HOW THE ARMY FIGHTS

Operational Warfighting Guidance

VICE CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES ARMY

October 2026

Foreword

Our Army has a sacred duty to protect and defend our Nation. *The Army Azimuth* sets our strategic direction and affirms the Army's role as the foundation of the Joint Force. *How the Army Fights* turns that direction into warfighting guidance for the force.

The battlefield is changing. The Homeland is no longer a sanctuary, and peer adversaries can disrupt our ability to generate and project combat power before our formations close with the enemy. Persistent observation and increasing lethality compress decision time, requiring us to sense, decide, move, and strike faster.

We must, therefore, build the Army to overcome adversaries that exploit geographic advantage and prepared positions. Tactical success alone is not enough; we must translate it into operational advantage for the Joint Force.

How the Army Fights organizes Army land power through four interdependent operational elements: Convergence, Strike, Close Battle, and Endurance. Integrated together, they allow us to maximize our capabilities and formations to create operational maneuver. They connect battlefield action to campaign outcomes, while posture, access, partnerships, and theater infrastructure enable their employment before conflict begins.

This guidance requires the Army to change how it prepares for war. We have built lethal tactical formations. We must now bring greater institutional weight to the operational level and ensure the Joint Force can turn tactical success into campaign advantage. Our Total Army must reinforce this approach in how we train, educate, develop doctrine, and build the force.

At the center of *How the Army Fights* is the American Soldier. Technology will extend our reach and strengthen our combat power, but war remains a human contest of wills. Judgment and discipline matter. So does the determination to endure when conditions are at their worst. Our Soldiers remain our decisive advantage.

The Nation is depending on us. That responsibility demands action. Read this document. Put it into practice. Be ready to win.

This We'll Defend!

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HOW THE ARMY FIGHTS

OPERATIONAL MANEUVER APPLIED THROUGH THE FOUR ELEMENTS OF LAND POWER

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

THE ARMY AZIMUTH

- DEFEND THE HOMELAND
- WARFIGHT – PACING CHALLENGE
- PROJECT POWER ON AND FROM THE LAND

THE OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

NO SANCTUARY
Peer adversaries can disrupt our ability to generate and project combat power from the Homeland to the tactical edge.

PERSISTENT OBSERVATION
The proliferation of sensors makes concealment increasingly difficult and compresses the time from detection to engagement.

INCREASED RANGE AND OPERATIONAL DEPTH
Layered defenses and long-range fires hold forces, entry points, and critical nodes at risk across greater distances.

ACCELERATED TEMPO AND LETHALITY
Increasing lethality compresses decision time, requiring us to sense, decide, move, and strike faster.

FOUR OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES

1. How does the Army defeat adversaries seeking to deny U.S. freedom of action from CONUS to the combined joint operational area?
2. How does the Army shape the mid- and long-range fight against an adversary whose layered defenses and long-range fires hold the Joint Force and its points of entry at risk?
3. How does the Army bring the full weight of land power against an adversary that holds our formations under persistent observation and precision strike?
4. How does the Army project power and maintain theater-wide tempo against an adversary operating from geographic advantage near Allies' and partners' territories?

THE CENTRAL IDEA

The Army fights through four operational elements. Convergence creates positions of advantage. Strike destroys the enemy at range. Close Battle seizes and holds ground. Endurance carries the fight across time and distance.

FOUR ELEMENTS OF LAND POWER

CONVERGENCE
GAINS ADVANTAGE
Creates and exploits positions of advantage through all-domain effects
Theater Armies & Corps

STRIKE
SEIZES INITIATIVE
Degrades and destroys enemy systems through lethal and non-lethal fires at range
Theater Armies to Divisions

CLOSE BATTLE
COMPELS THE ENEMY
Closes with and defeats the enemy; seizes and holds ground; establishes land control
Divisions & Below

ENDURANCE
EXTENDS REACH
Postures, protects, and projects combat power across time, distance, and contested conditions
Theater Armies, Corps & Enablers

HOW THE ARMY DELIVERS THE FOUR ELEMENTS

ORGANIZE FOR COMBAT
Purpose-built and organized at echelon around the four operational elements

FOCUSED RESOURCING
Modernization and dollars aligned to the four elements

READINESS
Train, exercise, and certify formations to execute the four operational elements

POSTURE & PARTNERSHIPS
Forward posture, access, partnerships, and theater infrastructure before conflict

END STATE

Army land power delivers operational maneuver, translates tactical success into campaign advantage, and provides the Joint Force the land control, operational reach, and staying power required to win.

How the Army Fights at a Glance —from strategic direction to end state.

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Chapter 1. The Foundation of the Joint Force

Why land power remains the foundation of the Joint Force and why the Army is transforming for the third time in its modern history.

Even before our Declaration of Independence, there was our Army. Established in June 1775, the Army is the Nation's oldest military service and has defended American liberty for more than 251 years. The Constitution empowers Congress to raise and support Armies, and federal law charges the United States Army to organize, train, and equip for prompt and sustained land combat. Today's strategic guidance sharpens that charge, directing us to defend the Homeland and project combat-credible forces globally.

The Army faces an operational environment marked by growing complexity, accelerating technological change, and increasing state-on-state conflict. Revisionist powers and rogue states cooperate across economic, diplomatic, and military spheres to circumvent U.S. power and fracture the international order. Peer adversaries are building counter-intervention approaches designed to deny our Joint Force freedom of action.

Modern war features the acceleration and democratization of precision lethality. Weapons reach farther, operations unfold faster across every domain, and persistent observation makes concealment and surprise increasingly difficult. Superiority in any domain is contested, while adversary nuclear capabilities shadow operational maneuver. The Homeland is no longer a sanctuary; adversaries are prepared to actively target our domestic mobilization, rail, and port networks to disrupt power projection before our forces can deploy. A new operational warfighting approach is required to counter these threats.

The Joint Force depends on the Army to achieve decisive land control, deliver cross-domain effects, and provide the land-based capabilities that underpin joint operations. Our presence binds together the land power networks of our Allies and partners to deliver theater access, sustain presence, and enable interoperability.

> **KEY POINT**
> *Land power is the foundation of the Joint Force. The Joint Force depends on the Army to achieve decisive land control, deliver cross-domain effects, and provide the land-based capabilities that underpin joint operations.*

Our enduring purpose remains what it has been since our founding: to fight and win the battles and wars of the Nation. That purpose is constant. The way we fulfill it changes with the threat. Over the last decade, the Army created multidomain-capable formations and increased tactical lethality. The wars occurring today inform every assumption behind that operational concept, and our warfighting concept must adapt accordingly.

I. From Modularity to Multidomain Operations

The Army's shift from modularity to Multidomain Operations (MDO) reflected the demands of a changing threat and an operational environment that required greater integration and depth across echelons. As precision-strike weapons, long-range sensors, and layered air defenses proliferated, large-scale combat against a peer adversary exposed the limitations in how the Army was organized and prepared to fight. To defeat advanced anti-access and area-denial (A2/AD) systems and converge effects across land, air, sea, space, and cyberspace, the Army developed the concept of MDO and restored the division as the principal tactical echelon.

The Army adopted MDO in 2022 as its operating concept, establishing capstone doctrine, modernizing our warfighting capabilities, improving training to rehearse complex MDO scenarios in contested environments, and adapting the force to support that way of fighting. The Army has:

- Transformed at echelon, focused on theater army multidomain enablers, division as the tactical unit of action, and combat brigades that are leaner, more lethal, and more survivable.
- Fielded long-range precision fires to include new hypersonic weapons, mid-range capabilities, High Mobility Rocket Artillery System (HIMARS), and advanced munitions for extended ranges and maritime strike capabilities.
- Integrated layered air and missile defense with new Integrated Fire Protection Capability (IFPC), Maneuver Short Range Air Defense (M-SHORAD), and UAS detection capabilities.
- Modernized close-combat forces with next-generation weapons and optics.
- Fielded Infantry Squad Vehicles and other modern platforms to improve tactical formations' speed and agility under MDO conditions.
- Modernized the command-and-control network with mobile satellite and ground links that offer advantages in every domain.

The Army is choosing to divest legacy equipment and formations, reduce redundant tactical mobility fleets and excess headquarters, and reinvest those resources into fewer, higher-impact capabilities.

That work continues. Robotics, autonomous systems, artificial intelligence, and counter-unmanned capabilities must reach formations at scale, with command and control and sustainment that keep pace. Today's conflicts demonstrate how these capabilities reshape speed, observation, survivability, and tempo. Those lessons now inform how the Army fights.

II. Modern Warfare

Contemporary conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza, along with hegemonic great power intimidation in Asia, demonstrate the range and complexity of threats the Army faces as it prepares to execute its missions. Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine showed the scale and destructive power of modern land warfare. After the initial weeks of fighting, each side lost its ability to maneuver, and the conflict became a fight of yards rather than miles. The gridlock of this positional warfare prompted some to prematurely declare the death of ground maneuver, claiming that a transparent battlefield defined by persistent

observation, unmanned system proliferation, AI-driven targeting, and long-range strike made offensive ground movement obsolete.

These claims mistake tactical destruction for operational and strategic success. Long-range fires degrade enemy networks at range, but standoff alone rarely compels the enemy to surrender. Only ground maneuver can seize what the enemy holds and secure it against the enemy's will. Achieving strategic objectives requires a unified joint approach to operational-level maneuver applied across and at depth throughout the combined, joint operational area. Air and maritime forces establish superiority and control in their domains, while space and cyber capabilities disrupt adversary targeting and protect friendly networks. Land power then exploits those conditions to enable freedom of action and, when required, conduct combined arms maneuver to defeat the enemy, seize and hold ground, and consolidate gains.

The conflict in Ukraine also demonstrates that the proliferation of sensors challenges a force's ability to remain concealed, severely restricting ground maneuver. A transparent battlefield, however, is not inevitable; it emerges only when enemy observation goes uncontested and a formation's signatures are left unmanaged. Through deception, concealment, dispersion, and aggressive counter-reconnaissance, friendly forces can disrupt and distort the enemy's operating picture, proving that battlefield transparency is never guaranteed.

> **KEY POINT**
> *Battlefield transparency is not fixed. It is a relative advantage gained when one force builds understanding and acts effectively while denying its adversary the ability to do the same.*

Operations in Gaza, following the October 2023 terrorist attack in Israel, highlight the challenges of dense urban and subterranean combat. Advanced sensors and precision strikes proved insufficient to defeat a dug-in network. Deliberate combined arms maneuver was required to clear and secure terrain. High-intensity, persistent engagements underscore two demands: munitions depth and land forces capable of resolving what standoff alone cannot.

These lessons shape our response to national strategic guidance, which calls for "peace through strength" and denying adversaries their objectives. For the Army, this means forces and capabilities postured forward, regularly rehearsed with Allies and partners, and formations proficient at operational maneuver. It also requires us to organize, train, and equip against the People's Liberation Army (PLA) – the "pacing threat" – with the same institutional focus that the Cold War generations brought to the Soviet Army.

III. The Path to Institutional Change

Since the end of World War II, the Army has repeatedly reorganized to confront emerging operational threats. During the 1950s, as the newly formed Joint Force debated the merits and dangers of an atomic battlefield, the Army introduced the Pentomic Division—a radical redesign of the service's core tactical architecture. Built around five self-contained battle groups, each division was designed to survive an era

dominated by nuclear strikes through wide dispersion, rapid deployment in depth, and decentralized mission command that assumed formations would fight isolated from higher headquarters.

