant capabilities to create identified effects in the Information Environment; support the creation of other effects by conducting Information Activities; and to identify support requirements of military capabilities and non-military actors to create effects in the Information Environment (supported/supporting roles).

6. Coordination

Coordination is a key task and main responsibility of StratCom to promote the integration of communication in all aspects of operations planning, execution and assessment. Therefore, StratCom needs to manage the appropriate involvement of all communication capabilities and functions in the JTF HQ staff routine. Effective and efficient communication requires harmonisation and synchronization of Information Activities. Furthermore, activities designed to create effects in the

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10 Non-military = not belonging to, characteristic of, or involving the armed forces. A civilian is a person who is not a member of the military or of a police or firefighting force. As the latter two categories should not be excluded from planning considerations – in particular in peace support or stability operations –, the term non-military is chosen here in preference to civilian.
Information Environment need to be coordinated with other force activities and manoeuvre operations that – through human perception – affect the Information Environment as well.

7. Direct Communication

Direct communication promotes the principles of transparency, credibility and authenticity. Therefore, opportunities to directly address internal and external audiences should be sought and planned for whenever and wherever possible. In principle, the personal commitment of the senior leadership is the preferred option. Because communication managers are communicators at the same time, the HQ's communication capabilities and functions need to act carefully synchronized to convey the right messages to their colleagues and counterparts.

8. Media Communication

Larger audiences can be best reached by using media channels with wider reach. The JTF disposes of own media capabilities (such as PA and PSYOPS) and may also employ public or commercial media – e.g., by contracting, buying news time and newspaper inserts; by giving selected information at compulsory media opportunities; or through embedded journalists. Once released into the public domain, the original information is no longer under JTF control. Therefore, in order to sustain the principles of transparency, credibility and authenticity, media outlets need to be coordinated and documented.

9. Assessment of Effects

Driving and shaping JTF communication requires dynamic and prompt measurement of effectiveness in order to design and appropriately adjust effects and activities. This task needs to be closely linked to the continuous analysis of the Information Environment, which provides the baseline for change assessment, and to effects development and activity planning.

Assessment of effects is part of the wider operations assessment process led by J5. Depending on the envisioned participation of JTF HQ staff in assessment team meetings, prior meetings of the CCB and/or the IACB are required to coordinate communication input. Communication capabilities and functions contribute to the development and evaluation of Measures of Performance (MOP) and Measures of Effectiveness (MOE).

10. Education and Training

Integration of communication in all plans and activities, and advancing the new mind-set towards awareness and perception of the Information Environment, requires the assistance of communication Specialists during staff processes and working routines as well as general
communication training for all (which constitutes a communication management function itself).

Internal leadership and staff development programs should enhance the accountability of all members of the JTF as communicators, promote the mission Narrative, evolve the corporate identity and image of the JTF, and in turn contribute to overall mission success. It is the Commander’s responsibility to ensure that properly trained personnel are empowered through training and education opportunities in order to facilitate these requirements.

Led by StratCom and based on the Commander’s guidance, the JTF HQ staff as well as subordinate commanders need to involve in education and training programs that support the development of the mind-set of integrated communication. Each and every member of the JTF must acknowledge the fact of not being able to not communicate, and implement this in their plans and actions – shaping the body language of the JTF’s operations.

Staff education programs also serve the purpose of promoting situation awareness, information exchange, transparency, and a common understanding of the Commander’s intent related to the Information Environment. Cross-functional individualised training should be considered extremely important as it will help communication and coordination amongst all staff elements. Leadership development efforts should include the commanders and key leaders of the JTF. It is a primary responsibility of the Dir StratCom as the senior communication specialist to plan and conduct these activities. In addition, the permanent advice of the Dir StratCom to the Commander will contribute to the achievement of a better understanding of his role in the Information Environment.

C. StratCom’s Role in Communication Management

Personnel with assigned StratCom duties (i.e., the StratCom Directorate, Information Analysts, and Information planners) working in a deployed military HQ at the operational level should assume the following tasks. Most of these are continuous tasks throughout the operation.

- Translate political-strategic policy and guidance into the Commander's decision-making process from a communication perspective.
  - Review the Strategic Planning Directive (SPD) in order to understand the strategic-political will to achieve by the operation.
  - Analyse the Information Environment focused on the situation and developments in the assigned JOA.
  - Interpret the SPD and the Information Strategy in the light of mission requirements.
Develop guidance for the operational-level planning process from a communication perspective.

Contribute to developing and maintaining a common understanding of the Information Strategy within the JTF in the context of other actors’ communication efforts.

- Share the Information Strategy with all key JTF personnel.
- Explain the relevance of the Information Strategy to JTF operations.
- Develop an understanding of relevant other actors’ communication efforts (e.g., those of coalition partners, the Host Nation, opposing forces, etc.).
- Advise / inform the JTF on other actors’ communication efforts.

Coordinate recommendations for revision of higher level communication guidance.

- Collect and fuse insights on the situation development from various JTF and mission partner sources related to the Information Environment.
- Relate situation assessments with existing communication guidance in order to identify challenges, risks and opportunities for implementation of this guidance.
- Collaboratively develop recommendations for adjustment of higher level communication guidance with JTF communication capabilities and functions.

Provide bottom-up feedback on higher level activity affecting the Information Environment.

- Identify higher level activities that could be relevant for JTF communication efforts.
- Evaluate the impact (positive or negative) of higher level activities on the implementation of the Information Strategy / achievement of JTF objectives with respect to the Information Environment.
- Collaboratively develop reports to higher levels on the assessment of their activities with JTF communication capabilities and functions.

Coordinate operational-level communication guidance with strategic authorities.

- Share draft operational-level communication guidance with the custodian of the Information Strategy (informal).
- Advise operations planning based on feedback from the strategic authorities on draft operational-level communication guidance.
• Direct all internal and external communication processes of the JTF at the operational level on behalf of the Commander.

  o Exercise the Commander’s authority to ensure consistency and effectiveness of all JTF internal and external communication efforts.

  o Assist in operations planning and assessment, and provide advice from a communication perspective.

  o Lead operational-level communication planning.

  o Design education and training programs for JTF personnel on communication issues and manage corporate identity campaigns.

  o Advise on the development of directives and orders from JTF HQ to subordinates.

  o Guide communication efforts of subordinate commands.

  o Ensure the alignment of JTF spokesperson’s statements addressing external audiences with JTF communication guidance.

  o Develop directives that guide the overall approach to, and use of digital media, and interaction through Social Media platforms.

  o As appropriate, engage in approval processes for products (e.g., Internet postings, press releases, leaflets) to be used for Information Activities.

  o Develop and update the communication parts of the JTF HQ SOP.

• Liaise and coordinate communication efforts with neighbouring commands and other organisations and stakeholders in theatre.

  o Identify appropriate communication counterparts.

  o Establish working relationships and/or information sharing mechanisms with communication counterparts.

  o Share communication guidance or planning products (e.g., Information Strategy, OPLAN Annex StratCom) with communication counterparts, as appropriate.

• Contribute to moderating the group effort of JTF HQ staff functions and capabilities involved in communication management.

  o Establish the Communication Coordination Board (CCB) as the venue and process for implementing communication guidance in JTF HQ staff activities and beyond.
Participate in operations planning, campaign synchronization and joint coordination processes and provide communication input.

As appropriate, manage the involvement of communication specialists from strategic and tactical levels, mission partners, and the Host Nation in the CCB.

Integrate, coordinate and harmonise communication specialists’ contributions to JTF HQ staff activities.

Contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the situation and dynamics in the Information Environment, and its relevance for the JTF mission and operations.

Guide and conduct systemic analysis of the Information Environment.

Integrate results from Information Environment analysis in the development of the Comprehensive Preparation of the Operational Environment (CPOE).

Guide and assist KLE planning and execution.

Develop and coordinate intended outcomes for KLE meetings.

Coordinate JTF key leaders’ involvement in KLE meetings.

Direct the development of tactical background information on external stakeholders by Info Ops.

Provide oversight to the Info Ops integration of KLE in the JTF targeting process.

Ensure JTF communication efforts are documented.

Collect, distribute and archive materials on own activities affecting the Information Environment in support of creating an institutional memory that provides the context for future communication efforts (e.g., to avoid undesired duplication of effort, avoid contradictory messaging, and to enable building on previous achievements).

Guide and coordinate the contributions of other JTF HQ staff and subordinates to communication documentation.
Chapter 4 – Organisation of Military Strategic Communication

A. Headquarters Staff Involved in StratCom

1. The Strategic Communication Directorate

In current crisis response operations there are several options for organising a military operational-level HQ. For the purpose of this concept, a generic HQ organisation is applied as a baseline for further elaborations on the appropriate integration of communication (see Figure 8).\(^\text{11}\)

Communication management involves a number of traditional staff elements, which should be complemented by a dedicated StratCom staff, Information Analysts and Information Planners.

It is suggested that the Director StratCom (Dir StratCom) with assistants forms a staff element within the Command Group of a JTF HQ – the StratCom Directorate – in order to provide direct support to the Commander, emphasise the importance of communication as a leadership responsibility, and promote the Dir StratCom’s authority to provide direction and guidance on behalf of the Commander.

\(^{11}\) This generic example is derived from NATO doctrine on Joint Force Headquarters Management Processes, and organisational designs of NATO JFC HQs, ISAF HQ and IJC 2014.
a. Director Strategic Communication

Role: The Dir StratCom assists the senior leadership in all aspects of integrated communication. He coordinates communication guidance with strategic authorities and directs all internal and external communication processes of the JTF at the operational level on behalf of the Commander. The Dir StratCom coordinates communication efforts with neighbouring commands and other organisations and stakeholders in theatre, and guides respective communication efforts of subordinate commands.

Status: The Dir StratCom must not outrank the COM (4*) or DCOM (3*), but should have sufficient seniority to act on par with the COS, DCOS and ACOS. This may be a military post in the rank of a 2* flag / general officer or a civilian post in the rank of Director or Counsellor (Senior Executive Service, SES). Both options may have a deputy, either a civilian in the rank of Secretary or Attaché (General Schedule, GS) or a military (field-grade or senior officer) in the Army rank of Brigadier (1*) or Colonel (or equivalent).

Authority: The Dir StratCom should be granted the authority to assign tasks and require consultation between JTF agencies (organisations or commands and their representatives) for all issues related to JTF communication. Within his responsibility for integrating internal and external communication processes the Dir StratCom should also be authorised to directly address all members of the JTF HQ as well as communication specialists of subordinate commands.

Using relevant working groups, boards, centres and cells, and their meetings in the HQ’s staff routine / battle rhythm for coordination with communication capabilities and functions, the Dir StratCom should be equipped with coordinating authority. Within the scope of the Dir StratCom’s coordinating authority it is important to understand who the appropriate problem-solving authorities are once an issue needs to be referred to someone else for decision. This may not necessarily always be the direct superior at the operational level, but could, e.g., involve the strategic authorities as well as a Component Commander in case of tactical urgency or functional responsibility (principle of subsidiarity).

Direct liaison should be authorised for the Dir StratCom to coordinate and cooperate with strategic and mission partner authorities regarding JTF communication issues.

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12 The authority granted to a commander or individual assigned responsibility for coordinating specific capabilities, functions or activities involving two or more agencies (organisations or commands). The person with assigned coordinating authority has the authority to require consultation between the agencies involved or their representatives, but does not have the authority to compel agreement. In case of disagreement between the agencies involved, he should attempt to obtain essential agreement by discussion. In the event he is unable to obtain essential agreement he shall refer the matter to the appropriate authority.
**Qualification:** The Dir StratCom has to be a communication expert, a smart consumer of consulting services, and a problem-solver. There must be a comfort level with a range of subject matters, from marketing and media relations issues to human resources or legal matters. The best person to drive that integration process is someone with the largest possible view of how the processes should work. The Dir StratCom should be a generalist, but rooted in at least one specialty (e.g., PA or Info Ops) and with enough experience in several disciplines to manage them effectively. He should have a clear understanding of intended messaging and how the JTF responds to incoming information and inquiries. He must be able to facilitate open dialogue to build strong relationships with important stakeholders and should fully understand the value and role that third-party endorsements play in managing perceptions or perpetuating misperceptions. The Dir StratCom needs to be a counsellor to senior leadership. He must be proficient at playing the primary advisory role to the Commander, and in certain situations as being the organisation’s spokesperson. He should be a skilled public speaker, have established relationships with leaders, and be deeply knowledgeable with every facet of the JTF organisation, in particular with the operations planning and campaign synchronization processes.

**Role:** The SOs StratCom assist the Dir StratCom for all intents and purposes. In this respect, the Dir StratCom’s role is mirrored in the roles of the SOs at a lower level of competency and higher granularity. Their focus is on coordination, support, and dissemination of direction and guidance on behalf of the Dir StratCom. They coordinate communication guidance with other authorities and support all JTF HQ internal and external communication processes with special emphasis on communication planning. They coordinate communication efforts with neighbouring commands and other organisations and stakeholders in theatre, and impart respective guidance to subordinate commands.

**Status:** The SOs StratCom should have sufficient seniority (in rank and/or expertise) to act on par with Branch heads or Section chiefs, as well as with representatives of the JTF HQ Special Staff. This may require military posts in the rank of field-grade or senior officers (Army ranks of Major, Lieutenant Colonel or Colonel, or equivalent) and/or equivalent civilian posts (GS).

**Authority:** The SOs StratCom should be granted the authority to assign tasks and require consultation between JTF HQ staff elements and communication specialists of subordinate commands, on behalf of the Dir StratCom, for all issues related to JTF communication.

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13 Acting as the JTF spokesperson is not a role of the Dir StratCom but a responsibility of the PA staff. However, the Dir StratCom should be trained in speaking to the media and thoroughly understand the professional attitudes and intentions of journalists.
Direct liaison should be authorised for the SOs StratCom to coordinate and cooperate with HHQ and mission partner authorities regarding JTF communication issues.

In case there isn’t a Deputy to the Dir StratCom technically established in the StratCom Directorate, the SO StratCom performing this function may have comparable authority in the absence of the Dir StratCom.

Qualification: The SOs StratCom should be communication experts, trained in at least one communication discipline (communication capability or function, e.g., PA or Info Ops). They should be generalists able to manage several communication disciplines effectively. The SOs StratCom should have a clear understanding of the JTF intended messaging and how the JTF responds to incoming information and media inquiries. They should have established relationships with leaders, and be generally knowledgeable with every facet of the JTF organisation, in particular with the operations planning process.

