FM 7-100.1 Opposing Forces Operations

This manual is one of a series that describes a contemporary Opposing Force (OPFOR) for training U.S. Army commanders, staffs, and units. See the Bibliography section for a list of the manuals in this series. Together, these manuals outline an OPFOR than can cover the entire spectrum of military and paramilitary capabilities against which the Army must train to ensure success in any future conflict.

Applications for this series of manuals include field training, training simulations, and classroom instruction throughout the Army. All Army training venues should use an OPFOR based on these manuals, except when mission rehearsal or contingency training requires maximum fidelity to a specific country-based threat. Even in the latter case, trainers should use appropriate parts of the OPFOR manuals to fill information gaps in a manner consistent with what they do know about a specific threat.

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Unless this publication states otherwise, masculine nouns or pronouns do not refer exclusively to men.

Introduction

This manual is part of the FM 7-100 series, which describes a contemporary Opposing Force (OPFOR) that exists for the purpose of training U.S. forces for potential combat operations. This OPFOR reflects the characteristics of military and paramilitary forces that may be present in the contemporary operational environment (COE). Like those real-world threats, the OPFOR will continue to present new and different challenges for U.S. forces. The COE is constantly changing, and it is important for U.S. Army training environments to keep pace with real-world developments.

Contemporary Operational Environment

Contemporary Operational Environment (COE)
The operational environment that exists today and for the clearly foreseeable future.

The DOD officially defines an operational environment (OE) as â composite of the conditions, circumstances, and influences that affect the employment of military forces and bear on the decisions of the unit commanderâ (JP 1-02). The contemporary operational environment (COE) is the operational environmentÂ thatÂ existsÂ today and for the clearly foreseeable future. There are some â constantsâ orcommon threads that define the general nature of this COE:

- The United States in not likely to have a peer competitor until 2020 or beyond.
- However, nations will continue to field armed forces and use these forces as a tool to pursue national interests.

- As nations use their armed forces (or other instruments of national power) in pursuit of national interests, their actions may cause U.S. intervention, either unilaterally or as a coalition partner, with or without United Nations mandate.
- Nations that believe the United States may act to counter their national interests will develop diplomatic, informational, economic, and military plans for managing U.S. intervention.
- Nations will continue to modernize their armed forces within the constraints of their economies, but in ways that may negate U.S. overmatch.
- Advanced technology will be available on the world market for a wide variety of nation-state and non-state actors.
- Non-state actors will play an important role in any regional conflictâ as combatants or noncombatants.
- All combat operations will be significantly affected by a number of variables in the environment beyond simple military forces.

Thus, one of the constants is that there are variables. Those â variablesâ in the COE result in a number of different OEs that can occur in specific circumstances or scenarios.

Critical Variables

Critical Variables of COE

- Nature and Stability of the State.
- Regional and Global Relationships.
- Economics.
- Sociological Demographics.
- Information.
- Physical Environment.
- Technology.
- External Organizations.
- National Will.
- Time.
- Military Capabilities.

Any OE, in the real world or in the training environment, can be defined in terms of eleven critical variables. While these variables can be useful in describing the overall (strategic) environment, they are most useful in defining the nature of specific OEs. Each of these â conditions, circumstances, and influencesâ and their possible combinations will vary according to the specific situation. In this sense, they are â variables.â These variables are interrelated and sometimes overlap. Different variables will be more or less importantÂ inÂ different

situations. Each OE is different, because the content of the variables is different. Only by studying and understanding these variablesâ and incorporating them into its trainingâ will the U.S. Army be able to keep adversaries from using them against it or to find ways to use them to its own advantage.

Nature and Stability of the State

It is important to understand the nature and stability of the state (or states) with which or in which the conflict takes place. Study of this variable measures how strong or weak a country is and determines where the real strength of the state lies; it may be in the political leadership, the military, the police, or some other element of the population. Understanding this variable will allow U.S. forces to better understand the nature of the military campaign and the true aims of an enemy campaign, operation, or action. It also helps determine what kinds of threats may be present in a particular country. The real threat to U.S. forces may come from elements other than the military.