The Pentomic experiment ultimately fell short, proving that designing our formations around the promise of novel technology rather than the enduring realities of combined arms maneuver produces a structurally brittle force. The Army learned that tactical dispersion and decentralized decision-making are operationally hollow if stripped of the command echelons, organic sustainment, and integrated protection required to properly maneuver, survive, and fight in the mud. The United States Army is a maneuver Army; organizational change that fails to reinforce maneuver has historically failed.

The shortcomings of the Pentomic design quickly became apparent. It hampered command and control, reduced organic firepower, and relied on unproven technologies that existed only on blueprints. The Pentomic design survived a mere five years before its abandonment. To rectify these structural deficiencies, the Army successfully instituted the Reorganization Objective Army Division (ROAD) initiative in the early 1960s. ROAD restored intermediate headquarters and provided a highly flexible, tailored modularity that dramatically increased conventional combined arms capability.

The enduring lesson of this era for modern Army reformers is clear: future force design cannot chase technological promises at the expense of structural depth. True readiness for large-scale combat operations demands layered lethality, enduring survivability, and combined arms maneuver integrated across every echelon of command.

In the post-Vietnam 1970s and 1980s, facing Soviet conventional mass in Europe, the Army revolutionized its approach by developing AirLand Battle—a threat-driven doctrine centered on how to "Fight Outnumbered and Win." This doctrine shifted our focus from passive attrition to aggressive, synchronized operations executed in depth, utilizing deep strikes to disintegrate second-echelon enemy forces before they could influence the close, lethal fight. AirLand Battle served as the catalyst that aligned our entire institution, driving the rapid integration of our premier "Big 5" combat platforms, the professionalization of our NCO corps, and the evolution of our CTCs to forge ready leaders in realistic training environments. Additionally, the AirLand Battle doctrine was successfully paired with the Army 86 (including Division 86) reorganization to create the deep maneuver capability needed for a European battle against the Soviet Union.

An enduring lesson of this era is that a coherent, threat-driven doctrine should precede and dictate capability development and force structure. By aligning training, leadership, and technology toward a single operating concept, AirLand Battle established a framework that *How the Army Fights* will replicate to drive institutional change across the Army.

The post-9/11 era presented a different set of institutional challenges. To meet the demands of concurrent counterinsurgency operations, the Army expanded and modularized, increasing total BCT numbers by 46 percent across the Active and Reserve Components while quickly fielding specialized capabilities directly to deploying units. Over two decades of rotational deployments, the Army became accustomed to operating from fixed forward sanctuaries while benefiting from air and maritime dominance and an uncontested logistics pipeline from the Homeland.

These experiences created a generation of units that rarely had to maneuver under a contested sky, mask their electromagnetic signatures, or sustain high-tempo operations without contractor support. This era demonstrated the peril of optimizing for immediate conditions at the expense of the core combined arms proficiency required to fight a peer threat. As the Army reorganizes for large-scale combat operations, its operational approach cannot rest on outdated assumptions of joint domain supremacy.

To deliver operational maneuver on a lethal battlefield, the Army must master the four elements of land power—Convergence, Strike, Close Battle, and Endurance—under the conditions of the modern threat environment where concealment and surprise are increasingly difficult. These four operational elements are inherently interdependent and gain power when functioning together to solve the Joint Force's most complex challenges.

IV. The Four Elements of Land Power

Capitalizing on our technological advantages and tactical lethality, the Army must now focus upon operational warfighting. The U.S. Army conducts operational maneuver to translate tactical victories into strategic outcomes through cumulative and sequential actions across multiple domains. Operational maneuver creates dilemmas for an adversary, exploits convergence to disrupt enemy systems, positions the Joint Force for decisive action, and extends tactical success into campaign-level advantage. Achieving this standard of operational maneuver requires the application of four operational elements:

CONVERGENCE: creates and exploits positions of advantage through the deliberate synchronization of all-domain effects. The Convergence element includes the physical and non-physical capabilities and networks of sensors, command nodes, and weapon systems employed against the enemy. Convergence maximizes operational maneuver in joint all-domain operations. Theater armies and corps execute Convergence.

STRIKE: degrades and destroys enemy systems through offensive lethal and non-lethal fires at range. The Strike element includes sensors, targeting, mass and precision fires, non-lethal effects, and command and control networks. Divisions through theater armies execute Strike.

CLOSE BATTLE: closes with, dislocates, destroys, or defeats enemy forces in contact through echeloned maneuver of combined arms land power. The Close Battle element includes combat forces, direct and indirect fires, and command and control. Close Battle establishes land and population control. Divisions and below execute Close Battle.

ENDURANCE: postures, protects, and projects combat power over time, distance, and contested conditions through resilient sustainment and force generation. The Endurance element includes units focused upon Soldier health, logistics, transportation, security, counter-UAS, air and missile defense, cyber defense, force projection, and resilient infrastructure. Theater armies, corps, and their enabling commands execute Endurance.

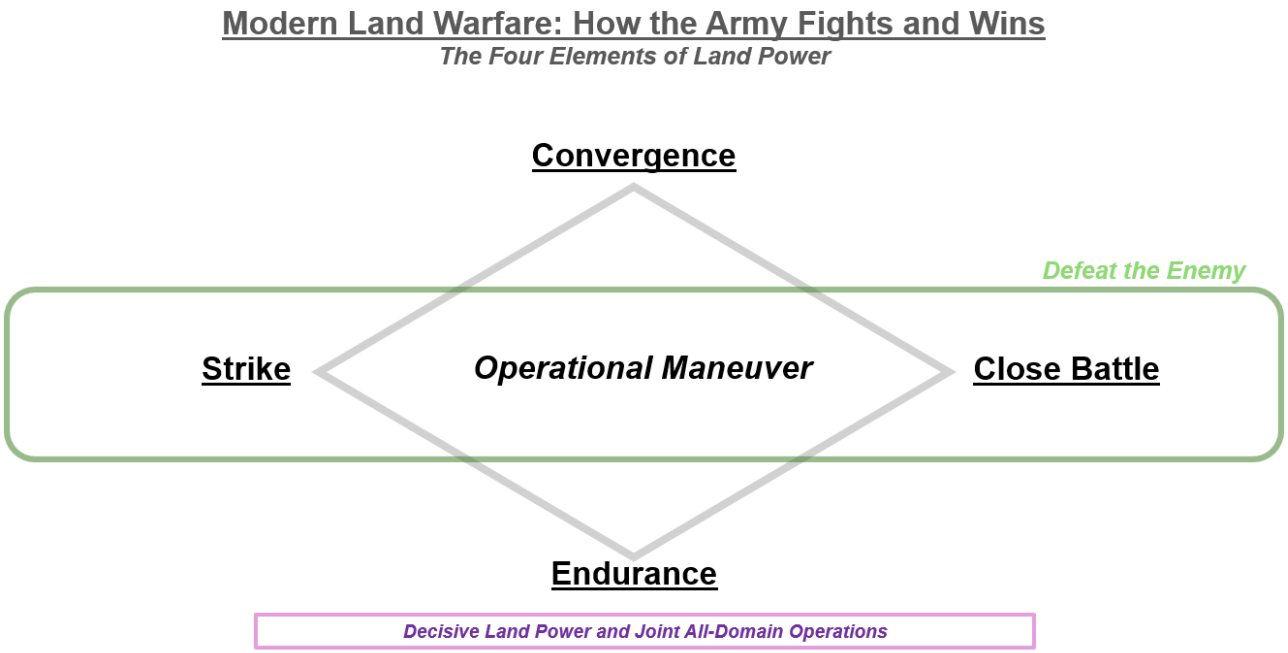


Figure 1. The four elements of Army land power applied to operational maneuver.

Chapter 2. The Four Elements of Army Land Power

The four operational elements of land power— Convergence, Strike, Close Battle, and Endurance — and how they deliver operational maneuver.

Land power is the decisive capability to control terrain, resources, and populations—projecting force from the ground into every warfighting domain. Land power binds the Army, Marine Corps, Special Operations Forces, and ground forces of our Allies and partners, each operating at distinct depth and scale. The Army conducts prompt and sustained land combat while continuously setting the theater, shaping the security environment, and securing critical terrain. Marines conduct land operations vital to naval campaigns and fleet support. Special Operations Forces conduct high-risk, low-visibility operations to develop intelligence and shape the battlefield for conventional forces. Regional Allies and partners secure sovereign territory, establish collective legitimacy, and provide invaluable local expertise. Together, these capabilities form a land power network that the Army helps integrate and employ at scale, commanding joint and multinational campaigns through four operational elements.

> **LAND POWER:** the ability to control land, resources, and people, and to fight from that land into every domain. It is exercised by the Army, the Marine Corps, Special Operations Forces, and the land forces of our Allies and partners, each operating at different depths and scales.

The four operational elements of land power—Convergence, Strike, Close Battle, and Endurance—operate as interdependent capabilities, formations, and actions that achieve operational maneuver and enable joint all-domain maneuver for the Joint Force. Army forces employ the four operational elements to gain positional advantage, enable joint and multinational operations, and defeat enemy forces over time and distance.

Through Convergence, theater armies and corps synchronize capabilities across the cyber domain, space domain, and electromagnetic spectrum to degrade the adversary's networks, jam their communications, and disrupt their air defenses. Once these conditions are established, the adversary is dismantled and defeated through the concurrent execution of Strike and Close Battle elements. Strike acts as the deep operational shaper, employing medium- and long-range precision fires and uncrewed systems to disrupt, degrade, and dislocate enemy forces and logistical assets before they can influence the close fight. Close Battle is the decisive act of combined arms maneuver where friendly forces close with and destroy the enemy. Underpinning this entire framework is Endurance, generated as theater armies and corps construct robust sustainment architectures, establish layered protection, and sustain the combat power required to preserve tempo.

> **KEY POINT**
> *Convergence and Endurance set the conditions. Strike and Close Battle deliver decisive outcomes.*

I. Convergence

> **CONVERGENCE:** creates and exploits positions of advantage through the deliberate synchronization of all-domain effects.

Convergence is the primary integrator of operational maneuver, synchronizing capabilities across land, air, maritime, space, cyberspace, and the electromagnetic spectrum. Leaders seek to maximize Convergence. Our adversaries employ integrated A2/AD networks composed of layered air defenses, advanced non-kinetic warfare suites, and precision missiles that feature no single physical point of failure. Commanders employ Convergence to expose and exploit enemy vulnerabilities, enabling Strike operations to systematically dismantle enemy standoff networks and open pathways for ground formations to dominate the Close Battle.

Convergence is illustrated when a commander executes a kinetic strike against an adversary command post while electronic warfare assets jam backup communication systems. Concurrently, long-range artillery targets an enemy radar exposed while illuminating friendly aircraft, while friendly space and cyber capabilities degrade the broader integrated air defense network. Synchronized across time and space, these combined multidomain effects isolate the adversary and expose their remaining forces to air and maritime strikes.

