This chapter describes a proposed set of planning areas that encompasses demands originating from both inside and outside the Air Force. From within, the Air Force strives to maintain the high quality of its men and women and to keep pace with technological advances. Success in these areas ensures that the Air Force can satisfy external demands, including the missions of unified commanders and direct tasking from the NCA. These planning areas are linked to the Air Force vision and core competencies, both of which are the basic building blocks of the common framework.

COMMON PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Figure 3.1 illustrates the common planning framework. The shaded areas depict the two critical demands that the Air Force must meet: Air Force service functions and the missions of the unified commanders. We will give an overview of the framework. More detailed discussion of the framework and its various attributes may be found in Appendix B.

National Goals and Objectives

The hierarchy begins with national goals and strategic direction from the NCA and culminates in the tasks necessary to accomplish those NCA goals and objectives. At the top of the common planning framework are the national goals—memorable statements of enduring national purpose found in historic documents (such as the
Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, and the Gettysburg Address) that are set forth by statesmen. Public policy is aimed at achieving these goals.

National security objectives are derived from the President’s National Security Strategy and include political, economic, and military means of protecting and defending fundamental U.S. interests and enduring goals (see Clinton, 1997). Unlike national goals, national security objectives are fluid and shift in accordance with changes in the geopolitical environment. “Enlarging the community of democratic, free-market countries” is an example of a national security objective.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) sets forth the national military objectives in the National Military Strategy (NMS) (Shalikashvili, 1997). National military objectives define the actions necessary to protect and defend U.S. principles, goals, and interests with respect to national goals and national security objectives.
“Promoting overseas presence,” “maintaining peacetime engagement activities,” and “responding to a full spectrum of crises” are some national military objectives.

National military objectives are attained by the missions and objectives of the unified commanders, supported by service capabilities. Joint Vision 2010 (Shalikashvili, 1995) links the first three tiers of the framework with the internal Air Force side and the external joint side. The external demands are the missions of the unified commanders, which are in turn supported by

- supporting joint operational objectives,
- supporting joint operational tasks,
- combat joint operational objectives, and
- combat joint operational tasks.

The supporting objectives and tasks help the CINCs, component commanders, and Joint Task Force (JTF) commanders achieve combat objectives and tasks.

**Joint Operational Objectives and Tasks**

The external demands on the Air Force are imposed by the capabilities the unified commanders require to fulfill their missions. The missions of the unified commanders are defined in Joint Strategic Capability Plans and NCA orders. These missions state the intent of the NCA in broad political-military terms (for example, “deterring and defeating aggression against U.S. allies and friends”) and are usually communicated through CJCS and the joint planning system.

Supporting joint operational objectives call for the provision of means or the creation of advantageous conditions to achieve the unified commander’s mission. The sources for these objectives include campaign plans, the JWCA, Universal Joint Task List (UJTL) (CJCS, 1996), the Air Force Task List (AFTL) (HQ USAF/XOOOE and

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1One problem the services encounter in responding to extremely detailed task lists (such as the UJTL) is that the hierarchy of tasks is ambiguous; for example, “providing fuel” shares the same rank as “ensuring air superiority.” RAND research supports the
AFDC), Strategies-to-Tasks Baseline for USAF Planning, and RAND documents that have tried to capture the generic elements of the joint commander’s objectives (Kent and Simmons, 1991; Lewis et al., 1994; Lewis et al., 1995; Thaler and Shlapak, 1995; Pirnie, 1996). CINCs, component commanders, and JTF commanders determine the military force objectives at the operational level (for example, “gain information dominance”). In practice, each commander’s site has specific campaign objectives derived from his or her tasking from the NCA.

Supporting joint tasks are objectives to be attained by military force at the tactical level. Unit and subunit commanders are responsible for accomplishing these tasks. At this level, the tasks outline the actions necessary to achieve the supporting joint operational objectives. For instance, acquiring intelligence on opposing forces and disrupting and distorting an opponent’s information and intelligence would achieve the operational objective of “gaining information dominance.” The supporting joint tasks are extracted from the JWCA, the UJTL, and RAND documents.