Depending on the scope of mission, the JTF design, the JTF HQ set-up, and the number of available posts, the tasks and responsibilities – and consequently the required qualification – may vary between the incumbents.

c. StratCom Directorate Supporting Staff

The StratCom Directorate needs adequate administrative support. This support should be provided by personnel affiliated to the StratCom Directorate. As a minimum, a Military Assistant (MA) to the Dir StratCom and a Staff Assistant (SA) should be established.

Their roles inter alia comprise: calendar management, taking minutes, IT support, making meeting arrangements, drafting presentations, preparing staff summary sheets, clerical work, etc.

2. Information Analysts

Role: The Information Analysts assist all analysis and assessment processes from a communication perspective. This includes fusion of data and information related to the Information Environment from various sources, and guidance to Intelligence development. Information Analysts provide expertise to all relevant staff elements and activities, thus promoting awareness and understanding of the Information Environment.

Status: Information Analysts are integral members of the J2 INTEL division (or equivalent) and work as desk officers in the Plans and Production sections. Information Analysts should fill military posts in the rank of field-grade or senior officers (Army ranks of Major or Lieutenant Colonel, or equivalent) and/or equivalent civilian posts (Senior Specialist). It is worth pursuing a mix of civil and military incumbents to cover a broader scope of views from different personal backgrounds.
Analysts should be recognised as affiliates of the StratCom Directorate with functional reporting relationships to the Dir StratCom.

**Qualification:** The primary qualification requirement for Information Analysts is systemic analysis. They should be competent to conduct an interdisciplinary analysis and assessment of the Information Environment across the PMESII\(^{14}\) domains, considering the information factor throughout. Information Analysts need to be familiar with general Knowledge Development (KD) and INTEL procedures, processes and tools applied by the J2 division. A specific contribution from an integrated communication perspective will be required to the Comprehensive Preparation of the Operational Environment (CPOE). This includes familiarity with and active involvement in the joint targeting process. Information Analysts also need to be team players, able to fully integrate in various different groups, and planning and coordination processes within the HQ staff routine. They must understand military thinking and be able to *operationalize* academic insight in order to incorporate the information factor in the CPOE, OLPP, targeting and assessment. Training in one or more communication capabilities (such as PA or PSYOPS) would be an optional and complementary qualification requirement for Information Analysts. Experience in Target Audience Analysis (TAA) or media analysis may benefit their systemic analysis of the Information Environment. Information Analysts – provided additional functional training – could also be employed as Information Planners.

### 3. Information Planners

**Role:** The Information Planners assist in operations planning and assessment, and provide advice to all relevant staff elements and activities based on analysis and assessment of the Information Environment. They consolidate communication planning input from other JTF HQ staff and subordinate commands.

**Status:** Information Planners are integral members of the J5 Plans division (or equivalent) and work as desk officers in the Joint Operations Planning Group (JOPG) branch. Information Planners should fill military posts in the rank of field-grade or senior officers (Army ranks of Major or Lieutenant Colonel, or equivalent). Information Planners should be recognised as affiliates of the StratCom Directorate with functional reporting relationships to the Dir StratCom.

**Qualification:** Information Planners need to be proficient in all aspects of operations planning. They contribute their comprehensive understanding of the Information Environment as core competence to planning and assessment of operations. The main function of Information Planners is the development of effects in the Information Environment and related indicators and metrics in

\(^{14}\) Cf. Section B-2 of Chapter 3 "Analysis of the Information Environment".
conjunction with Info Ops and force capabilities, as appropriate. In order to do so, Information
Planners should be trained in at least one communication capability or function, such as PA, PSYOPS
or Info Ops. Information Planners – provided additional functional training – could also be employed
as Information Analysts.

4. Military Public Affairs

In the military, Public Affairs (PA) is commonly understood as the function responsible to promote
politically approved aims and objectives to audiences in order to enhance awareness and
understanding of military aspects of crisis management / crisis response involvements. This *inter alia*
includes planning and conducting external (media relations and outreach activities) and internal
communication, and community relations.

The mission of military PA – within the scope of *Freedom of Information* – is to support commanders
by communicating accurate information in a timely manner to audiences to improve public
awareness and understanding of the military aspects of the coalition's role, aims, operations,
missions, activities and issues, thereby enhancing its credibility.

Military PA is a communication capability in its own right, possessing own assets for conducting
Information Activities. It is part of the wider StratCom effort which aims to enhance coherence of all
information and communication activities and capabilities, both civilian and military.

Public Affairs Officers (PAOs) primarily communicate through the media. Audiences can be
allied/coalition, international, regional, local or internal, depending on the issue or activity. PAOs also
contribute to analysis and assessment of the Information Environment.

The Chief Public Affairs Officer (CPAO) supports the Commander's StratCom process by ensuring that
PA actions, plans and objectives are coordinated as part of the broader StratCom effort. The
Commander’s StratCom structure must not affect the direct link of the spokesperson or the CPAO to
the Commander, nor modify the inter-relationships between the different information disciplines.

Beyond coordination of efforts and messages, and being informed of these activities, PA will have no
role in planning or executing PSYOPS or deception operations. However, since all coalition messaging
needs to be fully integrated throughout the operation, PA shall align their activities in terms of
timing, sequencing, and completeness of published content.

PA at each level of command directly supports the Commander and may therefore not be further
delegated or subordinated to other staff functions. The CPAO, as the principal advisor on PA matters
and official spokesperson for that HQ, reports directly to the Commander. For general
communication guidance issues, however, the CPAO has a functional reporting relationship to the Dir StratCom.

5. Information Operations

Info Ops is a staff function to analyse, plan, assess and integrate Information Activities to create desired effects on the will, understanding and capability of adversaries, potential adversaries and approved audiences in support of mission objectives.

Info Ops is also an advisory and coordination function for military Information Activities. Commanders at operational and tactical level ensure through the Info Ops function that all military Information Activities are properly coordinated as well as integrated into the operational planning process and support the overall StratCom approach.

While the StratCom focus is on policy-making and guidance, the focus of Info Ops clearly is on the practical execution of that guidance in close cooperation with force capabilities.

The Info Ops staff conducts collaborative effects development and activity planning regarding the Information Environment. The Info Ops staff is also the Dir StratCom’s instrument for coordinating contributions of communication capabilities – at the JTF HQ and from subordinate commands – to the operations planning process. Therefore, the Chief Info Ops has a functional reporting relationship to the Dir StratCom for general communication guidance issues.

6. Other Staff Involved in the Communication Management Process

a. Chief of Staff

The Chief of Staff (COS) is a principal advisor to the Commander. He coordinates the work of the staff divisions to ensure that the staff pulls together as a team. In this respect, he assists the building of a corporate identity and enables the appropriate involvement of key staff elements in the communication management process.

b. Legal Advisor

The Legal Advisor (LEGAD) is the principal advisor to the Commander concerning national and international law and mandates, Rules of Engagement (ROE), and all legal matters arising from the presence of the JTF in the JOA. He advises on legal implications, including ROE, of proposed Information Activities. He also advises the targeting process in concert with Information Analysts and Planners, and the Info Ops and PA staffs.
c. Political Advisor

The Political Advisor (POLAD) is the Commander’s principal advisor on policy, and local, national, regional and international political issues, including the JTF’s relationship with coalition partner nations, the Host Nation, and IOs and NGOs. In this respect, the POLAD may closely coordinate with relevant stakeholders on behalf of the Commander. The POLAD advises on policy implications of proposed Information Activities. He supports the targeting process and contributes to analysis and assessment of the Information Environment.

d. Cultural Advisor

The Cultural Advisor (CULAD) provides expertise on local languages, customs, religion, art, symbols, etc. relevant to the JTF operation. He offers a conduit to better understand foreign societies and communicate effectively. The CULAD supports the targeting process and contributes to analysis and assessment of the Information Environment. He advises on cultural implications of proposed Information Activities, including ethnological, religious and social aspects. He also contributes to cross-cultural awareness and, through cultural knowledge education and foreign language training, enhanced intercultural communicative competence of the JTF.

e. Gender Advisor

Military operations in today’s world require a diversity of qualifications and resources to ensure that peace and security are achieved and maintained. The complementary skills of both male and female personnel are essential for the effectiveness of JTF operations. The Gender Advisor (GENAD) assists to integrate a gender perspective into all aspects of operations. In particular, the GENAD can provide advice regarding gender equity and women empowerment, and contributes to cross-cultural awareness and enhanced intercultural communicative competence of the JTF.

f. Chaplain

The Chaplain is responsible for the spiritual ministry and pastoral support to soldiers and their families in a range of challenging environments. He may contribute religious and cultural assessments to the StratCom process.

g. Director of Staff

The Director of Staff (DOS) *inter alia* is responsible for Information Management (IM) and, therefore, has a key role in ensuring an effective flow of information in support of all staff activities and communication management.
**h. Liaison Officers**

The Liaison Officers (LOs) assist cooperation and information exchange between the JTF HQ, higher command, adjacent units, the Host Nation, troops contributing nations, International Organisations (IOs) involved in the operation, and supporting forces / commands assigned to the JTF.

**i. J1 Manpower Management**

J1 identifies personnel requirements and advises on staff development programs.

**j. J2 Intelligence**

The J2 INTEL division is responsible for the provision of accurate, timely and relevant Intelligence to meet the JTF’s operational and security requirements, and maintain situation awareness. J2 supports the targeting process and contributes to analysis and assessment of the Information Environment as part of the CPOE.

**k. J3 Operations**

The J3 Operations (Ops) division acts as the focal point through which the Commander directs the conduct of an operation, ensuring unity of effort and the most effective use of resources. J3 assesses the status and capabilities of assigned forces, specifies tasks for subordinate units based on the OPLAN, and leads campaign synchronization. J3 is responsible for the integration of effects and activities into the JTF HQ's deliberate short and mid-term planning process. J3 – in close cooperation with J2 and J5 – manages the targeting process and contributes to analysis and assessment of the Information Environment.

**l. J5 Plans**

The J5 Plans division leads the planning for future operations and coordinates these efforts within the JTF HQ and with higher, subordinate and adjacent commands and civil authorities. J5 supports activity planning and the assessment of the Information Environment.

**m. J6 Command & Control Support**

J6 identifies Communications and Information Systems (CIS) vulnerabilities and develops procedures and capabilities to protect friendly battle management and Consultation, Command, Control, Communications and Information (C4I) systems. J6 develops INFOSEC plans and supports the development of OPSEC plans. J6 also assesses the impact of adversary Information Activities on own systems.
The J9 Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) division is responsible for civil-military liaison activities and advising the Commander on the implications of all activities undertaken that concern the relations between the armed forces, local governments, civil population, IOs, NGOs, and other agencies of the countries where the JTF is deployed, employed and supported. When performing its liaison function, J9 becomes an important communication agent to directly convey JTF messages and contribute to the assessment of the Information Environment.

The role of engineers is significant in relation to StratCom because of the particular visibility of engineers’ achievements and their special capacity of contributing to Host Nation reconstruction. The Chief Engineer advises on capabilities and assessments that support Information Objectives.

Medical support and assistance may have an enormous psychological impact on local/regional audiences. The Chief Medical advises on capabilities and assessments that support Information Objectives.

Command and Control (C2) is the exercise of authority and direction by a properly designated individual over assigned resources in the accomplishment of a common goal. The implementation of StratCom to accomplish integrated communication at a JTF HQ requires the establishment of a designated staff element – the StratCom Directorate – and the definition of working / reporting relationships with other related staff elements, in particular PA, J2, J3 and J5 (in a traditional J-staff organisation).

An administrative reporting relationship establishes a clear line of authority between positions or units in the organizational hierarchy. The actions of the subordinate are subject to the direction and/or approval of the next higher level of management, irrespective of the autonomy the latter may choose to grant to, or withhold from, subordinate levels. Subordinate positions never report administratively to more than one higher level supervisor. Administrative reporting relationships should be established between (superior – subordinate):

- the Commander and the Dir StratCom;
- the Dir StratCom and the SOs StratCom;
b. Functional Reporting Relationship

A functional reporting relationship establishes a connection between positions or organizational units at different management levels based on the specialized nature of the function for which a mutual responsibility is shared. In this type of situation – often referred to as an indirect reporting relationship – the higher level position or unit provides functional guidance and support to positions or units lower in the organizational structure. There is no formal line of authority in a strictly functional relationship.

Functional reporting relationships should be established between (higher – lower):

- the Dir StratCom and the CPAO;
- the Dir StratCom and the J2 Information Analysts;
- the Dir StratCom and the J3 Chief Info Ops;
- the Dir StratCom and the J5 Information Planners.

B. StratCom in the Headquarters Staff Routine / Battle Rhythm

1. Boards, Centres, Cells and Working Groups

a. Commander's Meeting with the Chief of Staff:

At this meeting, the Commander discusses the daily routine with his COS and provides direction and guidance. The Dir StratCom shall attend in his capacity as the Commander’s principal advisor on all communication issues.

b. JTF HQ Morning Update:

This briefing session, coordinated by the ACOS J3, involves all JTF HQ staff and the CCs (per LOs and/or VTC). Staff division representatives provide update information on the situation, current operations and plans, with concluding direction and guidance by the Commander. The Dir StratCom will use the briefing session as a platform to issue communication-related guidance to the whole staff and CCs. The Morning Update shall also be used as a venue for internal staff development by the Dir StratCom, who provides an assessment and outlook regarding the implementation of the Information Strategy.
**c. COS Coordination Meeting**

This meeting, chaired by the COS, prepares meetings/VTCs of the Commander and the VTC of the COS JTF HQ with the CC COSs. The StratCom Directorate, CPAO and the Chief Info Ops shall attend the meeting to contribute communication aspects.

**d. Commander’s Meeting with J5 Plans**

This meeting, chaired by ACOS J5, informs the Commander on the status of J5 operations assessment and forecast, and addresses decision points and future coordination and synchronization requirements. It is also the forum for the Commander to issue direction and guidance to J5. The Dir StratCom and J5 Information Planners shall attend the meeting to contribute communication aspects.

**e. JTF HQ COS Meeting with COS UN**

The COS JTF HQ meets his counterpart at the UN Mission HQ on a regular basis to address principal coordination issues at theatre level. A member of the StratCom Directorate and the CPAO shall attend these meetings to contribute communication aspects and advise on a coordinated implementation of the Information Strategy.

**f. Commander’s VTC with Higher HQ**

At this VTC, the JTF Commander provides his assessment of the situation and receives direction and guidance from HHQ. The Dir StratCom and CPAO shall attend the VTC to assist the Commander in any aspects related to communication guidance, as required.

