

**11 MAY 1995**



***Space, Missile, Command and Control***

***THEATER AIR CONTROL SYSTEM***

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OPR: HQ USAF/XOFI (Maj Gordon A. Olvera)

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(Maj Gen John B. Sams, Jr.)

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The Theater Air Control System (TACS) provides the Air Force Component Commander (AFCC) and the Joint Force Air Component Commander (JFACC) the capability to plan and conduct theater air operations, including joint US operations and combined operations with allied forces. The TACS supports the Air Force doctrine of centralized control and decentralized execution of theater air support assets. This directive establishes Air Force policies for the TACS.

**1.** Air Force major commands (MAJCOM) and the Air National Guard (ANG) will organize, train, and equip TACS elements to provide unit interoperability and interchangeability in all theaters of operation. While deployed, these standardized elements will be task-organized for the particular theater or mission.

1.1. Deployable TACS elements, both airborne and ground-based, will contain standard manning and equipment as required by the force projection tenets. They must be sufficiently mobile and flexible to respond to contingencies across the spectrum of warfare.

**2.** This directive establishes the following responsibilities and authorities:

2.1. The senior TACS element, the Air Operations Centers (AOC) takes JFACC guidance as approved by the Joint Force Commander (JFC) (i.e. apportionment decision) and develops the air campaign, allocates resources, and tasks forces through Air Tasking Order (ATO). The AFCC if appointed as JFACC by the JFC, normally serves as the Area Air Defense Commander (AADC) and Airspace Control Authority (ACA). The ACA writes the Airspace Control Plan and the Airspace Control Order through the AOC's Airspace Control Center. The AOC serves as the JFACC's operational headquarters when the AFCC is designated the JFACC.

2.2. Air Support Operations Centers (ASOC) and Tactical Air Control Parties (TACP) provide advice and liaison to supported Army combat maneuver units during force application (Close Air Support [CAS], interdiction, and force enhancing missions, including surveillance and reconnaissance, airlift, electronic warfare [EW], and special operations). These TACS elements request and coordinate force application missions and provide "on scene" airspace control of air assets with other supporting fires.

2.3. ASOCs provide Army or allied corps commanders, or their equivalents, with the capability to receive and process requests for immediate air support from subordinate TACPs. They commit allocated sorties to satisfy requests for immediate air support, and they integrate those missions with the supported ground unit's fire support plan and scheme of maneuver.

2.4. TACPs are aligned with Army maneuver elements, battalion through corps level. They are primarily responsible for decentralized execution of CAS. Immediate CAS requests flow directly into the ASOC and once approved by the Army, are assigned best available air assets by the ASOC. They also advise ground combat unit commanders on integrating other air support missions, such as interdiction, EW, reconnaissance and airlift missions, into the ground commander's fire support plan and scheme of maneuver. TACPs will request, coordinate, and control CAS and theater airlift missions as required.

2.4.1. In addition to command and control of air assets, TACPs provide terminal attack control of close air support assets and USAF liaison to the ground combat maneuver commander on weapons employment techniques, procedures, suitability and capabilities.

2.5. Control and Reporting Centers (CRC) and Control and Reporting Elements (CRE), which are ground-based mobile radar elements of the TACS, execute air defense, offensive air operations and airspace control. They exercise tactical exercise tactical control (TACON) over air defense missions providing air battle management, early warning, and fighter control. They are linked to Army medium and high altitude surface-to-air missile units and may have authority for launch control and target assignment.

2.6. Airborne elements of the TACS include the Joint Surveillance and Target Attack Radar System (JSTARS), Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS), Airborne Battlefield Command and Control Center (ABCCC), Airborne Forward Air Controllers (AFAC), and the Tactical Air Coordinator (Airborne) (TAC-A).

2.6.1. JSTARS provides air and ground commanders with near-real-time surveillance and targeting information on surface targets.