Regional and Global Relationships

Nation-states and/or non-state actors often enter into relationships, which can be regional or

global. These partnerships support common objectives, which can be political, economic, military, or cultural. An actorâ s membership or allegiance to such a relationship can determine its actions of support and motivation. Virtually all conflict will occur with alliances and coalitions, some involving the United States and some involving its adversaries. When actors create regional or global alliances, it can add to their collective capability and broaden the scale of operations and actions.

As the world moves away from the traditional long-term, fixed alliances of the past, regional and global relationships are much more fluid and unpredictable. The choice of a state to be nonaligned does not mean that it will not become involved in a conflict or crisis. It simply means that the state does not make a commitment to another state, alliance, or cause before a situation arises. This lack of precommitment makes it difficult to predict how actors and forces may align when a situation does arise. Alliances can form or change rapidly, even during the course of an operation or campaign.

Economics

The economic variable establishes the boundaries between the â haves and the â have-nots. This gap of economic differences among nation-states and other actors can cause conflict. Economic superiority, rather than military superiority, may be the key to power or dominance within a region. However, economic position often represents a nation or non-state actorâ s ability to buy military technology or to conduct prolonged operations. Economics help define the relationship between a nation or non-state actor and other actors at the regional or global level. These regional or global economic relationships could result in military or political assistance.

Sociological Demographics

The demographics variable includes the cultural, religious, and ethnic makeup of a given region, nation, or non-state actor. Extreme devotion to a particular cause or significant hatred of a particular group may provide an enemy with an unshakable will and a willingness to die for the cause. U.S. forces may also find that large segments of the population around them are sympathetic to the same cause as the enemy force. The needs of the local population can create heavy demands on U.S. military units, particularly their supply and medical systems. Refugees and internally displaced persons may increase the complexity of the environment. The enemy may use civilians as shields or obstacles or as cover for hostile intelligence services.

Information

Media and other information means can make combat operations transparent to the world, visible to all who have access to data. Various actors seek to use perception management to control and manipulate how the public sees things. They will exploit U.S. mistakes and failures and use propaganda to sway the local population to support their cause. Media coverage can impact on U.S. political decision making, international opinion, or the sensitivities of coalition members.

Even without sophisticated sensors and information systems, actors native to the area or region often have greater situational awareness than U.S. forces. Various actors are able to access commercial systems (such as satellite communications and imagery) for the larger picture. For a more detailed view, they can use human networks operating over normal telephone lines or with cellular telephones.

Physical Environment

The main elements in the physical environment are terrain and weather. Potential enemies clearly understand that less complex and open environments favor a U.S. force with its long-range,

precision-guided weapons and sophisticated reconnaissance capability. So they will try to avoid the types of operations and environments for which such U.S. forces are optimized. They will try to operate in urban areas and other complex terrain and in weather conditions that may adversely affect U.S. military operations and mitigate technological advantages[1].

Technology

The technology that nations or non-state actors can bring to the OE includes what they can develop and produce, as well as what they could import. Access to technological advances available on the global market is slowly eating away at the technological advantage the United States has enjoyed in the past.

It is likely that some high-end forces in a particular region of the world could field a few systems that are more advanced than those of the U.S. force deployed there. Easy access to new technology allows potential adversaries to achieve equality or even overmatch U.S. systems in selected niche areas. Many countries are trying to acquire relatively low-cost, high-payoff, new technologies. In addition, upgrades and hybridization allow older systems to compete with more modern capabilities, thus neutralizing the technical advantage of many modern forces. In urban areas or other complex terrain, less advanced systems may still find effective uses. Various actors may find adaptive and innovative ways of using systems for other than their originally intended applications.

