

NEWS FROM THE FRONT

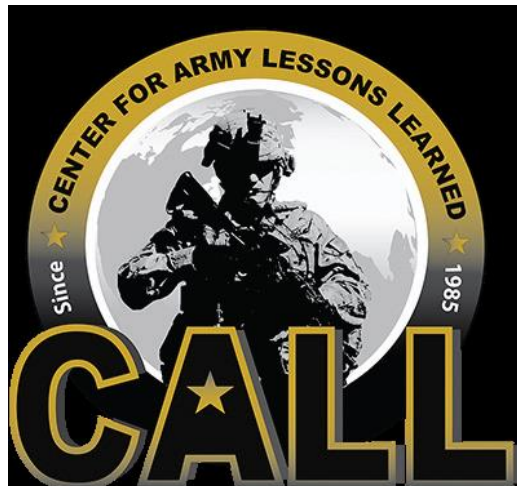


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News from the Front: Setting the Theater in the Pacific

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Setting the Theater in the Pacific

"We will always be ready to fight today, and we will always prepare to fight tomorrow."

General Mark A. Milley

U.S. Army Chief of Staff

Setting the theater is a geographic combatant command responsibility in which the theater army plays a major role. The purpose of this document is to show how U.S. Army Pacific (USARPAC) postured land domain capabilities, particularly those that fall under mission command, to set the theater and contribute to security and stability in the Pacific region. Written for public release, the insights offered in this document are based on previous collections and therefore provide a snapshot in time. As the situation evolves in this theater, so do the support requirements for specific operation plans, concept plans, and other requirements established in the geographic combatant commander's (GCC's) theater campaign plan. Therefore, this document merely provides a framework for staff to consider as they ponder and refine their own plans.

USARPAC, as U.S. Pacific Command's (USPACOM) Army Service Component Command (ASCC), postures and prepares Army forces to the geographic combatant command, sustains and protects those forces in the theater, supports the development of an integrated joint force across domains, and builds military relationships that develop partner defense capacity in order to contribute to a stable and secure Pacific Command area of responsibility. Since 1898, the U.S. Army has maintained a presence in the Pacific dating back to the Spanish-American War, when American Soldiers consolidated the United States Navy's victory in the Battle of Manila Bay. Today, Pacific operations are a cornerstone of U.S. national security. The region encompasses approximately half the earth's surface and is home to the world's largest democracy, the largest trading region, three of the largest economies, and six of the most populous nations. The region is also the world's most disaster-prone, with dangers from volcanoes, tsunamis, and earthquakes along the so-called "Ring of Fire." As a result of these facts and the region's dynamic security environment, President Barack Obama focused national assets and attention to this strategic and challenging region during the "Pacific Pivot" in 2012.

Even with changing missions and evolving adjustments to force structure, USARPAC's enduring constant has been its regional partnerships and relationships. These relationships are enhanced through the employment of joint and expeditionary capabilities. USARPAC has implemented new initiatives to set the theater, streamline and operationalize command relationships within the USARPAC area of responsibility (AOR), and build ties with regional armies and land domain stakeholders

The posturing of land domain capabilities is needed to set the theater to enable security and stability in the Pacific region. A theater is “set” when it has the necessary capabilities and agreements in place to support the combatant commander’s regional operations and missions. These missions in the USPACOM AOR could include response to natural disasters, contingency operations, or theater security cooperation engagements. A set theater requires building partnerships with regional armies and interested parties, unified action partners, and the U.S. joint forces community. A set theater ultimately serves as the basis for stability and security across the AOR and is the keystone of USARPAC’s theater strategy. Success in this critical operating environment poses a significant challenge. Importantly, theater posture (and a set theater) must be firmly grounded in a USARPAC strategy that supports the Guidance for Employment of the Force (GEF), the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan, the USARPAC Campaign Plan, and the Army Campaign Plan. From this guidance and support, USARPAC elements will be able to provide land component resources to the PACOM commander in order to facilitate successful operations in their AOR.