The operational significance of Convergence is its ability to impose multiple dilemmas. Convergence overwhelms the enemy with simultaneous effects and persistent disruption of enemy sensor networks, creating advantages for the Joint Force. Synchronized cyberspace disruption, sensor degradation, and kinetic strikes induce cascading operational paralysis, disintegrating the enemy's A2/AD architecture and creating windows for Joint Force all-domain maneuver. Operationalizing Convergence requires AI-enabled data fabrics and edge-computing nodes capable of pairing any sensor to the optimal cross-domain shooter in real time.

Although synchronization is foundational to Convergence, the two are not synonymous. Synchronization occurs at every echelon, from company through theater army. Convergence, however, is executed at corps and theater army, where commanders possess the unique capabilities, authorities, and capacity to integrate effects across all domains, including space, cyberspace and the electromagnetic spectrum. Those echelons execute Convergence on behalf of the force, creating opportunities for the execution of operational maneuver that subordinate formations exploit.

HISTORICAL VIGNETTE

Operation Glowing Symphony, 2016 – Cyber-Enabled Convergence Against ISIS's Digital Infrastructure: *Joint Task Force (JTF) ARES, under U.S. Cyber Command, targeted ISIS's media apparatus — including Amaq News Agency and al-Hayat Media Center — locking out administrators, deleting propaganda, and disrupting the servers ISIS used to recruit and coordinate. As cyber effects degraded the network, key personnel who relied on it for secure communication were exposed, paralleling the August 2015 strike near Raqqa that killed senior ISIS hacker Junaid Hussain after his online activity was tracked to his physical location. Cyber effects degraded the enemy's command and control while creating the exposure that enabled kinetic targeting, denying ISIS the ability to protect both its digital network and its operators at once. Convergence combined cyber disruption of the enemy's information and C2 networks with kinetic strikes to degrade ISIS's propaganda and command system.*

II. Strike

STRIKE: degrades and destroys enemy systems through offensive lethal and non-lethal fires at range.

Strike is more than the execution of the Fires warfighting function; it does not function in isolation. Rather, Strike depends on ground maneuver formations to provide mobility, command and control, security, counter-UAS defensive fires, and signature management. Strike benefits from Convergence's disruption of the enemy's sensory system while also relying on Endurance for continuous resupply and expeditionary sustainment throughout prolonged operations.

Against a peer adversary, the operational significance of Strike is its ability to degrade sophisticated A2/AD networks. Systematically targeting command bunkers, transporter erector launchers (TELs), and integrated air defense radars disrupts the adversary's command structure and paralyzes its operational cohesion. This disruption allows the Joint Force to maneuver within the A2/AD bubble and project power across all domains.

To survive on modern battlefields, Strike employs mobility, rapid dispersion, concealment and deception. Maintaining this tempo of continuous mobility and dispersion requires mission command and proficiency in protection and concealment tasks at every echelon.

Strike is an interconnected capability spanning every tactical and operational echelon. While divisions and corps integrate the full targeting cycle with Joint enablers, distributed sensors and shooters empower subordinate formations to participate directly in the strike network. Concurrently, the Army is expanding Strike capacity well beyond traditional rocket artillery, incorporating launched effects, loitering munitions, one-way attack (OWA) unmanned systems, and affordable medium- to long-range precision fires.

HISTORICAL VIGNETTE

Ukraine, June 2025 – Operation Spider's Web*: On the 1st of June, Ukraine launched 117 first-person-view drones against five Russian long-range aviation bases up to 4,300 km from the front lines. The result of this multifaceted strike was devastating. Strike eliminated a major share of the enemy's strategic platforms at their source. More than 41 strategic aircraft were damaged, with 13 destroyed. Additionally, approximately 34% of Russia's cruise-missile carrier fleet was degraded in one night. See ANNEX E for more examples.*

III. Close Battle

CLOSE BATTLE: closes with, dislocates, destroys, or defeats enemy forces in contact through echeloned maneuver of combined arms land power.

Close Battle is the unique, indispensable operational element of land power—one that no other service can replicate at scale. It involves warfare carried out on land through direct and indirect fires. More than simply a series of tactical actions, Close Battle is a lethal set of operational land power capabilities and formations. Close Battle is a fully integrated combined arms element, synchronizing everything from fires and protection to Army aviation and tactical sustainment under a unified command. It is enabled by Convergence and Strike. Close Battle is always the decisive element of land power and the only element that directly defeats the enemy by seizing or destroying what the enemy values the most.

Modern conflict requires that the Joint Force possess the capability to violently seize and physically hold ground occupied by the enemy. As demonstrated in Ukraine, HIMARS strikes on Russian ammunition depots in occupied Donbas severely weakened Russia's ability to generate offensive fires but did not displace Russian forces from occupied lands. To accomplish strategic and operational objectives, the Joint Force relies on the Army to establish land control through Close Battle.

Close Battle is built on highly lethal ground maneuver formations that cannot be formed over short periods of time. They are built on years of rigorous training, institutional expertise, and leadership. Close Battle formations must possess the overwhelming destructive power, tactical overmatch, and survivability required to shatter the enemy and win the first fight of the next war.

The Army is transitioning now for Close Battle in a peer fight. Our brigade combat teams are converting to brigades of increased capability and tactical mobility. They are optimizing for rapid dispersion, survivability, and massing precision effects. These modernized formations will be capable of dominating the enemy through Close Battle—on a battlefield characterized by proliferated sensors, continuous electronic warfare and massed fires—and will win the first fight.

Close Battle formations must excel at operations under all nine forms of contact. Beyond simply direct and indirect fire contact, proficiency in aerial, visual, and electromagnetic contact is necessary to maneuver on the modern battlefield. Close Battle formations must gain and maintain the contact

required for friendly understanding while denying enemy contact to preserve freedom to maneuver. The battlefield is not transparent when Close Battle formations are highly trained at concealment and deception.

Positioning Close Battle capabilities forward in high-threat theaters is vital to deterring aggression and enabling rapid response. While joint air and sea power forward in theater establish denial by contesting transit lanes and airspace, forward-deployed Close Battle formations assure the security of maritime choke points, littoral corridors, and joint launch facilities. Forward positioning, though, cannot cover every contingency; the Army must maintain an agile global response capability ready to project combat power wherever Close Battle is required.

Close Battle forces train and equip to prevail in extreme environmental conditions—from the frozen Arctic to arid deserts to dense triple-canopy jungles. The Army does not possess the luxury of choosing its battlefields. The enemy always gets a vote, and they will inevitably cast it on the most unforgiving ground they can find.

Close Battle remains the harshest and most intensely human-centric of all military endeavors. Yet, it is precisely this human element—grounded in the physical presence, cognitive adaptability, and situational understanding of the individual Soldier—that enables the control and stabilization of territory. We prioritize Soldier training as the foundation of Close Battle. We train to out-think and out-fight the adversary with or without sophisticated technology. Autonomous systems enable Soldiers to destroy and disrupt, but they can never replace the human judgment, leadership, and physical presence of Soldiers required to control the land and consolidate gains.

> **HISTORICAL VIGNETTE**
>
> ***Fallujah, November 2004 – Operation Phantom Fury.*** *On 8 November 2004, U.S. Army and Marine units launched Operation Phantom Fury into Fallujah, one of the most heavily fortified urban strongholds in Iraq. Task Force 2-2 Infantry, built around 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry and mechanized infantry from the 1st Infantry Division, fought alongside Marine regiments block by block through a city prepared with fighting positions, spider holes, and interlocking fields of fire. Tanks, Bradleys, and combat engineers cleared lanes while infantry entered and cleared buildings room by room—a process that took nearly six weeks. This is Close Battle at its most granular level: only Soldiers in direct contact could clear and hold the ground that surveillance and precision strikes alone could not secure. See ANNEX E for more examples.*

IV. Endurance

> **ENDURANCE:** postures, protects, and projects combat power over time, distance, and contested conditions through resilient sustainment and force generation.

Endurance enables sustainment and layered protection from industry and installations to the forward line of troops using theater armies, corps, and their enabling commands. It preserves joint tempo and extends operational reach by sustaining military operations, projecting combat power, and protecting

critical assets. It allows the Joint Force to execute cumulative and sequential campaigns and transition between offensive, defensive, and stability operations. Endurance allows Strike and Close Battle to operate without interruption and enables sustained employment of Convergence across all domains.

At the theater level, Endurance is generated by the theater army through the continuous campaign of "setting the theater." Setting the theater is not static. It is a dynamic operation that persists through competition, crisis, conflict, and post-conflict stabilization. During competition, the theater army coordinates the prepositioning of forces and materiel and follows through on the diplomatic access, basing and overflight (ABO) agreements necessary to project combat power. During conflict, the theater army dynamically adjusts lines of communication, manages the flow of supplies such as critical munitions, and conducts joint reception, staging, onward movement, and integration (JRSOI) of follow-on forces. In the post-conflict phase, it sustains the consolidation of gains, facilitates the transition to civil authority, and retrogrades forces.

Endurance enables joint operations, which are inevitably tethered to geography. Air, maritime, space, and cyber operations all reach forward from secure land areas, from bases and deep-water ports to airfields and land-based communication nodes. Army forces establish, sustain, and secure these sites, turning exposed geography into hardened points that project and protect joint combat power.

That foundational role carries formal obligations: the Army provides Army Support to Other Services (ASOS) across theater logistics to include land transportation and land-based air and missile defense. The Army serves as the Department of War Executive Agent (EA) for functions on which the entire Joint Force relies, from land-based water resources to the military postal operations and detainee operations. Other services provide much of the strategic and operational mobility that carries the Army forward, while the Army provides Endurance to the Joint Force in theater once they arrive.

Protecting and sustaining maneuver forces is critical to achieving Endurance and requires the Army to build and defend interior lines of communication. The capacity to protect and move personnel, commodities, and supplies through contested environments provides the Joint Force with the operational depth and reach required to execute prolonged campaigns. Its interior lines, consisting of components such as hardened ammunition storage with magazine depth, distributed equipment and supply stockpiles, medical care and casualty evacuation, sustain our operational forces. This requirement is even more pronounced today: the absence of sanctuary across any theater of operations underscores the critical necessity of interior lines.

Maintaining operational tempo at the tactical edge with disaggregated formations demands a distribution capacity that legacy networks cannot support. Pervasive sensing makes traditional, centralized sustainment hubs and linear distribution corridors easy to detect and strike, necessitating decentralized supply nodes and redundant delivery routes. To achieve Endurance and sustain dispersed forces in contested environments, the Army must operationalize autonomous ground, aerial, and littoral distribution platforms to scale throughput while minimizing human exposure in high-threat corridors. Concurrently, the Army must field advanced expeditionary fabrication capabilities anchored by additive manufacturing and secured "right-to-repair" authorities. By enabling forward-postured units to produce

critical components on-site, the Army can bypass vulnerable transoceanic supply lines and return damaged equipment to the fight at the tempo of modern conflict.

Equally critical, our organic industrial base (OIB) must actively expand and generate the surge capacity required to sustain the munitions consumption and platform attrition rates of modern interstate warfare. Our OIB must harness advanced manufacturing and best commercial practices that will allow it to quickly pivot production outputs based upon emergent operational demands. This 'agile facilitation construct' will allow production of numerous different finished products and repairs, evolving beyond historical 'one plant, one output' industrial models.

