



U.S. Army soldiers with 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division (25th ID), fire an M240 machine gun on 2 November 2022 while defending an objective as the opposing force during Joint Pacific Multinational Readiness Center (JPMRC) rotation 23-01 at Pohakuloa Training Area, Hawaii. JPMRC used training scenarios specific to certain environments to train the 2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th ID, with joint, allied, and partnered forces under conditions in which they would fight. (Photo by Sgt. Rachel Christensen, U.S. Army)

# How I Corps Fights

## Movement and Maneuver

Brig. Gen. Eric Landry, Canadian Army

Col. Andrew Watson, U.S. Army

Lt. Col. Alex Bedard, U.S. Army

Maj. Callum Muntz, Australian Army

*Now the general who wins a battle makes many calculations in his temple ere the battle is fought. The general who loses a battle makes but few calculations beforehand. Thus do many calculations lead to victory, and few calculations lead to defeat: how much more no calculation at all! It is by attention to this point that I can foresee who is likely to win or lose.*

—Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*

America's First Corps (I Corps) serves as the operational U.S. Army headquarters for U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM), employing U.S. Army forces in the INDOPACOM area of responsibility (AOR) to contribute to the vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific. Previous work by the I Corps commanding general, Lt. Gen. Xavier Brunson, outlined the vision for how I Corps fights, introducing the DARES framework: define fights, apportion efforts, resource priorities, evaluate outcomes, and seek feedback.<sup>1</sup> The objective of this article is to build and expand upon this framework as it relates to the movement and maneuver warfighting function (M2 WfF). At the corps level, the M2 WfF is commonly misunderstood. Decisions regarding



Tanks from 1st Armored Division download at the Port of Gladstone, Australia, on 14 July 2023 to participate in Talisman Sabre 2023. I Corps operates in archipelagic and littoral areas, relying on the joint force extensively for intratheater movement. (Photo by Sgt. Oniel McDonald, U.S. Army)

the M2 WfF need to be made well before those forces ever engage in combat with the enemy. This article first reviews how I Corps fights in the context of the INDOPACOM AOR, multidomain operations (MDO), and the I Corps distributed command and control nodes (DC2N) process. It then defines the M2 WfF. The next section introduces a thesis and applies it within the context of the DARES framework.

The INDOPACOM AOR is fraught with challenges unlike those seen in AORs where U.S. Army forces have played a more prevalent role in recent history. The INDOPACOM AOR contains over half of the

**Brig. Gen. Eric Landry, Canadian Army,** serves as the deputy commanding general, operations for I Corps at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington. He holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Québec at Montréal, an MBA from HEC Montréal, and masters' degrees from the Royal Military College of Canada and the U.S. Army War College.

**Col. Andrew Watson, U.S. Army,** serves as the future operations director for I Corps at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington. He holds a BA from the University of Nevada, Reno, an MS from Kansas State University, an MMAS from the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, and an MA from the School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College.

**Lt. Col. Alex Bedard, U.S. Army,** serves as the deputy future operations director for I Corps at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington. He holds a BS from the U.S. Military Academy, an MEd from the University of Virginia, and an MA from the School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College.

**Maj. Callum Muntz, Australian Army,** serves as a future operations planner and Australian military exchange officer for I Corps at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington. He holds a BSc in computer science, an MA in cyber security operations from the University of New South Wales, and an MA in defence and strategic studies from the Australian National University.





Soldiers from the 25th Infantry Division, the Singapore Army, and the 1st Australia Division conduct a huddle during a Talisman Sabre field exercise in July 2023. I Corps forces frequently operate in a multinational construct without a common language or a multilateral military alliance like NATO. (Photo courtesy of I Corps Public Affairs Office, U.S. Army)

world's population with nearly two-thirds of the world's economy.<sup>2</sup> The INDOPACOM AOR's geography often requires operations in littoral and archipelagic regions, leading to noncontiguous areas of operation (AO). Time and distance challenges in this AOR surpass those in others, impacting force movement and sustainment operations. Geography also forces the U.S. Army toward greater reliance on the U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, and U.S. Air Force.

