Developing a framework to extend across the Air Force first required developing the criteria. The framework also had to incorporate the current Air Force vision and explicitly capture nonoperational demands; these attributes were specified by the client. The client was also quite explicit that the STT methodology be the foundation of the framework, although attributes of the framework could be modified to accommodate the full spectrum of Air Force activities. AF/XPX leadership requested that institutional activities be captured, i.e., service-specific activities that act as broad enablers of operational capabilities.

**DESIGN CRITERIA**

Early in the project, the RAND-facilitated working group generated seven design criteria. According to these criteria, a common planning framework should

1. Display the elements that contribute to attaining a military capability
2. Be based on a hierarchy that links programs to national goals
3. Help identify intertemporal issues
4. Provide a basis for identifying and evaluating ways of attaining capabilities
5. Assist Air Force analysis and decisionmaking
6. Accommodate all data required for Air Force planning and pro-
gramming\textsuperscript{1}

7. Be understood by and be persuasive to all participants in the
planning and programming processes, including the OSD, JS,
unified commands, other services, and the Congress.

**ADDITIONAL AIMS**

Beyond satisfying these design criteria, the project had two addi-
tional aims: (1) incorporate as much as possible of the current Air
Force vision and (2) explicitly capture nonoperational demands.

**Air Force Vision**

In recent years, the Air Force leadership has developed a vision of air
power. The Secretary of the Air Force (SAF) and CSAF articulated this
vision at the highest level in Global Engagement: A Vision for the 21st
Century Air Force (Department of the Air Force, 1997). The vision
was further developed through long-range planning initiatives that
emerged from the fall 1996 CORONA and the spring 1997 CORONA.\textsuperscript{2}
To some extent, the vision is also reflected in MAJCOM mission areas
and their supporting analyses. The vision provides the broad outline
of a common planning framework and is widely known and under-
stood within the Air Force. We incorporated the Air Force vision into
the recommended framework to the greatest extent possible.

\textsuperscript{1}These data proceed from national military strategy, program guidance, CINC re-
quirements, acquisition programs, and PPBS inputs and outputs. In addition, there
are unstructured data requests that concern revised fiscal guidance, modernization
initiatives, changes in acquisition programs, and consideration of cost alternatives.

\textsuperscript{2}The fall 1996 CORONA identified core competencies and 46 planning initiatives that
were later collapsed into five operational thrusts: (1) the ability to find, fix, track, tar-
get, and engage anything of significance located or moving on, above, or below the
surface of the earth; (2) expeditionary forces to provide tailored full-spectrum forces
capable of rapidly deploying and delivering decisive air and space power on demand
anywhere; (3) global command and control to support decisionmaking and decisive
execution, at any level from local to global; (4) seamless control of the air and space
environment and of the supporting surface environment and information infrastruc-
ture to secure protection from attack and freedom to operate; and (5) enabling capa-
bilities that provide the essential underpinning for a military service. The spring 1997
CORONA refined these initiatives.
Nonoperational Demands

Early in the project, we recognized the importance of including non-operational demands in the framework. Nonoperational demands are generated within the Air Force to meet standards that the Air Force sets for itself, such as quality of life for Air Force personnel and their families. Of course, nonoperational demands are ultimately linked to operational demands made by the National Command Authority (NCA) and the unified commanders. For example, the Air Force maintains a high quality of life to attract and retain the personnel necessary to ensure operational success. Nevertheless, nonoperational demands have their own dynamics and must be explicitly included in any comprehensive planning framework.

APPROACH

Although RAND agreed that the STT methodology was an ideal choice for a planning framework, the methodology had to be extended to accommodate different perspectives between combatant commands and services. Both ultimately work to a common end, but they have different perspectives that must be reflected in a planning framework.

