

- Level of legal and ethical ambiguity.
- Rules of engagement.
- Level of unit cohesion.
- Level of training.
- Level of trust.
- Level of shared understanding.

(See figure 1-1 for a sample of the considerations for determining the appropriate level of control.)

1-25. Different operations and phases of operations may require tighter or more relaxed control over subordinate elements than other phases. Operations that require the close synchronization of multiple units, or the integration of effects in a limited amount of time, may require more detailed coordination, and be controlled in a more centralized manner. Examples of this include combined arms breaches, air assaults, and wet gap crossings. Conversely, operations that do not require the close coordination of multiple units, such as a movement to contact or a pursuit, offer many opportunities to exercise initiative. These opportunities may be lost if too much emphasis is placed on detailed synchronization. Even in a highly controlled operation, subordinates must still exercise initiative to address unexpected problems and achieve their commander's intent when existing orders no longer make sense in the context of execution.

← More control → Less control →		
	Considerations	
• Predictable • Known	Situation	• Unpredictable • Unknown
• Inexperienced • New team	Unit Cohesion	• Experienced • Mature team
• Untrained or needs practice	Level of Training	• Trained in tasks to be performed
• Being developed	Level of Trust	• Established
• Top down • Explicit communications • Vertical communications	Shared Understanding	• Reciprocal information • Implicit communications • Vertical and horizontal communications
• Restrictive	Rules of Engagement	• Permissive
• Optimal decisions later	Required Decision	• Acceptable decisions sooner
• Science of war • Synchronization	Appropriate To	• Art of war • Orchestration

Figure 1-1. Levels of control

PRINCIPLES OF MISSION COMMAND

1-26. Mission command requires competent forces and an environment of mutual trust and shared understanding among commanders, staffs, and subordinates. It requires effective teams and a command climate in which subordinates are required to seize opportunities and counter threats within the commander's intent. Commanders issue mission orders that focus on the purpose of an operation and essential coordination measures rather than on the details of how to perform assigned tasks, giving subordinates the latitude to accomplish those tasks in a manner that best fits the situation. This minimizes the number of decisions a

single commander makes and allows subordinates the greatest possible freedom of action to accomplish tasks. Finally, when delegating authority to subordinates, commanders set the necessary conditions for success by allocating appropriate resources to subordinates based on assigned tasks. Successful mission command is enabled by the principles of—

- Competence.
- Mutual trust.
- Shared understanding.
- Commander's intent.
- Mission orders.
- Disciplined initiative.
- Risk acceptance.

COMPETENCE

1-27. Tactically and technically competent commanders, subordinates, and teams are the basis of effective mission command. An organization's ability to operate using mission command relates directly to the competence of its Soldiers. Commanders and subordinates achieve the level of competence to perform assigned tasks to standard through training, education, assignment experience, and professional development. Commanders continually assess the competence of their subordinates and their organizations. This assessment informs the degree of trust commanders have in their subordinates' ability to execute mission orders in a decentralized fashion at acceptable levels of risk.

1-28. Training and education that occurs in both schools and units provides commanders and subordinates the experiences that allow them to achieve professional competence. Repetitive, realistic, and challenging training creates common experiences that develop the teamwork, trust, and shared understanding that commanders need to exercise mission command and forces need to achieve unity of effort. (See ADP 7-0 for doctrine on individual and collective training.)

1-29. Leaders supplement institutional and organizational training and education with continuous self-development. Self-development is particularly important for the skills that rely on the art of command, which is further developed by reading and studying the art of war. These skills can also be developed through coursework, simulations and experience. (See chapter 2 for discussion on the art of command.)

MUTUAL TRUST

1-30. Mutual trust is shared confidence between commanders, subordinates, and partners that they can be relied on and are competent in performing their assigned tasks. There are few shortcuts to gaining the trust of others. Trust is given by leaders and subordinates, and built over time based on common shared experiences. It is the result of upholding the Army values, exercising leadership consistent with Army leadership principles, and most effectively instilled by the leader's personal example.

1-31. Mutual trust is essential to successful mission command, and it must flow throughout the chain of command. Subordinates are more willing to exercise initiative when they believe their commander trusts them. They will also be more willing to exercise initiative if they believe their commander will accept and support the outcome of their decisions. Likewise, commanders delegate greater authority to subordinates who have demonstrated tactical and technical competency and whose judgment they trust.

1-32. At the lowest tactical levels the ability to trust subordinate formations to execute their collective tasks and battle drills is essential. Building that trust is critical to rapid decision making in high pressure situations; commanders should be focused more on the problem to be solved when giving guidance than the methods that their subordinates might use. Subordinates must trust that commanders will employ mission orders to the maximum extent possible once they have demonstrated the attributes and competencies expected.

1-33. Commanders must also trust their colleagues who are commanding adjacent and supporting forces, and they must earn their trust as well. When a commander exercises initiative, trust gives other commanders the same level of confidence to synchronize their actions with those of that commander. Such actions synchronize operations without requiring detailed instructions from higher echelons. Once established and

sustained, trust allows each echelon to focus on operations as a whole instead of on the actions of individual subordinates.

1-34. Trust is based on personal qualities, such as professional competence, character, and commitment. Soldiers must see values in action before such actions become a basis for trust. Trust is built through shared experiences and training deliberately developed by commanders or through the conduct of operations. During shared experiences, two-way communication and interaction among the commander, subordinates, and Soldiers reinforces trust. Soldiers expect to see members of the chain of command accomplishing the mission while taking care of their welfare and leading by example through shared hardships and danger.

1-35. Trust is also a product of a common background, education, understanding of doctrine, and a common language for operations. In some situations, trust may be based solely on a common understanding of an approach to operations. This understanding creates a basic level of trust that, until proven otherwise, new team members or adjacent units will conduct operations to a common standard. During large-scale ground combat operations where task organizations are likely to change rapidly and often, commanders and staffs must assume a basic level of trust regarding the level of competence among new teams.