Another notable factor of the AOR involves the U.S. Army's partnerships and alliances in the region. Whereas other AORs may have well-established U.S. multinational military frameworks, the Indo-Pacific is rife with bilateral and multilateral agreements, often without a commonly understood language. Formal alliances exist with Japan, the Republic of Korea, Thailand, the Philippines, and Australia. Those alliances are reinforced regularly by military exercises like Yama Sakura, Freedom Shield, Cobra Gold, Salaknib-Balikatan, and Talisman Sabre. As the geopolitical situation across the AOR evolves, traditionally bilateral

U.S. engagements are expanding to include new partnerships. One example is the frequent integration of I Corps and the 1st Australian Division, or 1 (AS) DIV. Japan formally recognized 1 (AS) DIV as a participant in exercise Yama Sakura 85, traditionally a bilateral U.S.-Japan exercise. These distinguishing factors of geography and continually changing relationships within the INDOPACOM AOR set the stage for I Corps' role within U.S. Army MDO.

The U.S. Army fights using MDO, which highlights four tenets: agility, convergence, endurance, and depth.<sup>3</sup> Focusing heavily on the European theater and AirLand Battle as a foundation, applying MDO to the INDOPACOM AOR presents many challenges. I Corps focuses on development and realization of the tenet of convergence, defined as "an outcome created by the concerted employment of capabilities from multiple domains and echelons against combinations of decisive points in any domain to create effects against a system, formation, decision maker, or in a specific geographic area."<sup>4</sup> I Corps plays an instrumental role in





Staffs from I Corps and the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force participate in a bilateral staff working group 6 December 2023 during Yama Sakura 85. I Corps operates with many partners throughout the Pacific without a common language or multilateral military alliance like NATO. (Photo by Pfc. Elija Magana, U.S. Army)

achieving convergence in the AOR by requesting and synchronizing joint effects with division maneuver. This is done while working with emerging formations external to I Corps, including multidomain task forces, security force assistance brigades, and sister service formations like Marine littoral regiments. I Corps works to integrate and synchronize operations through the development of the concept of convergence windows, an expansion on the tenet of convergence within the context of Brunson's vision of how I Corps fights.

I Corps fights in the INDOPACOM AOR using DC2N and by posturing combat credible forces west of the international date line to build interior lines against the pacing threat, China. I Corps uses DC2N to deliberately place the headquarters in time and space, task organized and purpose built by mission and resources. DC2N seeks to decrease signature, reduce logistical requirements, reduce data bandwidth, and increase survivability for the corps headquarters. There are six pillars to DC2N (structure, form factor, data, transport, location, process) and four characteristics

(agile, resilient, scalable, and survivable).<sup>5</sup> By executing operations using DC2N to build interior lines against the pacing threat, I Corps contributes to campaigning in the AOR. Given all the above factors, how does I Corps fill its role with respect to the M2 WfF?

The M2 WfF is defined as “the related tasks and systems that move and employ forces to achieve a position of relative advantage over the enemy and other threats.”<sup>6</sup> This includes force projection activities, employing direct fires, occupying areas, conducting mobility and countermobility, reconnaissance and surveillance, and battlefield obscurity.<sup>7</sup> The M2 WfF does not include administrative movements of personnel and equipment, which instead reside under the sustainment warfighting function.<sup>8</sup> How do these functions materialize at the corps level, and specifically within the context of the challenges of the INDOPACOM AOR, MDO, and how I Corps fights?

The overarching concept for how I Corps fights the M2 WfF in its AOR is that I Corps shapes conditions for divisions to maneuver in the close area by



M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System launchers from the 17th Field Artillery Brigade are obscured by smoke as they fire during Talisman Sabre in Australia, July 2023. Fires support the movement-and-maneuver focus of I Corps on shaping conditions for division maneuver in the close area. (Photo courtesy of I Corps Public Affairs Office, U.S. Army)

focusing on movement to posture forces and by using the I Corps DARES framework to focus staff analysis and supplement doctrinal tools with best practices. Decisions concerning the M2 WfF are typically made at the future-operations-focused DC2N node (Node 2), but decision-making transfers to the Home Station Operations Center (HSOC) as required.<sup>9</sup> This article outlines how I Corps fights with respect to the M2 WfF by using the DARES framework as a road map.

## Define the Fights

Defining the fights for I Corps is a critical portion of planning an operation and serves as the basis for how I Corps fights the M2 WfF. This process can be viewed doctrinally as deciding on operational frameworks, which is part of intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) and the planning portion of the operations process. I Corps does not supplement these tools with any additional products or processes. However, due to the requirements of the AOR and frequent employment of I Corps in multiple roles, the corps staff needs

to focus additional analysis in this area to enable timely decision-making for the M2 WfF.

