

**BY ORDER OF THE COMMANDER
AIR FORCE SPECIAL OPERATIONS
COMMAND**

**AIR FORCE SPECIAL OPERATIONS
COMMAND INSTRUCTION 11-2DSO,
VOLUME 3**



**12 DECEMBER 2013
Certified Current 01 December 2016**

**Flying Operations
DIRECT SUPPORT OPERATOR
OPERATIONS PROCEDURES**

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RELEASABILITY: There are no releasability restrictions on this publication.

OPR: HQ AFSOC/A3V

Certified by: HQ AFSOC/A3V
(Col Timothy D. Sartz)

Pages: 20

This instruction implements Air Force Policy Directive (AFPD) 11-2, *Aircrew Operations*, and references Air Force Instruction (AFI) 11-202, Vol 3, *General Flight Rules*, AFI 11-200, *Aircrew Training, Standardization/Evaluation*, as well as the appropriate Air Force Tactics Techniques and Procedures (AFTTP). It provides policies and procedures to Direct Support Operators (DSO) flying on Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) aircraft under most circumstances but should not replace sound judgment. This instruction applies to AFSOC associated Air Force Reserve Command (AFRC) and Air National Guard (ANG) units. This instruction may be supplemented, see [Paragraph 1.6](#) for guidance. This publication requires the collection and or maintenance of information protected by the Privacy Act of 1974 authorized by 37 USC 301a (Incentive Pay), Public Law 92-204, Section 715 (Appropriations Act for 1973), Public Laws 93-570 (Appropriations Act for 1974) and 93-294 (Aviation Career Incentive Act of 1974), DODD 7730.57 (Aviation Career Incentive Act of 1974 and Required Annual Report, February 5, 1976, with Changes 1 and 2), and Executive Order 9397 (SSN) as amended by Executive Order 13478, Amendments to Executive Order 9397, Relating to Federal Agency Use of Social Security Numbers, November 18, 2008. The applicable SORN, F011 AF XO A, Aviation Resource Management Systems (ARMS), is available at: <https://dpclo.defense.gov/privacy/SORNS/SORNS.html>. Forms affected by the PA have an appropriate PA statement. System of records notice F011 AF/XO-A, *Aviation Resource Management System* (ARMS) applies. Refer to [Attachment 1](#) for a Glossary of references, abbreviations and terms. Refer recommended changes and questions about this publication to the office of Primary Responsibility (OPR) using the Air Force (AF) Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*; route AF Forms 847 from the field through the appropriate functional's chain of command, Headquarters (HQ) Air Force Special Operations

Command (AFSOC)/Standardization and Evaluation (A3V), 100 Bartley Street, 141W, Hurlburt Field, FL 32544-1015. Waiver authority is addressed within this document in **Paragraph 1.4**. Ensure that all records created as a result of processes prescribed in this publication are maintained in accordance with (IAW) Air Force Manual (AFMAN) 33-363, *Management of Records*, and disposed of in accordance with Air Force Records Information Management Systems (AFRIMS) Records Disposition Schedule (RDS) The use of the name or mark of any specific manufacturer, commercial product, commodity, or service in this publication does not imply endorsement by the Air Force.

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Chapter 1

GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1. General. This volume provides guidelines and restrictions for DSOs who operate onboard AFSOC aircraft. It is an original source document for many areas, but AFSOC mission-specific areas will remain in their applicable AFI 11-2 Mission Design Series (MDS), Vol 3. DSOs will be familiar with applicable AFI 11-2MDS, Vol 3, for aircraft in which they hold qualification. If conflicting DSO guidance is given in aircraft tactics manuals or handbooks, this volume takes precedence. It is written for normal and contingency operations to reduce procedural changes at the onset of contingencies. All DSO operations shall be conducted in accordance with United States (US) domestic law and international law, to include the law of armed conflict. Training procedures are included. HQ AFSOC/A3V has overall responsibility for the administration of this volume. In the absence of clear defining guidance in this instruction, see applicable AFI 112MDS Volumes. (T-2)

1.2. Applicability. This instruction is applicable to DSO operations. References to units, personnel, and aircraft in this annex include all gained forces unless specifically exempted by this instruction.

1.3. Terms Explained.

1.3.1. "Will," and "Shall" indicate a mandatory requirement.

1.3.2. "Should" indicates a recommended procedure.

1.3.3. "May" indicates an acceptable or suggested means of accomplishment.