SHARED UNDERSTANDING

1-36. A critical challenge for commanders, staffs, and unified action partners is creating shared understanding of an operational environment, an operation's purpose, problems, and approaches to solving problems. *Unified action partners* are those military forces, governmental and nongovernmental organizations, and elements of the private sector with whom Army forces plan, coordinate, synchronize, and integrate during the conduct of operations (ADP 3-0). Shared understanding of the situation, along with the flow of information to the lowest possible level, forms the basis for unity of effort and subordinates' initiative. Effective decentralized execution is not possible without shared understanding.

1-37. Shared understanding starts with the Army's doctrine and professional military education that instills a common approach to the conduct of operations, a common professional language, and a common understanding of the principles of mission command. Army professionals understand the most current Army doctrine to ensure a minimum level of shared understanding for the conduct of operations. It is this shared understanding that allows even hastily task-organized units to operate effectively.

1-38. Commanders and staffs actively create shared understanding throughout the operations process (planning, preparation, execution, and assessment). They collaboratively frame an operational environment and its problems, and then they visualize approaches to solving those problems.

1-39. Collaboration is more than coordination. It is multiple people and organizations working together towards a common goal by sharing knowledge and building consensus. It requires dialogue that involves the candid exchange of ideas or opinions among participants and encourages frank discussions in areas of disagreement. Throughout the operations process, commanders, subordinate commanders, staffs, and unified action partners collaborate by sharing and questioning information, perceptions, and ideas to understand situations and make decisions.

1-40. Through collaboration, commanders create a learning environment that allows participants to think critically and creatively and share their ideas, opinions, and recommendations without fear of reproach. Effective collaboration requires candor and a free, yet mutually respectful, exchange of ideas. Participants must feel free to make viewpoints based on their expertise, experience, and insight. This includes sharing ideas that contradict the opinions held by those of higher rank. Successful commanders listen to novel ideas and counterarguments. Effective collaboration is not possible unless commanders enable it.

1-41. Commanders establish a culture of collaboration in their organization. They recognize that they do not know everything, and they recognize that they may have something to learn from even the most junior subordinate. Commanders establish a command climate by their personal example, coaching, counseling, and mentoring where collaboration routinely occurs throughout their organization. Successful commanders invest the time and effort to visit with Soldiers, subordinate leaders, and unified action partners to understand their issues and concerns. Through such interactions, subordinates and partners gain insight into their commander's leadership style and expectations.

1-42. Shared understanding both supports and derives from trust. However, like trust, it requires time to establish, and commanders cannot assume shared understanding. Shared understanding is perishable, and commanders and their subordinates must adequately communicate to maintain shared understanding of the situation, problems, and potential solutions. Commanders can develop shared understanding in their organizations through training and by creating an environment of collaboration and dialogue.

1-43. An important source of shared understanding is open and clear communications between leaders and Soldiers. Commanders can also aid shared understanding by exhibiting a demeanor and personal mannerisms that reinforce, or at least do not contradict, their spoken message. Units develop the ability to communicate through familiarity, trust, a shared philosophy, and experiences. Sharing a common perception of military problems also leads to shared understanding.

1-44. There is a hierarchical component of shared understanding. At each echelon of command, commanders will have a slightly different understanding of the situation. Having a common perception of military problems does not imply any requirement to come to identical solutions; under mission command, understanding what outcome to achieve is more important than agreement on how to achieve it. Activities that can lead to shared understanding include collaboration among commanders and staffs, professional development meetings, terrain walks, and professional discussions.

Command Based on Shared Understanding and Trust: Grant's Orders to Sherman, 1864

In a letter to MG William T. Sherman, dated 4 April 1864, LTG Ulysses S. Grant outlined his 1864 campaign plan. LTG Grant described MG Sherman's role by writing, "It is my design, if the enemy keep quiet and allow me to take the initiative in the spring campaign, to work all parts of the army together, and somewhat towards a common centre.... You I propose to move against Johnston's army, to break it up and to get into the interior of the enemy's country as far as you can, inflicting all the damage you can against their War resources. I do not propose to lay down for you a plan of campaign, but simply to lay down the work it is desirable to have done and leave you free to execute it in your own way. Submit to me, however, as early as you can, your plan of operation."

MG Sherman responded to LTG Grant immediately in a letter dated 10 April 1864. He sent LTG Grant, as requested, his specific plan of operations, demonstrating that he understood LTG Grant's intent:

"...That we are now all to act in a common plan, converging on a common center, looks like enlightened war.... I will not let side issues draw me off from your main plan, in which I am to Knock Joe [Confederate GEN Joseph E.] Johnston, and do as much damage to the resources of the enemy as possible....I would ever bear in mind that Johnston is at all times to be kept so busy that he cannot, in any event, send any part of his command against you or [Union MG Nathaniel P.] Banks."

COMMANDER'S INTENT

I suppose dozens of operation orders have gone out in my name, but I never, throughout the war, actually wrote one myself. I always had someone who could do that better than I could. One part of the order I did, however, draft myself—the intention. It is usually the shortest of all paragraphs, but it is always the most important, because it states—or it should—just what the commander intends to achieve. It is the one overriding expression of will by which everything in the order and every action by every commander and soldier in the army must be dominated. It should, therefore, be worded by the commander, himself.

Field Marshall William Joseph Slim

1-45. The *commander's intent* is a clear and concise expression of the purpose of the operation and the desired military end state that supports mission command, provides focus to the staff, and helps subordinate and supporting commanders act to achieve the commander's desired results without further orders, even when the operation does not unfold as planned (JP 3-0). The higher echelon commander's intent provides the basis for unity of effort throughout the force. Each commander's intent nests within the commander's intent two levels up. During planning, the initial commander's intent drives course of action development. During execution, the commander's intent establishes the limits within which a subordinate may exercise initiative.