Role of the ASCC

As the USPACOM commander seeks to set the theater and U.S. forces shift their focus and resources to the Pacific, it is important to understand the role of the ASCC and its contribution to theater security cooperation and theater posture planning. The Army’s ability to prevail in ground operations provides the PACOM commander with the decisive ability to impose American strategy on hostile actors. Although the United States Navy (USN) and United States Air Force (USAF) provide the ability to geographically contain threats in the region and are critical to power projection, Army and U. S. Marine Corps (USMC) elements are the components necessary to force complete acquiescence to the United States / international coalitions’ policy. To be successful in this environment requires the theater army (ASCC) to set the theater and assist Army forces into the fight. An army corps designated as a Combined/Joint Task Force (C/JTF), Combined/Joint Forces Land Component Command (C/JFLCC), Army forces (ARFOR), will integrate Army, Marine Corps, and coalition land power throughout each phase of a campaign. Divisions maneuver to destroy enemy ground forces, seize and exploit operationally significant objectives, and match decisive action to ground conditions. For the corps and divisions to be successful, the theater army commander must set the conditions for the effective use of this land power.

Importantly, and in order to gain access and understanding of the operational environment (OE), the theater army and its theater-assigned Army forces support the combatant commander’s theater engagement plans and security cooperation. The theater army and its assigned forces set the theater and the joint operations area (JOA) for the employment of Army forces – for both contingencies and campaigns. To achieve all this, the theater army must anticipate, plan, request, receive, train, sustain, and support redeployment of land power within its AOR and one or more JOAs when established.

Security Cooperation

Activities in the shape phase help set conditions for successful theater operations. They are designed to dissuade or deter adversaries, assure friends, and set conditions for contingency plans. Shape activities are generally conducted as part of military engagement and security cooperation. Joint and multinational operations and various interagency activities occur routinely during the shape phase. Shape activities are executed continuously with the intent of enhancing international legitimacy and gaining multinational cooperation by shaping perceptions and influencing adversaries' and allies' behavior, developing allied and friendly military capabilities for self-defense and multinational operations, improving information exchange and intelligence sharing, providing U.S. forces with peacetime and contingency access, and mitigating conditions that could lead to a crisis.

FM-3-0 Operations

This section illuminates some of the considerations and challenges the ASCC, the Army's main effort for security cooperation around the globe, faces as we begin to execute this new guidance.

The routine military and interagency security cooperation activities that the USARPAC performs to deter potential adversaries and solidify our relationships with allies and partners can be described as shaping activities. In the Pacific, shaping the security environment is a cost-effective way to ensure peace and stability, and to prevent conflict. United States relationships with international partners in this critical AOR are essential to protecting U.S. and allies' national security interests. By helping to build the capacity and enhance the interoperability capability of our partners, the U.S. Army contributes to a more secure world.

The GEF directs military departments and defense agencies to develop integrated campaign support plans for the execution of steady-state shaping activities. Therefore, the USARPAC campaign support plan focuses on activities that promote the achievement of combatant command objectives, and contribute to campaign and GEF regional, functional and global end states. USARPAC planners must be able to effectively plan, execute, and assess security cooperation activities in campaigns and operations that are consistent with Department of Defense security cooperation policy to achieve combatant command objectives.

USARPAC's security cooperation activities, such as exercises like Yama Sakura and Pacific Pathways, provide additional opportunities to enhance the Army's overall readiness, training, and leader development, and build interoperability with partner armies. This supports the current U.S. Army Chief of Staff (CSA) strategic priorities that shape and set theaters for regional commanders to influence the security environment, build trust, and develop relationships through multilateral exercises, mil-to-mil engagements, coalition training, and other opportunities.