Endurance also demands that we harden and expand our power projection platforms (PPP) and mobilization force generation installations (MFGI). Army installations historically have been administrative hubs for the stationing of our units, Soldiers and Families. Acknowledging that the Homeland is no longer secure, our installations can no longer be seen as safe havens within which we build and project combat power. Modern warfare requires them to transition into hardened platforms that can rapidly generate and project combat power into theaters of conflict. Equally critical, they must possess the required infrastructure to transition to a war footing with increased capacity to support demands of protracted conflict.

While the other operational elements of land power collectively win battles and campaigns, it is Endurance that enables the Army to win wars. It is the sinew that connects tactical action to strategic victory, ensuring that the Joint Force can project power, absorb blows, and sustain the fight over the time and distance required to achieve national objectives. From the industrial base at home to the forward line of troops in a contested theater, Endurance is the manifestation of our national resolve. It allows us not only to fight but to outlast any adversary.

HISTORICAL VIGNETTE

Normandy, August–November 1944 – The Red Ball Express. *After the breakout from St. Lo, Allied armies advanced across France faster than their logistics could support. Deep-water ports remained damaged, and the rail network destroyed, forcing total reliance on truck transport from the Normandy beaches. The Army created the Red Ball Express—a dedicated one-way highway system that at its peak ran nearly 6,000 vehicles and delivered more than 12,000 tons of supplies daily. Over the course of the operation, drivers moved more than 400,000 tons of critical combat supplies under constant threat of mechanical failure, fatigue, and Luftwaffe attack, keeping Third Army's advance alive. Endurance sustained combat power over distance and time through resilient, scalable logistics—preventing premature culmination and enabling operational success to continue. See ANNEX E for more examples.*

Chapter 3. Organizing and Resourcing

Organizing formations and equipping them for the future fight.

The execution of Convergence, Strike, Close Battle, and Endurance requires a holistic assessment of the organization and structure of the Army followed by difficult resourcing decisions. We will organize, man, train, and equip around the four operational elements.

I. Formations

Convergence is driven by the theater army and corps headquarters alongside multidomain commands. Formations at these levels must be purpose-built to continuously synchronize capabilities across multiple domains, echelons, and the Joint Force to achieve effects. Theater armies and corps execute Convergence, synchronizing multidomain effects at decisive points. These headquarters require the networks, authorities, and staff capacity to integrate sensing, decision, and action in real time. That capacity cannot be assembled after the fight begins—it must be designed into the headquarters from the start. Without that capacity and capability, the force cannot achieve Convergence.

Strike is executed by divisions through theater armies. It degrades and destroys enemy systems through offensive lethal and non-lethal fires at range. Strike uses sensors, targeting, precision fires, non-lethal effects, and the command-and-control networks that bind them together. Formations across these echelons must be able to see, sense, and kill, then rapidly assess effects while remaining integrated into the joint kill web. The systems and staff capacity required to execute the full Strike targeting cycle, including the integration of joint enablers, resides at the division echelon and above. To deliver Strike, the Army is moving beyond sole reliance on rocket artillery, leveraging combat aviation brigades, one-way attack drones, and modular launched systems to diversify and scale lethal Strike options. Divisions and higher, though, will remain the synchronizer of Strike and must have the staff capacity and expertise to effectively plan and execute.

Close Battle is executed by tactical formations at division and below. As the decisive element of operational maneuver, it involves closing with and defeating enemy formations, seizing and holding key terrain, and consolidating gains. Divisions are the primary unit of action for Close Battle and must be resourced and equipped to succeed. Ensuring the protection, concealment, and survivability of these formations is vital; they must be resourced with integrated defensive fires, tactical concealment and robust deception capabilities.

Endurance is executed through theater armies, primarily through theater enabling commands. These organizations set the theater and conduct operations to establish sustainment and protection postures, infrastructure, and access—creating and defending positional advantage across vast distances and time. Theater armies executing Endurance must integrate emerging capabilities, including autonomous surface vessels, distributed additive manufacturing, and resilient, low-signature power generation capable of operating under contested conditions. Theater armies require appropriate force structure and resources to execute Endurance.

II. Capabilities, Technology, and Platforms

Operationalizing the four elements demands range, mass, tempo, and precision at a scale the current force cannot yet deliver. Producing and sustaining these capabilities hinges on expanding domestic industrial surge capacity while rapidly scaling commercial dual-use technologies across the force.

Army enterprise experimentation and innovation are both necessary to inform industry's development of the capabilities our formations need, but each serves a different purpose in the capability's development process. Experimentation is a top-down process that applies scientific rigor and structured controls to determine cause and effect. It allows the Army to validate warfighting concepts, formations, and materiel solutions before integrating them across the force. Innovation begins with Soldiers and tactical formations. It is bottom-up and user-driven, focused on solving immediate tactical problems, improving readiness, and adapting to current conditions. Together, experimentation informs what the Army builds for tomorrow, while innovation helps formations solve the problems they face today with currently available resources.

CAPABILITIES THE ELEMENTS DEMAND

- Autonomy. The proliferation of autonomous systems on the modern battlefield is an operational reality to which Army formations must rapidly adapt. The force must master the employment of autonomous capabilities while leveraging the irreplaceable judgment, adaptability, and experience of Soldiers to defeat the most complex threats. Modern tactical formations are actively integrating unmanned systems into combined arms teams with a goal of delivering autonomous platforms capable of sensing, deciding, and acting at machine speed to unburden Soldiers and accelerate tactical decision-making.
- Artificial Intelligence (AI)-Enabled Sensing and Decision. The compressed tempo of the modern battlefield demands faster decision-making cycles. AI must process vast streams of multidomain sensor data to compress sensor-to-shooter timelines, directly enabling Convergence and Strike. For Close Battle, AI-driven planning tools will allow commanders to anticipate enemy actions and rapidly synchronize maneuver options, while predictive analytics assess force readiness and consumption rates to preserve Endurance. Ultimately, the objective is decisive cognitive advantage: delivering actionable clarity to Soldiers and commanders in seconds and minutes rather than hours.
- Command and Control. The Army's current communications architecture remains overly reliant on vulnerable space-based links. To ensure survivability in contested environments, the Army must build resilient, transport-agnostic network architectures that integrate hardened terrestrial infrastructure, including tactical fiber-optic backbones and distributed node networks, within theater operational areas. Furthermore, standardizing open digital architectures and common interfaces is essential to deliver a synchronized, real-time common operating picture across joint, interagency, and multinational coalitions.
- Munitions. Prevailing in large-scale combat demands a deliberate balance between high-end precision weapons and affordable mass. While exquisite precision munitions remain essential for neutralizing high-value targets, they cannot serve as the sole solution for prolonged conflict. The Army must field lower-cost, scalable munitions capable of achieving the standoff ranges

required for Strike without prematurely exhausting inventories. Modern conflict proves that magazine depth and sustained production capacity are no longer mere industrial considerations; they are decisive operational requirements.

III. Aligning Dollars, Programs, and Modernization

Headquarters Department of the Army (HQDA) Army Staff and Secretariat, leveraging the Central Programming process, will align resources to this operational construct. Resourcing the four elements will be constrained as the Army's topline budget remains flat in real terms, and strategic requirements, inflation, and operational costs grow.

Cost growth is driven by three primary pressures that must be accounted for: increasing manpower expenses, inflation-driven losses in purchasing power, and continuous unforeseen external requirements. The Army must prioritize investments in warfighting fundamentals (e.g., individual and unit readiness, Soldier welfare and quality of life) while focusing its limited modernization dollars on capabilities that deliver four critical advantages:

- Rapid Deployability enables all four elements. The Army structures, equips, and positions forces to fight and win the "away game," ensuring logistics and power projection pipelines are hardened to immediately mass decisive operational maneuver on target.
- Low-Cost Optionality enhances Strike. The U.S. arsenal cannot consist solely of high-cost, exquisite munitions and platforms. Development of low-cost, high-performance alternatives provides Army leaders more options and more capacity to deliver long-range, precision firepower over extended ranges and time periods.
- Operational and Tactical Mobility are essential to Close Battle. The Army will build and procure highly maneuverable, dispersed systems, rejecting slow, heavy platforms that present static targets for precise adversary fires.
- Fleet Simplification makes Endurance possible. The Army maximizes sustainability by focusing on commonality among platforms performing similar missions, reducing the maintenance and installation requirements placed on our logistics footprint.

High-intensity conflict consumes massive quantities of equipment sustainment supplies; the U.S. defense industrial base and our government-owned organic industrial base—consisting of government depots, arsenals, and ammunition plants—must adapt to meet this strain. The industrial base must develop rapid replenishment solutions rather than relying on peacetime schedules. Concurrently, the Army will continue to modernize our combat fleets to ensure mobility, survivability, and combat overmatch. Accomplishing these resourcing goals requires discipline in where, when, and how we invest.

The Army is adopting a strategy of focused modernization. Equipping every unit with every capability is neither fiscally sustainable nor operationally effective. Broad, Army-wide modernization efforts can take decades, with procured platforms being outdated by the time fielding is completed. Instead, we will prioritize rapid procurement of only the Army's most critical systems, leveraging competitive multi-

vendor sourcing to compress development timelines and expand production capacity. Once a capability is selected, it will be developed and integrated into a focused portion of the Army with a rapid fielding plan. Concurrently, dedicated research and development funding will advance the next generation of critical technologies for fielding to a different portion of the Army. To ensure focused modernization is successful, the divestment of legacy equipment will be accounted for with the repurposing of legacy equipment sustainment dollars to fund our warfighting priorities.

Our investments must strengthen the Army as a collective warfighting system rather than attempt to make *every* platform technologically superior or equip *every* formation with *every* capability. We will concentrate resources on the capabilities essential to Convergence, Strike, Close Battle, and Endurance.

> **KEY POINT**
> *The Army cannot and should not modernize everything at once. The answer is focused modernization.*

Conclusion

War remains a human endeavor fought to achieve policy ends in a chaotic and dynamic environment. *How the Army Fights* provides a modern framework for operational warfighting on and from the land, translating the conceptual depth of multidomain operations into practical warfighting guidance for combat. The core thesis is that the Army fights with interdependent elements of land power to deliver operational maneuver while serving as the unbreakable foundation of the Joint Force.

To win against peer adversaries, the Army must build upon recent improvements in the tactical lethality of independent maneuver brigades to achieve cumulative effects through higher-echelon operational warfighting. Corps and theater armies must be capable of Convergence to achieve decision dominance and generate localized opportunities, while Strike acts as the deep shaper to disrupt, degrade, and dislocate the enemy in depth. This cross-domain coordination creates the conditions for Close Battle to close with and defeat the enemy in contact, establishing decisive land control. Underpinning this entire framework is Endurance, which provides the Joint Force with the operational staying power to sustain continuous pressure over time and vast distances.

To ensure land power forces defeat the enemy, the Army will organize formations, technology, and budgets around the four operational warfighting elements of land power. Operational brigades will be leaner, more lethal and optimized for rapid dispersion. The OIB will modernize to generate high-volume surge capacity and enable the acquisition of new types of warfighting systems. While *How the Army Fights* focuses on operational victory, our elements are nested within a larger national system of industrial mobilization and strategic depth that enables the Nation to win wars.