1-46. The commander's intent succinctly describes what constitutes success for the operation. Commanders convey their intent in a format they determine most suitable to the situation. It may include the operation's purpose, key tasks, and conditions that define the end state. When describing the purpose of the operation, the commander's intent does not restate the "why" of the mission statement. Rather, it describes the broader purpose of the unit's operation in relationship to the higher commander's intent and concept of operations. Doing this allows subordinates to gain insight into what is expected of them, what constraints apply, and, most importantly, why the mission is being conducted. If it is longer than a brief paragraph it is probably too long.

1-47. **Key tasks are those significant activities the force must perform as a whole to achieve the desired end state.** Key tasks are not specified tasks for any subordinate unit; however, they may be sources of implied tasks. During execution—when significant opportunities present themselves or the concept of operations no longer fits the situation—subordinates use key tasks to keep their efforts focused on achieving the desired end state. Examples of key tasks include terrain the force must control or an effect the force must have on the enemy. Commanders include the purpose of each associated key task to facilitate subordinate decision making and disciplined initiative.

1-48. The end state is a set of desired future conditions the commander wants to exist when an operation ends. Commanders may describe the operation's end state by stating the desired conditions of the friendly force in relationship to desired conditions of the enemy, terrain, and civil considerations. A clearly defined end state promotes unity of effort among the force and with unified action partners.

1-49. The commander's intent becomes the basis on which staffs and subordinate leaders develop plans and orders. A well-crafted commander's intent conveys a clear image of an operation's purpose and desired end state. The commander's intent provides a focus for subordinates to coordinate their separate efforts. Commanders personally prepare their commander's intent. When possible, they deliver it in person. Face-to-face delivery ensures shared understanding of what the commander wants by allowing immediate clarification of specific points. Individuals can then exercise initiative within the overarching guidance provided in the commander's intent.

1-50. Commanders write and communicate their commander's intent to describe the boundaries within which subordinates may exercise initiative while maintaining unity of effort. A clear and succinct commander's intent that lower-level leaders can remember and understand, even without an order, is key to maintaining unity of effort. Soldiers two echelons down should easily remember and clearly understand the commander's intent. Commanders collaborate with subordinates to ensure they understand the commander's intent. Subordinates who understand the commander's intent are far more likely to exercise disciplined initiative in unexpected situations.

1-51. Mission command requires that subordinates use their judgment and initiative to make decisions that further their higher commander's intent. Subordinates use the commander's intent, together with the mission statement and concept of the operation, to accomplish the mission. Empowered with trust, shared understanding, and commander's intent, they can develop the situation, adapt, and act decisively in uncertain conditions.

MISSION ORDERS

An order should not trespass upon the province of a subordinate. It should contain everything that the subordinate must know to carry out his mission, but nothing more... An order must be simple and understandable, being framed to suit the intelligence and

understanding of the recipient. Above all, it must be adapted to the circumstances under which it will be received and executed.

FM 100-5, *Tentative Field Service Regulations, Operations* (1939)

1-52. An order is a communication—verbal, written, or signaled—that conveys instructions from superiors to subordinates. The five-paragraph format (situation, mission, execution, sustainment, and command and signal) is the standard for issuing Army orders. Army commanders issue orders to give guidance, assign tasks, allocate resources, and delegate authority.

1-53. Mission command requires commanders to issue mission orders. **Mission orders are directives that emphasize to subordinates the results to be attained, not how they are to achieve them.** Mission orders enable subordinates to understand the situation, their commander's mission and intent, and their own tasks. Subordinate commanders decide how to accomplish their own mission. The commander's intent and concept of operations set guidelines that provide unity of effort while allowing subordinate commanders to exercise initiative in planning, preparing, and executing their operations.

1-54. A mission order is not a separate type of order; rather, it is a technique for writing orders that allows subordinates maximum freedom of action in accomplishing missions. Mission orders should succinctly state the mission, task organization, commander's intent and concept of operations, tasks to subordinate units, and minimum essential coordinating instructions. Tasks to subordinate units include all the standard elements (who, what, when, where, and why) with particular emphasis on the purpose (why).

1-55. Mission orders should focus on the essential tasks a subordinate is to accomplish and not an extended list of every task a unit may be required to accomplish. It should never repeat items that are part of the standard operating procedures or are commonly understood by the force. Mission orders should not contain directives to a subordinate that dictate how a task is to be accomplished. That is the province of the subordinate.

1-56. Mission orders contain the proper level of detail in the context of a particular situation; they are neither so detailed that they stifle initiative nor so general that they provide insufficient direction. The proper level of detail is situationally dependent. Some phases of operations require tighter control over subordinate elements than other phases require. An air assault's air movement and landing phases, for example, require precise synchronization. Its ground maneuver plan requires less detail. As a rule, the base plan or order contains only the specific information required to provide the guidance to synchronize combat power at the decisive time and place while allowing subordinates as much freedom of action as possible. Commanders rely on subordinates' initiative and coordination to act within the commander's intent and concept of operations.

1-57. Graphics that accompany mission orders should be drawn in a manner that allows maximum flexibility during execution. They should provide enough control for those activities requiring synchronization, but they should avoid constraining subordinates' freedom of action within their areas of operation. Ideally graphics provide enough references such as checkpoints and phase lines for subordinate leaders to use them as a basis of shared understanding when deviation from the base order becomes necessary. Inherently flexible graphics and mission orders together create conditions for initiative and rapid decision making.

1-58. Using mission orders does not mean commanders do not supervise subordinates during operations. Subordinates are accountable to their commanders for the use of delegated authority, but commanders remain solely responsible and accountable for the actions over which subordinates exercise delegated authority. Thus, commanders have the responsibility to check on their subordinates and provide directions and guidance as required to focus their activities. Commanders should emphasize mission orders during training when actual consequences are low, allowing subordinates to develop their own solutions to problems, and intervening only when necessary to avoid a serious problem. This is valuable both for subordinates to gain experience in problem solving and confidence in exercising initiative and for commanders to develop an understanding of the capabilities of subordinates.