The operational and strategic effects of security cooperation engagements depend on the expertise of the Army personnel who conduct it. Failure to understand the nuances involved can lead to poor execution, planning, or assessment of Army SC efforts. The results can hinder interagency cooperation, damage bilateral or multilateral relationships, and unknowingly violate U.S. Code.

CALL 16-09 Security Cooperation Bulletin

Shaping the OE is a relationship-based and human focused endeavor. USARPAC support to USPACOM provides landpower capabilities that develop an understanding of the OE, while exporting professionalism, leadership, and experience that contribute to partner capacity and trust building. The forces assigned to USARPAC further enhance security cooperation by providing deployable and scalable regionally-focused Army forces in direct support of geographic and functional combatant commands and joint priorities. Another security cooperation enabler is the National Guard's State Partnership Program.

Security cooperation is a core competency that the U.S. Army must sustain to ensure strategic success in the operating environment. Theater Army strategy and the execution of security cooperation activities in support of the geographic combatant commanders have taken on new significance with the CSA's regionally engaged, globally responsive guidance. The fairly recent Presidential Policy Directive on Security Sector Assistance (PPD23, Security Section Assistance, 05APR2013) demonstrates that the Army is conceptually on track regarding the goals and guidelines for U.S. Security Sector Assistance. The CSA's direction for Army security focuses on engagements with our partners to foster mutual understanding through mil-to-mil contacts, and helping partners to build the capacity to defend themselves. Security cooperation has a threefold purpose: build partner capacity to prevent conflict; shape the international security environment while maintaining a stabilizing presence; and establish strategic relationships that are critical for winning the peace. The security cooperation challenge for ASCCs will be in connecting ends and ways to means to build partner capacity in a manner consistent with national and military strategy.

Talisman Saber, Yama Sakura, Ulchi Focus Guardian, Balikitan, Cobra Gold and the Pacific Pathways innovation are effective security cooperation activities conducted with our Pacific partners that contribute to increased regional security.

The U.S. Army has had some major successes in security cooperation over the years. The most significant example is the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in Europe. Since 1949, NATO focused security cooperation has brought about enormous change to Europe and its security sector. Security cooperation activities were initially focused on deterring the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics (USSR) and Warsaw Pact.

After the collapse of the USSR, security cooperation was a significant factor in reintegrating Europe. International Security Assistance Force's (ISAF) participation and capability in Afghanistan was greatly aided by NATO Standardization Agreements (STANAGS). While the same type of effort and results may not be completely replicated in the Pacific, partners and organizations like ABCANZ (America, Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand) are critically important to create, nurture and maintain. Security cooperation activities and exercises with our Pacific treaty allies such as Talisman Saber, Yama Sakura, Ulchi Focus Guardian, Balikitan and Cobra Gold, connected to the Pacific Pathways innovation, have been very effective in increasing regional security. In 2014, GEN Vincent K. Brooks, USARPAC Commander, established Pacific Pathways, the name for an improved operational concept that links these once individually executed activities throughout the Pacific region into a single operation under a corps-level headquarters. As a result, the USARPAC commander has gained flexibility in supporting the USPACOM commander's engagement strategy and reduced response times in the event of a regional crises.

Pacific Pathways

A scalable element of 600 -1100 Soldiers forming an Infantry Task Force, plus associated enablers from support units, often including Army aircraft and other capabilities.

Pacific Pathways Provides:

- *Cooperative and persistent engagement with our Partners*
- *An Army Force comprised of a robust, versatile and deployed force west of the international date line*

In the USARPAC AOR, the Republic of Korea (ROK) is a notable example of successful security cooperation. The United States has helped the ROK in deterring North Korean aggression since 1953. The ROK and U.S. Armies are very closely linked in training and regularly exercise the United States' ability to rapidly reinforce the peninsula in case of conflict. Korean Augmentation to the United States Army (KATUSA) has reduced required U.S. troop strength on the peninsula and spread understanding of both cultures. In addition, standard agreements on items such as ammunition types, war plans, and equipment have increased both nations' military readiness.