At the center of our operational elements remains the individual Soldier. Advanced technology, uncrewed systems, and autonomous networks optimize kill webs, yet they can never replace the human judgment, tactical discipline, and physical courage of the Soldiers executing the fight in the mud. Soldiers are the catalyst of Convergence, the trigger of Strike, the deciding factor in Close Battle, the instruments of Endurance—and the ultimate guarantor of victory.

Annex A. The Army's Operational Challenges

The accelerating trends in the operational environment generate critical challenges that the Army, as the foundation of the Joint Force, must solve.

1. **How does the Army defeat adversaries intent on denying U.S. freedom of action from CONUS to the combined joint operational area?**

    - Theater armies and corps require multidomain capabilities to execute continuous rather than episodic convergence.
    - Theater armies and corps require the capability and expertise to sense, target, and employ the full suite of multidomain capabilities at expanded scope, scale, and duration.
    - Theater armies and corps require validation as joint task forces with demonstrated proficiency in executing Convergence and Endurance operational elements.

2. **How does the Army shape the mid- and long-range fight against an adversary whose layered defenses and long-range fires hold the Joint Force and its points of entry at risk?**

    - The Army requires long-range precision fires (LRPF) capacity and munitions volume inside the First Island Chain (FIC) sufficient to interdict adversary launch sites and maritime targets in the western Pacific.
    - The Army requires the LRPF and multidomain effects to disintegrate dense A2/AD layers and support joint all-domain operations.
    - The Army requires the capability and capacity to protect Strike formations from massed missiles and one-way attack drones, accounting for new adversary concepts of employment.
    - The Army requires proficiency in integrated conventional-nuclear operations to support strategic forces.

3. **How does the Army bring the full weight of land power lethality against an adversary that is organizing and exercising to persistently observe and strike our formations?**

    - Ground maneuver requires integrated protection, signature management, deception, and counter-reconnaissance to preserve freedom of maneuver and prevent enemy sensing from becoming effective strike.
    - Maneuver platoons and companies require organic lower-tier defensive fires to defeat autonomous threats and enhance survivability.
    - Close Battle formations require persistent sensing and AI-enabled data aggregation to execute decision-making and command and control at the increased tempo of the modern battlefield.

- Close Battle formations require redundant, multidomain deception and concealment capabilities to mitigate the risk posed by the adversary's pervasive manned and unmanned sensors.

4. How does the Army project power and maintain theater-wide tempo against an adversary that is proximate to Allies' and partners' territories?

- Army forces require forward posture and responsiveness to deny the adversary freedom of action and prevent it from achieving its initial operational objectives.
- Mobilization and power projection nodes and processes require protection from long-range strikes, sabotage, and cyber interdiction throughout the strategic support area to guarantee Joint Force projection.
- Installations require enduring force generation platforms and industrial-scale capacity to mobilize forces rapidly and reconstitute from peer or near-peer attrition in war.
- Forward-postured formations require advanced manufacturing and autonomous distribution to fix equipment at the point of need and maintain reach across vast distances.
- Army land power stocks and forward sites require repositioning to allow inside forces to overcome A2/AD, deny a fait accompli, and win the first battle.
- All theater distribution and forward logistics nodes require the capability and capacity to execute sustainment operations across vast, contested distances.
- The OIB and the Defense Industrial Base (DIB) require surge capacity to meet the sustainment and platform attrition rates of modern war, generating the national endurance to win the last battle.

Annex B. Defending the Homeland

How the Army defends the Homeland: The service that builds the force and the theater army that protects the American people, secures key terrain, and defeats threats to the Nation.

The Army defends the Homeland through the disciplined force generation and employment of land power. Every campaign the Joint Force fights around the world begins and ends in the Homeland. The efforts at home to build and ready the force directly enable Convergence, Strike, Close Battle, and Endurance.

Homeland Defense protects sovereignty, territory, and population against external threats. U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) leads across North America, while U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM) leads across the Pacific sovereign territories. Defense Support of Civil Authorities is what the Army executes on order, in support of civilian authorities, when a disaster or emergency exceeds what those authorities can meet alone. Inside those missions, the Army defends the Homeland through two roles: first, as a Department of War service under 10 U.S.C., the Army builds the force and sustains joint combat power. Second, through its theater armies and Army Service Component Commands (ASCCs) to combatant commands, the Army protects the American people, secures key terrain and strategic approaches to the Homeland.

> **KEY POINT**
> Every campaign the Joint Force fights begins and ends in the Homeland. The Army defends it in two roles: as the service that builds the force and sustains joint combat power, and through theater armies and ASCCs that protect the American people and secure key terrain and strategic approaches.

I. Building the Force

Army support to the Joint Force begins with the service role, the enduring and mandated work of manning, organizing, training, equipping, mobilizing, and sustaining. As part of its Title 10 responsibilities, the civilian leadership of the Army Secretariat, working with Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA) Staff, leads these institutional functions as the service force provider while Transformation and Training Command, Army Materiel Command, the Army National Guard, and the Army Reserve generate readiness across the Total Army. Force generation of ready forces provides multiple options to national leaders; readiness is the first line of Homeland defense.

Force generation is executed in the strategic support area (SSA), the reach of the operational environment back into the Homeland itself. The SSA comprises the installations, ports, depots, arsenals, strategic highway and rail networks, and industrial capacity through which the Army generates and projects combat power. Hardening and modernizing the SSA builds national endurance—the capacity to generate, sustain, and reconstitute combat power over a peer fight. Campaigning against the pacing

threat demands endurance beyond anything the Army has required since the end of the Cold War. The SSA is a warfighting platform and must be protected and modernized accordingly.

II. Contested Power Projection

The Army can no longer take a secure homeland for granted; it will be contested. The ability to project forces will be actively targeted by peer adversaries from home station to the tactical edge. Adversaries will seek to disrupt mobilization and movement long before friendly forces reach the theater of operations by executing cyber-attacks, drone strikes, and sabotage against domestic power projection platforms and mobilization installations. Further, adversaries will target strategic lift assets in transit and launch direct strikes on ports and airfields of debarkation, transforming the entire deployment pipeline into a contested battlespace.

> **ASSURED FORCE PROJECTION:** the ability to generate, deploy, receive, and sustain combat power despite adversary interference. It decides whether the Joint Force can close on the fight on the required timeline.

The Army is building assured force projection, in close partnership with U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) through Army Transportation Command (ARTRANS) and the combatant commands it supports. Mission assurance anchors that effort, focusing protection on the assets that move the force and the networks that support it. Layered C-UAS defense at installations and critical infrastructure is one component of that work that must evolve with the threat. Rehearsing the deployment and mobilization enterprise under contested conditions is how the Army improves readiness to defend against the threat. The pace of the threat sets the pace of the work, and the Army will match it.

A protracted peer war will consume the ready force faster than any recent conflict, and force generation will shift from a readiness cycle to a wartime campaign. The Reserve Component activation ladder gives the authorities; capacity turns them into combat power. Mobilization installations, the training base, and the industrial base carry that capacity, and the Army will build it out at the scale of a protracted fight.

III. Homeland Defense Operations

The theater army executes the Army's operational mission in the Homeland. In the Western Hemisphere, U.S. Army Western Hemisphere Command (USAWHC) serves as the ASCC to USNORTHCOM and U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM), conducting operations and setting the theater for both combatant commanders. It provides trained and ready Army forces, sustains them in the fight, and, when designated, serves as the Joint Force Land Component Command. U.S. Army Pacific (USARPAC) holds the same responsibilities for USPACOM across the Pacific sovereign territories. Currently, the Army supports numerous efforts for Homeland Defense:

- Territorial integrity of the United States. USAWHC's first Homeland Defense mission is protecting the territorial integrity of the United States at the southern border. Through JTF-Southern Border, the Army conducts all-domain operations in support of DHS and CBP across all 1,954 miles, detecting,

monitoring, and deterring unlawful entry between the ports of entry. Within the National Defense Areas, Soldiers patrol and emplace barriers and sensors, with civilian authorities in the lead throughout.

- Standing Joint Task Forces. The Homeland is defended in depth, through a network of standing joint task forces across the theater. JTF-Civil Support stands ready for chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear explosives (CBRNE) consequence management and other catastrophic events. JTF-Bravo at Soto Cano maintains forward presence and provides rapid response capability throughout Central America and the Caribbean. JTF-Guantanamo Bay (GTMO) and JTF-Southern Guard support operations at Guantanamo. JTF-Western Hemisphere, backed by JIATF-South, drives land-force targeting, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR), and analysis against cartels designated as foreign terrorist organizations and enables operations across the region.
- The southern approaches. The Army Security Cooperation Group South and the Joint Security Cooperation Group Panama work alongside the Panama Canal Authority and the government of Panama to enable combined defense of the Panama Canal, backed by the Army Corps of Engineers.
- The northern approaches. Arctic-capable formations guard the polar approaches and, on order, execute sea denial from land at strategic chokepoints such as the Aleutians and the Bering Strait. Every border and coastline is held to the same standard.
- Air and missile defense. U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command (USASMDC) serves as an ASCC to USNORTHCOM, integrating the land-based defense against air, cruise missiles, ballistic missiles, hypersonic missiles, and drone threats. That defense anchors the Defense of Guam for USPACOM and the Army contribution to Golden Dome for America, a joint architecture linking early warning radars, advanced interceptors, and AI-enabled command and control under USNORTHCOM and North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD). The Army fields lethal and non-lethal counter small UAS capabilities to protect power projection platforms and secure the airspace.
- Defense Support of Civil Authorities. USNORTHCOM tasks the mission and USAWHC delivers land support as the Joint Force Land Component Command (JFLCC), drawing on Defense Coordinating Officers in every Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) region, deployable command posts, and JTF-Civil Support when the event demands it. The same is true for USPACOM and USARPAC. All-hazards response, National Special Security Events, and support to civil law enforcement follow the same principle: civilian authorities lead throughout.

KEY POINT

In the Western Hemisphere, all roads lead to the Homeland. The theater army executes the Army's operational mission from the Panama Canal to the polar approaches, and Army air and missile defense anchors the contribution to Golden Dome for America and the Guam Defense System. Together, these operations form hemispheric defense-in-depth.

IV. The Homeland Advantage

When combatant commanders require Army forces, the Homeland puts those forces into the fight and keeps them there. Convergence is supported in the SSA and executed in theater. Strike is fed by munitions produced at home. Close Battle is fought by divisions and below readied at home stations and training grounds. Endurance is measured in mobilization and deployment capacity, industrial output, and installation resilience.

Defending the Homeland is part of *How the Army Fights*. It is the strategic ground the four operational elements stand on. From that ground, the Army projects decisive combat power globally, and the Nation draws the Endurance to outlast, outfight, and defeat any enemy.

> **KEY POINT**
> The Homeland is the strategic base the four operational elements stand on. Convergence, Strike, Close Battle, and Endurance are built, projected, and defended from home.

Annex C. Partnerships and Posture

Where the Army must be postured and how Allies and partners extend the land power network.

As a predominantly CONUS-based force, the Army cannot project power across transoceanic distances without joint and commercial support. The contested nature of mobilization and deployment operations exacerbates these massive undertakings. Therefore, the Army must win the first battle forward, often within the enemy's geographic backyard, so our strategic mass can arrive. The Army treats its worldwide network of alliances and partnerships as an active land power network. The Army's land power network is an advantage. Relational geography—our access, integration, and trust with regional forces—unlocks physical geography, converting exposed forward positions into secure, enduring platforms from which the Joint Force can project power.