The first critical aspect of defining the fights is to determine the role the corps headquarters will play in the operation. A corps headquarters can serve as a joint task force, a joint forces land component command, an army forces command, or as the senior army tactical formation, with the former three roles requiring significant augmentation.<sup>10</sup> The corps may fill more than one of these roles during an operation and will likely also be called upon to do so in a multinational context. The decided role or roles of the corps headquarters must be understood by all as the role frequently changes in the AOR throughout a given year of campaigning.

Once the corps determines the role of the headquarters for the operation, I Corps employs doctrinal tools to further define the fights. When employed as an army forces command, joint forces land component command, or senior army headquarters, the corps staff employs IPB to help define the AO and area of interest. Combining IPB with the military



decision-making process (MDMP), the staff also determines the corps area of influence. This forms the basis for the development of the corps deep, close, and rear areas, and initial designation of main efforts and supporting efforts. When employed as a JTF, I Corps uses joint intelligence preparation of the operational environment combined with the joint planning process (JPP) to define the joint operations area, joint security areas, and component AOs. The geography of the INDOPACOM AOR often necessitates a non-contiguous AO. This decreases the agility of the corps with respect to the M2 WfF and necessitates earlier decisions than in other theaters.

As employed in I Corps, defining the fights places greater staff emphasis on doctrinal tools that currently exist in IPB, MDMP, and JPP. The frequent employment of the corps in different roles and the geography of the AOR highlights the importance of developing a detailed understanding of the operational framework to facilitate timely decision-making for the M2 WfF. The staff will often develop a noncontiguous AO or joint operations area for the corps, which requires a deliberate consideration for the next element of the DARES framework, apportioning efforts.

## Apportion Efforts

The process of apportioning efforts involves expanding upon defining the fights through further application of MDMP or JPP. The implications of this process enable the corps to determine the right posture of forces and the correct task organization and assist the corps staff in assessing culmination. These are all vital to the M2 WfF. Apportioning efforts results in critical products for corps operations, including fights by echelon, development of a kill contract, and an 8-day sketch (visual matrix; see the figure). The process of apportioning efforts also enables the corps staff to identify and develop the aforementioned convergence windows. Central to the analysis and development of these products is the correlation of forces and means (COFMs).

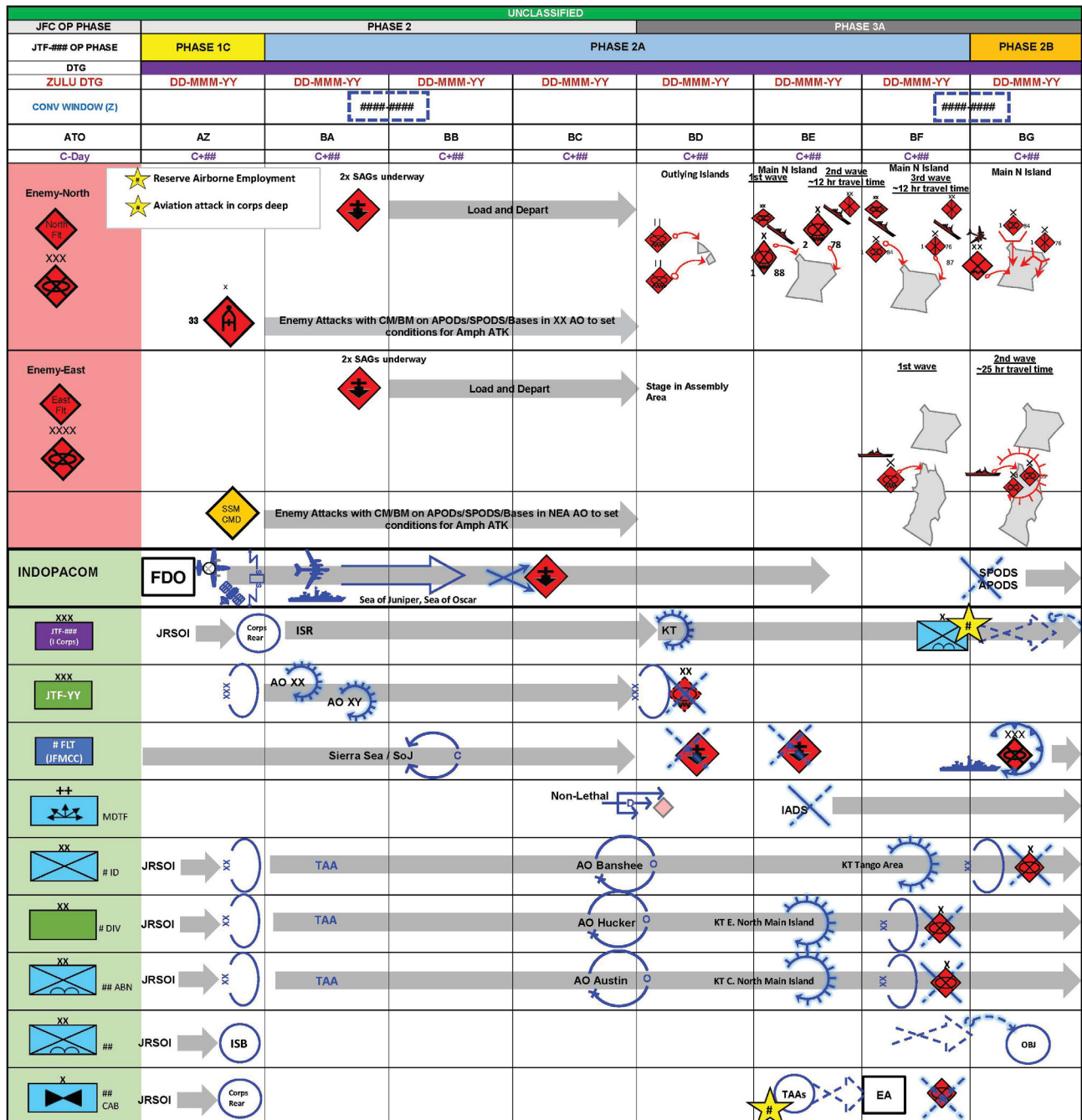
The first critical product of apportion efforts is fights by echelon, which communicates what each headquarters involved in the operation must do to achieve successful outcomes. This includes the delineation of responsibilities, or “fights,” for a higher headquarters, the corps headquarters, and subordinate organizations. This product conceptualizes what