DISCIPLINED INITIATIVE

Every individual from the highest commander to the lowest private must always remember that inaction and neglect of opportunities will warrant more severe censure than an error

of judgment in the action taken. The criterion by which a commander judges the soundness of his own decision is whether it will further the intentions of the higher commander.

FM 100-5, *Tentative Field Service Regulations, Operations* (1941)

1-59. Disciplined initiative refers to the duty individual subordinates have to exercise initiative within the constraints of the commander's intent to achieve the desired end state. Simply put, disciplined initiative is when subordinates have the discipline to follow their orders and adhere to the plan until they realize their orders and the plan are no longer suitable for the situation in which they find themselves. This may occur because the enemy does something unforeseen, there is a new or more serious threat, or a golden opportunity emerges that offers a greater chance of success than the original course of action. The subordinate leader then takes action on their own initiative to adjust to the new situation and achieve their commander's intent, reporting to the commander about the new situation when able to do so.

1-60. Leaders and subordinates who exercise disciplined initiative create opportunity by taking action to develop a situation without asking for further guidance. Commanders rely on subordinates to act to meet their intent, not simply adhere to a plan that is no longer working. A subordinate's initiative may be the starting point for seizing, retaining, and exploiting the operational initiative by forcing an enemy to respond to friendly action.

1-61. *Operational initiative* is the setting of tempo and terms of action throughout an operation (ADP 3-0). Under mission command, subordinates are required, not just permitted, to exercise disciplined initiative in the absence of orders, when current orders no longer apply, or when an opportunity or threat presents itself. The collective effect of multiple subordinates exercising disciplined initiative over time sets the conditions for friendly forces to seize the operational initiative in chaotic and ambiguous situations.

1-62. The commander's intent defines the limits within which subordinates may exercise initiative. It gives subordinates the confidence to apply their judgment in ambiguous situations because they know the mission's purpose and desired end state. They can, on their own responsibility, take actions that they think will best accomplish the mission when communication with higher echelons is intermittent or decisions must be made immediately.

1-63. When exercising initiative, neither commanders nor subordinates are independent actors. Subordinates consider at least two factors when deciding when to exercise initiative:

- Whether the benefits of the action outweigh the risk of desynchronizing the overall operation.
- Whether the action will further the higher commander's intent.

1-64. The main consideration in exercising initiative is the urgency of the situation. If time permits, subordinates attempt to communicate their new situation and recommended course of action to their commander. When subordinates communicate their intentions to their commander, their commander can assess the implications for the overall force, and for other operations, and set in motion supporting actions. However, subordinates must depart from their orders when they are unable to contact their commander or when there is a limited amount of time to seize a fleeting opportunity. If doubt exists about whether to contact their commander or depart from orders and act to seize a fleeting opportunity, subordinates should act, if they can do so within their commander's intent.

1-65. Fostering a command climate that encourages initiative requires commanders to accept risk and underwrite the good faith mistakes of subordinates in training, before the unit is committed to combat. Commanders set conditions for subordinates to learn and gain the experience they need to operate on their own. Subordinates learn to trust that they have the authority and responsibility to act, knowing their commander will back their decisions. Because mutual trust and shared understanding constitute the foundation of subordinate initiative, commanders train subordinates to act within the commander's intent in uncertain situations.

Initiative: U.S. Paratroopers in Sicily

When paratroopers assaulted Sicily during the night of July 9-10, 1943, they suffered some of the worst weather that could affect that kind of a mission. The men were supposed to conduct two airborne assaults and form a buffer zone ahead of the 7th Army's amphibious assault on the island, but winds of up to 40 knots blew them far from their intended drop zones.

The 3,400 paratroopers in the assault took heavy losses before a single pair of boots even touched the ground. But what happened next would become airborne legend. It became the story of the "The little groups of paratroopers." The little groups of paratroopers did not find cover or spend hours trying to regroup. They rucked up wherever they were and immediately began attacking everything nearby that happened to look like it belonged to the German or Italian militaries. They tore down communications lines, demolished enemy infrastructure, set up both random and planned roadblocks, ambushed Axis forces, and attacked enemy positions. A group of 16 German pillboxes that controlled key roads was neutralized despite the attacking force having only a fraction of their planned strength. This mischief had a profound effect on the defenders. The Axis forces assumed that the paratroopers were attacking in strength at each spot where a paratrooper assault was reported. So, while many little groups of paratroopers had only a few men, German estimates reported much stronger formations. The worst reports stated that there were 10 times as many attackers as were actually present. German commanders were hard-pressed to rally against what seemed to be an overwhelming attack. Some conducted limited counterattacks at what turned out to be ghosts while others remained in defensive positions or, thinking they were overrun, surrendered to American forces that were a fraction of their size.

The operation was a success, thanks in large part to the actions of little groups of paratroopers acting on their own initiative across the island until they could find a unit to form up with. Axis forces began withdrawing from the island on July 25 and Lt. Gen. George S. Patton took Messina, the last major city on Sicily, on August 17.

RISK ACCEPTANCE

Given the same amount of intelligence, timidity will do a thousand times more damage in war than audacity.

Carl von Clausewitz

1-66. In general terms, risk is the exposure of someone or something valued to danger, harm, or loss. Because risk is part of every operation, it cannot be avoided. Commanders analyze risk in collaboration with subordinates to help determine what level of risk exists and how to mitigate it. When considering how much risk to accept with a course of action, commanders consider risk to the force and risk to the mission against the perceived benefit. They apply judgment with regard to the importance of an objective, time available, and anticipated cost. Commanders need to balance the tension between protecting the force and accepting and managing risks that must be taken to accomplish their mission.

1-67. The greatest opportunity may come from the course of action with the most risk. An example of this would be committing significant forces to a potentially costly frontal attack to fix the bulk of enemy forces in place to set the conditions for their envelopment by other forces. Another would be taking a difficult but unexpected route in order to achieve surprise.