While the operational elements of land power provide the immediate capabilities to defeat the enemy in battle, it is the deep integration within this regional land power network that underwrites the Joint Force's overall capacity to deter, assure, persist, and triumph. Posture creates positional advantage that translates these four operational elements from abstract concepts into physical reality before the first shot is fired.

> **KEY POINT**
> *The alliance and partnership network is an advantage, but only forward-postured land power converts it into deterrence and assurance: relational geography unlocks physical geography.*

I. Allies and Partners

Relationships differ across Allies and partners, necessitating a flexible approach to diverse conditions that limit what is operationally feasible. The Army designs options to match not only operational needs, but also the specific sovereignty constraints of each nation, avoiding uniform demands that could trigger a sovereign veto. While some treaty Allies house U.S. Joint Force permanent footprints or permit full-scale combat rehearsals, other partners can only conduct limited peacekeeping training or humanitarian assistance and disaster relief exercises.

The Army's versatility allows for partnering with any nation across this spectrum of cooperation, establishing baseline physical presence, logistics access, and layered protection without forcing escalatory decisions. By providing cooperative, non-offensive entry points, the Army steadily builds the institutional trust and interoperability required to expand access and, when necessary, transition to joint operations during a crisis.

The Army navigates the human terrain of Allies and partners through a campaign of security cooperation activities, including security force assistance training, Foreign Military Sales (FMS), International Military Education and Training (IMET), and multilateral warfighting exercises. To maximize the depth and continuity of these relationships, the Army must actively leverage the unique capabilities of Reserve and

National Guard forces overseas. These units possess deep, long-term cultural, institutional, and linguistic ties to specific regions—largely cultivated through the State Partnership Program (SPP)—providing a persistent, trusted presence that binds relationships over decades.

II. Army Posture

The Army employs posture in many ways. It combines trained and ready rotational forces with hardened, forward-postured equipment sets and rapid response hubs. This approach creates a persistent presence that deters adversaries, deepens interoperability, and builds operational depth without generating diplomatic friction or triggering host-nation sovereign denials.

A key aspect of the Army's forward posture is Total Army Power Projection Equipment (TAP2E), formerly Army Prepositioned Stocks (APS). TAP2E is the physical manifestation of Endurance forward. It is the aggregation of all Army equipment, munitions, and classes of supply postured forward to support either rotational forces or forces deploying forward during contingency operations. These stocks are critical for all joint services whose expeditionary capabilities and operational endurance rely on land-based platforms to project and sustain combat power inside contested theaters.

In the Pacific, the Army will counterbalance the pacing threat by improving its warfighting infrastructure across the region. The pacing threat's rapid deployment capabilities require land power options that do not rely on traditional, lengthy deployment timelines**.** The Army is moving beyond assumptions of an uncontested build-up and developing the infrastructure to support forward-positioned multidomain capabilities and munitions, starting in the FIC.

The Army's forward-deployed "inside forces" are shaping the strategic environment and are postured to act immediately on day one of a conflict. Near-term priorities include constructing bulk fuel and munitions storage, stockpiling supplies, improving contingency sites, and establishing an enduring command-and-control architecture to neutralize the pacing threat's A2/AD networks.

To build operational depth for a prolonged conflict through posture improvements, the Army is hardening logistics across the Second Island Chain (SIC). This includes expanding protected fuel and munitions storage, improving distribution networks, and forward-deploying engineering, medical, and air defense assets to sustain distributed joint operations.

In addition to Pacific posture considerations, the Army's Western Hemisphere posture secures the Homeland for Joint power projection and denies adversaries access or influence across regional approaches. The Homeland can no longer be treated as a sanctuary. In a major conflict, adversaries will seek to disrupt mobilization, deployment, sustainment, and the infrastructure that underpins them. This requires a hemispheric posture that integrates Homeland and missile defense, infrastructure protection, and expanded partner cooperation across the Americas. To support this, the Army must secure key logistics and contingency nodes, harden critical infrastructure (ports, rail, roads), and deepen Western Hemisphere land force partnerships that enable crisis response and counter-network operations. The Army's regional land power network in the Western Hemisphere must provide the strategic depth, policy-level access, and operational maneuver space needed both to defend the Homeland and to enable the projection of combat power abroad at speed and scale.

In Europe and the Middle East, the Army follows strategic guidance by preserving essential warfighting access, theater-setting functions, and partner integration while shifting greater responsibility for routine conventional deterrence to allies and partners.

In Europe, the Army will retain relevant posture and provide the critical, but limited capabilities necessary to support NATO-led deterrence. U.S. Army Europe will support a modernized, warfighting-focused NATO, where European Allies assume primary responsibility for conventional ground defense.

In the Middle East, the Army will continue to support contingency operations as directed. It will maintain the agile posture, access agreements, and partner relationships needed to protect U.S. forces, sustain ongoing operations, respond to regional crises, and prevent adversaries from threatening U.S. footprints.

In both theaters, the goal is optimization: a more lethal, more mobile, more survivable, and more sustainable footprint that preserves critical infrastructure, prepositioned stocks, and access while freeing resources for priority requirements in the Pacific and Western Hemisphere.

By aligning our global posture and partner networks with the physical realities of the threat, the Army moves beyond passive defense. It builds an active, integrated land power network that allows the Joint Force to deter aggression, assure our Allies, survive the first blow, and decisively defeat any adversary in the campaigns that follow.

KEY POINT

The Army is establishing a hardened, forward-postured global network—prioritizing the Pacific and Western Hemisphere—to secure the Homeland and enable positional advantage. By shifting routine conventional deterrence in Europe and the Middle East to Allies, the Army optimizes critical resources to counter primary pacing threats.

Annex D. Facts and Assumptions

How the Army Fights warfighting guidance is founded upon these priority facts and assumptions about the operational environment.

FACTS

- Requirements for Total Army employment include Title 10 and 32 U.S.C., combatant command contingency plans, and Department of War strategic guidance. Key guidance includes defending the borders and territorial integrity of the United States and establishing a strong denial defense along the FIC.
- The Army fights as a Total Army – Active, Guard, and Reserve – and as part of a Joint and Combined Force with Allies and partners.
- The current Army funding level challenges the ability to meet competition, conflict, and modernization requirements simultaneously.
- The Army is a CONUS-based force and lacks organic capability for strategic deployment, creating reliance on other military services and commercial transportation options.
- Within the Western Hemisphere (WHEM), state adversaries conduct multidomain competition for access, influence, and logistics that will hinder U.S. power projection during a global crisis.
- The People's Liberation Army (PLA) leverages established interior lines of communication to secure immense strategic and operational depth, employing integrated counter-intervention A2/AD frameworks specifically designed to deny the Joint Force freedom of action from CONUS forward.
- Industrial lead times for critical military components and sub-assemblies currently range from months to years. Systemic supply chain vulnerabilities, raw material scarcities, and specialized manufacturing bottlenecks are documented and measurable.
- The Army has limited sustainment distribution capacity within the FIC that will be further constrained during conflict.

ASSUMPTIONS

- Total Army end strength will remain constant across the planning horizon and will not drop below current authorized levels.
- The Army base budget remains flat in real terms for the foreseeable future.
- The Homeland is not a sanctuary during large-scale conflict. Adversaries will actively attempt to disrupt mobilization and deployment activities primarily through non-kinetic means; force projection into contested theaters will be opposed in all domains.
- To win the first battle of the next war, the Army must forward posture "inside forces" with Endurance capabilities. This requires increased Access, Basing, and Overflight (ABO) with Allies and partners to fight from a position of advantage.
- Adversaries will continue to field and integrate nuclear capabilities.

Annex E. Four Operational Elements Vignettes

Convergence

- **Operation Allied Force, 1999 – The Multiple-Dilemma Trap Against a Mobile Network:** Facing a dispersed, camouflaged Yugoslav IADS, NATO's air component paired electronic-attack jamming of fixed command bunkers and radar sites with kinetic effects, guided by space-based assets. Yugoslav operators faced an inescapable dilemma: actively locate radar to engage NATO aircraft and be immediately targeted by suppression assets or stay dark and cede the sky to uncontested strikes. Once the enemy radars were blinded, NATO aircraft punched through the air defense bubble and conducted strikes, rendering the IADs network ineffective. *This cross-domain pairing of electronic warfare and kinetic fires generated short, localized windows of superiority against a network designed to survive sequential attack.*
- **Operation Glowing Symphony, 2016 – Cyber-Enabled Convergence Against ISIS's Digital Infrastructure:** Joint Task Force ARES, under U.S. Cyber Command, targeted ISIS's media apparatus — including Amaq News Agency and al-Hayat Media Center — locking out administrators, deleting propaganda, and disrupting the servers ISIS used to recruit and coordinate. As cyber effects degraded the network, key personnel who relied on it for secure communication were exposed, paralleling the August 2015 strike near Raqqa that killed senior ISIS hacker Junaid Hussain after his online activity was tracked to his physical location. Cyber effects degraded the enemy's command and control while creating the exposure that enabled kinetic targeting, denying ISIS the ability to protect both its digital network and its operators at once. *Convergence combined cyber disruption of the enemy's information and C2 networks with kinetic strikes to degrade ISIS's propaganda and command system.*
- **Operation Absolute Resolve, 3 January 2026 – Multidomain Convergence:** The capture of Nicolás Maduro in Caracas demonstrated convergence under extreme time compression. After months of intelligence preparation that mapped the regime's patterns of life and its integrated air defense system, the Joint Force launched a synchronized multidomain operation involving more than 150 aircraft and numerous warships. Cyber effects and electronic warfare synchronized with kinetic strikes disrupted Venezuelan command servers, communications, and air defense, creating a temporary window of local air superiority. Through that window, Army rotary wing assets were able to insert a ground force onto the target compound to capture Maduro. The entire mission concluded in under three hours with zero U.S. fatalities. *Convergence integrated sensing and degraded enemy capabilities with effects across multiple domains to create and exploit a window of relative advantage against a defended enemy system.*

- **Luzon Strait – Edge Convergence Under Isolation (Hypothetical):** In a high-intensity Pacific scenario, an Army Multi-Domain Task Force forward-deployed to Northern Luzon is severed from USARPAC by adversary cyber, anti-satellite, and electronic-warfare attack. Isolated and operating in a communications-denied environment, the MDTF shifts to a survivable local tactical cloud. Edge AI detects an adversary integrated air and missile defense radar vulnerable to cyber-attack. The MDTF Multi Domain Effects Battalion (MDEB) coordinates the attack,

creating a window with degraded adversary missile defense. The AI-enabled targeting process autonomously pairs MDTF targeting data with a Navy unmanned surface vessel and an Army long-range precision missile battery, executing a synchronized strike that penetrates the adversary's degraded missile defense and strikes an adversary high-payoff target. *Convergence at the tactical edge integrates sensing, decision, and cross-domain action, enabling lethal effects even when higher headquarters are unreachable.*