1.3.4. "**WARNING**" Operating procedures, techniques, etc., which will result in personal injury or loss of life if not carefully followed.

1.3.5. "**CAUTION**" Operating procedures, techniques, etc., which will result in damage to equipment if not carefully followed.

1.3.6. "**Note**" Operating procedures, techniques, etc., which are essential to emphasize.

1.3.7. See [Attachment 1](#), *Glossary of References and Supporting Information*, for additional terms, definitions, and references.

1.4. Deviations and Waivers. Do not deviate from the policies and guidance in this instruction, except when the situation demands immediate action to ensure safety. Report deviations, without waiver, through channels to HQ AFSOC/A3 within 24 hours, followed by a written report.

1.4.1. Although this instruction provides guidance for DSO operations under most circumstances, it is not a substitute for sound judgment. When it is necessary to protect the crew and aircraft from a situation not covered by this instruction and immediate action is required, the Pilot in Command (PIC) has ultimate authority and responsibility for the course of action to be taken. Report all deviations or exceptions to this instruction without a waiver through channels to HQ AFSOC/A3.

1.4.2. Unless otherwise indicated, HQ AFSOC/A3 is the waiver authority for operational procedure requirements contained in this instruction. HQ AFSOC/A3 may delegate this

authority to the Commander Special Operations Air Forces (COMAFSOF) for operationally assigned Special Operations Forces. Request waivers to this instruction through proper command and control channels.

1.4.3. Tier requirements refer to waiver authority based on level of risk.

1.4.3.1. “Tier 0” (T-0) requirements are reserved for requirements that non-compliance is determined and waived by respective non-Air Force authority.

1.4.3.2. “Tier 1” (T-1) requirements are reserved for requirements that non-compliance may put airman, mission, or program strongly at risk, and may only be waived by the major command (MAJCOM)/commander (CC) or delegate with concurrence of publication approver. When multiple MAJCOMs are affected, then T-1 is appropriate.

1.4.3.3. “Tier 2” (T-2) requirements are reserved for requirements that potentially put the mission at risk or potentially degrade the mission or program, and may only be waived by the MAJCOM/CC or delegate.

1.4.3.4. “Tier 3” (T-3) requirements are reserved for requirements that non-compliance has a remote risk of mission failure, and may be waived by the Wing/CC but no lower than the OG/CC.

1.5. Distribution.

1.5.1. DSO Unit/CCs, All Levels — 1

1.5.2. Operational File (Ops Section), All Levels — 1

1.5.3. Flight Crew Information File (FCIF) — 1

1.5.4. Aircrew — 1

1.6. Supplements. Units may supplement this instruction. The purpose of the unit supplement is to document the process by which units implement the requirements of this instruction. Post the unit supplement behind the basic instruction. Supplements should not duplicate and will not be less restrictive than the provisions of this or any other publication without prior authorization from HQ AFSOC/A3V. (T-2)

1.7. Requisitioning Procedures. Order this volume through the Publication Distribution Office. Unit Commanders provide copies for all aircrew members and associated support personnel as directed by **Paragraph 1.5**.

1.8. Improvement Recommendations. Personnel at all echelons are encouraged to submit proposed changes IAW AFI 11-202, Vol 2, AFSOCSUP, *Aircrew Standardization/Evaluation Program*, through MAJCOM Standardization and Evaluation channels to HQ AFSOC/A3V. Use AF Form 847.

1.9. Development of New Equipment and Procedures. Units are encouraged to suggest new equipment, methods, tactics and procedures. Coordinate these requirements through 361 ISRG.

1.10. Roles and Responsibilities. For Roles and Responsibilities, refer to **Paragraph 1.4** and **Chapter 2**.

Chapter 2

COMMAND AND CONTROL (C2)

2.1. General. The AFSOC C2 system is based on the principles of centralized monitoring and decentralized control and execution. The result is a C2 mechanism which keeps the AFSOC/CC informed of the current status of AFSOC forces while enabling the Wing (Wg), Group (Gp), or Squadron (Sq) Commander (CC) to exercise control over the day-to-day operations. Defining guidance for DSO employment is outlined in the HQ AFSOC/AF Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) Agency Memorandum of Agreement (MOA).