Choice of STT Methodology

At the inception of the project, the client specified that the common planning framework employ STT methodology. STT is an ideal choice because its practical, commonsense approach is well understood within the Air Force. Moreover, it is intuitively persuasive to people outside the Air Force. It links lower-level objectives to national strategy in a clearly defined hierarchy, thus generating rationale and justification for programmatic decisions. It allows decisionmakers to review the strategic and operational effects of their decisions in an orderly, comprehensive way. However, the STT methodology was originally intended to support development of operational concepts, not the full range of functions performed by armed services.
Combatant Command Perspective

In its original form, STT reflected largely the perspective of combatant commands.3 The Air Force focus is on providing warfighting capabilities based on operational concepts. Essentially, it defines objectives at each level of war from the nation’s historical goals to immediate tactical aims. It reflects a classic hierarchy of strategy, operational art, and tactics that links the President to unit commanders and even individual pilots and others involved in the war. At every level, it asks what the commander wants to achieve.

STT was originally developed to support the development of operational concepts that employ weapons and techniques to produce desired combat outcomes. The basic thrust was operational and tactical, centering on the objectives of theater commanders, component commanders, and unit commanders engaged in combat. The methodology challenged developers to envision concepts, often implying new weapons and emerging technologies, that would enable commanders to accomplish their objectives more rapidly, more effectively, more surely, or at less risk to friendly forces.

Service Perspective

As a service, the Air Force is charged under U.S. Code Title 10 to perform many broadly defined functions that include every aspect of military forces except their actual employment in war, which is the responsibility of combatant commanders.4 In a formal sense, the services provide forces to combatant commands, but they do more than that. They provide forces so sized, equipped, and trained that they can attain objectives of critical importance. In short, they provide capabilities. The Air Force does not provide forces to combatant

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3STT has a long intellectual history at RAND, beginning with Glenn Kent’s initiative in the early 1980s. See, among others, Kent and Simmons (1983), Lewis (1983), and Pirnie (1996).

4The Title 10 functions are (1) recruiting, (2) organizing, (3) supplying, (4) equipping, (5) training, (6) servicing, (7) mobilizing, (8) demobilizing, (9) administering, (10) maintaining, (11) constructing, outfitting, and repair of military equipment and repair of buildings, structures, and utilities and the acquisition of real property and interests in real property necessary to carry out the responsibilities specified. (Public Law 99-433, October 1, 1986.)
commanders without suggesting how they should be employed. It prepares forces to make the greatest possible contributions to attaining CINC operational objectives. The Air Force defines and assesses various operational concepts to determine the capabilities that air power can provide. It expects to accomplish most, if not all, of its operational objectives in a joint context that implies both mutual support and competition among the services. Its operationally oriented programs link easily to the operational objectives of combatant commanders, although not always in one-to-one relationships. For example, a program to develop a “multicapable” aircraft may be linked to several operational objectives, including air superiority, degradation of an opponent’s warmaking potential, and domination of land operations. But programs that are not operationally oriented may not link so directly to any operational objectives or may link indirectly to a range of objectives. For example, higher education doubtless helps develop Air Force officers into better warfighters and more effective representatives of their service but does not link directly to any particular operational objective. These types of activities are what we term institutional.

**Extension of STT Methodology**

To accommodate the totality of Air Force activities (i.e., operational and institutional activities), STT methodology must be extended to include service objectives that are not directly linked to a particular operational objective but that contribute generally to accomplishing several or all of them. These service objectives may be understood as broad enablers analogous to noncombat operational objectives. Just as deployment and sustainment underlie accomplishment of the entire range of combat objectives, higher education helps to produce Air Force officers who are more effective in accomplishing practically any objective.

In extending the STT methodology, it is important to keep the priority of combat objectives in mind. Like all armed services, the Air Force exists ultimately to accomplish objectives that will allow the NCA to impose its will on an opponent. These objectives have priority and determine other objectives. Extending the STT methodology horizontally does not imply that objectives residing on the same level have the same priority. On the contrary, combat objectives have pri-
ority; other objectives—whether noncombat objectives of theater commanders (such as deployment of forces) or service objectives (such as higher education for officers)—are important because they contribute to accomplishing combat objectives.