External Organizations

When the U.S. Army goes into a failed state or into areas torn by conflict, it is likely to find international humanitarian relief organizations at workÂ there. These external organizations continue to grow in influence and power, as well as in willingness to become involved in crisis situations that were previously purely military operations. These external organizations can have both stated and hidden interests and objectives that can either assist or hinder U.S. mission accomplishment. The presence of transnational corporations operating in a country or region can also place added pressure on U.S. forces to avoid collateral damage to civilian life and property. U.S. forces may have to divert troops and resources from their assigned missions to conduct rescues or provide security for various external organizations.

Prior to the outbreak of hostilities in a given region (or at least prior to U.S. military intervention there), during such hostilities, or after the conclusion of hostilities in a particular area, members of external organizations and other civilian noncombatants from outside the region may be endangered. Diplomatic personnel, other government employees, or private citizens from the United States or other countries might be present in one or more countries within the region. The private citizens might be associated with an external organization (media, humanitarian relief organization, or transnational corporation) or might be there on private business or as tourists. If their lives are endangered by war, civil unrest, or natural disaster, such U.S. citizens and their dependents, as well as selected host-nation citizens and third-country nationals, could be eligible for evacuation in noncombatant evacuation operations conducted by U.S. forces.

National Will

The variable of national will reflects how much each countryâ s people and government are behind what the military or paramilitary forces are doing. This can influence the objectives of a conflict, its duration, and the conditions for ending it.

A country will try to attack its opponentâ s national will and still preserve its own. Clearly, most foreign countries view U.S. national will as a point of vulnerability. Thus, a potential adversary may perceive the collective will of his people as a comparative advantage against the United States.

History has proven that battlefield victory does not always go to the best-trained, best-equipped, and most technologically advanced force. Victory often goes to the side that most wants to win, needs to win, and is willing to sacrifice to do so.

Time

In most cases, potential opponents of the United States view time as being in their advantage. When U.S. forces have to deploy into the area over long time and distance, the opponent can use this time to adjust the nature of the conflict to something for which the U.S. forces are not prepared.

First, the opponent will try to control the entry of U.S. forces into the area. If access control fails, the enemy still has the opportunity to oppose lightly equipped U.S. early-entry units and try to prevent full deployment of the rest of the force. The opponent will try to speed up the tempo, to rapidly defeat its local or regional enemy or to defeat U.S. early-entry forces before the United States can deploy overwhelming military power. If that fails, the opponent will try to prolong the conflict and to outlast the U.S. will to continue.

Military Capabilities

Military capabilities of a nation-state or non-state actor are measured in relative terms, in comparison to the capabilities of other actors against which they might be applied. Most of the military forces in the world continue to operate in conventional ways, which remain sufficient against other local and regional actors.

However, once the United States becomes involved, these same military forces may have to use adaptive or asymmetric approaches. Various nations and other foreign entities around the world study the United States and its military forces. They generally view the United States as a major powerâ the worldâ s only superpowerâ with an overall advantage in technology and warfighting capability. Despite these strengths, other actors see some weaknesses that they may be able to exploit. They can use these perceptions as a guide to optimizing the effectiveness of their own forces and to find ways to negate current U.S. advantages.

Military capabilities may be the most critical and the most complex variable that affects military operations. However, the military variable does not exist in isolation from the other variables that help determine the overall OE. It interacts with the other variables, and all the other variables can affect military capabilities. Potential enemies can use any or all of these factors against the Army as it tries to accomplish its missions in various parts of the world or in various training environments.

Real World

In the real world, the COE is the entire set of conditions, circumstances, and influences that U.S. Armed Forces can expect to face when conducting military operations to further the national interests of the United States, its friends, and allies. The COE is â contemporaryâ in the sense that it does not represent conditions that existed only in the past or that might exist only in the remote future, but rather those conditions that exist today and in the clearly foreseeable, near future. This COE consists not only of the military and/or paramilitary capabilities of potential real-world adversaries, but also of the manifestations of the ten other variables that help define any OE.