2.2. Administrative Control (ADCON). The AF ISR Agency exercises ADCON of 361 ISRG personnel.

2.3. Operational Control (OPCON). AFSOC is the air component to the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM). USSOCOM may delegate OPCON of all Air Force Special Operations Forces (AFSOF) aircraft assigned or allocated to USSOCOM. In circumstances where OPCON of AFSOF aircraft has been provided to the Theater Special Operations Commands (TSOC) within a Geographic Combatant Command for theater-based assets, AFSOC is typically designated as the controlling agency for such assets and assigned aircrew. **Exception:** In practice, responsibility for planning and executing AFSOC missions is routinely delegated to the Wg/CC or Gp/CC. The Wg/CC or Gp/CC, in turn, exercises control of non-close-hold missions through the command post supporting the wing or group. In the event that assigned forces undergo a change in operational control, responsibility for mission monitoring passes from the wing or group C2 facility to the gaining command. Changeover will be accomplished in accordance with the pertinent Operational Plan, Operational Order, Deployment Order, or Execution Order. **Note:** For certain close-hold activities, security considerations may compel the Wg/CC or Gp/CC to shift mission monitoring responsibilities from the command post to another wing, group, or theater agency. The Wg/CC or Gp/CC will ensure procedures are established for the responsible agency to monitor mission progress and advise the HQ AFSOC/A3 or AFSOC/CC as appropriate. For mission monitoring guidance, adhere to applicable AFI 11-2MDS, Vol 3. (T-2)

2.4. SILENT SHIELD. SILENT SHIELD is a capability that includes a specially trained aircrew member and specifically designed equipment to provide threat warning, enhances SA, and target cueing to special operation forces (SOF) (see applicable AFTTP 3-1 for expanded DSO equipment information). When deployed, SILENT SHIELD refers to a team that may include a mission commander (MC), Team Chief (TC), DSO, Direct Support Analysts (DSA), computer support and maintenance personnel, as well as all associated mission and mission support equipment. The size and composition of the team primarily depends on the mission type, number of aircraft supported, deployment length, and available DSO personnel. Coordinate DSO support as soon as possible in the pre-deployment planning process to ensure personnel and equipment are available. This lead-in time also will allow the DSAs to provide quality intelligence data to the DSOs. Deployment of the DSO and mission equipment with the mission aircraft (organic) is preferred especially if the forward operating base (FOB) is in or near a high threat area. This will preclude the possibility of lost support due to airlift delays.

2.4.1. SILENT SHIELD Personnel.

2.4.1.1. Mission Commander. The MC is normally an officer or Senior Non-Commissioned Officer (SNCO) who acts as a liaison to AFSOC flying units and administrative point of contact (POC) during the deployment. The MC is an advisor to the deployed commanders and is subordinate to the deployed operations officer (DO/A-3/J-3 as appropriate).

2.4.1.2. Team Chief. The TC is a senior DSO, SNCO preferred, who exercises supervision of the SILENT SHIELD team and mission. The TC is the operational POC for the deployment and is considered the SILENT SHIELD subject matter expert. The TC acts as the senior mission planner and may also fly as a DSO.

2.4.1.3. DSO. The DSO performs the mission as defined in applicable AFTTP 3-1.

2.4.1.4. Direct Support Analyst. Specially trained DSAs deploy with the DSOs. The DSAs are specially trained analysts who are experienced in Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) analysis and its application to SOF missions. These analysts provide vital technical information to the DSOs as part of mission planning. Additionally, DSAs perform mission monitoring and may pass pertinent technical or threat data to the DSO in-flight via secure communications. DSAs produce technical reports based on DSO-specific debrief items. These reports are separate from normal mission report (MISREP) production.

2.4.1.5. Computer Support Personnel. SILENT SHIELD computer support personnel maintain and repair all mission and mission support computers.

2.4.1.6. Maintenance Personnel. SILENT SHIELD maintenance personnel are trained in all aspects of SILENT SHIELD equipment hardware and software. They can perform all levels of maintenance short of depot level. Maintenance personnel also provide logistic support for mission equipment to the team.

2.5. Pilot in Command Responsibility and Authority. AF Form 4327A, *Crew Flight Authorization*, designates a PIC for all flights. The PIC is:

2.5.1. In command of all persons aboard the aircraft.

2.5.2. Responsible for the welfare of their crew, Mission Essential Personnel (MEP), passengers, and the safe accomplishment of the mission.