Strike

- **Ukraine, June 2025 – Operation Spider's Web:** On the 1st of June, Ukraine launched 117 first-person-view drones against five Russian long-range aviation bases up to 4,300 km from the front lines. The result of this multifaceted strike was devastating. More than 41 strategic aircraft were damaged, with 13 destroyed. Approximately 34% of Russia's cruise-missile carrier fleet was degraded in one night. *Strike eliminated a major share of the enemy's strategic platforms at their source.*
- **Gaza, 2025 – Tzayad Sensor-to-Shooter Isolation:** Israel Defense Forces' AI-enabled Tzayad system (analogous to our Palantir's Maven) drove thousands of real-time precision strikes on Hamas commanders, weapons depots, and underground nodes while compressing fire-support cycles from 40–50 minutes to 1–7 minutes. Remaining forces were reduced to isolated, non-reinforcing pockets. *Strike converted sensor advantage into rapid isolation of the enemy for the ground force.*
- **Ukraine, June 2026 – Blinding the Reconnaissance-Fire Complex:** Coordinated Ukrainian drone and precision-fire strikes destroyed or disabled 19 air-defense/radar systems, 8 headquarters, 25 unmanned-aerial-vehicle command posts, and multiple power/communications nodes 30–150+ km deep. The Russian Reconnaissance-Fire Complex lost coherent sensing and connectivity across sectors. *Strike blinded the enemy's sensory and command nervous system, desynchronizing massed fires.*
- **Taiwan – Dynamic Army Strike Contribution (Hypothetical):** A rigid 96-hour Air Tasking Order cycle forged in the Global War on Terror will not survive contact with the PLA. In Northern Luzon, the Army disperses a dense web of strike options across the battlespace—upgraded fires systems, attack aviation employing long-range launched effects, and ground maneuver units armed with one-way attack munitions plus medium- and long-range precision fires. These assets operate decentralized, mutually supporting, and far more responsive than Navy or Air Force platforms alone. *Strike gives the Joint Task Force commander a dynamically scalable, ground-based deep-fires capacity that shapes the environment at the speed required for modern large-scale combat.*
- **Nuclear Battlefield – Modeled Operation Resilient Shield (Hypothetical):** In peer-adversary combat modeling, untrained/unwarned armored brigades endured tactical nukes at 40–50% effectiveness (70% M1 Abrams/Bradley losses from blast/thermal/EMP/fallout in varied terrain). Trained/warned units—with 500 m dispersal, hardened gear, nuclear protocols—hit 70–80% effectiveness (25% degradation, 50% M1 survivability, 30% Bradley survivability), sustaining maneuvers through contaminated zones and counterattacks isolating enemy lines. *Tactical*

nuclear strikes can be mitigated by an educated and trained force, enabling survivable operations and strike responses in irradiated environments.

- **Contested Pacific APOD on Guam – Modeled Operation Iron Gateway (Hypothetical):** In nuclear interdiction modeling, enemy fires struck Guam's APOD, disrupting logistics for 72 hours with fallout (50–200 km northwest, 90% decay by 48 hours) contaminating key areas. Trained blue forces decontaminated quickly, rerouted supplies, and neutralized attacker nodes to restore throughput within two weeks. *Tactical nuclear strike effectiveness can be blunted by maintaining dispersed forces, trained decontamination teams, and leveraging engineer assets for hardening.*

Close Battle

- **St. Lo, July 1944 – Restoring Maneuver in the Bocage:** By July 1944 the Army faced the problem of restoring maneuver after the Normandy landings. Around St. Lo, the 29th and 30th Infantry Divisions fought through hedgerows, sunken roads, and concealed German positions that shattered formations. Infantry, tanks, engineers, and artillery operated as a single combined-arms team at company and battalion level, cutting gaps, applying direct tank fire, and closing with the enemy hedgerow by hedgerow. When St. Lo fell on 18 July, its road network enabled First Army to mass armor for Operation Cobra eight days later, breaking the German line and opening the pursuit across France. *Close Battle translated operational direction into the decisive ground actions that seized the terrain the Joint Force needed to project power inland.*
- **Buna, November 1942 – January 1943 – Closing with the Fortified Enemy:** Japanese forces held fortified positions at Buna, blocking the airfields and harbor MacArthur needed for the advance toward Rabaul. The 32nd Infantry Division, untrained for jungle warfare and weakened by malaria, stalled against camouflaged bunkers. Lieutenant General Robert Eichelberger restored the attack by relieving ineffective commanders, moving among the forward troops, and rebuilding the fight as a combined-arms effort—infantry, tanks, artillery, and engineers closing with and destroying the bunkers. Buna fell in early January 1943. *Close Battle demanded leaders at the point of contact who could integrate all arms, adapt to the enemy and terrain, and seize the ground that made subsequent joint operations possible.*
- **73 Easting, 26 February 1991 – Closing with the Republican Guard:** On the afternoon of 26 February 1991, elements of the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment crested a ridge in a blinding sandstorm and collided with a dug-in tank battalion of the Iraqi Republican Guard's Tawakalna Division. Deep strikes had degraded Iraqi air defenses, command, and logistics, but the storm and dispersion had hidden this formation. Using thermal sights, the troop closed with and destroyed the enemy in roughly 23 minutes of direct fire—nine Abrams and twelve Bradleys destroying nearly 30 Iraqi tanks and dozens of other vehicles with almost no losses. The regiment then held the ridge against counterattacks, consolidating the gain. *Close Battle exploited the window opened by Strike, closed with and destroyed the enemy in contact, and secured the ground before he could reorganize.*
- **Fallujah, November 2004 – Operation Phantom Fury:** On 8 November 2004, U.S. Army and Marine units launched Operation Phantom Fury into Fallujah, one of the most heavily fortified urban strongholds in Iraq. Task Force 2-2 Infantry, built around 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry and

mechanized infantry from the 1st Infantry Division, fought alongside Marine regiments block by block through a city prepared with fighting positions, spider holes, and interlocking fields of fire. Tanks, Bradleys, and combat engineers cleared lanes while infantry entered and cleared buildings room by room—a process that took nearly six weeks. *This is Close Battle at its most granular level: only Soldiers in direct contact could clear and hold the ground that surveillance and precision strikes alone could not secure.*

- **Southern Ukraine, 8–11 June 2023 – Closing Under Persistent Observation:** On 8 June 2023, the NATO-trained 47th Separate Mechanized Brigade attacked Russian defenses near Mala Tokmachka and Robotyne with Leopard 2A6 tanks and M2A2 Bradleys. The brigade entered dense minefields covered by artillery, Ka-52 helicopters, and FPV drones that gave Russian gunners real-time surveillance of every vehicle that slowed to breach. Surviving vehicles were hunted individually by low-cost drones. Several Leopards and Bradleys were destroyed or abandoned within days and the assault stalled. *Close Battle in this environment demands formations that can mass, then disaggregate, breach under continuous observation, and still close with and destroy the enemy—capabilities the Army is now building into leaner, more survivable units.*
- **Kursk Oblast, 6 August 2024 – Achieving Surprise Under Persistent Observation:** Ukraine covertly repositioned elements from several brigades, in some cases across several hundred kilometers, into concealed assembly areas in Sumy Oblast. Operational security, limited planning, late notification, terrain, camouflage, deception, and disruption of Russian sensors prevented warning indicators from becoming an effective response. On 6 August, mobile groups crossed the border, bypassed strongpoints, seized the Sudzha border checkpoint, and advanced along intact roads. Follow-on forces secured Sudzha and surrounding settlements. By 19 August, Ukraine reported control of more than 1,250 square kilometers and 92 settlements. The operation captured Russian prisoners, forced Russia to commit forces to retake its territory, constrained its freedom of action elsewhere, and created operational and political leverage. *Close Battle exploits the disrupted enemy picture created by Convergence and disciplined management of contact to penetrate defenses, seize and hold terrain, and compel the enemy to respond on unfavorable terms.*

Endurance

- **Milne Bay & Southwest Pacific Base Sections, 1942–1943 – Building Joint Endurance on Land:** General MacArthur's island-hopping campaign required turning primitive jungle coastlines into functioning joint bases. At sites such as Milne Bay and Oro Bay in Papua New Guinea, the U.S. Army Services of Supply engineered deep-water ports, cleared runways, laid fuel pipelines, and constructed large hospitals from nothing. These bases became the logistical foundation that sustained not only ground forces but also the Fifth Air Force and Seventh Fleet with fuel, munitions, and common-user support. *Endurance in a non-contiguous theater is built and defended on land—Army theater logistics and infrastructure provided the reach and depth the entire Joint Force required to advance.*

- **Normandy, August–November 1944 – The Red Ball Express:** After the breakout from St. Lo, Allied armies advanced across France faster than their logistics could support. Deep-water ports remained damaged and the rail network destroyed, forcing total reliance on truck transport from the Normandy beaches. The Army created the Red Ball Express—a dedicated one-way highway system that at its peak ran nearly 6,000 vehicles and delivered more than 12,000 tons of supplies daily. Over the course of the operation, drivers moved more than 400,000 tons under constant threat of mechanical failure, fatigue, and Luftwaffe attack, keeping Third Army's advance alive. *Endurance sustained combat power over distance and time through resilient, scalable logistics—preventing premature culmination and enabling operational success to continue.*
- **Poland–Ukraine Logistical Corridor, 2022–Present – Contested Logistics:** Persistent drone surveillance and Russian long-range strike eliminated rear-area sanctuary in Ukraine. Centralized supply depots became high-value targets, forcing sustainment nodes to disperse and lengthening resupply times. The campaign relies on the secure land-based allied hub at Rzeszów-Jasionka in Poland to manage the continuous flow of multinational materiel, while frontline units depend on decentralized quick-fix maintenance teams and real-time tele-maintenance support from USAREUR-AF. *Endurance under persistent observation requires a dispersed, dynamic logistics architecture anchored by secure allied access and basing—without it, combat power cannot be sustained.*
- **Exercise Tenacious Archer, August 2025 – Forward Land-Based Air Defense:** During Exercise Tenacious Archer 25, the 94th Army Air and Missile Defense Command rapidly deployed Patriot batteries to Palau by C-17, establishing launch sites on remote key terrain in the SIC. The land-based air defense canopy created a survivable envelope that protected joint air and naval assets operating within range of PLA and KPA long-range missile networks, securing critical maritime choke points and sea lines of communication. *Endurance projects protective power forward—Army land-based air and missile defense expands the defensive shield that allows the joint force to maintain tempo inside contested zones.*
- **Northern Luzon & Batanes Strait, 2027 – Contested Sustainment in the FIC (Hypothetical):** In a maritime-denial scenario, the 593rd Corps Sustainment Command deploys across northern Luzon and the Babuyan Islands to secure the Batanes Strait. Inside the adversary's A2/AD envelope, the Army establishes a decentralized mesh of survivable supply hubs hidden in rugged terrain. Army watercraft, autonomous surface vessels, and UAVs from the 8th Theater Sustainment Command move ammunition and critical commodities to distributed MRC, HIMARS, and IFPC launchers, while mobile additive manufacturing units fabricate parts on-site under a tactical right-to-repair model. *Endurance sustains combat power under continuous observation and threat—dispersed, resilient land-based logistics provide the staying power that prevents a rapid fait accompli and anchors joint denial.*

Annex F. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. **What is the impetus for *How the Army Fights*?**

   How the Army Fights (HTAF) was developed by the Vice Chief of Staff, Army to provide guidance for aligning the force during a period of intense change. HTAF is not a prescriptive document that tells leaders 'what to do'; rather, it provides a framework for leaders at every echelon to understand how the Army must build on tactical-level materiel and technological change by improving proficiency at operational-level warfare.