1-68. While each situation is different, commanders avoid undue caution or commitment of resources to guard against every perceived threat. An unrealistic expectation of avoiding all risk is detrimental to mission

accomplishment. Waiting for perfect intelligence and synchronization may increase risk or close a window of opportunity. Mission command requires that commanders and subordinates manage accepted risk, exercise initiative, and act decisively, even when the outcome is uncertain.

1-69. Reasonably estimating and intentionally accepting risk is not gambling. Gambling is making a decision in which the commander risks the force without a reasonable level of information about the outcome. Therefore, commanders avoid gambles. Commanders carefully determine risks, analyze and minimize as many hazards as possible, and then accept risk to accomplish the mission.

THE ROLE OF SUBORDINATES IN MISSION COMMAND

1-70. The mission command approach to command and control requires active participation by personnel of all ranks and duty positions. Subordinate officers, noncommissioned officers, and Soldiers all have important roles in the exercise of mission command. During operations, subordinates are delegated authority, typically through orders and standard operating procedures, to make decisions within their commander's intent. Commanders expect subordinates to exercise this authority to further the commander's intent when changes in the situation render orders irrelevant, or when communications are lost with higher echelon headquarters.

1-71. Because mission command decentralizes decision-making authority and grants subordinates significant freedom of action, it demands more of subordinates at all levels. Commanders must train and educate subordinates so they demonstrate good judgment when exercising initiative. Subordinates must be competent in their respective fields, and they must be confident they will have the commander's support to make and implement decisions. They must embrace opportunities to assume responsibility for achieving the commander's intent.

1-72. Subordinates do not wait for a breakdown in communications or a crisis situation to learn how to act within the commander's intent. Subordinates look for every opportunity to demonstrate and exercise initiative. To the greatest extent possible, they report what they intend to do and then execute unless their commander specifically denies them permission.

1-73. As subordinates realize their commander will support sound decisions, their trust increases, and they become more willing to exercise initiative. As commanders see subordinates perform in uncertain situations, they gain trust in their subordinates' judgment and ability.

Corporal Alvin York and Mission Command

On the morning of 8 October 1918, Soldiers of the 82nd Division began an attack to sever the German supply network in the Argonne Forest. Among the men in this push was CPL Alvin York, a squad leader in the 328th Infantry Regiment.

Initially, the American attack seemed to go well as forward-deployed Germans seemingly retreated in the face of superior numbers. However, this was a ruse, as the Germans were falling back into prepared positions. Once the Americans were in the middle of the kill zone, the Germans opened fire. This was quickly followed by German artillery ripping gaping holes in the American line.

Among the first to fall was CPL York's platoon leader, LT Kirby Stewart, and as the casualties mounted, the American attack quickly foundered. With LT Stewart dead, SGT Harry Parsons assumed command of CPL York's platoon. After surveying the situation, he ordered SGT Bernard Early, CPL York, CPL Murray Savage, and CPL William Cutting to advance with their squads to a defile to the south. From here, SGT Parsons surmised that they just might be able to get behind the German lines and eliminate the machine guns that were holding up the advance.

After dodging German fire, SGT Early led his 16 men to the defilade, then up a cut in the valley that led behind the German positions. They slowly worked their way around the German infantry and subsequently surprised and captured some 70 German soldiers, which included the battalion commander. While the Americans tried to line up their prisoners, a machine-gun crew on a nearby hill yelled to the captured Germans to take cover and then opened fire. The blast of bullets killed six Americans and wounded three. CPL York was the highest ranking Soldier not hit, and he took charge of the remaining seven men.

With the surviving Americans and German prisoners clinging to the ground, CPL York seized the initiative. He charged up the hill, outflanked the German machine gun and an infantry platoon, killing 19. Seeing a large group of German reinforcements arriving from further up the hill, CPL York decided to go back to his men. As he trotted down the hill, he was spotted by a German officer who ordered a bayonet charge to kill the American. Seeing a platoon of Germans charging, CPL York slid on his side, pulled out his 1911 Colt automatic pistol, and began picking off enemy soldiers from back to front. Seeing this, the German battalion commander, who had been captured earlier, slowly got up off of the ground and approached CPL York. Standing behind CPL York, he cautiously yelled above the din, "English?" CPL York replied, "American!" In exasperation, the German commander answered, "Good Lord! If you won't shoot anymore, I will make them give up.

CPL York and his men quickly organized their prisoners, which now numbered 100, into a formation and began marching them out of the forest. During the march back to the American lines, the Americans ended up walking into another group of Germans. CPL York shrewdly secured their surrender as well, and in the end he came out with 132 prisoners. This saved his unit from destruction, thwarted a German counterattack, and allowed the 82nd Division to achieve its objective. For his heroism, CPL York was promoted to sergeant, awarded the Medal of Honor, and would go down in history as America's most celebrated hero of the First World War.

COMMAND AND CONTROL

If intercommunication between events in front and ideas behind are not maintained, then two battles will be fought—a mythical headquarters battle and an actual front-line one, in which case the real enemy is to be found in our own headquarters.

Major General J.F.C. Fuller

1-74. Mission command is the Army's approach to command and control. *Command and control* is the exercise of authority and direction by a properly designated commander over assigned and attached forces in the accomplishment of mission (JP 1). Command and control (also known as C2) is fundamental to the art and science of warfare. No single activity in operations is more important than command and control. Command and control by itself will not secure an objective, destroy an enemy target, or deliver supplies. Yet none of these activities could be coordinated towards a common objective, or synchronized to achieve maximum effect, without effective command and control. It is through command and control that the countless activities a military force must perform gain purpose and direction. The goal of command and control is mission accomplishment.

1-75. The focal point of command and control is the commander. Commanders assess situations, make decisions, and direct action. They provide purpose, direction, and motivation to instill the will to win. Commanders seek to understand the situation, visualize an end state and operational approach, and describe that end state and operational approach in their commander's intent and planning guidance. During execution, commanders direct the actions of subordinates and adjust operations based on changes to the situation and feedback from subordinate units, external organizations, and their staffs.