2.5.3. Vested with the authority necessary to manage the crew and accomplish the mission.

2.5.4. The final mission authority and will make decisions not specifically assigned to a higher authority.

2.5.5. The final authority for accepting a waiver affecting the crew or mission.

2.5.6. Charged with keeping the applicable commander informed of mission progress and difficulties.

2.5.7. Responsible for the timely reporting of aircraft movements in the absence of a MC.

Chapter 3

AIRCREW COMPLEMENT AND MANAGEMENT

3.1. Aircrew Qualification. Each person assigned as a primary crew member will be qualified or in training for qualification in that crew position, mission, and aircraft. (T-2)

3.2. Crew Complement. The normal crew complement for DSO operations is one, IAW AFI 65-503, *US Air Force Cost and Planning Factors*, Table 36.1.

3.2.1. Logging of Flying Time. Log flying time IAW AFI 11-401, *Aviation Management*.

3.3. Interfly. Interfly is the exchange and/or substitution of aircrew members and/or aircraft between MAJCOMs to accomplish flying missions. Normally, interfly should be limited to specific operations/tests, exercises, or special circumstances.

3.3.1. IAW letters of agreement (LOA) or MOAs, 361 ISR Group personnel are authorized interfly on designated AFRC, Air Education Training Command, and NGB aircraft.

3.4. Intrafly. The OG/CC or COMAFSOF is the approval authority for intrafly of AFSOC crew members on aircraft under their control.

3.4.1. 361 ISR Group personnel are authorized intrafly on any AFSOC-assigned aircraft.

3.4.2. As a minimum, aircrews will be qualified in the applicable aircraft. (T-2)

3.5. Scheduling Restrictions. DSO scheduling restrictions are IAW AFI 11-202, Vol 3, *General Flight Rules*, and MAJCOM Supplement.

3.6. Alert Crew Procedures. See AFI 11-202, Vol 3, and MAJCOM Supplement.

3.7. Flight Duty Period and Crew Rest Restrictions. See AFI 11-202, Vol 3, and MAJCOM Supplement.

Chapter 4

AIRCRAFT OPERATING GUIDELINES

4.1. General. This chapter provides guidance for operations with certain degraded equipment. If the aircraft commander elects to operate with degraded equipment or aircraft systems, coordinate mission requirements (i.e., revised departure times, fuel requirements, maintenance requirements, etc.) prior to flight with the mission control agency to ensure the decision does not adversely impact follow-on missions.

4.2. Responsibility. The final responsibility regarding required equipment for a mission rests with the aircraft commander. If one aircraft commander accepts an aircraft to conduct a mission or mission segment with a degraded or inoperative item or system, this acceptance does not commit that aircraft commander, or a different aircraft commander, to subsequent operations with the same item or system inoperative. When the aircraft commander considers an item essential, designate the component mission essential (ME) on the Air Force Technical Order (AFTO) Form 781A, *Aircrew/Mission Flight Data Document*, and the item will be repaired or replaced prior to departure. (T-2)

4.2.1. The DSO will inform the aircraft commander of degraded DSO equipment prior to crew check-in. (T-2) After crew check-in, when aircraft operations allow, the DSO will inform the aircraft commander or designated crew member in a timely manner of any changes in mission systems. (T-2)

Chapter 5

AIRLAND OPERATIONS

5.1. General. This chapter establishes procedures for DSO employment during airland operations while operating onboard AFSOC aircraft. In addition to the guidance outlined below refer to AFI 11-202, Vol 3, and the 11-2MDS, Vol 3, *General Operating Procedures*, chapter for MDS-specific guidance.

5.2. Checklists/In-Flight Guides. Accomplish all checklists/in-flight guides, as required, with strict discipline. A checklist/in-flight guide is not complete until all items have been accomplished.

5.2.1. Direct Support Operators will use the HQ AFSOC/A3V approved checklist/in-flight guide for their duty position when conducting ground or flight operations. (T-2)

5.2.2. Direct Support Operators may use approved checklist/in-flight guides modified with notes, amplifying procedures, and limits provided the checklist/in-flight guides and notes are current. Currency of notes is the crew member's responsibility.

Chapter 6

GENERAL OPERATING PROCEDURES

6.1. General. This chapter establishes procedures for DSO employment on AFSOC aircraft. In addition to the duties listed in applicable technical orders (TO), directives, and this instruction, the PIC may assign other duties as necessary. The DSO is primarily responsible for providing inputs to enhance aircrew situational awareness. In addition to the guidance outlined below refer to the 11-2MDS, Vol 3, *General Operating Procedures*, chapter for MDS-specific guidance.