**g. Commander’s VTC with Subordinate HQ**

At this VTC, CCs address assessments, concerns, and plans for the next 48-72 hours, and any requests at the commanders’ level. The JTF Commander provides feedback from the HHQ and issues direction and guidance. The Dir StratCom and CPAO shall attend the VTC to assist the Commander in any aspects related to communication guidance, as required.

**h. Joint Military Commission**

The Joint Military Commission (JMC), usually chaired by the Commander (depending on the level of participation in that meeting), coordinates joint activities, disseminates intent and instructions of the JTF, and resolves differences amongst the parties. A member of the StratCom Directorate and the CPAO shall attend these meetings to contribute communication aspects and advise on a coordinated implementation of the Information Strategy.
i. Command Group Meeting

This meeting, chaired by the Commander, prepares VTCs with HHQ and CCs, the JMC, and the meeting of the COS JTF HQ, with the COS UN, and addresses related synchronization requirements. The Dir StratCom and CPAO shall attend the meeting to contribute communication aspects.

j. Joint Coordination Board Working Group

The Joint Coordination Board Working Group (JCBWG) prepares the draft Joint Coordination Order (JCO), and addresses follow-up planning issues, targeting, and Commander’s Critical Information Requirements (CCIRs). A member of the StratCom Directorate, the CPAO and the Chief Info Ops shall attend the meeting to contribute communication aspects and ensure common situation awareness.

k. Joint Coordination Board – VTC

The Joint Coordination Board (JCB), often conducted as VTC, assists JTF activity and effects synchronization, specifically to prepare and issue Commander’s priority guidance across the subordinate commands, and to resolve potential areas of conflict. The JCB assigns execution responsibilities, prioritises, de-conflicts and synchronizes all aspects of the employment of lethal and non-lethal means. The Commander provides, through the medium of the JCB, further amplification to his direction and guidance. The Dir StratCom shall attend the meeting to contribute communication aspects. Note: PA and J3 Info Ops shall be kept involved through the Communication Coordination Board (CCB) and informed through their attendance at the JCBWG.

l. Joint Targeting Working Group

The Joint Targeting Working Group (JTWG) prepares target nominations and conducts Battle Damage Assessment (BDA). J2 Information Analyst(s) and representative(s) of J3 Info Ops shall attend the meeting to contribute communication aspects.

m. Joint Targeting Coordination Board

The Joint Targeting Coordination Board (JTCB), co-led by J2 and J3, is the primary agency for the synchronization and management of the joint targeting efforts. As such they will prepare target lists for JCB review and (if necessary) Commander’s approval, maintain the targeting database and co-ordinate the production of target materials. Members of the StratCom Directorate, J2 Information Analysts and J3 Info Ops shall attend the meeting to contribute communication aspects.
n. **Assessment Working Group**

The Assessment Working Group (AWG), led by J5, prepares the operations assessment for the Commander’s endorsement. The J2 Information Analyst, J3 Info Ops and J5 Information Planners shall attend the meeting to contribute communication aspects.

o. **Assessment Board**

The Assessment Board (AB), chaired by ACOS J5, the operations assessment is presented to the Commander for his approval. A member of the StratCom Directorate and a J5 Information Planner shall attend the meeting to contribute communication aspects.

p. **Joint Operations Planning Group**

Led by a dedicated J5 team leader, the JOPG conducts long-term operations planning, including the development of Branch plans and Sequels. A representative of J3 Info Ops and the J5 Information Planners shall attend the meeting to contribute communication aspects.

q. **CIMIC Coordination Meeting**

Chaired by the DACOS J9, this meeting prepares the CIMIC VTC by assessing ongoing CIMIC activities and focussing CIMIC efforts for the next 3-4 days. A representative J3 Info Ops shall attend the meeting to contribute communication aspects and coordination requirements.
r. **CIMIC VTC**

This VTC involves CIMIC representatives of all JTF CCs to exchange information and coordinate CIMIC activities. A member of the StratCom Directorate and the CPAO shall attend the VTC to contribute communication aspects, as required.

s. **Info Ops Working Group**

The Info Ops Working Group (IOWG) is the J3 Info Ops venue for preparing and evaluating IACB meetings, and producing input to JTF current operations.

**t. Information Activities Coordination Board**

The Information Activities Coordination Board (IACB) is the J3 Info Ops tool for synchronizing, integrating and harmonizing Information Activities and other military actions with (potential) effects in the Information Environment. A member of the StratCom Directorate, a PAO, as well as a J2 Information Analyst and a J5 Information Planner shall attend the IACB to provide StratCom guidance and contribute functional expertise.
u. Commander's Decision Brief

At this meeting, the Commander decides on issues related to operations planning, targeting, PA, external correspondence, and high-level encounters. The Dir StratCom and CPAO shall attend and provide advice from a communication perspective, as required for clarification of the Commander’s decisions.

2. The Communication Coordination Board

a. Role and Functions

The Communication Coordination Board (CCB) is the Dir StratCom’s primary tool for communication management (i.e., coordinating and implementing integrated communication). The board meets on a regular basis, but also provides the framework for bilateral and virtual coordination amongst its members. In this respect, the CCB can be considered as a meeting venue and a process.

The purpose of the CCB is to:

- Develop and maintain a common understanding of the Information Strategy and other communication-related guidance.
- Interpret strategic guidance and the Commander’s intent, and coordinate their proper implementation in all relevant planning and coordination processes.
- Develop, review and adjust the mission Narrative, themes and master messages.
- Coordinate communication input to JTF HQ working groups, boards, and other bodies, and the related processes.
- Review and update the communication-related annexes to the JTF HQ Standing Operating Procedures (SOP).

b. Composition

The CCB is chaired by the Dir StratCom and comprises the core of the JTF HQ communication specialists: SOs StratCom from the StratCom Directorate, the CPAO, J2 Information Analysts, the Chief J3 Info Ops, and J5 Information Planners (see Figure 9).

The Director of Staff (DOS) will attend the CCB, as required, to ensure that the integration of communication specialists / expertise is adequately reflected in the JTF HQ SOP, and to advise on appropriate ways and means for HQ internal information exchange, including the staff routine / battle rhythm. If needed, communication specialists from the strategic and tactical levels will be invited to attend the CCB in order to clarify and promote communication guidance.
Furthermore, the CCB may invite other external communication representatives, such as the Public Information staff of the UN and other organisations operating in theatre, or Host Nation communication specialists, in order to support a comprehensive approach to integrated communication.

However, attendance at the regular CCB meetings must be kept to a limited number in order to avoid any duplication with other staff meetings, in particular the IACB.
Chapter 5 – Communication Planning Process

"To put it simply, we need to worry a lot less about how to communicate our actions and much more about what our actions communicate. --- We need an Information Order with an Operations Annex!"

(Admiral Michael G. Mullen)

The main purpose of StratCom involvement in the operations planning process is to achieve a common understanding of the planning tasks amongst communication specialists and other functional and capability experts, to coordinate the respective input related to the Information Environment, and ultimately promote the implementation of the Information Strategy (and other superior communication guidance). It includes respective advice on the development of operational objectives, decisive conditions and operational effects throughout the operations planning process, wherever appropriate.

This can be achieved by either employing the CCB, the StratCom Directorate as a whole group or selected members of communication capabilities and functions. Depending on mission and situation requirements, possible options to prepare communication input to discrete planning steps include:

- A standing StratCom or Info Ops staff participation in meetings of respective planning teams (JOPG, etc.);
- The permanent availability of communication specialists for providing advice to JTF HQ planners;
- The conduct of ad hoc or regularly scheduled meetings (CCB, IACB) to prepare required input to discussions of JTF HQ planning teams.

A. Initiation of the Operational-Level Planning Process (OLPP Step 1)

1. Process Description

Purpose: Understand the strategic situation and the nature of the problem, as well as the proposed end-state and strategic objectives; and contribute operational advice to the Strategic Commander on his military response options and assess the operational-level viability of these options.

Input: Strategic Planning Directive (SPD).

Activity: Framing the problem – CPOE; examination of the SPD; end-state analysis.

Output: Initial operational estimate; warning orders to subordinate commands; the document containing the JTF’s operational advice; Commander’s initial guidance.
2. Communication Management Activities and Participation

- **Command and Control**: The Commander provides operational advice to the strategic level, including input to the development of the Information Strategy (if it is not already available). He provides initial guidance to the JOPG and authorises the Dir StratCom to directly coordinate with communication managers and practitioners at the strategic level. The Dir StratCom assists and advises the Commander. He also directs HQ staff elements (communication capabilities and functions) to prepare communication input to operations planning, and provides guidance to subordinate commands, i.e., he initiates the communication planning process. For this purpose, the Information Strategy (once available) needs to be emphasised and conveyed to the HQ staff and subordinate commands. Furthermore, the Dir StratCom (in coordination with the CPAO) prepares lines to take for JTF HQ's face-to-face and media communication activities.

- **Analysis of the Information Environment**: The Information Analysts continue and focus their analysis on the identified crisis situation. They contribute to the strategic assessment and provide analysis results to the Dir StratCom and the JOPG, as required. Analysis results will feed into the JTF's operational advice to the Strategic Commander.

- **Coordination**: On behalf of the Commander, the Dir StratCom contacts strategic-level communication managers and practitioners, as well as appropriate counterparts from multinational partners, including civilian organisations, in order to establish working relationships amongst relevant Points of Contact (POCs). The Dir StratCom coordinates with the CPAO what lines to take for communication to and via the media.

- **Direct Communication**: The Dir StratCom advises, assists and prepares the Commander for addressing external audiences. The Commander uses lines to take when talking to his counterparts and representatives of other agencies and organisations.

- **Media Communication**: Media attitudes may reflect or influence public opinion and ultimately will influence, positively or negatively, popular and political support of JTF activities, and eventual mission success. The CPAO, based on direction by the Dir StratCom, responds to media enquiries and develops programs to inform the public about the JTF's role in crisis management.

- **Education and Training**: On behalf of the Commander, the Dir StratCom continues internal communication programs to enhance the accountability of all members of the JTF as
communicators, promote the mission Narrative, and evolve the corporate identity and image of the JTF.

3. Communication Planning Outputs

- Initial estimate of the Information Environment (as part of the initial operational estimate) with conclusions to inform the JTF’s operational advice to the Strategic Commander and his initial guidance to the JOPG.
- Liaison and coordination template for interaction of the Dir StratCom with other actors ("interaction" might involve: coordination, cooperation, collaboration, consultation, exchange of information, toleration).
- Lines to take for external communication.
- Updated training/education plan for internal communication programs.

B. Mission Analysis (OLPP Step 2)

1. Process Description

**Purpose:** Analyse the crisis situation in depth; determine precisely the operational problem that must be solved and the specific operational conditions that must be achieved.

**Input:** Commander’s initial guidance.

**Activity:** Identify and understand the situation and the problem; appreciate conditions to be established; analyse mission and objectives; identify constraints and restraints; conduct staff estimates and initial force estimates.

**Output:** Initial operations design; restated mission (if required); Commander’s intent; Commander’s planning guidance, including guidance for COA development and selection.

2. Communication Management Activities and Participation

- **Command and Control:** The Commander considers the essence of the Information Strategy to become part of his initial statement of intent. Advised by the Dir StratCom, the Commander provides direction and guidance to his staff and subordinate commands to further detail and operationalise the strategic-political provisions contained in the Information Strategy and the SPD. As a key activity of this planning step, the Dir StratCom and communication capabilities and functions, as appropriate, will develop the operational-level Narrative, coordinate it with the JOPG, and submit it to the Strategic Commander for approval. The Dir StratCom will also advise the Commander and planning staff to consider potential effects in the Information Environment to become a COA selection criterion.
• **Analysis of the Information Environment**: Led by the Dir StratCom, the POLAD, Information Analysts, PAO, J2 INTEL, the Info Ops staff, and J9 CIMIC will analyse the strategic-political assessments from a communication perspective and relate it to the operational level and the assigned JOA. They assist the development of a sound common understanding of the mission-specific elements of the Information Environment.

• **Coordination**: The Dir StratCom contacts strategic-level communication managers and practitioners in order to confirm the appropriate operational-level interpretation of strategic-political guidance regarding the Information Environment and seek clarification and additional guidance, as appropriate.

• **Direct and Media Communication**: Continued from previous step. Internal and external communication needs to be continued throughout the planning process (and conduct of operations) in order to support situation awareness, transparency, and freedom of information.

• **Education and Training**: Continued from previous step. Throughout the planning process (and conduct of operations) the JTF needs to gain, maintain and further develop situation awareness, a common understanding of the importance of communication, and a corporate identity in order to promote the JTF’s synergy and effectiveness.

### 3. Communication Planning Outputs

• Refined estimate of the Information Environment (in support of the development of the operational design and a sound common understanding of the mission-specific elements of the Information Environment).

• The approved operational-level, mission Narrative (as part of the Commander’s planning guidance) to help inform the development of the Commander’s intent statement.

• A proposed phrasing that highlights communication (as a task) and/or the Information Environment (and the intended effects in it) in the Commander’s intent statement.

• Proposed themes, themes to avoid, and audiences to address (as part of the Commander’s planning guidance).

• Proposed initial COA selection criteria related to the Information Environment.

• Lines to take for external communication.

• Updated training/education plan for internal communication programs.
C. Courses of Action Development (OLPP Step 3)

1. Process Description

**Purpose:** Develop a set of tentative COAs\(^{15}\), all of which will accomplish the mission effectively in accordance with the Commander's intent (this may be a collaborative planning effort between strategic and operational-level planners to produce coherent broad COAs for each level in order to preserve a common context during the further development steps).

**Input:** Initial operations design; restated mission (if required); Commander’s intent; Commander’s planning guidance.

**Activity:** Develop and test COAs; implement Commander's guidance for COA development.

**Output:** A set of own feasible COAs; refined COA selection criteria.

2. Communication Management Activities and Participation

- **Command and Control:** Within the scope of the Information Strategy and the approved operational-level Narrative, the Dir StratCom and communication capabilities and functions, as appropriate, contribute to the development of tentative COAs in order to incorporate communication (as a task) and/or the Information Environment (and the intended effects in it), as required, to reflect the Commander’s intent. Based on advice by the Dir StratCom, the Commander carries on his attitude towards communication (as stated in his intent) when providing guidance for COA refinement.

- **Analysis of the Information Environment:** Lead by the Dir StratCom, the POLAD, Information Analysts, PAO, J2 INTEL, the Info Ops staff, and J9 CIMIC will continue to analyse the Information Environment and assist the further development of a common understanding of its mission-specific elements.