CINCs, component commanders, and JTF commanders are responsible for achieving combat joint operational objectives. These objectives are accomplished by the use of military force at the operational level. Combat joint operational objectives, such as “countering regional and global threats involving weapons of mass destruction (WMD),” are derived from campaign plans, RAND documents, and the UJTL.

“Assuring U.S. ability to operate in a WMD environment,” “defending against attacks using WMD,” and “suppressing and destroying opposing WMD” are examples of combat joint tasks culled from analysis, RAND documents, and the UJTL. Combat joint tasks consist of objectives that unit and subunit commanders and leaders are to attain through the use of military force at the tactical level.

The demands the unified commanders’ missions place upon the Air Force must be balanced with internal Air Force demands. This requires addressing not just fiscal restraint but also the limits placed on

establishment of more general STT missions, objectives, and tasks that are based on CINC mission taskings.
the service by law and/or Department of Defense Directive (DoDD). These sets of demands must then be integrated to allow corporate Air Force leadership to make trade-offs and more capably represent the Air Force in the joint arena.

An example of an internal demand that would cause additional resources to be allocated in the programming cycle and finally in the service budget was the institutional need to limit the total number of days an Air Force member spent overseas in support of a joint force commander. The CSAF during our study stated that 120 days would be used as a standard. The consequence of this standard was to establish an internal demand, which increased the number of personnel needed to maintain the current CINC demand for some weapons systems. The old system would not recognize a demand such as this until, as in this case, a situation created a crisis in the ability of the service to maintain its commitment in the short term.

**Supply in the Common Planning Framework**

Figure 3.2 displays the common planning framework, with shaded areas depicting planning areas. The LRP embraces both the service functions of the Air Force and the missions of unified commanders.

**Definitions of Terms**

The following definitions were developed by RAND and refined during the working group meetings:

- A **planning area** concerns Air Force senior leaders as they make decisions to ensure that the Air Force remains a successful military service and provides the best possible capabilities to unified commanders and to civil authorities. The proposed planning areas were derived primarily from Global Engagement,

Note: The note at the bottom of the page provides additional information on the development of the definitions and the working group meetings.
especially the core competencies. The areas provide a means of assessing performance and raising issues to be addressed by Air Force senior leaders.\(^3\)

- A **capability** is, broadly stated, the ability to progress toward a fundamental goal of the Air Force as a military service or to contribute to the attainment of the operational objectives of unified commanders or civil authority. Assessing capabilities helps to integrate related efforts at the levels of Air Staff, MAJCOMs, centers, and agencies. Through integrating the capabilities, planning area components can be determined.

\(^3\)The expression “planning area” was chosen for its neutrality. The expression “core competency” was precluded because the proposed set of planning areas is not identical with core competencies, although it is closely related. The expression “mission area” was precluded because the proposed set is again not identical with mission areas, although there is much correspondence.
A **task** is a more closely defined effort required to generate a capability.

**Sources**

The proposed set of planning areas are derived from several sources including documents and working group meetings. Air Force vision statements, especially Global Engagement (Department of the Air Force, 1997), are primary sources. The Annual Report to the President and Congress (Cohen, 1997) reflects concerns that cut across the military services. The UJTL provides an authoritative source of joint terminology. The AFTL contains helpful formulations. Mission Area Plans provide a wealth of detail at capability and task levels.

The Air Staff and the MAJCOMs helped develop the common planning framework during working group meetings and individual visits to their headquarters. During these visits, MAJCOM staff officers briefed the project team on the planning processes and priorities of their commands. The participating commands provided comments, most in writing, regarding the framework, planning areas, capabilities, and tasks. We considered these comments carefully and reflected many of them in the proposed set of planning areas. However, RAND is solely responsible for the material contained in this chapter.

**Formulation**

Every level in the common planning framework directs planning toward some desired outcome. Thus, every level could correctly be described as an objective. As far as is practical, capabilities and tasks are formulated without reference to the medium or means. For example, the capabilities implied by global attack are not associated with the mediums of either air or space because both might be involved. Similarly, one task is formulated as “ensure access to space,” not “launch and recover satellites” because rocket launch may not always be the preferred means.
PLANNING AREAS

Overview

Through an iterative process of research and coordination, representatives of Air Force XP and the working group developed a set of planning areas (see Figure 3.3).