1-76. The Army's framework for organizing and putting command and control into action is the operations process. The operations process consists of the major command and control activities performed during operations (planning, preparing, executing, and continuously assessing). Commanders, supported by their staffs, employ the operations process to drive the conceptual and detailed planning necessary to understand, visualize, and describe their operational environment; make and articulate decisions; and direct, lead, and assess military operations. (See chapter 2 for more information on the role of the commander. See ADP 5-0 for details on conducting the operations process.)

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COMMAND AND CONTROL

1-77. Command and control are interrelated. Command resides with commanders and includes the authority and responsibility for effectively using available resources and for planning the employment of, organizing, directing, coordinating, and controlling military forces for the accomplishment of missions. It also includes responsibility for the health, welfare, morale, and discipline of assigned personnel. Command emphasizes a commander's lawful assignment of authority and the responsibility that accompanies that authority.

1-78. Effective command is impossible without control. Control is inherent in command and includes collecting, processing, displaying, storing and disseminating relevant information. Commanders, supported by their staffs, control operations by receiving and communicating information to build shared understanding and to direct, coordinate, and synchronize the actions of subordinate units. Commander's intent, orders, control measures, and standard operating procedures all assist with the control of operations. Determining the appropriate level of control in a particular situation is a critical command responsibility.

1-79. Command and control is not a one-way, top-down process. In application, command and control is multidirectional, with feedback from lower echelons, from higher echelons, laterally, and from sources outside the chain of command. It includes the reciprocal flow of information between commanders, staffs, subordinates, and other organizations in an area of operations as they work to achieve shared understanding and adjust to continuously changing circumstances in an operational environment.

Command

I believe firmly in a "personal" command, i.e. that a commander should never attempt to control an operation or a battle by remaining at his H.Q. or be content to keep touch with his subordinates by cable, [radio], or other means of communication. He must as far as possible see the ground for himself to confirm or correct his impressions of the map; his

subordinate commanders to discuss their plans and ideas with them; and the troops to judge of their needs and their morale.

Field-Marshal Earl Wavell

1-80. *Command* is the authority that a commander in the armed forces lawfully exercises over subordinates by virtue of rank or assignment (JP 1). Command is personal—an individual person commands, not an organization or a headquarters. Command is considered more art than science, because it incorporates intangible elements that require judgment in application. The key elements of command are—

- Authority.
- Responsibility.
- Decision making.
- Leadership.

1-81. Inherent in command is the authority that a military commander lawfully exercises over subordinates, including the authority to assign tasks and the responsibility for their successful completion. Authority derives from two sources: official authority and personal authority. Official authority is a function of rank and position and is bestowed by law and regulation. This authority to enforce orders by law is one of the key elements of command and distinguishes military commanders from other leaders and managers. Personal authority is a function of personal influence and derives from factors such as experience, reputation, skill, character, and personal example. It is bestowed by the other members of the organization. Official authority provides the power to act, but it is rarely enough for success on its own; the most effective commanders also possess a high degree of personal authority.

1-82. With authority comes responsibility. Commanders are legally and ethically responsible for their decisions and for the actions, accomplishments, and failures of their subordinates. Commanders may delegate authority, but delegation does not absolve commanders of their responsibility to the higher echelon commander. Commanders are always accountable for what happens or fails to happen in their command.

1-83. Commanders exercise their authority through decision making and leadership. Decision making refers to selecting a course of action as the one most favorable to accomplish the mission, and includes making adjustments to plans during the execution of an operation. Decision making includes knowing whether to decide or not, then when and what to decide, and finally, understanding the consequences. Commanders use understanding, visualization, description, and direction to make and communicate their decisions. Commanders rely on their education, experience, knowledge, and judgment in applying authority as they decide (plan how to achieve the end state) and lead (direct their forces during preparation and execution), all while assessing progress.

1-84. Leadership refers to influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation, while operating to accomplish the mission and improve the organization. It is the unifying and multiplying element of combat power. Commanders lead through a combination of personal example, persuasion, and compulsion. Commanders employ leadership to translate decisions into effective action by forces.

Control

1-85. **Control is the regulation of forces and warfighting functions to accomplish the mission in accordance with the commander's intent.** Commanders exercise control over all forces in their area of operations, aided by their command and control system. Staffs aid the commander in exercising control by supporting the commander's decision making; assisting subordinate commanders, staffs and units; and keeping units and organizations outside the headquarters informed.

1-86. Control is more science than art because it relies on objectivity, empirical methods, and analysis. Control demands commanders and staffs understand those aspects of operations that they can analyze and measure. These include the physical capabilities and limitations of friendly and enemy organizations and systems. Control also requires a realistic appreciation for time and distance factors and the time required to initiate and complete certain actions. Units are bound by factors such as movement rates, supply consumption, weapons effects, and ethical and legal considerations.

1-87. The proper application of control incorporates some level of art, since commanders must use judgment with regard to the abilities of subordinates and the likelihood that friction is part of every operation. The key elements of control are—

- Direction.
- Feedback.
- Information.
- Communication.

1-88. Commanders, assisted by their staffs, direct the actions of their subordinates within their commander's intent, the unit's mission, and the concept of operations. Commanders provide direction and communicate information, usually in plans and orders that provide subordinate forces their tasks and instruct them how to cooperate within a broader concept of operations. In the process, they receive feedback from subordinates and supporting forces that allows commanders to update their visualization and modify plans. This feedback creates a reciprocal flow of information that leads to a shared understanding among all participants.

1-89. Central to providing direction and receiving feedback is information. The amount of information that is available makes managing information and turning it into effective decisions and actions critical to success during operations. Commanders and staffs employ knowledge management techniques to add clarity to information, speed its dissemination, and support situational understanding and decision making. (See chapter 3 for more information on knowledge management and information management)

1-90. Commanders and staffs disseminate information among people, elements, and places. Communication is more than mere transmission of information. It is an activity that allows commanders, subordinates, and unified action partners to create shared understanding that supports action. It is a means to exercise control over forces. Communication links information to decisions and decisions to action. Communication among the parts of a command enables their coordinated action. Effective commanders understand the importance of using multiple means of communication to ensure shared understanding. They use multidirectional communication and suitable means of collaboration to ensure clear understanding of the commander's intent. They also anticipate those times when communication is likely to be intermittent, and they adjust their level of control accordingly.