- **Coordination:** The Dir StratCom, in close coordination with the POLAD, contacts strategic-level communication managers and practitioners in order to directly harmonise communication input to COA development.

- **Direct Communication:** Continued from previous step.

- **Media Communication:** Continued from previous step.

- **Education and Training:** Continued from previous step.

\(^{15}\) COAs should answer the following questions: (1) When does the operation begin and/or when must it be completed for the required conditions be established? (2) Who will conduct the operation? (3) What military operations are considered? (4) Where will they be performed? (5) Why is the operation conducted? (6) How will the operation be conducted?
3. Communication Planning Outputs

- Refined estimate of the Information Environment (in support of the development of tentative COAs).
- COA refinement guidance that reflects the Commander's intent regarding communication and the Information Environment.
- Proposed refined COA selection criteria related to the Information Environment.
- Lines to take for external communication.
- Updated training/education plan for internal communication programs.

D. Courses of Action Analysis (OLPP Step 4)

1. Process Description

**Purpose:** Refine and analyse the COAs based on the Commander's guidance on tentative COAs (this will partly be a collaborative planning effort between the operational and tactical-level planners to produce coordinated COAs for each level).

**Input:** Set of own COAs.

**Activity:** Analyse and refine COAs; wargaming.

**Output:** refined COAs; outline CONOPS for each COA.

2. Communication Management Activities and Participation

- **Command and Control:** The Dir StratCom, in close coordination with the COS and J3 Operations, directs the involvement of representatives of subordinate commands and JTF HQ staff elements (communication capabilities and functions) in the wargaming process.

- **Analysis of the Information Environment:** Continued from previous step. In addition, in this step the Information Analysts will contribute their expertise to the development of COA evaluation criteria (derived from the principles of joint and multinational operations; see Supplement I.1).

- **Coordination:** The Dir StratCom will ensure appropriate participation of communication capabilities and functions in the wargaming process and coordinate their input to meet the requirements of a realistic representation of the Information Environment. The Info Ops staff actually conduct this coordination effort, as directed by the Dir StratCom. The LOs represent their sending organisations / agencies; they should, upon request of the Dir StratCom, place an additional focus on the Information Environment and the particular role of their organisations / agencies in it (The same applies to the JTF HQ's LOs to other organisations /
agencies; in addition to their information gathering function, they also convey JTF Commander’s messages. The Info Ops staff will also contribute their expertise to the development of the synchronization matrix.

- Direct Communication: Continued from previous step.
- Media Communication: Continued from previous step.
- Education and Training: Continued from previous step.

### 3. Communication Planning Outputs

- Communication input to the wargaming process (simulation of communication capabilities and functions, and their activities).
- Proposed COA evaluation criteria focused on the Information Environment.
- Communication input to the synchronization matrix (reference to the implementation paragraph of the Information Strategy).
- Lines to take for external communication.
- Updated training/education plan for internal communication programs

### E. Courses of Action Validation and Comparison (OLPP Step 5)

#### 1. Process Description

**Purpose:** Validate and compare the COAs that were analysed during the previous step.

**Input:** Refined COAs.

**Activity:** Compare advantages, disadvantages, and performance against adversarial COAs; apply Commander’s selection criteria; conduct COA risk assessment.

**Output:** Evaluated and prioritised COAs; recommended COA.

#### 2. Communication Management Activities and Participation

- **Command and Control:** Based on the results from wargaming and following consultation with the JTF HQ communication capabilities and functions, the Dir StratCom recommends to the Commander how to evaluate COAs from a communication perspective. Once approved, he provides guidance to the JOPG.
- **Analysis of the Information Environment:** Continued from previous step.
- **Coordination:** Internal coordination amongst the communication capabilities and functions, as mentioned above. The Info Ops staff will contribute the coordinated input from the communication capabilities and functions.
3. Communication Planning Outputs

- Communication input to COA evaluation, including recommendations and guidance (*inter alia* advantages and disadvantages concerning desired effects in the Information Environment and the achievement of strategic / Information Objectives, and prioritisation of joint functions, sequencing and phasing).
- Lines to take for external communication.
- Updated training/education plan for internal communication programs.

F. Commander's Courses of Action Decision (OLPP Step 6)

1. Process Description

   **Purpose:** Gain the Commander's decision on a chosen COA and then refine this COA as the future core of the CONOPS.

   **Input:** Prioritised COAs; recommended COA.

   **Activity:** Conduct COA decision briefing; receive Commander's decision; further refine the selected COA; review Commander's intent.

   **Output:** Commander's decision and additional guidance on the selected COA to be developed, including Branches and Sequels; liaison, coordination and reconnaissance requirements; refined Commander's intent.

2. Communication Management Activities and Participation

   - **Command and Control:** The Dir StratCom directs the Info Ops staff to coordinate contributions to the refinement of the selected COA. He will advise and consult with the Commander on potential adjustments of his statement of intent.

   - **Analysis of the Information Environment:** Continued from previous step.

   - **Coordination:** The Dir StratCom, in close coordination with the POLAD, contacts strategic-level communication managers and practitioners – within the OLPP and C2 procedures – in order to confirm concurrence of the selected COA and the proposed refinement with strategic-political guidance. The Info Ops staff coordinate contributions to COA refinement with communication capabilities and functions, involving JTF HQ staff elements as well as subordinate commands.
3. Communication Planning Outputs

- Communication considerations incorporated in the strategic appreciation of the Commander’s selected COA.
- Refined estimate of the Information Environment (in support of the refinement of the selected COA).
- Refined Commander’s intent regarding communication / the Information Environment.
- Lines to take for external communication.
- Updated training/education plan for internal communication programs.

G. Concept of Operations and Plan Development (OLPP Step 7)

1. Process Description

**Purpose:** Produce a coherent operational-level CONOPS and OPLAN as collaborative planning effort between the strategic and the operational level.

**Input:** Selected COA with outline CONOPS; Commander’s additional guidance and refined intent.

**Activity:** Develop and coordinate the CONOPS and OPLAN for the selected COA.

**Output:** CONOPS; proposal for target categories and illustrative target sets; Rules of Engagement Request (ROEREQ); Combined Joint Statement of Requirements (CJSOR) and associated documents; approved OPLAN.

2. Communication Management Activities and Participation

- **Command and Control:** The Dir StratCom supervises the planning activities of communication capabilities and functions in order to promote the implementation / realisation of guidance provided with the Information Strategy and the Narrative(s). He also permanently cross-checks intermediate planning products and ideas with the Commander’s intent and, if required, advises on required modifications.

- **Analysis of the Information Environment:** Continued from previous step.

- **Effects Development:** Information Planners will be permanently involved in the development of operational objectives, decisive conditions and operational effects. Based on the estimate of the Information Environment and Information Strategy guidance (here in particular:
Information Objectives), they will consider corresponding potential effects in the Information Environment and advise the JOPG on desired and undesired, intended and unintended effects, and related indicators and metrics. In order to incorporate the contributions from communication capabilities and functions, Information Planners will closely cooperate with the Info Ops staff.

- **Contribution to Targeting**: The Info Ops staff will lead this activity, primarily assisted by Information Analysts, Information Planners and the PAO. The aim of the contributions to the targeting process from a communication perspective is a) to facilitate consideration of effects in the Information Environment from any action, and b) to integrate communication audiences and relevant targets in the process. Planning joint fires, including the use of lethal and non-lethal means against priority targets, requires significant support by the CULAD, LEGAD and POLAD, in particular to enable consideration of overarching, cross-dimensional aspects of the Information Environment. Therefore, these advisors should be available to assist the Info Ops staff, as appropriate. The Dir StratCom, in close coordination with the LEGAD (in the lead), will propose ROEs that are relevant to the Information Environment and the operational design. PA needs to continue their 'constitutional' task with respect to freedom of information and must therefore not exclusively be tied into the targeting process. However, in order to at least de-conflict activities and effects – in other words: messages and audiences – PA should participate in and contribute to target nomination, as appropriate.

- **Activity Planning**: Information Activities will be planned and conducted by the force capabilities. The Info Ops staff – through the IACB – advise activity planning with a view on creating desired effects in the Information Environment and assist the force generation process, i.e., the identification of required means and assets.

- **Coordination**: The Dir StratCom contacts strategic-level communication managers and practitioners in order to directly harmonise communication input to CONOPS development. The Info Ops staff – through the IACB – will involve the JTF HQ's as well as subordinate commands' communication capabilities and functions to contribute to the development of effects in the Information Environment, and for planning Information Activities.

- **Direct Communication**: Continued from previous step.

- **Media Communication**: Continued from previous step.

- **Education and Training**: Continued from previous step.

3. **Communication Planning Outputs**

- Modified Commander's intent regarding communication, if required.
H. Operations Assessment and Plan Review / Revision (OLPP Step 8)

1. Process Description

Purpose: Monitor and assess campaign progress; adapt the OPLAN, as required; and plan for conflict termination and transition.

Input: OPLAN; approved ROE; crisis establishment (manpower and capabilities).

Activity: Conduct operational management, operations assessment, plan adaptation and planning for transition.

Output: Operational-level assessment reports for the strategic level; revised OPLAN.

2. Communication Management Activities and Participation

• Analysis of the Information Environment: Continued from previous steps.

• Assessment of Effects: This activity is considered the most difficult one in the age of "swarm communication" and Social Media, where simple cause-effect relationships don't exist. Co-led by the Info Ops staff (involving those force capabilities that execute Information Activities to create desired effects) and J2 INTEL (involving Information Analysts), communication specialists develop recommendations to the Dir StratCom for advising the Commander and further coordination with the HQ's joint assessment staff (usually consisting of the J5 Plans in cooperation with J2 INTEL and J3 Operations).

3. Communication Planning Outputs

• Refined estimate of the Information Environment (in support of operations assessment).

• Communication part of the assessment report(s) (draws from the continued analysis of the Information Environment).
I. Summary: Integration of Operations Planning and Communication Planning

Figure 10: Operations Planning and Communication Planning
Chapter 6 – Delineation of Roles, Tasks and Activities

Planning, approval and implementation of communication guidance through communication management requires close cooperation of the StratCom and Info Ops functions and the capabilities to perform Information Activities.

Roles, tasks and activities of integrated communication are sustained by communication capabilities and functions with different emphasis at the various levels of command. At the strategic level, integrated communication is promoted by StratCom and (military) PA. At the operational level this responsibility is shared by StratCom, military PA and Info Ops, while at the tactical level integrated communication is driven by Info Ops and military PA.

Figure 10 shows key roles, tasks and activities involved in integrated communication at the operational level, grouped by functions and capabilities. Roles, tasks and activities depicted in overlapping areas of the graph are shared responsibilities that entail collective action.

Figure 11: StratCom, Info Ops and Communication Capabilities
A. Strategic Communication

1. Information Strategy Implementation and Development

StratCom holds the primary responsibility for implementing strategic communication guidance manifested in the Information Strategy (or equivalent format). This includes the operationalization of the strategic Narrative, the provision of planning guidance by Information Objectives, themes and master messages, as well as the contribution of respective advice to HHQ from the operational-level communication perspective.

As the Info Ops function doesn’t exist at the strategic-political and military-strategic levels, StratCom provides communication-specific analyses and assessments, and related input to strategic planning.

2. Command & Control

The Dir StratCom is the primary advisor to the Commander on all communication issues affecting the JTF, its mission and its operations. This responsibility includes advice on the design of reporting relationships, the involvement of subordinate commands in JTF activities with high external effect, and on corporate leadership.

The Dir StratCom is also authorised to provide direction and guidance on behalf of the Commander.

3. Education and Training

The Dir StratCom is responsible for the planning and conduct of staff and leadership development programs to improve communication patterns and communication skills, promote the JTF corporate identity, and enhance situation awareness regarding the Information Environment.

B. Strategic Communication and Information Operations

1. Analysis of the Information Environment

The StratCom Directorate, Information Analysts and Info Ops share the responsibility to provide coordinated results from analysis of the Information Environment and respective input to all relevant JTF HQ staff processes.

Advice to decision-making involving the Command Group is a responsibility of the Dir StratCom. Analysis input to lower-level boards, cells, centres and working groups is a shared responsibility of the StratCom Directorate, the Information Analysts and Info Ops, the actual practice of which depends on arrangements laid down in the JTF HQ SOP (attendance requirements at meetings). The CCB and the IACB should be used as venues for coordination.
2. Operations Planning

The StratCom Directorate, Information Planners and Info Ops – assisted by Information Analysts – share the responsibility to provide coordinated input to operations planning.

Members of the StratCom Directorate are primarily responsible for providing direction and guidance for the implementation of superior communication guidance and the Commander’s intent related to the Information Environment. StratCom also drafts and coordinates the operational-level Narrative. Information Planners support the planning process from a general communication perspective. Info Ops relays coordinated input from communication capabilities.

3. Effects Development

Members of the StratCom Directorate are primarily responsible for providing direction and guidance for the implementation of superior communication guidance and the Commander’s intent related to the Information Environment. J3 Info Ops is responsible for the coordination of effects in the Information Environment with (communication) capabilities. The operational phasing of respective effects will be developed by Info Ops, Information Planners and PA within their scope of responsibility.

4. Key Leader Engagement

Key Leader Engagement (KLE) is defined as the meeting of JTF military leaders with decision-makers of approved audiences that have defined goals. These engagements can be used to shape and influence local leaders within the operations area or may also be directed toward specific groups (religious, academic, tribal, etc.).

KLE planning is a shared responsibility of the StratCom Directorate and Info Ops. The StratCom Directorate has the better insight concerning the Commander’s intent and the availability of the Command Group and Special Staff to attend KLE meetings, and is responsible for implementing strategic communication guidance. J3 Info Ops has the closer link to communication capabilities and the CCs, and thus is in a better position to provide (tactical) background information on stakeholders to be engaged by JTF leaders. J3 Info Ops is also responsible for integrating KLE into the joint targeting process.

5. Coordination

StratCom and Info Ops share the responsibility to coordinate communication input to JTF HQ staff processes. The focus of StratCom is on decision-making and direction and guidance. StratCom coordinates vertically with HHQ and horizontally with JTF external (military and non-military) mission
partners. Info Ops focuses on Information Activities and communication capabilities, and coordinates with JTF subordinate commands.

C. Information Operations and (Communication) Capabilities

1. Targeting

J3 Info Ops is responsible to provide coordinated input to the joint targeting process regarding effects in the Information Environment. In particular, Info Ops supports the integration of lethal and non-lethal effects and kinetic and non-kinetic actions, and contributes to target nomination. Info Ops, assisted by Information Analysts and Information Planners, advises on potential effects in the Information Environment caused by actions directed at specific targets. In close cooperation with communication capabilities, Info Ops develops and maintains target folders for KLE.