The planning areas allow Air Force planners to identify and categorize corporate Air Force requirements to ensure their eventual resourcing. Planning areas also help remove the stovepipes that hinder Air Force planning efforts because of a lack of horizontal integration. Horizontal integration provides the Air Force leadership with the ability to make trade-offs and to view options and alternatives.

The two service planning areas are enablers; they provide the foundation for operational planning areas. The six operational planning areas reflect how the Air Force contributes to full-spectrum dominance—dominating the nation’s potential opponents across the entire range of military operations. Appendix B describes the planning areas and their elements.

There will not always be a one-to-one relationship between a program element and a planning area, much less between capabilities and tasks. On the contrary, one program element will often contribute to more than one planning area and will usually contribute to attaining more than one capability or accomplishing more than one task. For example, a mult-capable aircraft, such as the F-16, helps to dominate air operations and to attack a wide variety of targets. This one-to-many relationship correctly reflects the broad utility of the weapon system.

The common planning framework provides a mechanism for linking operational objectives (from STT) with resource decisions. However, the framework will work only if resource decisions are made with an understanding of how each decision will affect service capabilities. Attaining this understanding will require assessments of capabilities from both the joint and Air Force perspectives. Program elements are only indirectly related to operational capabilities. They are a necessary part of the programming process, but it is the assessment of
the impact of a particular set of decisions on operational capabilities, involving many systems, that is relevant for senior decisionmaking.

**Relationship to Global Engagement**

The proposed set of planning areas is designed to realize and implement the vision of CSAF and SAF presented in Global Engagement. This vision includes the core competencies and other functions extending across the entire breadth of the Air Force. Figure 3.4 shows how the planning areas are derived from Global Engagement. Core competencies are enclosed in shaded boxes, while quotations from the text describe other planning areas.

**Service Planning Areas**

Service planning areas are broadly defined enablers, each supporting all the operational planning areas. For example, “maintaining a
high-quality force” enables the Air Force to dominate air and space, provide rapid global mobility, and so on. These planning areas should give visibility to programs that do not directly serve the needs of unified commanders yet are fundamental to the Air Force contribution. The shaded area in Figure 3.5 shows the service planning areas.

**Foster High-Quality People**

Recruiting and sustaining the high quality of Air Force military and civilian personnel is a critical service issue. The need for high-quality personnel affects both the current Air Force and its future effectiveness. Success here means not only training people in technical skills but also imbuing them with the institutional vision and core values.
In addition, the Air Force has an obligation to maintain a quality of life that fosters a wholesome community and family life. “People are at the heart of the Air Force’s military capability, and people will continue to be the most important element of the Air Force’s success in capitalizing on change.” (Department of the Air Force, 1997, p. 19.)

The four elements of this planning area are accessing personnel, training and educating personnel, maintaining quality of life, and ensuring good order and fair treatment.

**Evolve Through Innovation**

The Air Force depends on technology and innovation to develop its operational capabilities. It is continually affected by technological change. Thus, innovation underlies every operational planning area. To maintain its edge over other nations, the Air Force must con-
stantly develop new operational concepts and systems that effectively exploit emerging technology. “The key to ensuring today’s Air Force core competencies will meet the challenge of tomorrow is Innovation.” (p. 10).

This planning area has four elements: providing analytic capability, sponsoring and conducting basic and applied research, empowering new ideas, and developing doctrine for air and space power.

**OPERATIONAL PLANNING AREAS**

Operational planning areas are related to the requirements of the unified commanders, generally on the level of joint operational objectives. These areas reflect the perspective of the Air Force as the service uniquely able to provide global reach and global power. The Air Force also generates air and space power to support civil authorities, for example, in disaster relief and interdiction of illegal drug traffic.