COMMAND AND CONTROL IN MULTINATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS

1-91. *Multinational operations* is a collective term to describe military actions conducted by forces of two or more nations, usually undertaken within the structure of the coalition or alliance (JP 3-16). Multinational operations are driven by common agreement among the participating alliance or coalition partners. While each nation has its own interests and often participates within the limitations of national caveats, all nations bring value to an operation. Each nation's force has unique capabilities, and each usually contributes to the operation's legitimacy in terms of international or local acceptability. Army forces should anticipate that most operations will be multinational operations and plan accordingly.

1-92. Multinational operations present unique command and control challenges. These include cultural and language issues, interoperability challenges, national caveats on the use of respective forces, the sharing of information and intelligence, and rules of engagement. Establishing standard operating procedures and liaison with multinational partners is critical to effective command and control. When commanding and controlling forces within a multinational training or operational setting, Army commanders should be familiar with and employ multinational doctrine and standards ratified by the United States. For example, *Allied Tactical Publication 3.2.2* applies to Army forces during the conduct of North Atlantic Treaty Organization operations. (See FM 3-16 for a detailed discussion on multinational operations.)

DOMAIN COMMAND AND CONTROL CONSIDERATIONS

1-93. While Army commanders are primarily concerned with command and control in the land domain, command and control occurs in all domains across the range of military operations. Through command and control, Army forces converge effects from all domains (land, air, maritime, space, cyberspace), as well as the information environment and the electromagnetic spectrum, to accomplish missions. Each domain has a unique set of characteristics that influences how capabilities are synchronized and converged throughout an operation. Convergence is the continuous integration of capabilities from multiple domains, the

electromagnetic spectrum, and the information environment, to create multiple dilemmas for the enemy. In order to effectively converge effects from all domains, Army forces must understand the authorities, processes, procedures, and time it takes to receive and assess effects from other domains and for Army forces to create effects in those domains.

1-94. Army forces have effectively integrated capabilities and synchronized actions in the land, air, and maritime domains for decades, and the authorities, processes, and procedures are well established. However, the military application of technologies to the space and cyberspace domains, as well as the information environment and the electromagnetic spectrum, require special consideration in planning to converge effects within or across domains. Liaisons can assist commanders with integrating capabilities resident in domains other than land. (See chapter 4 for a discussion on liaisons.)

THE COMMAND AND CONTROL WARFIGHTING FUNCTION

1-95. A *warfighting function* is a group of tasks and systems united by a common purpose that commanders use to accomplish missions and training objectives (ADP 3-0). Warfighting functions are the physical means that tactical commanders use to execute operations and accomplish missions assigned by higher level commanders. The purpose of warfighting functions is to provide an intellectual organization for common critical capabilities available to commanders and staffs at all echelons.

1-96. Operations executed through simultaneous offensive, defensive, stability, or defense support of civil authorities operations require the continuous generation and application of combat power. *Combat power* is the total means of destructive, constructive, and information capabilities that a military unit or formation can apply at one time (ADP 3-0). Combat power includes all capabilities provided by unified action partners that are integrated and synchronized with the commander's objectives to achieve unity of effort in sustained operations.

1-97. Combat power has eight elements: leadership, information, command and control, movement and maneuver, intelligence, fires, sustainment, and protection. The elements facilitate Army forces accessing joint and multinational fires and assets. The Army collectively describes the last six elements as warfighting functions. Commanders apply combat power through the warfighting functions using leadership and information. Leadership is a multiplying and unifying element of combat power. Information enables commanders at all levels to make informed decisions about the application of combat power and achieve definitive results.

1-98. The *command and control warfighting function* is the related tasks and a system that enable commanders to synchronize and converge all elements of combat power (ADP 3-0). The primary purpose of the command and control warfighting function is to assist commanders in integrating the other elements of combat power (movement and maneuver, intelligence, fires, sustainment, protection, information and leadership) to achieve objectives and accomplish missions. The command and control warfighting function consists of the command and control warfighting function tasks and the command and control system, as depicted in figure 1-2 on page 1-20.



Figure 1-2. Combat power model

COMMAND AND CONTROL WARFIGHTING FUNCTION TASKS

1-99. The command and control warfighting function tasks focus on integrating the activities of the other elements of combat power to accomplish missions. Commanders, assisted by their staffs, integrate numerous processes and activities within their headquarters and across the force through the mission command warfighting function. These tasks are—

- Command forces (described in chapter 2).
- Control operations (described in chapter 3).
- Drive the operations process (described in chapter 2).
- Establish the command and control system (described in chapter 4).

COMMAND AND CONTROL SYSTEM

1-100. Commanders need support to effectively exercise command and control. At every echelon of command, each commander establishes a **command and control system—the arrangement of people, processes, networks, and command posts that enable commanders to conduct operations**. The command and control system supports the commander's decision making, disseminates the commander's decisions to subordinates, and facilitates controlling forces. Commanders employ their command and control system to enable the people and formations conducting operations to work towards a common purpose. All the equipment and procedures exist to achieve this end. Commanders organize the four components of their command and control system to support decision making and facilitate communication. The most important of these components is people. (See chapter 4 for a detailed discussion of the command and control system.)

People

1-101. A commander's command and control system is based on people. The human aspects of operations remain paramount regardless of the technology associated with the system. Therefore, commanders base their command and control systems on human characteristics more than on equipment and processes. Trained personnel are essential to an effective command and control system. Technology cannot support command and control without them.