While the United States' interaction with Korea is often characterized by the many success stories, there have been numerous other successes in recent years. Japan's government has recently increased authorization for increased defense spending, with the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force modernizing several of its units with U.S. / NATO compatible equipment. Mongolia is another example, with this geographically significant nation developing the capability to support U.S. efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Finally, cooperation with traditional allies such as Australia and New Zealand in PACOM has continued to demonstrate American capabilities in the region.

As a whole, these examples demonstrate how USARPAC can continue to set the conditions for success in future conflicts. Joint / combined exercises, combined with standardization agreements and common supply choices, all serve to aid ability to “fight tonight” for the Army in particular and the joint force as a whole.

Theater Posture

Theater posture is almost as important as security cooperation plans for shaping the Army’s efforts in the Pacific. Importantly, USARPAC planners understand that theater campaign plans (TCP) are not synonymous with theater security cooperation plans. Theater posture is a significant aspect of a combatant commander’s TCP development. The Theater Posture Plan (TPP) is an annex of the TCP. The TPP is a detailed plan of forces, footprint and agreements which enable the GCC to operate and if necessary, project force into the theater. Of the components, the Army’s input into the TPP is arguably the most critical. To assist with this, the commander has a number of tools available to assist in gaining access to critical resources through the Embassy and Country Team; building partnership capacity programs; and U.S. Army National Guard State Partnership Program (SPP).

USARPAC, Army and joint force commanders will require airfields, ports and facilities for terminal operations and reception, staging, onward-movement and integration (RSOI). The location and positioning of cooperative security locations and forward operating stations in the USARPAC AOR is important to the Theater Army’s success in setting the theater. In general, TCPs necessarily have a large security cooperation-related component. However, they should also address unit posture, ongoing combat operations where applicable, and known flashpoints throughout a combatant command. These generally comprise the Phase 0 component of the combatant command’s contingency planning and are the main elements of “setting the theater.”

The ways PACOM has identified to shape the theater are building strong relationships (Security Cooperation); assured presence (posture); and strategic communication. USARPAC’s Theater Campaign Support Plan is nested in USPACOM’s TCP. USARPAC planners understand that the actions and objectives of operations conducted in one part of the Pacific will likely affect others. Therefore, it will be necessary to deconflict and balance activities to ensure the resources devoted to one campaign do not adversely affect others both concurrent and planned. Failure to nest these efforts, or viewing them as distinct and separate areas of planning, risk making posture activities counterproductive. In turn, this may create adverse impacts at both the operational and strategic levels of war.

Importantly, USARPAC’s input to USPACOM lays out the resources it has available. This is crucial because the USPACOM concept developed for the TCP must consider USARPAC’s supply and mobility requirements for theater posture to be fully effective. Posture not only has a direct effect on how forces can be employed and supported in

the Pacific, but may affect other geographic combatant commanders as well. USARPAC planners must consider that posture decisions may also alter the requirement for certain kinds of forces (e.g., naval assets to escort increased sealift).

Proper posture planning must use the GEF and the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP) to focus its support of the theater strategy. This requires a thorough review of both PACOM and USARPAC's TCPs, with planners applying contingency analysis to most likely scenarios in theater. Addressing what must be done to get from the baseline to the objective requires theater army planners to know the full array of resources available not only to USARPAC, but also to PACOM's joint providers as a whole. To cite one example, international partners' willingness to provide ground forces to the USARPAC plan must be balanced with their ability to move those forces to a given crisis point.

The challenges USARPAC faces associated with supporting USPACOM in a very complex theater are many. The region has been a cornerstone of U.S. national interests and encompasses a huge swath of the planet. Because of the region's dynamic security environment, the U.S. is focusing more and more national assets and attention to this strategic and challenging region. USARPAC's challenge going forward will be how to best posture the Army for success as part of a joint or combined warfighting force.

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