each element will do in the areas designated in define the fights. The fights by echelon can be described by many means but needs to be tailored to the operation through planning processes. It must be as specific as possible to be of the most use. Some common techniques involve using objectives, specifying enemy formations, or designating precise enemy capabilities. This simple document allows common visualization of responsibilities for each headquarters, aids in the principles of economy of force and mass and helps build unity of effort. Fights by echelon then forms the basis for development of the kill contract.

The I Corps kill contract provides greater refinement of fights by echelon focused on enemy forces in large-scale combat operations. Simply put, the kill contract specifies what enemy formations and systems each headquarters must remove from the operation in space and time for friendly forces to be successful. The term “contract” in the name implies the conditions must be met; however, the realities of military operations result in a more aspirational kill contract than a definite one. It assists commanders in understanding risk and articulates tangible requirements to achieve acceptable levels of risk for operational success to enable decision-making. The kill contract fills a vital role in synchronizing resources and allowing I Corps commanders and staffs to understand, visualize, describe, and direct operations.

The kill contract is developed during the course of action analysis portion of the planning process and heavily involves the use of COFMs. As staffs iterate through course of action analysis using COFMs, they identify minimum friendly force requirements and enemy capabilities that need to be targeted by specific echelons. Staffs gain an appreciation for how these conditions need to be met in space and time. This process is challenged by the lack of standardized COFMs calculators for the pacing threat and contemporary joint warfighting systems. The minimum friendly force requirements the staff develops serve to refine the task organization and assist in the assessment of culmination. These are of vital importance given the much longer time and distance factors in the AOR.

The I Corps kill contract is a living document. The staff continues to refine it during execution, through subsequent planning, and through the targeting process. This document aids in building unity of effort and



(Figure by authors)

### Figure. 8-Day Sketch

In this example of an 8-day sketch (visual matrix), I Corps is serving as a joint task force and joint force land component command in an archipelagic environment. The sketch covers two air tasking order cycles, depicts planned convergence windows, and enables commander understanding and visualization of the operation.

preserving economy of force, aids in massing effects, and helps realize convergence. As I Corps seeks to fulfill its kill contract, the staff often identifies the need for high-risk but high-payoff operations. I Corps seeks to

mitigate the high risk of these operations through the development of convergence windows.