2. **What is the difference between HTAF and Multidomain Operations (MDO) doctrine?**

   MDO remains the Army's capstone operational doctrine. HTAF distills how we conduct MDO, describes MDO at the operational level of war, and explains how the Army converges capabilities and technologies, employs the force (Strike/Close Battle), and sustains operations to achieve Army and Joint Force objectives.

3. **Is HTAF resource-informed?**

   HTAF explains the operational ways the Army fights battles and sustains campaigns. HQDA and major Army commands will receive guidance through HQDA EXORDs and the Army Campaign Plan to drive resourcing decisions associated with HTAF.

4. **What does this framework (approach) mean for me (CO/PLT/SQD/Soldier)?**

   While HTAF is focused on the operational and strategic levels of war, it will affect how tactical units execute warfighting at echelon. Brigades and EABs will orient their training, exercises, and plans to account for the four operational elements.

5. **How does this approach nest within joint doctrine?**

   HTAF is designed to be fully nested within the Joint Warfighting Concept and JP 3-0. It operationalizes joint doctrine for land power forces, providing Army commanders with a framework for planning and executing operational maneuver in support of joint all-domain operations.

6. **How will the Army measure success in implementing *How the Army Fights*?**

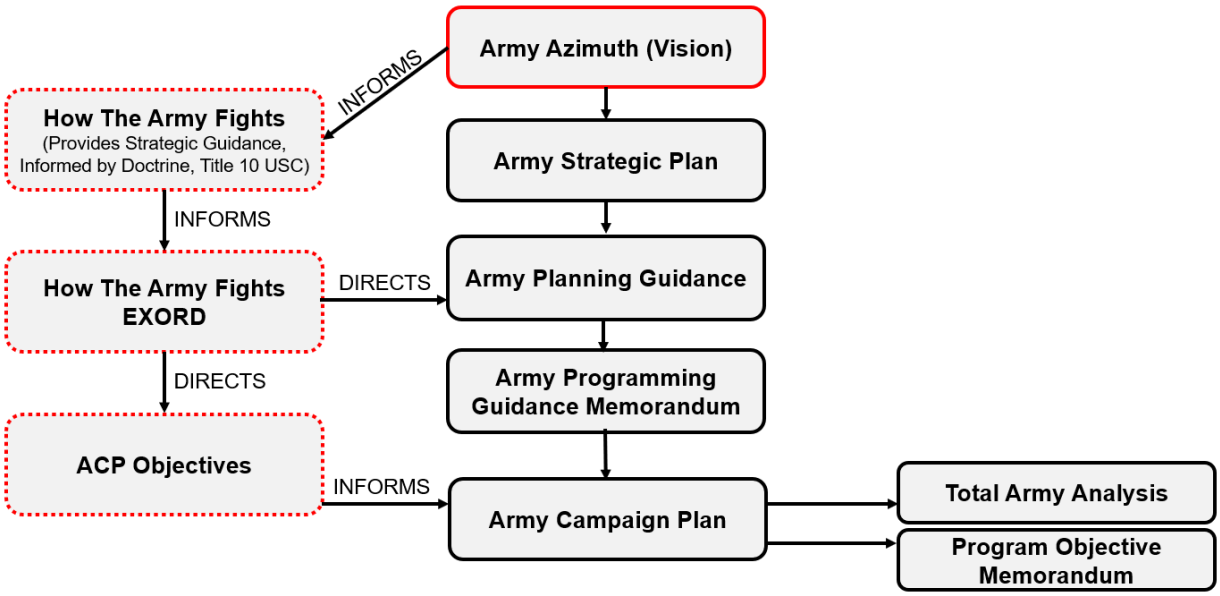
   Success will be measured by whether the Army can deliver the operational outcomes this framework requires across the four operational elements of land power: Convergence, Strike, Close Battle, and Endurance.

7. **Does this approach include allies and partners?**

   Yes, HTAF fully acknowledges that operational maneuver by land power can only be accomplished with our Allies and partners closely engaged with our Army. At every opportunity, we must posture, train, equip, modernize, exercise, and plan with the goal of increasing interoperability to ensure unity of purpose and action in advance of conflict.

Annex G. The Army Plan (AR 1-1)

The Army's planning, programming, budgeting, and execution process, as depicted below, is a collaborative effort between the Army's Secretariat and military leadership to ensure the force is properly resourced and prepared to meet its global commitments.



The Army Plan (AR 1-1) — strategy alignment.

Document	Key Purpose	Primary Authors
1. Army Azimuth (Ends)	Outlines senior leadership's long-term vision, goals, and desired end state. Provides a holistic view of required Army capabilities.	ACSA
1a. How The Army Fights	Describes the operational warfighting capabilities Army formations must possess. Serves as the guiding document for the Army Strategy.	ACSA
1b. How The Army Fights EXORD	Tasks the Army enterprise to determine force structure changes required to execute How The Army Fights. Identifies mid-term objectives for the Army Strategy and Army Campaign Plan.	ACSA
2. Army Strategic Plan (Ways)	Articulates how the Army will fulfill its Title 10 obligations. Establishes mid-term objectives to achieve the Azimuth.	G-3/5/7
3. Army Planning Guidance (APG) (Means)	Establishes explicit priorities and policy guidance to shape the POM. Translates planning objectives into actionable priorities.	G-3/5/7 & G-8
4. Army Programming Guidance Memorandum (APGM) (Means)	Provides specific resourcing guidance and programming rules. Allocates limited resources against APG priorities.	G-8
5. Army Campaign Plan (ACP) (Execute & Assess)	Operationalizes the Army Strategy. Synchronizes LOEs and tracks progress toward Strategy objectives.	G-3/5/7

The Army Plan (AR 1-1) — planning, programming, budgeting, and execution

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Annex I. Glossary

AirLand Battle. The doctrine that taught the U.S. Army how to fight outnumbered and win by shifting the focus from surviving an enemy breakthrough to aggressively shattering the enemy's entire operational system in depth. (FM 100-5)

Anti-Access (A2). Action, activity, or capability, usually long-range, designed to prevent an advancing enemy force from entering an operational area. (JP 3-0)

Area Denial (AD). Action, activity, or capability, usually short-range, designed to limit an enemy force's freedom of action within an operational area. (JP 3-0)

Army Prepositioned Stocks (APS). Forward-positioned equipment and supplies in facilities to enable rapid power projection in support of strategic objectives. (ATP 3-35.1)

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Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Hazard (CBRN). Chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive elements that could create adverse effects due to an accidental or deliberate release and dissemination. (JP 3-11)

Combatant Command (CCMD). A unified or specified command with a broad continuing mission under a single commander established and so designated by the President, through the Secretary of Defense and with the advice and assistance of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. (JP 1)

Combatant Commander (CCDR). A commander of one of the unified or specified combatant commands established by the President. (JP 3-0)

Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA). Support that federal military forces provide at the request of a civil authority, triggered by a Stafford Act mission assignment or another statutory request to save lives in extremes. (ADP 3-28)

Electromagnetic Spectrum (EMS). The range of frequencies of electromagnetic radiation from zero to infinity. It is divided into 26 alphabetically designated bands. (JP 3-13.1)

Electromagnetic Warfare (EW). Military action involving the use of electromagnetic and directed energy to control the electromagnetic spectrum or to attack the enemy. Also called EW. See also directed energy; electromagnetic attack; electromagnetic protection; electromagnetic support. (JP 3-85)

Force Projection. The ability to project the military instrument of national power from the United States or another theater in response to requirements for military operations. (JP 4-0)

Future Years Defense Program (FYDP). Program and financial plan for the DoW as approved by the Secretary of War. The FYDP arrays cost data, manpower, and force structure over a 5-year period (force structure for an additional 3 years), portraying this data by major force program for DoW internal review for the program and budget review submission. It is also provided to the Congress annually in conjunction with the President's budget (DoDD 7045.14).

Homeland Defense. The protection of U.S. sovereignty, territory, population, and critical infrastructure against external aggression or other threats directed by the President. (JP 3-27)

Homeland Security. A concerted national effort to: (a) prevent terrorist attacks within the U.S.; (b) reduce America's vulnerability to terrorism, major disasters, and other emergencies; and (c) minimize the damage and recover from attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies that occur. (JP 3-28)

Joint All-Domain Operations (JADO). Operations involving one or more Military Departments across all domains. (JP 3-0)

Joint All-Domain Maneuver. A military strategy that combines forces across land, sea, air, space, and cyberspace to outmaneuver adversaries with speed and precision.

Land Control Operations. The employment of land forces, supported by maritime forces, air forces, special operations forces (SOF), cyberspace forces, and space forces (as appropriate), to control vital land areas. These operations are conducted to establish local military superiority in land operational areas. (JP 3-31)

Large-Scale Combat Operations (LSCO). Extensive joint combat operations in terms of scope and size of forces committed, conducted as a campaign aimed at achieving operational and strategic objectives. (ADP 3-0)

Multi-Domain Task Force (MDTF). A new Army formation able to execute multidomain operations, designed to deliver long-range precision joint strike as well as integrate air and missile defense, electronic warfare, space, cyber, and information operations in both competition and conflict to provide the Joint Force and coalition with new capabilities to enable the defeat of adversaries' anti-access and area denial strategies. (TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-1)

Mobilization Force Generation Installation (MFGI). Army installations, including federally activated State-operated installations, designated to provide continuous Regular Component/Reserve Component power projection, combat preparation, post-mobilization training, sustainment capabilities, and pre-mobilization training support. (AR 525-93)

Non-Strategic Nuclear Weapons (NSNW). Low-yield nuclear weapons for tactical and operational use on the battlefield generally not addressed in current arms control treaties. They are also known as tactical nuclear weapons. (JP 3-72)

Operational Maneuver. The employment of forces in an operational area to secure or exploit a tactical, operational, or strategic advantage. It links tactical actions in time and space to achieve strategic campaign goals, allowing commanders to bypass enemy strong points, mass effects, and strike where the adversary is most vulnerable.

Power Projection Platform (PPP). An installation capable of deploying a brigade-sized force or larger upon notification to meet CCMD OPLAN requirements within 10 days or less. (AR 525-93)

Program Objective Memorandum (POM). The final product of the programming process within the DoW; the DoW Component's POM displays the resource allocation decisions of the Military Departments in response to and in accordance with planning and programming guidance (DoDD 7045.14).

Security Force Assistance Brigade (SFAB). Specialized units with the core mission to conduct training, advising, assisting, enabling and accompanying operations with allied and partner nations. (ATP 3-96.1)

Setting the Theater. The broad range of actions conducted to establish the conditions in an operational area for the execution of strategic plans. (FM 3-0)

State Partnership Program (SPP). A National Guard program that partners a state's National Guard with the armed forces or equivalent of a partner country in a cooperative, mutually beneficial relationship. (JP 3-20)

Total Army Power Projection Equipment (TAP2E). The aggregation of all Army equipment, munitions, and classes of supply postured forward to support either rotational forces or forces deploying forward during contingency operations. (FY27 President's Budget Request)