6.2. Mission Planning Factors.

6.2.1. Mission Planning. Detailed information on mission planning can be found in this instruction, AFTTP 3-1, Vol 1 (S), *General Planning and Employment Considerations*, AFTTP 3-1, Vol 2 (S), *Threat Reference Guide and Countertactics*, and MDS specific AFTTP 3-1 (S) and AFTTP 3-3 (U) volumes.

6.2.2. The DSO, after coordinating with appropriate entities will conduct mission planning with the aircrew. The DSO will brief expected scenario inputs based on the analytical data, as required. (T-2)

6.2.3. The DSO is responsible for coordinating with all appropriate agencies to obtain all required or anticipated mission planning, professional, and SILENT SHIELD equipment for the duration of the flight/deployment. The DSO will ensure all equipment is inventoried and inspected prior to flight/deployment. (T-2)

6.3. Preflight/In-Flight Responsibilities. The DSO will: (T-2)

6.3.1. Brief the crew on SILENT SHIELD equipment configuration and anticipated inputs.

6.3.2. Ensure the crew is aware of SILENT SHIELD capabilities and limitations, OPSEC considerations, and emergency destruction procedures.

6.3.3. Monitor situational awareness information and relay pertinent information to the crew.

6.3.4. Advise the crew of any change in the status of mission equipment.

6.3.5. The DSO is responsible for knowing approximate aircraft location, altitude, and intentions at all times.

6.4. Communications Procedures. When missions require the DSO to communicate, they will obtain proper frequencies, time hack, schedules, call signs, and communications security (COMSEC) material prior to flight. Depending on the nature of the mission and the communications, the DSO will keep the crew updated on any pertinent information and will coordinate with the PIC for authorization to transmit. Any DSO-related COMSEC equipment loaded during the course of the mission will be zeroized at the end of the mission. (T-2)

6.4.1. On all AFSOC aircraft, the DSO will coordinate with the crew during mission planning regarding interphone connectivity. (T-2)

6.5. Post Mission. In addition to appropriate debriefs, the DSO will also ensure: (T-2)

6.5.1. Equipment write-ups are passed on to SILENT SHIELD maintenance.

6.5.2. Post mission technical summary (TECHSUM) inputs are provided to the supporting analyst.

6.5.3. Provide information to their units summarizing mission events, as required.

6.6. Augmentation. Some contingency operations may require operators from other units, or in some cases, non-aircrew personnel to provide tactical cryptological support. In these cases, a mission-ready instructor-qualified DSO will fly as primary DSO, and be responsible for DSO inputs. (T-2)

Chapter 7

AIRCRAFT SECURITY

7.1. General. As an aircrew member onboard AFSOC aircraft the DSO is required to be familiar with the proper procedures and guidance to help maintain the security of the aircraft. Refer to the 11-2MDS, Vol 3, *Aircraft Security*, chapter for MDS-specific guidance.

Chapter 8

OPERATIONAL REPORTS AND FORMS

8.1. General. For assistance in completing safety forms contact the wing/group, unit, or local flight safety officer. Refer to the 11-2MDS, Vol 3, *Operational Reports and Forms*, chapter for MDS-specific guidance.

Chapter 9

FLYING TRAINING POLICY

9.1. General. Refer to AFI 11-202, Vol 1, *Aircrew Training*, AFI 11-202, Vol 2, *Aircrew Standardization/Evaluation Program*, AFSOCI 11-2DSO, Vol 1, and AFSOCI 11-2DSO, Vol 2, for additional information.

Chapter 10

LOCAL OPERATING PROCEDURES

10.1. General. Units may publish local and/or unique unit operation procedures as a supplement to this chapter commencing with **Paragraph 10.2**. The title will indicate the unit concerned (e.g., “10.2. 43 IS Local Operating Procedures.”). (T-2)

10.1.1. Procedures in this chapter will not duplicate, alter, amend, or be less restrictive than those in this instruction. (T-2)

10.1.2. After validation, send final copies to HQ AFSOC/A3V.

10.1.3. DSOs will adhere to local operating procedures published via the 1 SOG, 27 SOG, 352 SOG, and 353 SOG. (T-2)

J. MARCUS HICKS, Brig Gen, USAF
Director of Operations

Attachment 1**GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION*****References***

AFSOCI 11-2DSO, Vol 1, *Aircrew Training*, 12 December 2013

AFSOCI 11-2DSO, Vol 2, *Direct Support Operator Aircrew Evaluation Criteria*, 12 December 2013