2. Activity Planning

J3 Info Ops identifies capabilities which are best suited to convey messages to specific audiences and thus create desired effects in the Information Environment. Info Ops coordinates activity planning with communication capabilities and JTF subordinate commands.

3. Operations Assessment

In close cooperation with capability representatives, Info Ops contributes to operations assessment by use of MOP and MOE. The primary role of Info Ops is the coordination, integration and synthesis of individual assessments into an overall view on the Information Environment.

D. (Communication) Capabilities

1. Information Activities

Information Activities can be performed by all force capabilities executing tasks on order of commanders and leaders in order to create desired effects in the Information Environment. They constitute the lower end of OPLAN execution.

2. The Role of Military Public Affairs

Military PA in all democratic societies constitutes a specific communication capability (Freedom of Information) and has a particular role in implementing an Information Strategy.

PA releases or publishes information with the primary purpose of keeping the public informed, in order to gain their understanding and support for military operations. PA endeavours to ensure accurate and timely information about the coalition forces, their commanders, staffs (temporary or permanent), activities and operations for reporting by external and internal news media.
In a democracy, military forces are responsible and accountable to the public for the performance of their mission. PA is the primary means to reach the general public, and is a command responsibility of highest priority.

PA addresses the media and general public – national and international, own and other audiences, using means and methods such as media outlets, press conferences, media opportunities, press statements and other media products. Once PA has released a message to the public, the further transmission of that message is under the control of the media. It is the media who will then decide what portion of the original message is communicated and to which audience.

PA activities are Information Activities. Therefore, other communication capabilities must be closely coordinated with PA in order to ensure consistency in the message released by the military to outside audiences and to promote overall effectiveness and credibility of the JTF campaign.
Chapter 7 – Guide to Military Strategic Communication for Non-StratCom Personnel

One cannot not communicate!

What that means is even when you’re not actively sending a message, even when words are not coming out of your mouth, coming across the keyboard from your typing, or being texted you’re still communicating. So, is it the message you want to be sending? It’s important to be cognizant of that because “one cannot not communicate” means that what you’re doing, active communication or not, you’re still sending a message and that’s important for you to know.

Communication is a basic function of human life. Every day, we communicate with a lot of people including our families, our friends, our colleagues, or even strangers. Without having the possibility to communicate and talk to other people, no individual, community, group or any other institution would be able to exist, or prosper. Strictly speaking the ability to communicate or the general right of communication make it possible to exchange opinions, thoughts and meanings. Many people believe that the significance of communication is like the importance of breathing. Indeed, communication facilitates the spread of knowledge and forms relationships between people.

People interact by exchanging messages. Quite a lot of communication is carried on below the level of consciousness; it just happens automatically. Even when you think you are not sending any messages, that absence of messages is quite evident to any observer, and can itself constitute quite a significant message.

Everything we do, and the way we do everything, sends a message. Everything that can be observed or otherwise perceived with all of our senses will be interpreted based on individual knowledge, experience, needs, etc. We usually transmit quite a few non-verbal messages unconsciously, even when we think we are not sending any messages at all. This means that, unless you are a hermit, you cannot really avoid communicating. You can, of course, very easily get your communication scrambled – often in both directions – but that is not much consolation. In other words, you cannot not communicate: communication happens all the time – intentional or unintentional, with desired or undesired effect.
1796

1797 **Actions speak louder than words!**

"Jesus Christ said 'by their fruits ye shall know them,' not by their disclaimers."
— William S. Burroughs

"Faith without works is dead."
— James the Apostle

Behaviour is the most important carrier of messages, as words are symbols and actions are undeniable real. Communication is usually considered to be restricted to language and words, but in reality body language and action play an important role in perception of the message in communication. Communication is more than just speaking, and much more than just media. What you do is more important and shows your intentions and feelings more clearly than what you say.

At the end of the day, whatever your actions may be will show what you are trying to prove. If you are simply talking, nothing is happening, but when actions take place, you are actually engaging in this behaviour. Actions prove who someone really is while words only show what someone wants to be.

"The belief that one's own view of reality is the only reality is the most dangerous of all delusions."
— Paul Watzlawick

It is not only depended on the sender to depict the meaning of any communication, the receiver plays a major role in the outcome of the communication. The message send by the sender may not be interpreted the same way it was intended. It is impossible to speak in such a way that you cannot be misunderstood.

All military actions — such as key leader engagements, military-to-military engagements, movements on the ground, visits by leaders, overflights of aircraft, and transits of ships — send messages. Observers of our actions reason (interpret and conclude) what they think is our intent. Therefore, our actions need to be consciously designed and executed in order to convey our intended messages.

"Words have less substance than air. Don’t tell me about your zealous dreams, your firm convictions, your profound love — show me."
— Richelle E. Goodrich
Avoid the say-do gap!

The way people conduct themselves in different situations is a greater determinant of behaviour and character than the words through which they choose to express themselves. What you do holds much more significance than what you say.

Credibility, reliability and consistency are paramount for the effectiveness of any communication. Promises mean nothing without proof. Actions should meet verbal commitments, not conflict them.

A say-do gap arises in the minds of targeted audiences when an organization’s statements conflict with the actions it takes. In the military, the term describes the mismatch between strategic policy objectives and military tactical actions. Any gap between publicised information and actual performance has the potential to damage trust and confidence, which can negatively affect the achievement of our objectives. If you promise something, people might not believe you until they see you actually do it.

It is all about trust, which is the bedrock of effective leadership and influencing others. Your behaviour is your single greatest mode of communication, and it must be congruent with what you say. If we give off two contradictory messages, verbal and nonverbal, people will have the tendency to believe the nonverbal over the verbal. If your actions don’t align with your words, there’s trouble.

Recent examples of a say-do gap came from operations in Afghanistan, where NATO forces proclaimed respect for the Afghan people and Islam, a verbal message that appeared contradicted by images and incidents of civilian casualties and military operations in and around mosques. Such apparent inconsistencies were successfully exploited by the Taliban via globally distributed images on the Internet.

We must ensure actions match words. We must ensure we do what we say we do. Our actions will invariably have a greater impact than what we communicate verbally or in writing.

Consider real-time media reporting!

Today’s technological achievements enable world-wide, real-time communication by individuals and the media. Permanent media surveillance makes military operations limpid to global audiences.

Reports of actions taken and the results of those actions are quickly spread across the globe; they affect the perceptions of the audiences we are trying to engage, not limited by any geographical boundaries.
In modern newsrooms, Social Media and the prevalence of smartphones means news posted in real-time is now more accessible to media outlets than ever before. This influx of information – together with audiences now conditioned to expect to read about breaking news as it happens – raises challenges as well as opportunities. There’s more information out there, and so finding the signal in the noise is harder for our audiences. Real-time data access and real-time reporting are determined by the speed at which information changes and when it becomes available for the user to manipulate.

The media provide a major source of information and the basis for public opinion-forming. Political discussions follow public opinion, and thus lead to, and impact on, military operations in terms of principle approval and resourcing.

Own public information activities compete with others’ reporting and people select what information to take as credible. Therefore, it is important to envision how our actions will be perceived by the different audiences and what messages they will deliver.

Military Strategic Communication

In today’s Information Environment, characterized by a 24/7 news cycle, the rise of social networking sites, and the global interconnectedness of audiences, it is increasingly important that a coalition involved in crisis management communicates in an appropriate, timely, accurate and responsive manner on its roles, objectives and missions. Coalition partners must use various channels, including the traditional media, internet-based digital media and public engagement, to build awareness, understanding, and support for their activities. Effective communication must build and maintain credibility and trust with friends and foes alike, through an emphasis consistency, veracity and transparency both in words and deeds. This requires a coherent institutional approach, coordination of effort with partner nations and between all relevant actors, and consistency with agreed policies, procedures and principles.

At the military operational level, the political will of coalition partners and their common strategic objectives are translated into military action. StratCom is a commander’s function to implement political-strategic guidance for the Information Environment, i.e., how operations and engagements are to be perceived by local, regional, global and domestic audiences. Ideally, all members of a joint force deployed to a theatre of operations act in line with communication guidance, fully aware of the perceptions that their actions may create; ideally, military operations speak for themselves without any accompanying media support required. StratCom aims at guiding and coordinating all joint force elements to act as one.

As long as the ideal world of all coalition actors accepting their roles as strategic communicators has not been achieved, StratCom requires the establishment of organisational structures and processes to support the development of this mind-set, and assist military commanders to implement political goals in the Information Environment. StratCom personnel will be employed as part of an operational-level military HQ to advise, coordinate, guide and direct analysis, planning, execution and assessment of operations, including decision-making, operations planning, and campaign synchronization.
Lexicon

Part 1 – Abbreviations

AAP  Allied Administrative Publication
AB   Assessment Board
ACO  Allied Command Operations
ACOS Assistant Chief of Staff
ACT  Allied Command Transformation
AJP  Allied Joint Publication
AOO  Area of Operations
Asmt Assessment
AWG  Assessment Working Group
Bi-SC Bi-Strategic Commands
BUDFIN Budgets and Finance
C2   Command and Control
C2S  Command and Control Systems
C4   Command, Control, Communications and Computers
CC   Component Command
CCB  Communication Coordination Board
CCIR Commander’s Critical Information Requirements
CD&E Concept Development and Experimentation
cf. compare (lat.: confer)
CICOM CIMIC Coordination Meeting
C-IED Counter Improvised Explosive Device
CIMIC Civil-Military Cooperation
CIS  Communications and Information Systems
CJSE Combined Joint Staff Exercise
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CJSOR</td>
<td>Combined Joint Statement of Requirements</td>
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<tr>
<td>CNO</td>
<td>Computer Network Operations</td>
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<tr>
<td>COA</td>
<td>Course of Action</td>
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<tr>
<td>COG</td>
<td>Centre of Gravity</td>
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<tr>
<td>COM</td>
<td>Commander</td>
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<td>CONOPS</td>
<td>Concept of Operations</td>
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<tr>
<td>COS</td>
<td>Chief of Staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPAO</td>
<td>Chief Public Affairs Officer</td>
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<td>CPOE</td>
<td>Comprehensive Preparation of the Operational Environment</td>
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<td>CSEL</td>
<td>Command Senior Enlisted Leader</td>
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<tr>
<td>CULAD</td>
<td>Cultural Advisor</td>
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<tr>
<td>DARB</td>
<td>Daily Assets Reconnaissance Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>Decisive Condition</td>
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<tr>
<td>DCOM</td>
<td>Deputy Commander</td>
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<tr>
<td>DCOS</td>
<td>Deputy Chief of Staff</td>
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<td>Dir</td>
<td>Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>DOS</td>
<td>Director of Staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>DPKO</td>
<td>Department for Peacekeeping Operations</td>
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<td>Eng</td>
<td>Engineer(s)</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>FINCON</td>
<td>Financial Controller</td>
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<td>FP</td>
<td>Force Protection</td>
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<tr>
<td>FRAGO</td>
<td>Fragmentary Order</td>
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<td>GENAD</td>
<td>Gender Advisor</td>
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<td>Geo</td>
<td>Geographic</td>
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<tr>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>Global Positioning System</td>
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<td>GS</td>
<td>General Schedule (Civil Service)</td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>HA/DR</td>
<td>Humanitarian Assistance / Disaster Relief</td>
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<td>HHQ</td>
<td>Higher Headquarters</td>
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<td>HQ</td>
<td>Headquarters</td>
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<td>IACB</td>
<td>Information Activities Coordination Board</td>
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<td>IED</td>
<td>Improvised Explosive Device</td>
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<td>IC Demo</td>
<td>Integrated Communication Demonstration</td>
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<td>IJC</td>
<td>ISAF Joint Command</td>
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<td>IM</td>
<td>Information Management</td>
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<td>IMPP</td>
<td>Integrated Missions Planning Process</td>
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<td>IMSWM</td>
<td>International Military Staff Working Memorandum</td>
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<td>Information Operations</td>
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<td>Infrastructure</td>
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<td>INTEL</td>
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<td>IO</td>
<td>International Organisation</td>
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<td>Information Operations Working Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISAF</td>
<td>International Security Assistance Force (Afghanistan)</td>
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<td>Information Technology</td>
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<td>Joint Coordination Board</td>
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<td>JCBWG</td>
<td>Joint Coordination Board Working Group</td>
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<td>JCO</td>
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<td>JDAWG</td>
<td>Joint Defended Assets Working Group</td>
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<td>JEC</td>
<td>Joint Effects Cell</td>
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<td>JFC</td>
<td>Joint Force Command</td>
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<td>JIPOE</td>
<td>Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Operational Environment</td>
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<td>JMC</td>
<td>Joint Military Commission</td>
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<td>JOA</td>
<td>Joint Operations Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>JOC</td>
<td>Joint Operations Centre</td>
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<td>JOPG</td>
<td>Joint Operations Planning Group</td>
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<td>JTCB</td>
<td>Joint Targeting Coordination Board</td>
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<td>JTF</td>
<td>Joint Task Force</td>
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<td>Joint Targeting Working Group</td>
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<td>KLE</td>
<td>Key Leader Engagement</td>
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<td>KLEP</td>
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<td>LEGAD</td>
<td>Legal Advisor</td>
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<td>LO</td>
<td>Liaison Officer</td>
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<td>LOG</td>
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<tr>
<td>LoO</td>
<td>Line of Operations</td>
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<td>MA</td>
<td>Military Assistant</td>
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<td>Multinational Capability Development Campaign</td>
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<td>MNE</td>
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<td>MNIOE</td>
<td>Multinational Information Operations Experiment</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOE</td>
<td>Measure(s) of Effectiveness</td>
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<td>MOP</td>
<td>Measure(s) of Performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAC</td>
<td>North Atlantic Council</td>
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<td>North Atlantic Treaty Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCS</td>
<td>NATO Command Structure</td>
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<td>NEO</td>
<td>Non-combatant Evacuation Operations</td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<td>NFS</td>
<td>NATO Force Structure</td>
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<td>Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
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<td>NR</td>
<td>NATO Restricted</td>
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<tr>
<td>NU</td>
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<td>OE</td>
<td>Operational Effect</td>
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<td>OLPP</td>
<td>Operational-Level Planning Process</td>
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<td>Operation Plan</td>
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<td>OPSEC</td>
<td>Operations Security</td>
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<td>Open Source Intelligence</td>
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<td>Public Affairs Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>PERS</td>
<td>Personnel (Management)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PM</td>
<td>Provost Marshall</td>
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<tr>
<td>PMESII</td>
<td>Political, Military, Economic, Social, Infrastructure and Information</td>
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<tr>
<td>PO</td>
<td>Private Office (of the NATO Secretary-General)</td>
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<tr>
<td>POC</td>
<td>Point of Contact</td>
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<tr>
<td>POLAD</td>
<td>Political Advisor</td>
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<td>PSYOPS</td>
<td>Psychological Operations</td>
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<tr>
<td>ROE</td>
<td>Rules of Engagement</td>
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<tr>
<td>ROEREQ</td>
<td>Rules of Engagement Request</td>
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<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>Staff Assistant</td>
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<tr>
<td>SACT</td>
<td>Supreme Allied Command Transformation</td>
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<tr>
<td>SES</td>
<td>Senior Executive Service (Civil Service)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG</td>
<td>Secretary-General (of the United Nations)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SME</td>
<td>Subject Matter Expert</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Part 2 – Glossary of Terms and Definitions

**Action**
The process of doing something to achieve an aim.

**Actor**
A person or organisation, including state and non-state entities, with the capability to pursue its interests and objectives.