Training

In training environments, the COE is the OE created to approximate the demands of the real-world COE and to set the conditions for desired training outcomes. This involves the appropriate combination of an OPFOR (with military and/or paramilitary capabilities representing a

composite of a number of potential adversaries) and other OE variables in a realistic, feasible, and plausible manner. The purpose of the COE in training simulations is to produce the necessary training outcomes[2].

Even in the COE for training, it is possible to speak of an overall COE that addresses the qualities of virtually any OE in which the units or individuals being trained might be called upon to operate. In this sense, there are the same â constantsâ as in the real-world COE.

Interaction and Linkage of Variables

The variables of the COE do not exist in isolation from one another. The linkages of the variables cause the complex and often simultaneous dilemmas that a military force might face. In order to provide realistic training, training scenarios must try to simulate this synergistic effect to the maximum degree that is feasible.

The COE is not just about the OPFOR. The COE variables and their interaction provide the robust environment and context for OPFOR operations. The complexity of the specific OE in training can be adjusted to keep it appropriate for the required training objectives and the training state of various U.S. Army units.

Adaptive and Changing

The nature of the COE is adaptive and constantly changing. As the United States and its military forces interact with the COE in a real-world sense, the OE changes. As the Army applies the lessons learned from training in a COE setting, the OPFOR and potential real-world adversaries will also learn and adapt.

The development of the COE for training started with research to develop an understanding of the real-world COE and trends that affect military operations. Then, taking into consideration the desired training outcomes and leader development goals, the authors of the FM 7-100 series proceeded to document an OPFOR doctrine and structure that reflect the real-world COE, and the Army began integrating this OPFOR and other COE variables into training scenarios. Meanwhile, the authors of the FM 7-100 series are continuing to research the real-world COE and to mature the OPFOR and the COE in training in order to provide a richer, appropriately challenging training environment and keep the OPFOR and the COE truly â contemporary.â

Enemy, Threat, and OPFOR

Before going further into the COE, the contemporary OPFOR, and the intended uses of this manual, it may be useful to define some key terms and the distinctions among them. It is important to distinguish among the terms enemy, threat, and OPFOR and to use them correctly.

Enemy

From the U.S. perspective, an enemy is an individual, group of individuals (organized or not organized), paramilitary or military force, national entity, or national alliance that is in opposition to the United States, its allies, or multinational partners. In other words, the enemy is whoever is actually opposing the United States in a particular conflict[3].Â Thus, this term is synonymous with adversary or opponent.

Threat

A potential adversary is sometimes designated as a threat. In this sense, the Army defines threat as â any specific foreign nation or organization with intentions and military capabilities that suggest it could become an adversary or challenge the national security interests of the United States or its allies.â Once hostilities actually begin, the threat becomes the enemy.

Opposing Force

An Opposing Force (OPFOR) is a training tool that should allow the U.S. Army to train against a challenging and plausible sparring partner that represents the wide range of possible opponents the Army could face in actual conflict. It enables training of all arms of the Army and prepares the Army for potential combat operations[4].

During the road to war leading up to events in a training scenario, the OPFOR may play the role of a â threatâ (potential enemy) that is on the verge of becoming an enemy. However, the actual training event usually deals with a state of hostilities. Thus, once hostilities begin in the training event, the OPFOR acts as the â enemyâ of the U.S. force in the training environment[5].

During the Cold War period, the Army employed OPFORs based on specific real-world threats. However, the Army needs a different type of OPFOR to meet its training requirements for the COE.