I Corps defines convergence windows as discrete time and space intervals in which multinational and

joint forces layer effects across domains and dimensions to create temporary windows of vulnerability the corps can leverage to gain a position of advantage against an enemy force. This concept is related to the MDO concept of convergence. I Corps uses convergence windows to help achieve decisive points that will build the outcome of convergence. I Corps identifies requirements for convergence windows during planning and through development of fights by echelon and the kill contract. The staff typically plans and develops convergence windows around high-risk activities such as joint forcible entry operations, air assault operations, and aviation deep attacks. I Corps builds convergence windows through the targeting cycle. The corps staff links convergence windows, their associated operations, the placement of forces, and the sequence and timing of the operation to achieve the tenet of convergence.

A term in common use among the U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force that is often conflated with a convergence window is a pulse. The U.S. Navy has used the concept of a pulse since at least the World War II era, meaning a discrete concentration of firepower directed at a specified enemy critical vulnerability designed to destroy the preponderance of an enemy's combat potential.<sup>11</sup> The concept of a pulse remains ill-defined and used colloquially. This working definition is related to the I Corps definition of a convergence window in that a pulse could contribute to creating a convergence window for a corps operation.

The I Corps staff takes the identified convergence windows along with their associated high-risk operations and portrays them on a visual model known as the 8-day sketch. The 8-day sketch assists the I Corps staff and commands in visualizing the operation in time and space and assists in coordinating and synchronizing the operation. The sketch portrays large-scale M2 WfF actions throughout the operation. It contains two air tasking order cycles to focus the staff on refining operations prior to the targeting cycle, which operates on a ninety-six-hour horizon. This product also aids the staff in visualizing required M2 WfF actions early enough in the process given the physics of operations in the Pacific. The 8-day sketch is continually refined throughout the operation and serves as a focal point to coordinate staff processes.

Apportioning efforts in the DARES construct involves further refinement and specification of the

defined fights. This is critical for enabling decisions involving the M2 WfF. Major outputs of this process include fights by echelon, the kill contract, identification of initial convergence window requirements, and initial COFM analysis. After completing the apportionment of efforts, the corps staff next verifies the resources provided at echelon are sufficient for the defined fights and apportioned efforts.

## Resource Priorities

Following apportioning efforts, the corps seeks to resource priorities. This is a critical aspect of the M2 WfF at the corps level in the INDOPACOM AOR due to time and distance factors, geography, and reliance on the joint force for intratheater movement. Considering these factors, the corps staff must resource priorities early and correctly to seize and maintain a relative position of advantage. Critical outputs of resourcing priorities are the task organization, positioning of corps sustainment assets, enabling brigade force posture, the composition and posture of the corps reserve, planning for culmination and follow-on forces, and development of the 8-day sketch. These are not novel products or processes, but the corps staff must conduct additional analysis and place emphasis on these aspects of the operation to enable the M2 WfF.

The task organization is a critical output concerning how I Corps fights with regard to M2. The task organization, informed by defining the fights and apportioning efforts, provides the correct resources to subordinate commands given their assigned missions. It enables the staff to position forces in an AOR where it is incredibly difficult to recover from a poor initial posture. Involved with the task organization is the designation of main and supporting efforts, which focuses the corps staff's support for subordinate headquarters. The corps staff also defines and refines command and support relationships, which feed into the positioning of corps sustainment, enabling brigade forces, and the corps reserve.

The geography of the INDOPACOM AOR exacerbates posturing corps enabling brigade forces and the corps reserve. This geography typically requires a noncontiguous AO with noncontiguous corps rear areas to enable operational reach. The corps often needs to split enabling brigade forces among multiple geographic locations. It is difficult to relocate those



forces within operationally relevant timelines, and repositioning typically involves reliance on the U.S. Air Force or the U.S. Navy. This necessitates early and correct decisions regarding the posture of the corps sustainment forces, the combat aviation brigade, field

These factors regarding the importance of reserve capabilities and posturing in the AOR link to the importance of assessing culmination and planning for follow-on forces early and often in the AOR. The sustainment WfF assesses and plans for casualties, materi-

“While I Corps may exercise control of Army watercraft, they are ill-suited for the movement of reserve formations. With noncontiguous AOs, the corps may designate and posture multiple reserves or portions of the reserve to mitigate this risk and increase responsiveness.”

artillery brigades, the engineer brigade, the military police brigade, and other corps enabling forces. One corps maneuver enhancement brigade (MEB) is typically insufficient to protect multiple noncontiguous corps rear areas and enable operational reach. To fill this operational gap, I Corps has experimented with creating additional MEB-like capabilities from other enabling brigades like a military police brigade. This practice, however, detracts from the ability of an enabling brigade to fill its specified purpose. As a result of this identified gap, I Corps is requesting greater MEB support during future operations.