**Area of Operations**
An area within a joint operations area defined by the joint force commander for the conduct of specific military operations at the tactical level.

**Area of Responsibility**
For a given level of command, an area assigned to a commander to plan and conduct operations.

**Battle Damage Assessment**
The assessment of effects resulting from the application of military action, either lethal or non-lethal, against a military objective.
| **Big Data** | The reality of huge volumes and streams of different forms of data from diverse sources (external and internal) and their constant processing, qualified by volume, variety, veracity and velocity. |
| **Campaign** | A set of military operations planned and conducted to achieve a strategic objective within a given time and geographical area, which normally involve maritime, land and air forces. |
| **Centre of Gravity** | The primary source of power that provides an actor its strength, freedom of action, or will to fight. |
| **Communication** | The process by which information, meanings and feelings are shared by people through an exchange of verbal and non-verbal messages. |
| **Communications and Information System** | An assembly of equipment, methods and procedures and, if necessary, personnel, organized to accomplish information processing and transfer functions. CIS include C4 systems and use IT to provide communication between its users and may embrace transmission systems, switching systems and user systems. Related sub-systems are based upon the continuous need for information to support operations. |
| **Command and Control System** | An assembly of equipment, methods and procedures – including planning and decision-making tools –, and personnel that enable commanders and their staffs to exercise command and control.  
Note: One of the major functions of a C2S is to ensure that data and information get to the right place on time and in a form that is quickly usable by its intended recipients and generates appropriate actions. In this regard, C2S play a critical role in the processing, flow, and quality of data supporting information requirements throughout the joint force. |
| **Communication Specialist** | An expert representative of a communication capability or function. Communication capabilities and functions are those force capabilities and staff functions the primary role of which is to execute communication management tasks, to conduct communication planning and/or to create effects in the Information Environment. |
| **Comprehensive Preparation of the Operational Environment** | A process (and product) to synthesise staff analyses and estimations in order to describe the main characteristics, and allow the planning staff to further assess the potential impact, of the operational environment on the... |
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accomplishment of the mission. The scope of the analysis and description comprises the conduct of operations, force capability requirements, logistics, medical and engineering support, communication, arrangements for C2 and CIS, cooperation with civil authorities and other civil actors, and force protection.

Note: CPOE is supported by (and results from) Knowledge Development. The part conducted by J2 INTEL is called Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Operational Environment.

Coordinating Authority

The assigned responsibility for coordinating specific capabilities, functions or activities involving two or more agencies (organisations or commands). The individual with assigned Coordinating Authority has the authority to require consultation between the agencies involved or their representatives, but does not have the authority to compel agreement. In case of disagreement, he/she should attempt to obtain essential agreement by discussion. In the event he/she is unable to obtain essential agreement he/she shall refer the matter to the appropriate authority.

Coordination

Consultation in order to forge common action or harmonisation in a concerted manner. Co-ordination activities can involve both subordinates as well as those organisations over which the commander has no authority. Co-ordination results in carefully planned and executed activity in which the various elements involved in an operation – military and civil – are harmonised in such a manner as to provide the greatest advantage to the overall mission. Co-ordination does not require command relationships (subordination) but active participation of all involved. The co-ordination process usually is organised by the assignment of Coordinating Authority.

Cross-Cultural Awareness

The understanding of the differences between oneself and people from other countries or other backgrounds, especially differences in attitudes and values, based on conscious attention and knowledge of culture.

Cultural Awareness

The recognition that not all people are from the same cultural background, that people have different values, different behaviours and different approaches to life.

Decisive Condition

A combination of circumstances and effects, or a specific key event, critical factor or function that when achieved allows commanders to gain a marked advantage over an opponent or contributes materially to achieving an objective.

Effect

A change in the state of a system (or system element) that results from one or more actions or other causes. Desired effects are those that have a positive impact on the
achievement of objectives. Undesired effects are those that disrupt or jeopardize the achievement of objectives. Intended effects are predetermined effects, anticipated to result from the actions taken. Unintended effects are those that are not anticipated or envisioned to be associated with the objectives and actions taken. These effects may be desired or undesired.

End-State The (statement of) conditions that define(s) an acceptable concluding situation for the coalition’s military involvement.

Engagement Action taken against a hostile force with intent to deter, damage or neutralize it. (Synonym: Battle)

Engagement Space That part of the strategic environment to a particular crisis in which the coalition may decide, or has decided, to engage.

Information An assembly of data in any medium or form capable of communication and use by assigned meaning through known conventions used in symbolic representation.

Basic features of information are:

(1) Development of Knowledge: Information is data interpreted in a context, and in turn, enables the linkage of data as a basis for the development of knowledge – this function is a prerequisite for developing situational awareness and understanding;

(2) Communication: Information enables humans to communicate and act in a social environment – this function inter alia is a prerequisite for effective leadership;

(3) Automation: Information enables automated systems to function without direct involvement of human reasoning – this function constitutes a decisive factor for new technological advances, including the whole range of sensors and effectors.

Information Activity An action designed to have an effect in the Information Environment, performed by any actor.

Information Environment The virtual and physical space, in which information is received, processed and conveyed. It consists of the information itself and information systems.

Information Factor The actuality of information pervading societies, such as actors and audiences have become increasingly indistinguishable, and every action sends a message, intended or not. (In the military, information is meanwhile recognised as a decisive factor per se that will increasingly affect the operational factors force, space and time.)
Information Objective
A desired condition to be created in the information environment. It should be measurable to enable analysis, planning, execution/management and assessment/evaluation of related actions and effects.

Information Strategy
The interagency and multinational approach to crisis/conflict prevention and resolution in the Information Environment. It constitutes mission-specific strategic and political communication guidance for multi-agency activity of coalition partners across all levers of power in support of mission objectives.

Information System
A socio-technical system for the collection, processing and dissemination of information. It comprises personnel, technical components, organisational structures, and processes that create, collect, perceive, analyse, assess, structure, manipulate, store, retrieve, display, share, transmit and disseminate information.

Intercultural Communicative Competence
The ability of a person to behave adequately in a flexible manner when confronted with actions, attitudes and expectations of representatives of foreign cultures.

Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Operational Environment
A J2 process that provides an understanding of the operational environment as a basis for planning and assists in the implementation of the plan by identifying opportunities to promote decisive action. (The JIPOE process has replaced the former IPB – Intelligence Preparation of the Battlespace – process at the operational level.)

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Joint Military Commission
Formally established meetings of the Joint Task Force attended by two or more military representatives (usually commanders) of the parties in conflict / former warring factions. At such meetings, the parties meet under Joint Task Force supervision to coordinate joint activities, disseminate intent and instructions, and to resolve difference.

Joint Operations Area
A temporary area defined by the strategic commander, in which a designated joint commander plans and executes a specific mission at the operational level of war. A joint operations area and its defining parameters, such as time, scope of the mission and geographical area, are contingency- or mission-specific and are normally associated with combined joint task force operations.

Key Leader Engagement
The meeting of JTF military leaders with decision-makers of approved audiences that have defined goals. These
engagements can be used to shape and influence local leaders within the operations area or may also be directed toward specific groups (religious, academic, tribal, etc.).

Knowledge Development
A staff-wide process across all command levels that collects and analyses information, integrates isolated data into a usable body of information based on an understanding of systems, and makes it available so that it can be shared in order to develop comprehensive situation awareness and understanding of the operational environment, and support decision-making.

Line of Operations
A path linking decisive conditions to achieve an objective.

Measure of Effectiveness
The criteria, derived from indicators of system state, used to evaluate how system behaviour has been affected. The MOE will help answer the question “Was the intended new system state—the desired effect—created?” This may require multiple MOEs per effect to fully capture the changes in system states.

Measure of Performance
The criteria used to evaluate the accomplishment of own actions.

Narrative
The statement of identity, cause and intent around which people can unite.

Objective
A clearly defined and attainable goal to be achieved.

Operation
A sequence of coordinated actions with a defined purpose. (NATO operations contribute to a wider approach including non-military actions.)

Operational Environment
A composite of the conditions, circumstances, and influences that affect the employment of military forces and bear on the decisions of the commander. (Synonym: Operating Environment)

Permissive Environment: host country military and law enforcement agencies have control as well as the intent and capability to assist operations that a military force intends to conduct.

Uncertain Environment: host government forces, whether opposed to or receptive to operations that a military force intends to conduct, do not have totally effective control of the territory and population in the intended operational area.

Hostile Environment: hostile forces have control as well as the intent and capability to effectively oppose or react to the operations a military force intends to conduct.

Operations Assessment
The activity that enables the measurement of progress and results of operations in a military context, and the subsequent
development of conclusions and recommendations in support of decision-making.

Reachback
Process allowing, through the use of communication and information systems, to timely provide deployed forces with services and capabilities from expert organisations that are external to the theatre.

Security Environment
The totality of the factors, conditions and relations existing in the fundamental domains of human society and the international community (political, diplomatic, economic, military, social, ecological, juridical, informational, etc.), at a certain moment in time, over a certain reference geographical area.

Situation Awareness
The perception of the elements in the environment within a volume of time and space, the comprehension of their meaning, and the projection of their status in the near future.
Note: The term is often used incorrectly with the adjective form ‘situational’: situational awareness is awareness that just happens sometimes, and situation awareness is awareness of the situation.

Strategic Communication
The integration of military communication capabilities and functions with other military capabilities in order to understand and shape the Information Environment, inform, persuade or influence audiences in support of mission objectives, and to implement political will.

Synchronization
The process of precisely coordinating or matching two or more activities, devices, or processes in time.

System
A functionally, physically, and/or behaviourally related group of regularly interacting or interdependent elements forming a unified whole.

Theatre of Operations
A geographic space including areas deemed to be of political, diplomatic and/or military importance and designated by political and/or military authorities, where an operation may take place.
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Index
I. Communication Planning Principles

I.1. Principles of Joint and Multinational Operations

The fundamental principles of joint and multinational operations guide operations planning and hence the respective contributions from a communication perspective.

- **Unity of Effort.** Multinational operations depend on cooperation and coordination to realize maximum combined effect. Alignment of words and deeds to achieve a common end-state is the overall goal of all operations. Communication advice must, therefore, be provided to operations planning from the early beginning of the process. The Information Environment must be considered throughout effects development, activity planning and conduct of operations.

- **Concentration of Force.** Combat power should be concentrated at a pre-selected time and place designed to achieve decisive results. Capabilities for creating effects in the Information Environment are manifold and complex, and their activities may have unexpected and/or unintended side effects. A sound analysis of the Information Environment and the coordination, harmonization and synchronization of Information Activities is prerequisite for an effective integration of communication and combat power.

- **Economy of Effort.** In the absence of unlimited resources, it will be necessary to take risks in some areas. This implies the balance of available resources, given acceptable risk, against a commander’s priorities. The application of the principles of subsidiarity and empowerment will support the employment of communication means where they are available and best fit. Furthermore, pooling and sharing of capabilities (e.g., media assets) at higher levels may facilitate a shift of emphasis, as required.

- **Freedom of Action.** JTF commanders should be empowered to pursue their designated missions with a minimum of restrictions placed upon them. The application of the principles of subsidiarity and empowerment to communication efforts will enable commanders to effectively tailor their forces and employ their capabilities where they are needed.

- **Definition of Objectives.** Joint multinational operations must be focused towards clearly defined and commonly understood objectives that contribute to the achievement of the desired end-state. Information Objectives must be phrased to support strategic objectives.
and provide a focus on the Information Environment. The Narrative supports the building of
a corporate identity of the JTF and enables a widespread understanding of its mandate and
mission.

- **Flexibility.** Plans and procedures should be sufficiently flexible to respond to the unexpected
and to empower commanders with maximum freedom of action. Analysis and assessment of
the Information Environment is a continuous and essential task to detect changes and trends
that require the attention of communication practitioners. An appropriate variety of
communication means and techniques should be held available for expeditious reaction on
situation requirements.

- **Initiative.** Initiative is about recognizing and seizing opportunities and solving problems in an
original manner. It usually requires command authorities to be delegated to the lowest level
possible. Generally, communication must be proactive rather than reactive. Activities of the
JTF should be self-explanatory and not require parallel or later comment. The application of
the principles of subsidiarity and empowerment will support active communication.

- **Offensive Spirit.** At the core of offensive spirit is the notion of a pro-active mind-set to foster
confidence and encourage enterprise. This pro-active attitude of mind is the essence of
integrated communication: StratCom needs to drive operations by implementing the
Information Strategy and anticipate developments in the Information Environment in order
to effectively shape and respond.

- **Surprise.** Surprise is built on speed, secrecy and deception, and if successful, achieves results
disproportionate to the effort expended. It is not necessarily required that the JTF
communicates everything on a subject issue. The selective messaging of truthful information
(or even temporary silence) may serve deceptive purpose while not compromising the JTF’s
credibility.

- **Security.** Security enhances freedom of action by limiting vulnerability to hostile activities
and threats. Truthful information promotes authenticity and credibility, and reduces the risk
of wrongful accusation. Situation awareness and an appropriate level of operational
knowledge limit the JTF’s vulnerability to adversarial misinformation.

- **Simplicity.** Simple plans and clear orders minimize misunderstanding and confusion.
Effective communication depends on the perception of the audience, which can never be
fully controlled (as it is composed of numerous factors such as personal attitudes,
knowledge, experience, expectations, etc.). However, a first step in entering the sphere of
another one's perception is sending a clear message: "If language is not correct, then what is said is not what is meant; if what is said is not what is meant, then what ought to be done remains undone." (Confucius)

- **Maintenance of Morale.** High morale is essential for operational success. It depends on good leadership, which instils courage, energy, determination, respect and care both for and amongst the personnel under command. Command of multinational forces demands an attitude of mind that is not only international, but also able to understand differing national perspectives and how they relate to the common purpose. Cross-cultural awareness and intercultural communicative competence both have an internal and external dimension.