2.6.2. AWACS performs the missions of air battle management, airspace control, fighter control, navigational assistance, and early warning. The AWACS may commit allocated sorties to satisfy requirements for immediate air defense. As an airborne platform, the AWACS provides radar surveillance and communications beyond the range of ground based radars.

2.6.3. ABCCC provides command and control of air forces in forward battle areas as assigned. It primarily provides command and control of the air to ground war; however, it may function as an airborne ASOC or limited AOC.

2.6.4. The AFAC and TAC-A assist in requesting, coordinating and controlling air support missions. Specific tasks include terminal attack control, visual reconnaissance, communications relay, and combat search and rescue assistance.

3. See **Attachment 1** for measuring compliance with this directive.

4. See **Attachment 2** for a listing of interfacing publications.

JOSEPH W. RALSTON, Lt General, USAF  
DCS/Plans and Operations

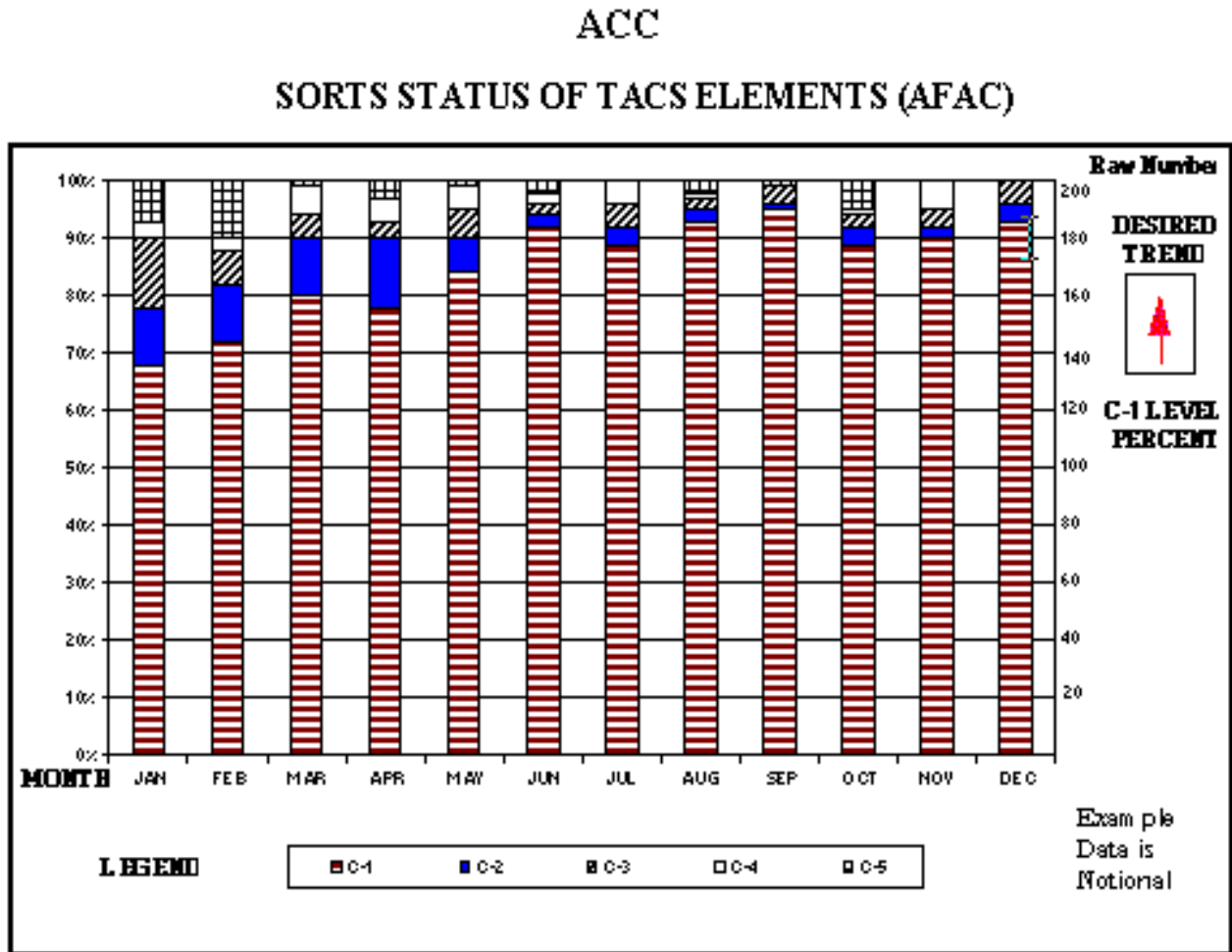
## Attachment 1

### MEASURING COMPLIANCE WITH POLICY

**A1.1.** Compliance with this directive will be measured by element types within the MAJCOM and ANG, meeting designed operational capability tasking reflected by the Status of Resources and Training Systems (SORTS) reports to make up the C-Level status.

**A1.2.** MAJCOMs and the ANG will compile TACS data from SORTS reports by element type and report percentages of combat status (C-level) to HQ USAF/XOFI monthly. HQ USAF/XOFI will monitor for adverse trends and report status to HQ USAF/XOF as required. A C-1 status, referenced in AFI 10-201, *Unit Reporting of Resources and Training Status (Category Levels) Status of Resources and Training System (SORTS)*, RCS: HAF-XOO(AR)7112, is desired as a measurement of TACS unit capability. **Figure A1.1.