Positioning the reserve and the required capabilities of the reserve are also complicated by the AOR. Distances and geography in the AOR often preclude the useful employment of the reserve through road marches or Army aviation, forcing a reliance on the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy for intratheater movement of the reserve. This creates long lead times and competes with the use of vessels and aircraft for sustainment or other air and maritime missions. While I Corps may exercise control of Army watercraft, they are ill-suited for the movement of reserve formations. With noncontiguous AOs, the corps may designate and posture multiple reserves or portions of the reserve to mitigate this risk and increase responsiveness. This requires greater forethought, planning, and preparation early in the operation. The corps will often not be able to recover from poor reserve posturing with sufficient timeliness to enable commander decision-making.

el losses, personnel replacements, and the use of theater stocks for reconstitution operations.<sup>12</sup> The M2 WfF works with sustainment to integrate reconstitution operations into operational tempo and decision-making and retains overall responsibility for coordinating reconstitution. When tempo and combat losses exceed the ability to reconstitute combat power, the corps seeks to employ follow-on forces. Due to the geography of the AOR, planning factors for follow-on forces are typically more than a month. The corps needs to adjust the tempo of operations, vigorously monitor culmination, and signal and request follow-on forces extremely early to ensure continued operational reach.

To manage the above-mentioned challenges, I Corps refines the 8-day sketch, developed during JPP or MDMP and apportioning efforts. The 8-day sketch helps planners to visualize culmination in sufficient time to mitigate these friction points through coordination with the joint force. It also assists in coordinating supporting staff functions to synchronize and coordinate the operation.

The resource priorities portion of the DARES framework does not introduce any novel products or processes to enable the M2 WfF, but rather forces the corps staff to focus and conduct additional analysis using existing doctrinal tools. An optimized task organization and posture of corps forces is critical for preventing culmination in the AOR. This is achieved by enabling timely decision-making for the M2 WfF through the final two DARES framework elements: evaluating outcomes and seeking feedback.

## Evaluate Outcomes

Evaluating outcomes of the DARES framework is vital to informing how the corps fights with respect to the M2 WfF and involves the formulation of assessments. An assessment is “the determination of progress toward accomplishing a task, creating a condition, or achieving an objective.”<sup>13</sup> Evaluating outcomes, as with define the fights and resource priorities, does not necessarily add processes or products to doctrinal tools but serves to focus the staff in conducting additional analysis throughout the operations process. The major output of evaluating outcomes is the operational assessment framework. This framework is developed concurrently with the staff planning process and involves developing the assessment approach and the assessment plan.<sup>14</sup> The operational assessment framework provides the structure through which the corps staff will inform commander decision-making and the prioritization of planning efforts during execution, which in turn enables the M2 WfF.

The first portion of evaluating outcomes is developing the assessment approach. The assessment approach answers the broad question of how the staff will approach conducting assessments during execution.<sup>15</sup> I Corps uses a formal assessment process, conducting an assessment working group attended by representatives of all staff sections and subordinate commands. The assessment working group is run by the I Corps Future Operations section and chaired by the chief of staff. It is typically run out of the corps DC2N future-operations-focused node, with participants attending remotely from other nodes and from supporting organizations as required. To be effective, the assessment working group needs to occur at the proper time in the corps battle rhythm. To focus the staff accordingly, the assessments working group is viewed as the first meeting of the critical path. Inputs for this meeting are made through all the respective staff working groups, allowing the staff to evaluate the data that is collected before entering the assessments working group. The major output of the I Corps assessments working group is the operation assessment, which provides inputs into the I Corps operations synchronization meeting, the operations and intelligence briefing, the targeting working group, the targeting coordination board, and the commander's update brief.