- **Sustainment.** Planning for sustainment encompasses strategy, tactics and administration. Ensuring a sound administrative baseline should be part of operations planning from the outset. Communication must be coherent and consistent. This requires foresighted strategic-political guidance (Information Strategy) and appropriate documentation mechanisms that enable comprehension of past activity and anticipation of future trends.


The principles for operations planning reflect the challenges for both civilian and military actors involved in planning for operations in a complex and uncertain security environment. They need to be considered for planning contributions from a communication perspective.

- **Coherence.** Every plan must positively contribute towards the accomplishment of the strategic objectives for addressing the crisis. Information Objectives must be clearly related to strategic objectives. Effects developed at the operational level must support the achievement of Information Objectives.

- **Comprehensive Understanding of the Environment.** Achieving the desired strategic outcomes must be understood at all echelons during planning and conduct of operations. Understanding the Information Environment is a prerequisite for purposeful effects development, activity planning and assessment of effects.

- **Mutual Respect, Trust, Transparency and Understanding.** Operations planning in support of the JTF’s contribution to a comprehensive approach should allow collaboration and cooperation across multinational and national bodies, among civil and military actors, and with other relevant actors and local authorities. Communication planning should always consider the 'end-user perspective', i.e., how own messages be understood by intended and
unintended audiences in a specific operational context. The Narrative and its operationalization will be key for promoting transparency, credibility and authenticity.

- **Consultation and Compatible Planning.** Mutually supportive, compatible, and wherever possible, concerted and harmonised planning is fundamental for success of a comprehensive approach. Civilian mission partners need to be involved in communication planning as much as possible, and communication planning products need to be prepared in a way that enables appropriate information exchange.

- **Efficient Use of Resources.** Decision-makers should be made aware of the risk of not adequately resourcing an operation. Planners must allow both military and non-military contributions to focus on and leverage their core competencies within the international response to a crisis. Communication planning needs to provide constant feedback to the higher command and identify potential resources at all levels for creating Information Effects. The application of the principles of subsidiarity and empowerment will support the employment of communication means where they best fit.

- **Flexibility and Adaptability.** Planning should accommodate an expanding set of circumstances, allowing due consideration for likely costs evaluated against benefits gained. Planning should be flexible enough to adjust to evolving political guidance, civil and military advice needed to facilitate collaborative planning and adapt to political requirements during a crisis. Analysis and assessment of the Information Environment is a continuous and essential task to detect changes and trends that require the attention of communication practitioners. Modified communication guidance must be forwarded to subordinate levels without filtering and as quickly as possible.
II. Options for Capturing Communication Planning Outputs

NATO doctrine is taken as a baseline for the design of an operational-level OPLAN. Based on results from experimentation, producing a stand-alone Communication Plan with information not contained in the OPLAN is not an option.

For the purpose of integration of communication guidance with the military OPLAN as well as for the coordination of efforts with other external and civilian counterparts, a combination of existing military planning products with an additional format for external use is suggested. Situation and mission requirements may demand the consideration of keeping operational-level communication guidance internal without intentional public disclosure.

An illustrative comparison of advantages and disadvantages includes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option 1 – Integration with Existing Formats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description: Incorporate operational-level communication guidance in the OPLAN, Main Body, Para 3.d “Concept of Operations” and Para 4.b.(7) “Coordinating Instructions / StratCom and Information Strategy”, in the Annex A “Concept of Operations” and the Annex SS “Strategic Communication”. Note that the functional annexes TT (PA), UU (Info Ops), VV (PSYOPS), and others, such as D (INTEL), Q (CIS) or W (CIMIC), need to be adjusted, as appropriate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages / PROs</th>
<th>Disadvantages / CONs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Best perception of fully integrated communication planning.</td>
<td>• Communication-related information is dispersed; hard to get the complete / big picture (requirement to read the whole OPLAN).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Communication-related information is allocated to all the appropriate text passages.</td>
<td>• Difficult to identify appropriate sections, paragraphs or annexes to incorporate new communication management proposals (such as the StratCom Directorate, Information Analysts and Planners).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Non-availability of an unclassified, stand-alone document for coordination and cooperation with external audiences (such as IOs and NGOs or local actors).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Requirement to de-classify information and produce another document for external use.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Option 2 – Amendment of Existing Formats


The Annex "Communication Management" may use the format of an Annex SS (StratCom). See supplement V.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages / PROs</th>
<th>Disadvantages / CONs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Communication-related information is allocated to all the appropriate text passages.</td>
<td>• Possible duplications / redundancies with functional annexes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Highlights communication-related information (own annex).</td>
<td>• Non-availability of an unclassified, stand-alone document for coordination and cooperation with external audiences (such as IOs and NGOs or local actors).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Opportunity to capture more information in a classified annex.</td>
<td>• Requirement to de-classify information and produce another document for external use.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Option 3 – Combination of Existing Formats and a Separate Communication Plan

**Description**: Produce an operational-level Communication Plan to summarise the major contributions to the OLPP from a communication perspective in a format similar to the Information Strategy (see Supplement V.1 – Information Strategy Format), and incorporate communication guidance in the OPLAN, Main Body, Para 3.d "Concept of Operations" and Para 4.b.(7) "Coordinating Instructions / StratCom and Information Strategy", in the Annex A "Concept of Operations", and functional annexes. Requirements for adjustment of annexes: as above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages / PROs</th>
<th>Disadvantages / CONs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Highlights communication-related information (communication plan).</td>
<td>• Potential perception of communication planning not fully integrated or separated from operations planning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Communication-related information is allocated to all the appropriate text passages.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Availability of an unclassified, stand-alone document for coordination and cooperation with external audiences (such as IOs and NGOs or local actors).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary:

Communication planning outputs – i.e., inputs to operations planning – should become an integral part of the OPLAN Main Body and annexes. As an UNCLASSIFIED excerpt from that, a Communication Plan should highlight the most important parts from a communication perspective, able to be shared with external actors for coordination of communication efforts.

Ideally, the mission-specific Narrative materialises in the Commander's intent statement. This prominently demonstrates the full integration of communication and highlights the importance of communication guidance for the conduct of military operations.
III. Campaign Synchronization

III.1. Mid-term Planning and Joint Functions

Campaign synchronization is the coordination and prioritisation of all efforts of the JTF in order to maximise the efficiency and synergism of all activities in time and space in accordance with the OPLAN. At an operational-level JTF HQ, the JCB is the Commander’s principal tool for campaign synchronization. It establishes the procedures and responsibilities for mid-term planning, integrating, synchronizing, de-conflicting, and executing joint fires, usually within the timeframe of Day 3 to Day 17, bridging the gap between the short-term conduct of current operations and long-term operations planning (see Figure 12).

Campaign synchronization is a command function managed by the J3 Operations staff in close cooperation with J5 Plans and – for contributing the joint targeting process – J2 INTEL. In this respect, one key purpose of campaign synchronization is to coordinate the employment of lethal and non-lethal actions to create specific physical and psychological effects in order to achieve military objectives and reach the desired end-state. Led by the Dir StratCom, all staff elements involved in communication management will have to contribute to campaign synchronization through appropriate processes in support of the JCB.

The primary objective of the JCB is to attain the most efficient use of the JTF’s resources and assets by capitalising on their synergistic effects. It is a decision-making body, usually chaired by the Deputy Commander or the ACOS J3, which involves all joint functions (see Figure 13): C2, INTEL, JOC, and JOPG.

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17 Default for high-intensity combat operations; time frame may expand in low-intensity stability operations.

18 Joint functions provide a sound framework of related capabilities and activities grouped together to assist JTF commanders to integrate, synchronize and direct various capabilities and activities in joint operations.
Manoeuvre and Fires, Sustainability, Force Protection (FP), and CIMIC. This handbook suggests adding Communication as another joint function, replacing Info Ops in the current understanding of NATO doctrine. Communication as a joint function should comprise a broader scope of capabilities and functions than Info Ops currently does, including PA and internal communication. Hence it will be represented by the Dir StratCom in all JTF HQ decision-making processes.

The JCB conducts regular meetings, prepared by the JCB Working Group (JCBWG, J3-led) and supported by the Joint Defended Assets Working Group (JDAWG, led by the designated Air Defence Commander of the JTF), the Daily Assets Reconnaissance Board (DARB, led by the Theatre Collection Manager / J2), the Joint Targeting Coordination Board (JTCB, J2 / J3 co-led), and the Assessment Working Group / Assessment Board (AWG/AB, J5-led). Current NATO doctrine also involves the IACB (J3-led) as a principal body in support of the JCB. Additional bodies involved in the joint coordination process are: the Joint Operations Centre (JOC, J3), the Joint Targeting Working Group (JTWG, usually operated at the Air Force Component level), the Target Support Cell (TSC, J2), and the Info Ops Working Group (IOWG, J3).

During conduct of operations, the JTCB integrates joint targeting into the campaign, crossing functional and component layers at the tactical, operational and strategic levels. The JTCB is typically responsible for: reviewing target information; developing targeting guidance and priorities; refining target lists; maintaining a list of restricted targets and areas where Special Operations Forces (SOF)
are operating; ensuring target nominations are consistent with the Commander’s intent and concept of operations; and ensuring that Information Activities are adequately addressed.

III.2. The Joint Coordination Board and Communication Management

In order to promote a common understanding of communication guidance throughout the joint coordination process, the Dir StratCom will have to take on his responsibility and play a visible role. A clear division of labour needs to be established amongst the staff elements involved in communication management, distinguishing between preparatory working groups and decision-making bodies. Attendance requirements for communication capabilities and functions at the JTCB, JCBWG and JCB need to be reconsidered in order to avoid duplication of effort and to ensure representation of communication expertise at the appropriate levels.

The Dir StratCom should be supported by a team of assistants and the CCB as his tool for communication management (see Chapter 3, Section E.2). Figure 14 shows the position and working relationships of a CCB in the Joint Coordination process. The CCB should link up with the IACB (to provide communication guidance and coordination to the targeting process), the AWG/AB (to assist operations assessment), the JOPG (to support operations planning), the JCBWG (to guide the
preparation of Joint Coordination Orders, JCOs), and the JCB (to participate in the decision-making process from a communication perspective). Details on the tasks and composition of a CCB are addressed in Chapter 3.

Figure 15 shows the proposed composition of a JTCB – without PA (and StratCom) representation. Once prepared by the CCB, Info Ops should be in a position to adequately contribute to the targeting process – based on direction by the Dir StratCom and coordinated with PA (considering that PA usually does not nominate 'targets' as such, but advises on potential public and media issues).

The JCBWG should involve a CCB representative in addition to PA and Info Ops (Figure 16). This is to ensure that the Dir StratCom (or a deputy or assistant of his choice) has a formal seat in JCBWG meetings to deliver his opinion. Although PA and Info Ops themselves are part of the CCB, their attendance is necessary to assure situation awareness and avoid misinterpretations.
The JCB assists the JTF’s activity and effects synchronization, specifically to prepare and issue the Commander’s priority guidance across the subordinate commands, and to resolve potential areas of conflict. The JCB assigns execution responsibilities, prioritises, de-conflicts and synchronizes all aspects of the employment of lethal and non-lethal means. The Commander provides, through the medium of the JCB, further amplification to his direction and guidance. JCB representatives must have the experience, knowledge and authority to take decisions (on behalf of their commanders).
2161 With respect to the decision-making function of the JCB, its high-level tasking authority, and its role in support of requests and recommendations to the strategic level, the Dir StratCom himself and the CPAO/Spokesperson should attend JCB meetings (Figure 17). Info Ops will be kept involved through the CCB and informed through their attendance at the JCBWG.
IV. Cultural Awareness and Communicative Competence

IV.1. Cultural Awareness and Cross-Cultural Awareness

Understanding of the Information Environment begins with the coalition partners' understanding of themselves and the acceptance of the JTF as their organisation. It requires awareness of their own national identity and understanding the rationale for becoming a member of the multinational coalition forming the JTF, as well as the conditions of this multinational environment.

Cultural awareness is the recognition that not all people are from the same cultural background; that people have different values, different behaviours and different approaches to life.

Cultural awareness is a first step in developing the required intercultural competences for effective cross-cultural communication. This requirement is as relevant for internal communication – between multinational coalition partners within and across the JTF and their staffs – as it is for external communication with foreign and domestic audiences.

Cultural awareness training would remain inadequate if its focus would primarily be intended to avoid embarrassing social offences in situations where members of foreign cultures meet. Awareness must not be mistaken simply as to know that it exists without understanding.

Cross-cultural awareness complements cultural awareness by adding the actionable, applied dimension of cultural literacy. The resulting intercultural competences can then be focused for communication efforts and developed into intercultural communicative competence.

Cross-cultural awareness is the understanding of the differences between oneself and people from other countries or other backgrounds, especially differences in attitudes and values, based on conscious attention and knowledge of culture.

Cultural awareness training must also stress language skills which constitute a decisive factor for interaction in a multinational environment – and for cross-cultural communication.

IV.2. Intercultural Communicative Competence

Intercultural communicative competence is the ability of a person to behave adequately and in a flexible manner when confronted with actions, attitudes and expectations of representatives of foreign cultures.

With joint markets and global communication, mass tourism and mass migration, the need to mediate between languages and cultures increases. Consequently, new notions of transnational and intercultural literacy develop, which recognise that communication with others who do not share our
background, and exposure to and contact with other modes of thinking is becoming essential to our
daily lives.

Training in the context of integrated communication should therefore aim at an integrated approach
to developing intercultural communicative competence (see Figure 18).

All JTF actors should engage in developing intercultural communicative competence. This will be
achieved mainly in two areas: cultural knowledge education and foreign language training.

**IV.3. Cultural Knowledge Education and Foreign Language Training**

Cross-cultural awareness involves the ability of standing back from ourselves and becoming aware of
others’ values, beliefs, perceptions, and modes or types of communication. It becomes central for
communication in a multinational context.