** Figure A1.1 is an example of notional data for TACS (AFAC) combat status. All TACS units are displayed separately to include CRCs, CREs, ASOCs, TACPs, JSTARS, AWACS, ABCCC, and AFACs. C-level status for AFACs represents 68% at C-1 level, 10% at C-2, 12% at C-3, 3% at C-4 and 7% at C-5 (January only).

**Figure A1.1. Sample Metric of SORTS Status of TACS Elements (AFAC).**



## Attachment 2

### INTERFACING PUBLICATIONS

AFI 13-101, *Evaluation of Ground Radar Systems*

AFI 13-102, *Air Support Operations Center (ASOC) and Tactical Air Control Party (TACP) Training and Evaluation*

AFI 13-105, *Roles, Organization, and Responsibilities of the Air Operations Center (AOC)*

AFI 13-106, *Air Support Operations Center (ASOC) and Tactical Air Control Parties (TACP)*

AFI 13-107, *Roles, Organization, and Responsibilities of Control and Reporting Centers (CRC) and Control and Reporting Elements (CRE)*

AFI 13-108, *Roles, Organization, and Responsibilities of Joint Surveillance and Target Attack Radar System (JSTARS)*

AFI 13-110, *Roles, Organization, and Responsibilities of Airborne Battlefield Command and Control Center (ABCCC)*

Air Force Manual 13-109, *Roles, Organization, and Responsibilities of Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS)*

Joint Publication 3-03, *Doctrine for Joint Interdiction Operations*

Joint Publication 3-09, *Doctrine for Joint Fire Support*

Joint Publication 3-09.3, *Joint Tactics, Techniques and Procedures for Close Air Support (CAS)*

Joint Publication 3-18.1, *Joint Doctrine for Airborne and Air Assault Operations*

Joint Publication 3-52, *Doctrine for Joint Airspace Control in a Combat Zone*

Joint Publication 3-55, *Doctrine for Reconnaissance, Surveillance and Target Acquisition Support for Joint Operations (RSTA)*

Joint Publication 3-56.1, *Tactical Command and Control Planning Guidance and Procedures for Joint Operations (Procedures and Formats)*

Joint Publication 3-56.23, *Tactical Command and Control Procedures for Joint Operations-Joint Interface Operational Procedures-Air Control/Air Defense Procedures for Joint Services Operations*