The second portion of evaluating outcomes is developing the assessment plan. The assessment plan is developed from the corps operational approach, which the staff creates during the initial stages of the planning process. The staff reviews the approach and develops indicators that will provide metrics allowing the staff to determine progress along lines of operation and lines of effort toward achieving the desired conditions for the operation. The staff divides indicators into measures of performance (MOPs) and measures of effectiveness (MOEs) and assigns them to respective staff sections. These metrics quantify progress toward decisive points, objectives, and desired conditions while allowing the corps to assess and prevent culmination and prepare future operations and plans. This in turn enables decisions regarding the M2 WfF to be made with sufficient lead time given the time and distance factors of the AOR and frequent reliance on the U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force for intratheater movement. The major output of this process is the structure of the operation assessment.

Evaluating outcomes involves creating the framework of the operation assessment, which is composed of creating an assessment approach and an assessment plan. These practices are well developed in joint and U.S. Army doctrine; however, applying the DARES construct focuses the staff in conducting the additional analysis needed given the features of the INDOPACOM AOR. This in turn enables adequate decision-making involving the M2 WfF. The outputs of evaluating outcomes form the basis for the collection of data that enables decision-making, emphasized in the DARES construct as seek feedback.

## Seek Feedback

During the seek feedback portion of the DARES framework, the corps executes the collection of MOPs and MOEs while building the common operating picture. This is important to how the corps fights with regards to the M2 WfF, as it enables timely decision-making and force posturing to achieve desired conditions in the AO. Each warfighting function and staff section collect MOPs and MOEs according to the assessment plan, and those efforts are coordinated and synchronized through the current operations cell with assistance from subordinate and adjacent unit liaison officers. The staff then conducts analysis of MOPs and MOEs in



respective working groups. The staff brings those outputs into the corps assessment working group. The major output of the assessment working group is the operation assessment for a given twenty-four-hour period, which highlights opportunities, risks, informs decision-making, and recommends planning priorities for branches and sequels. These outputs are then integrated into current and future operations through the corps operations synchronization meeting, where the corps operations officer approves plans and fragmentary orders. Much like other portions of the DARES framework, seeking feedback does not add new practices to doctrine but merely focuses staff efforts appropriately. This in turn enables the corps to make timely decisions regarding the posture and movement of forces for the M2 WfF.

## Conclusion

I Corps focuses on movement to position forces and uses the DARES framework to focus staff analysis and supplement doctrinal tools for the M2 WfF. This helps I Corps fill requirements as INDOPACOM's operational Army headquarters. In defining the fights, I Corps clarifies the role of its headquarters, developing appropriate operational frameworks given the geographical constraints of the AOR. Through apportioning efforts, I Corps develops fights by echelon, uses COFMs to aid in the development of a kill contract, and develops convergence windows to support operations in noncontiguous battlespaces. During the resource priorities portion of the DARES framework, I Corps develops and refines the task organization, designates main and supporting efforts, and refines command and support relationships. I Corps focuses on the posturing of corps sustainment, enabling brigades, and the corps reserve during initial planning efforts to prevent culmination and facilitate timely and appropriate requests for follow-on forces. This occurs in an environment where establishing interior lines can only be accomplished through joint efforts. Development of the 8-day sketch assists the corps in visualizing and directing required movement of forces in the AOR. The evaluating outcomes portion of the DARES framework focuses staff efforts on developing the assessment approach and the assessment plan, creating the structure of the operation assessment that will enable M2 WfF decision-making during execution. Finally, in seek feedback, the corps staff collects indicators during the corps

battle rhythm, evaluates those indicators, develops the operations assessment during the assessment working group, and makes recommendations for M2 WfF decision-making and planning prioritization during key battle rhythm events.

Based on current practices, there are several areas that require action. The first is with regards to COFMs tools for the pacing threat and for the joint level. The established standard COFMs tool uses Soviet threat equipment and does not adequately address joint capabilities. The Research and Analysis Center should lead development of improved COFMs tools. Due to reliance on the U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, and required cooperation with the U.S. Marine Corps, I Corps requires greater integration of joint forces in command post exercises and operations in the AOR. U.S. Army Pacific should continue to assist I Corps in resourcing and synchronizing operations within INDOPACOM. The frequent archipelagic terrain in the AOR creates noncontiguous corps rear areas that typically require more than one MEB. Time-phased force deployment data and operational plans should be adjusted to account for multiple MEBs. Finally, the lack of a U.S. military multinational framework such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization hampers interoperability with partner and ally forces in the AOR. This highlights the importance of foreign liaison officers, military personnel exchange programs, and informal military engagements like the frequent integration of 1 (AS) DIV with I Corps operations.