In order to develop intercultural communicative competence throughout the coalition and its
individual members, cultural knowledge education should be introduced as a standard training
subject. Cultural knowledge education aims at becoming competent within a foreign culture. A
thorough cultural educational background will prevent significant mistakes in cross-cultural
interaction and promote the effectiveness of JTF communication efforts. Cross-cultural awareness
will support both internal and external communication in a multinational coalition environment.
The knowledge of languages is the gateway to cultural understanding and international communication. There is a significant relationship between foreign language proficiency and the ability to develop a common (or corporate) identity in multinational environments such as a coalition JTF. In particular, internal communication and leadership depend on the ability to understand and use the language of the Lead Nation, which for many is a second language rather than their mother tongue.

Experience has shown that there are some observable behaviour patterns in multinational organisations that directly result from the status of being a native or non-native speaker\(^\text{19}\), and which have an effect on intra-organisational co-operation (Figure 19). Generally speaking, group behaviour may range between supportive and destructive concerning the cohesion of an organisation, depending on language proficiency and group interests.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Group Behaviour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Native Speakers</strong></td>
<td>ARROGANCE - neglect multinational integration - consider the organisation as national means with multinational augmentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>INCLUSIVENESS - accept cross-organisational responsibility to facilitate multinational integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Native Speakers</strong></td>
<td>PRESERVATION - insist on national discreteness while claiming authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ISOLATION - back out and establish own niche</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SUBSERVIENCE - unconditional fealty for native speakers / lead nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MULTINATIONALISATION - suppress national identity to serve the organisation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 19: Language Skills and Group Behaviour

Although interacting linguistic, psychological and sociocultural factors determine individual language proficiency to an extent that makes it almost impossible to predict related group behaviour, it can be considered a valid assumption that good language skills can foster cohesion and facilitate the development of a common identity amongst the members of complex organisations such as a coalition Joint Task Force.

Language shapes the way we behave and think: when we learn our mother tongue, we do after all acquire certain habits of thought that determine our experience in significant ways. In other words,

\(^{19}\) In this context the labels 'native' and 'non-native' are used in a generic sense and do not refer to a specific language or nationality. Also, the respective behaviour patterns shown in the Figure are illustrative and very much depend on individual attitudes.
the availability of symbols for objects influences our perception of these. Recent studies indicate that
different languages influence our minds in different ways and that this it is not because of what our
language allows us to think but rather because of what it habitually obliges us to think about. This
distinctive quality of learning languages needs to be considered in cultural knowledge education and
the development of intercultural communicative competence.

Intercultural communicative competence in support of communication within an organisation
requires remarkably different standards than that in external communication. Whereas for internal
communication the skills of 'reading' and 'writing' may often become as important as the oral skills,
'listening' and 'speaking' may become predominant for external communication in international crisis
management interventions.

All personnel deploying to a foreign country should acquire minimum standards in speaking and
understanding the local language, relative to their prospective tasks. Local populations will not
expect accentless command of their language from coalition actors but appreciate their honest
endeavours of authentic communication.

The employment of interpreters is another option for cross-cultural communication. However, co-
operation with interpreters needs to be trained, *inter alia* with respect to interpersonal and security
aspects. This indirect approach to communication may jeopardise authenticity and negatively affect
the credibility of the messenger if there isn't a very close and trusting working relationship.
V. Templates

V.1. Information Strategy, Format

REFERENCES: (to mandating, strategic assessments and planning)

1. INTRODUCTION

A. SLOGAN
(Name of the operation/mission with reference background or explanation, as required)

B. PURPOSE AND SCOPE
(Strategic-political dimension: partner nations and populations, all instruments of power, global perspective)

C. CUSTODIAN AND CUSTOMERS
(Strategic commander; partners/allies, contributing nations, operational/force commander)

D. REVIEW AND APPROVAL
(Periodical and event-driven; political approval)

2. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

A. ASSESSMENT OF THE INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT
(Synopsis; reference to separate document(s), as appropriate)

B. MANDATE AND MISSION
(Summary of relevant UNSCRs; strategic commander’s mission)

C. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES
(From strategic planning; non-military and military)

3. NARRATIVE AND INFORMATION OBJECTIVES

A. NARRATIVE STATEMENT
(Strategic-political dimension: partner nations and populations, all instruments of power, global perspective, derived from mandate)

B. INFORMATION OBJECTIVES
(Linked to strategic objectives; phrasing: subject focus – quality of change - conclusion)

C. APPROVED AUDIENCES AND TARGETS
(Bullet list; amended with caveats, as required)

D. THEMES AND MASTER MESSAGES
(Not linked to specific audiences/targets; general overview; include Contingency Master Messages and Themes to be avoided)

4. POTENTIAL ACTORS AND CAPABILITIES
(Strategy-political level, all instruments of power; national responsibilities)

5. IMPLEMENTATION

A. MILESTONES AND KEY EVENTS
(Milestones = decisive points; key events = important occurrences that happen anyway / periodically, story events that may lead to milestones or result from them)

B. COMMUNICATION APPROACH
(Broad description: mapping of audiences/targets, themes and master messages for each Information Objective; continuous text)

6. COORDINATION REQUIREMENTS
(Procedures ref. to partners/allies, information sharing arrangements, dialogue and interaction between civilian and military actors; coordination between military and civil mission components in theatre)
V.2. OPLAN Annex SS (Strategic Communication), Format

REFERENCES: (to mandating, Information Strategy, operational assessments and planning)

1. INTRODUCTION
   A. PURPOSE AND SCOPE
      (Relevance to the operational and tactical levels)
   B. CUSTODIAN AND CUSTOMERS
      (Communication capabilities and functions, HQ activities)
   C. RELATED OPLAN ANNEXES
      (List of annexes for specific consideration of StratCom guidance)

2. CONTEXT
   A. ASSESSMENT OF THE INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT
      (Synopsis; reference to separate document(s), as appropriate)
   B. MANDATE AND MISSION
      (Summary of relevant UNSCRs; strategic and operational commander’s mission)

3. NARRATIVE AND INFORMATION OBJECTIVES
   A. INFORMATION STRATEGY
      (Strategic reference)
   B. OPERATIONAL MISSION NARRATIVE
      (Focused on the military aspects of the mission)
   C. INFORMATION OBJECTIVES AND OPERATIONAL IMPLICATIONS
      (List of Information Objectives from the Information Strategy, each with explanation/operationalization for military implementation)
   D. INFORMATION OBJECTIVES, DECISIVE CONDITIONS AND THE INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT
      (Linking of Information Objectives and Decisive Conditions as starting-point for the development of effects in the Information Environment)

4. THEMES AND MASTER MESSAGES
   (List of themes and master messages from the Information Strategy; additional operational-level themes and master messages, as required)

5. AUDIENCES AND TARGETS
   (Approved audiences and targets; strategic, operational and tactical)

6. ACTORS AND CAPABILITIES
   (Operational and tactical communication capabilities and functions)

5. IMPLEMENTATION
   (Milestones and key events to be exploited for creating effects in the Information Environment; communication principles, e.g., transparency, comprehensive approach)

6. COORDINATION REQUIREMENTS
   (General working relationships; Communication Coordination Board introduction; approval of PA and PSYOPS Information Activities)

APPENDIX SS-1 KEY LEADER ENGAGEMENT
   (Definition; principles; responsibilities of StratCom and Info Ops)
### V.3. Key Leader Engagement Plan, Format

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(1) Information Objective</th>
<th>(2) Operational Effect / Message(s)</th>
<th>(3) Information Requirements</th>
<th>(4) Preparation Lead</th>
<th>(5) Date</th>
<th>(6) Location</th>
<th>(7) Milestone Event</th>
<th>(8) Key Leader(s)</th>
<th>(9) Stakeholders / Conversational Partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>XYZ HQ Key Leader Engagement Plan</strong> (as of: DD/MMM/YYYY)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Repeat table for additional Information Objectives, as required]
KEY:

(1) Respective Information Objective(s) (from Annex SS).

(2) Supported Operational Effect and (Master) Messages (from Annex SS and Info Ops Activity Coordination Matrix).

(3) Information to be gained from a KLE meeting in support of Information Activities.

(4) Responsible POC for preparing the meeting and providing the Influence Briefing Package and Talking Points.

(5) Date of the KLE meeting.

(6) Location of the KLE meeting.

(7) Related Milestone Event (e.g., conference, JMC meeting), if applicable.

(8) Joint Task Force military leaders to meet with external conversational partners.

(9) (External) Decision-makers of approved audiences to be engaged in a planned meeting.

Enclosures:

Influence Briefing Package

Talking Points
V.4. HQ SOP – Annex Strategic Communication, Format

1. MISSION OVERVIEW
(Brief description of the StratCom function)

2. COMMUNICATION COORDINATION BOARD (CCB)
(Purpose; incorporation into the Joint Coordination process; composition)

3. TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
(Key tasks and responsibilities of HQ communication capabilities and functions / communication specialists)

A. STRATCOM DIRECTORATE
B. PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICERS
C. J2 INFORMATION ANALYSTS
D. J3 INFO OPS
E. J5 INFORMATION PLANNERS

4. COMMAND AND CONTROL
(C2 arrangements for HQ communication capabilities and functions listed in Para 3; reporting, supervision, cooperation, and liaison)

5. BATTLE RHYTHM

A. STRATCOM KEY ACTIVITIES
(List of all meetings with attendance of communication specialists; purpose)

B. ATTENDANCE AT HQ MEETINGS
(Table indicating attendance requirements of HQ communication specialists, reference to Paras 3 and 5.a)

6. COORDINATION

A. DEFINITIONS
B. PRINCIPLES
C. RESPONSIBILITIES

APPENDIX – GENERIC STANDING AGENDA FOR CCB MEETINGS
### V.5. Generic Standing Agenda for CCB Meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>LEAD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. General (Situation) Overview</td>
<td>Dir StratCom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. COMBFOR’s Intent Update</td>
<td>Dir StratCom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Information Strategy Update</td>
<td>SO StratCom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Information Environment Update</td>
<td>J2 Information Analyst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. PA Update</td>
<td>CPAO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Civilian Mission Partners Update</td>
<td>SO StratCom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Civil Actors Update</td>
<td>SO StratCom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Current Operations Update</td>
<td>SO StratCom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Component Commands Update</td>
<td>SO StratCom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Information Activities &amp; Targeting Update</td>
<td>J3 Info Ops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. KLE Planning Update</td>
<td>SO StratCom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. StratCom Guidance:</td>
<td>Dir StratCom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. JCB / JCBWG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Operations Planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Info Ops &amp; Targeting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Operations Assessment</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>e. PA</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### VI. Examples

#### VI.1. Illustrative Examples for Information Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;All national and domestic actors...&quot;</td>
<td>...understand coalition aims, objectives, and intent...</td>
<td>...in order to ensure the continued willingness for member partners to continue their participation and maintain coalition cohesion.&quot; Supports all strategic objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Communications and information infrastructure in XYZ and the region...&quot;</td>
<td>...is functioning and reliable...</td>
<td>...to enable wide-ranging and reliable communication between all actors and the populations in the region.&quot; Supports strategic objective: &quot;Conditions that improve the economy, social welfare and humanitarian affairs of country XYZ.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Relevant actors in the region...&quot;</td>
<td>...are convinced to promote a positive vision of the future through dialogue, cooperation and education...</td>
<td>...in order to gain active participation and support for the stabilization and sustainable development of the region.&quot; Supports strategic objective: &quot;Political process agreed among XYZ institutions and civil society, to allow for free and fair elections that will result in the full and equal participation of all stakeholders in the political future of XYZ, initiated within the constitutional framework.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Telecommunication and C2 lines of communication of the L.M. Gang...&quot;</td>
<td>...are disrupted...</td>
<td>...in order to reduce their insurgent capability and contribute to local security in the ABC region.&quot; Supports strategic objective: &quot;Establishment of a safe and secure environment in which the government of XYZ exercises effective control of its entire territory and the security forces refrain from human rights violations.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### VI.2. Illustrative Examples for Themes and Master Messages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME:</th>
<th>&quot;Acceptance of the Coalition&quot; <em>(Understanding of coalition aims is a prerequisite for achieving enhanced security and building an environment that is favourable for coalition activity.)</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **MASTER MESSAGES:** | - We support the XYZ government and people and will leave XYZ as soon as our mandate is complete.  
- We are actively generating support within the International Community for the benefit of the XYZ people.  
- The XYZ government has requested us to support the development of the infrastructure, economy and social services.  
- The coalition will respond in an even handed manner to situations regardless of the affiliation of individuals or groups involved. (…) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME:</th>
<th>&quot;Favourable Conditions for Development&quot; <em>(There are certain conditions that have to be met as a prerequisite for effective coalition activity. Most of these require collective effort.)</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **MASTER MESSAGES:** | - The military component is in XYZ to provide security and logistics for the coalition and humanitarian organisations to allow them to make their job.  
- Violence is the wrong way to solve your problems and might lead to reduced international support.  
- We will support the development of an open and accessible information environment which will allow a constructive dialogue between all sides.  
- We are encouraging the local communities to accept refugees/IDPs on a temporary basis. We will support their return as soon as the situation allows. (…) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME:</th>
<th>&quot;Local Initiative, Involvement, Commitment &amp; Self-confidence&quot; <em>(The people of XYZ and the ABC region should perceive their future being as achievable and within reach of own initiatives. Coalition assistance must not be mistaken as dependence.)</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **MASTER MESSAGES:** | - Substantial improvements in life conditions can only be achieved if the XYZ people mobilise and utilise their resources, capabilities, and abilities.  
- The XYZ government and people are capable to substantially contribute to overcoming present problems and creating better conditions. (…) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME:</th>
<th>&quot;Local and Regional Dialogue and Cooperation&quot; <em>(The coalition should empower self-help. An important factor to enable this ambition is a sense of commonality and interdependence.)</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **MASTER MESSAGES:** | - All actors are called upon to cooperate with relevant institutions that comply with the XYZ constitution.  
- We will support the development of an open and accessible information environment which will allow a constructive dialogue between all sides.  
- We encourage all sides of the conflict to start and continue a dialogue concerning the reconciliation process. (…) |
VI.3. Information Strategy (CJSE 16)
ENCLOSURE 1 (separate document)

VI.4. OPLAN Annex SS (CJSE 16)
ENCLOSURE 2 (separate document)

VI.5. OPLAN Annex TT (CJSE 16)
ENCLOSURE 3 (separate document)

VI.6. OPLAN Annex UU (CJSE 16)
ENCLOSURE 4 (separate document)

VI.7. OPLAN Annex W (CJSE 16)
ENCLOSURE 5 (separate document)

VI.8. Key Leader Engagement Materials (CJSE 16)
ENCLOSURE 6 (separate document)

VI.9. Job Description: Director StratCom (CJSE 16)
ENCLOSURE 7 (separate document)