AFI 11-200, *Aircrew Training, Standardization/Evaluation*, 19 January 2012

AFI 11-202, Vol 1, *Aircrew Training*, 22 November 2010

AFI 11-202, Vol 2, *Aircrew Standardization/Evaluation Program*, 13 September 2013

AFI 11-202, Vol 2, AFSOCSUP, *Aircrew Standardization/Evaluation Program*,
18 October 2012

AFI 11-202, Vol 3, *General Flight Rules*, 22 October 2010

AFI 11-202, Vol 3, AFSOCSUP, *General Flight Rules*, 30 November 2012

AFI 11-401, *Aviation Management*, 10 December 2010

AFI 65-503, *US Air Force Cost and Planning Factors*, 04 February 1994

AFMAN 33-363, *Management of Records*, 01 March 2008

AFPD 11-2, *Aircrew Operations*, 19 January 2012

AFTTP 31 General Planning (S), *General Planning & Employment Considerations*, 29 February 2012

Prescribed Forms

There are no prescribed forms in this document.

Adopted Forms

AF Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*

AF Form 4327A, *Crew Flight Authorization (FA)*

AFTO Form 781, *ARMS Aircrew/Mission Flight Data Document*

Abbreviations and Acronyms

A3V—Standardization and Evaluation

ADCON—Administrative Control

AF—Air Force

AFI—Air Force Instruction

AFMAN—Air Force Manual

AFPD—Air Force Policy Directive

AFRC—Air Force Reserve Command
AFSOC—Air Force Special Operations Command
AFSOF—Air Force Special Operations Forces
AFTO—Air Force Technical Order
AFTTP—Air Force Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures
ANG—Air National Guard
ARMS—Aviation Resource Management Systems
C2—Command and Control
CC—Commander
COMAFSOF—Commander Air Force Special Operations Forces
COMSEC—Communications Security
DSA—Direct Support Analyst
DSO—Direct Support Operator
FCIF—Flight Crew Information File
FOB—Forward Operating Base
Gp—Group
HQ—Headquarters
IAW—In Accordance With
ISR—Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance
LOA—Letter of Agreement
MAJCOM—Major Command
MC—Mission Commander
MDS—Mission Design Series
ME—Mission Essential
MEP—Mission Essential Personnel
MISREP—Mission Report
MOA—Memorandum of Agreement
OPCON—Operational Control
PA—Privacy Act
PIC—Pilot in Command
POC—Point of Contact
RDS—Records Disposition Schedule

SIGINT—Signals Intelligence

SNCO—Senior NCO

SOF—Special Operation Forces

Sq—Squadron

TC—Team Chief

TECHSUM—Technical Summary

TO—Technical Order

TSOC—Theater Special Operations Command(s)

US—United States

USSOCOM—United States Special Operations Command

Wg—Wing

Terms

Command and Control—The exercise of authority and direction by a properly designated commander over assigned and attached forces in the accomplishment of the mission. Command and control functions are performed through an arrangement of personnel, equipment, communications, facilities, and procedures employed by a commander in planning, directing, coordinating, and controlling forces and operations in the accomplishment of the mission.

Exercise—A military maneuver or simulated wartime operation involving planning, preparation, and execution. It is carried out for the purpose of training or evaluation. It may be combined, joint, or single-service, depending on participating organizations.

Forward Operating Base (FOB)—An airfield without full support facilities used during mission operations for an undetermined and sometimes extended period of time.

Interfly—Intermixing of crew members from different units in the same aircrew or unit aircrews flying aircraft assigned to another unit.

Mission Essential Personnel (MEP)—Individuals who perform essential duties in support of a particular aircraft, aircrew, or mission.

Operational Control (OPCON)—Transferable command authority that may be exercised by commanders at any echelon at or below the level of combatant command. Operational control may be delegated and is the authority to perform those functions of command over subordinate forces involving organizing and employing commands and forces, assigning tasks, designating objectives, and giving authoritative direction necessary to accomplish the mission. Operational control includes authoritative direction over all aspects of military operations and joint training necessary to accomplish missions assigned to the command. Operational control should be exercised through the commanders of subordinate organizations. Normally this authority is exercised through subordinate joint force commanders and Service and/or functional component commanders. Operational control normally provides full authority to organize commands and forces and to employ those forces as the commander in operational control considers necessary to accomplish assigned missions. Operational control does not, in and of itself, include

authoritative direction for logistics or matters of administration, discipline, internal organization, or unit training.