How I Corps fights with respect to the M2 WfF involves focusing on the movement aspect of the WfF over maneuver to posture forces. It involves shaping conditions for divisions to maneuver in the close area by using the DARES framework to focus staff analysis and supplement the operations process and integrating processes. I Corps developed this practice over years of iterations conducting operations throughout the INDOPACOM AOR with the joint force, partners, and allies. It represents a continuing evolution in the application of MDO. Sharing this practice with the force is a vital part of preparing the U.S. Army for the next fight against the pacing threat, as I Corps will likely fight along several other headquarters that will not have the luxury of years of organizational learning in the AOR. With continued vigilance on sharing best practices and integrating lessons learned, the U.S. Army, our partners, and our allies will be ready for the next fight. ■

## Notes

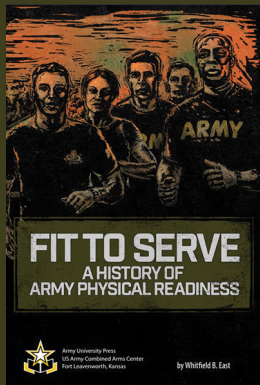
**Epigraph.** Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, trans. Lionel Giles (Blackburg, VA: Thrifty Books, 2009), 22.

1. Xavier Brunson and Liam Walsh, "How I Corps Fights: Pivoting to Meet Threats in the Indo-Pacific," Association of the United States Army, 19 April 2023, <https://www.ausa.org/articles/how-i-corps-fights-pivoting-meet-threats-indo-pacific>.
2. The White House, *Indo-Pacific Strategy of the United States* (Washington, DC: The White House, 2022), 4, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/U.S.-Indo-Pacific-Strategy.pdf>.
3. Field Manual (FM) 3-0, *Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Publishing Office [GPO], 2022), 3-2.
4. *Ibid.*, 3-3.
5. Brunson and Walsh, "How I Corps Fights."
6. Army Doctrine Publication 3-0, *Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. GPO, 2019), 5-3.
7. *Ibid.*, 5-3–5-4.
8. *Ibid.*, 5-4.
9. Regarding I Corps distributed command and control nodes (DC2N), Node 1 is focused on current operations, Node 2 is

focused on future operations, and Node 3 is focused on sustainment, protection, and the rear area fight. The Home Station Operations Center, located at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, provides reach-back support to forward deployed nodes. Forward nodes are restricted in size to facilitate deployment, logistics, minimize bandwidth, and decrease signature. While nodes may focus on one time horizon or warfighting function, there is redundancy so that loss of a node does not impair command and control for I Corps.

10. FM 3-94, *Armies, Corps, and Division Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. GPO, 2021), 4-1.
11. Wayne P. Hughes Jr., "Naval Maneuver Warfare," *Naval War College Review* 50, no. 3 (Summer 1997): 40, <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol50/iss3/27/>.
12. FM 4-0, *Sustainment* (Washington, DC: U.S. GPO, 2019), C-1–C-3.
13. Deputy Director, J-7 Joint Staff, *Commander's Handbook for Assessment Planning and Execution* (Suffolk, VA: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2011), I-1.
14. FM 5-0, *Plans* (Washington, DC: U.S. GPO, 2022), 8-3.
15. *Ibid.*, 8-5.

## Army University Press—New Book Releases



*Fit to Serve: A History of Army Physical Readiness* by Whitfield B. East is the second edition of an important history in U.S. Army readiness. East has provided significant revisions to the book from its original form, *A Historical Review and Analysis of Army Physical Readiness Training and Assessment*, published in 2013. Supplemental chapters provide in-depth accounts of how the U.S. Army's approach to physical readiness has evolved in the twenty-first century.

<https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/Research%20and%20Books/2024/June/Fit-To-Serve-Web-Book.pdf>

*Lessons Learned and Unlearned* analyzes nearly a century of U.S. artillery innovation and adaptation, focusing on the pressures of incorporating new technology, applying combat experience, and assessing external threats. Indirect fire's role on the battlefield has been repeatedly reshaped by new technologies on the one hand and organizational and doctrinal changes on the other. This research examines successful and unsuccessful historical indirect-fire adaptations since the birth of indirect fire—identifying innovation themes, insights into future issues, and recommendations for more effective indirect fire.

*Lessons Learned and Unlearned* is available online and in hard copy.

<https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/Research%20and%20Books/2024/Feb/Deveraux-Lessons-Learned-2024.pdf>