Some systems may help accomplish only one operational objective and therefore be considered only in that context. Other systems may help accomplish more than one operational objective and therefore be considered in several contexts. For example, variants of the multicapable F-16 may contribute to attaining three operational objectives (dominate air and space operations; attack anywhere on the globe; achieve global awareness). Such broad capability is an important rationale for developing multicapable systems and should be reflected in the planning framework. The shaded area in Figure 3.6 shows the operational planning areas.

**Dominate Air and Space Operations**

The Air Force has a unique ability to dominate operations in air and space, that is, to operate freely and deny freedom to opponents in the mediums of air and space. Sister services contribute to domination of air operations, but only the Air Force operates through the air-space continuum on a global basis. Success here is the fundamental, indispensable precondition for success in other planning areas.

The key elements in dominating air and space operations are suppressing air defenses; defeating air forces; suppressing and defend-
ing against cruise and ballistic missiles; and ensuring access to space, protecting friendly space assets, and countering opposing space assets.

**Attack Anywhere on the Globe**

The Air Force has a unique ability to attack targets located anywhere on the globe quickly and precisely. From its commanding position in air and space, the Air Force can use conventional weapons to engage any target that can be tracked. In concert with land and sea forces, the Air Force capability for global attack can dominate terrestrial operations. If necessary, the Air Force can employ nuclear weapons with the greatest selectivity possible for such devastating means.

The major elements of this planning area include projecting air forces globally, dominating land operations, dominating sea opera-
tions, degrading and destroying infrastructure, and countering weapons of mass destruction.

**Provide Global Mobility**

The Air Force is able to lift a wide range of passengers and cargo rapidly, including outsized military equipment, anywhere in the world. Global mobility is fundamental to America’s status as a world power because there may not be enough warning to permit reliance on slower means of transportation. Even in the absence of suitable basing, the Air Force ensures global reach through the world’s most capable aerial refueling fleet. It provides airlift and aerial refueling not only in benign conditions but also under combat conditions in denied air space. Currently, global mobility implies only airlift, but in the future it may also imply spacelift.

Global mobility requires the Air Force to provide lift in controlled or denied airspace, and to refuel aircraft in flight.

**Achieve Global Awareness and Control of Forces**

Immense leverage can be gained through information dominance and exploitation through timely and effective command and control. The ability to view a battlespace in near real time—observing the movements of both friendly and opposing forces while blinding an enemy or distorting his vision—can give unified commanders crushing advantages. This planning area focuses attention on the revolution in military affairs made possible by microelectronics and computing: “Information technology advances will make dramatic changes in how this nation fights wars in the future.” The Air Force is a natural leader in this planning area because of its role in space and its extremely rapid, flexible applications of air and space power.

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4These objectives are fundamental to military operations by all services at all levels of warfare from initial planning through execution and are therefore integral to other planning areas. However, the current pace of technological advance and the great expense of applying these technologies justify creation of a separate planning area.

Achieving global awareness and control of forces involves providing worldwide communications and information systems; protecting worldwide communications and information systems; providing worldwide information; providing intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; providing battle management and command and control; and attacking opposing information and control.

**Provide Combat Support**

The combat support planning area focuses on logistical support of air and space operations. It allows assessment of the entire logistical support system, from permanent installations in the continental United States to resupply of deployed forces. It includes oversight of logistic support associated with weapon systems and implementation of “best practices.”

The goal is to improve operational support of the warfighting CINCs, including the efficiency of weapon system support, by pursuing “best value” processes and products. This calls for a full transition from deployed maintenance and “push” resupply to a method based on “accurate information, responsive production and daily, time-definite airlift.”

Achieving these goals for combat support involves supporting deployed forces, providing infrastructure to support air and space operations, and protecting forces.

**Shape International Behavior**

The Air Force contributes to the unified commands’ shaping mission by interacting with foreign militaries and by equipping foreign forces. Forward presence, which may also shape behavior, is subsumed under the planning area “attack anywhere on the globe.”

The shaping function has two principal elements—interaction with foreign militaries and equipping of foreign forces.

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6Briefing, “CORONA Fall ’96 Long-Range Planning, Summary Themes,” slide 29.