Processes

1-102. Commanders establish and use processes and procedures to organize activities within their headquarters and throughout the force. A process is a series of actions or steps taken to achieve a specific

end, such as the military decision-making process. In addition to the major activities of the operations process, commanders and staffs use several integrating processes to synchronize specific functions throughout the operations process. The integrating processes are—

- Intelligence preparation of the battlefield (described in ATP 2-01.3).
- Information collection (described in FM 3-55).
- Targeting (described in ATP 3-60).
- Risk management (described in ATP 5-19).
- Knowledge management (See ATP 6-01.1)

1-103. *Procedures* are standard, detailed steps that prescribe how to perform specific tasks (CJCSM 5120.01). Procedures govern actions within the command and control system to make it more effective and efficient. For example, standard operating procedures often provide detailed unit instructions on how to configure common operational picture (COP) displays. Adhering to processes and procedures minimizes confusion, misunderstanding, and hesitation as commanders frequently make rapid decisions to meet operational requirements.

1-104. Processes and procedures can increase organizational competence, for example, by improving a staff's efficiency or by increasing the tempo. Processes and procedures can be especially useful in improving the coordination of Soldiers who must cooperate to accomplish repetitive tasks, such as those needed for the internal functioning of a command post. Units avoid applying procedures blindly to the wrong tasks or the wrong situations, which can lead to ineffective, even counterproductive, performance.

Networks

1-105. Generally, a network is a grouping of things that are interconnected for a purpose. Networks enable commanders to communicate information and control forces. Networks enable successful operations. Commanders determine their information requirements and focus their staffs and organizations on using networks to meet these requirements. These capabilities relieve staffs from handling routine data, and they enable extensive information sharing, collaborative planning, execution, and assessment that promote shared understanding. Each network consists of—

- End-user applications.
- Information services and data.
- Network transport and management.

Command Posts

1-106. Command posts provide a physical location for the other three components of a command and control system (people, processes, and networks). Command posts vary in size, complexity and focus. Command posts may be comprised of vehicles, containers, and tents, or located in buildings. Commanders systematically arrange platforms, operation centers, signal nodes, and support equipment in ways best suited for a particular operational environment. (See FM 6-0 and ATP 6-0.5 for more information on command posts.)

CONCLUSION

1-107. Command and control is fundamental to all operations. Mission command—the Army's approach to command and control—underpins how the U.S. Army fights. Mission command concentrates on the objective of an operation, not on every task necessary to achieve it. Mission command emphasizes timely decision making, understanding of the higher commander's intent, and the clear responsibility of subordinates to exercise initiative within that intent to achieve the desired end state. Mission command relies on decentralized execution and subordinate initiative within the commander's intent to provide unity of effort.

1-108. The fundamental basis of mission command is tactically and technically competent commanders and subordinates with a shared understanding of purpose who can be trusted to make ethical and effective decisions in the absence of further guidance. This allows commanders to focus on their intent, and it allows staffs to generate the mission orders essential to decentralized execution. Subordinates are empowered to decide when to adapt their assigned tasks to achieve the overall purpose of an operation. This requires

commanders to accept risk on their subordinates' behalf and subordinates to assume responsibility for the initiative necessary for success.

1-109. In practice, mission command tends to be decentralized, informal, and flexible. Plans, orders, and graphics should be as simple and concise as possible, designed for maximum flexibility during execution. By decentralizing decision-making authority, mission command increases tempo and improves subordinates' abilities to act quickly in fluid and chaotic situations.

1-110. Commanders cannot exercise command and control alone except in the simplest and smallest of units. Even at the lowest level, commanders need support to exercise command and control effectively. At every echelon of command, each commander has a command and control system. Commanders arrange people, processes, and networks into command posts to best facilitate their exercise of authority and direction to accomplish the mission.

Chapter 2

Command

When you are commanding, leading [soldiers] under conditions where physical exhaustion and privations must be ignored, where the lives of [soldiers] may be sacrificed, then, the efficiency of your leadership will depend only to a minor degree on your tactical ability. It will primarily be determined by your character, your reputation, not much for courage—which will be accepted as a matter of course—but by the previous reputation you have established for fairness, for that high minded patriotic purpose, that quality of unswerving determination to carry through any military task assigned to you.

General of the Army George C. Marshall
Speaking to officer candidates in September 1941

This chapter begins with a discussion of the nature and elements of command. It then describes the role of the commander in operations. The chapter concludes with a discussion of guides to effective command.

NATURE OF COMMAND

2-1. Command is the authority that a commander in the armed forces lawfully exercises over subordinates by virtue of rank or assignment. Command includes the authority and responsibility for effectively using available resources and for planning the employment of, organizing, directing, coordinating, and controlling military forces for the accomplishment of missions. It also includes responsibility for health, welfare, morale, and discipline of assigned personnel.

2-2. Command is personal. In Army regulations and doctrine, an individual is given the authority to command, not an institution or group. The legal and ethical responsibilities of a commander exceed those of any other leader of similar rank who is serving in a staff position. The commander alone is responsible for what the command does or fails to do.

2-3. Command is more art than science because it requires judgment and depends on actions only human beings can perform. The art of command comprises the creative and skillful exercise of authority through timely decision making and leadership. Commanders constantly use judgment gained from experience and training to delegate authority, make decisions, determine the appropriate degree of control, and allocate resources. Proficiency in the art of command stems from years of schooling, self-development, introspection, and operational and training experiences. It also requires a deep understanding of the science of war.

2-4. The basic techniques of command do not change between echelons. However, direct leadership within a command decreases as the level of command increases, and applying organizational leadership as described in ADP 6-22 becomes more relevant. Officers prepare for higher command by developing and exercising their skills when commanding at lower levels.

ELEMENTS OF COMMAND

2-5. The elements of command are authority, responsibility, decision making, and leadership. The definition of command refers explicitly to authority. With authority comes the responsibility to carry forward an assigned task to a successful conclusion. Commanders exercise their authority by making decisions and leading their command in implementation of those decisions. Successful commanders develop skill in each element through maturity, experience, and education.