Cold War OPFOR

When the Army established its OPFOR program in 1976 with Army Regulation 350-2, it could hardly have envisioned todayâ s computerized constructive and virtual simulations, or even the evolving requirements of live simulations. It defined an OPFOR simply as â an organized force created by and from U.S. Army units to portray a unit of a potential adversary armed force.â Thus, all OPFORs were originally threat-based, in the sense that they replicated the forces, capabilities, and doctrine of a particular country officially recognized as a threat or potential adversary. In the midst of the Cold War, the 1976 regulation identified only one potential adversary against which to train: the Soviet Union; by 1978, a revision of the regulation added North Korea as a second threat for replication by an OPFOR. Over time, the Army developed other OPFORs to replicate other threats emerging in places ranging from Latin America and Southwest Asia.

In its time, the threat-based OPFOR served the Army very well, particularly for units targeted against specific threats. The benefits of this training were borne out, for example, in Operation Desert Storm. Techniques and doctrine, including deep attack and the intelligence preparation of the battlefield, developed to cope with specific threats and honed against the OPFOR, enabled the Army to achieve decisive results on the battlefield. However, the OE is dynamic, and the pace of that dynamism has increased with the end of the Cold War and the rapid advancement of information technology.

Contemporary OPFOR

Training U.S. forces for the COE requires a different kind of OPFOR from that of the past. The contemporary OPFOR must be less predictable and not based on the armed forces of a particular country. In todayâ s world, the U.S. Army must be prepared to go into any OE and perform its full range of missions. It must be ready to do so in the face of a wide variety of possible threats and at the same time be prepared to deal with third-party actors that may have other interests. Not all threats are purely military in nature. Therefore, the U.S. Army now defines an OPFOR as â a plausible, flexible military and/or paramilitary force representing a composite of varying capabilities of actual worldwide forces, used in lieu of a specific threat force, for training and developing U.S. forces.â

Thus, in some training environments, a military force alone may be the OPFOR. In other cases, military forces may have paramilitary forces acting in loose affiliation with them, or acting separately from them within the same training environment. These relationships depend on the scenario, which is driven by training requirements.

Various agencies and experts have different lists of real-world threats the United States might

have to face. If the U.S. Army were to pick any one of these threats as the threat against which to train, that threat would almost certainly not be the one it would actually fight. What is needed is a composite that is representative of the full range and variety of possible threats and OEs. It must have a bit of everything—it could be virtually anybody, anywhere. Therefore, this manual defines this representative composite in a way that is flexible enough to fit the most demanding U.S. Army training requirements and provides a framework for training that creates the leaders, soldiers, and unit skills necessary for success on the next battlefield.

Contemporary Threats and Other Actors

There are many types of actors or participants in today's complex world environment. Some of the actors are countries (also called nation-states) and some are not. Nation-states are still dominant actors. However, some power is shifting to nontraditional actors and transnational concerns. There are many potential challenges to traditional concepts like balance of power, sovereignty, national interest, and roles of nation-state and non-state actors.

Of course, not all actors are threats. To be a threat, a nation or organization must have both the capabilities and the intention to challenge the United States. The capabilities in question are not necessarily purely military, but encompass all the elements of power available to the nation or organization.

Nation-State Actors

Nation-states fall into four basic categories according to their roles in the international community. The categories are core states, transition states, rogue states, and failed or failing states.

The category of core states includes more than half of the nearly 200 countries in the world today. These are basically democratic (although to varying degrees) and share common values and interests. Within this larger group, there is an "inner core" of major powers. These are the advanced countries, including the United States, that generally dominate world politics. Most conflict with global consequences will involve the core states in some fashion or another.

Transition states are other larger, industrial-based countries—mostly emerging regional powers—that are striving to become major powers. High-end transition states are moving from an industrial-based society to an information-based society. Low-end transition states are seeking to move from an agricultural-based society to an industrial base. As states try to make this transition, there are cycles of political stability and instability, and the outcome of the transition is uncertain. Some transition states may successfully join the ranks of core states and even become major powers within that context; others may become competitors.

Rogue states are those that are hostile to their neighbors or to core states' interests. These countries can sponsor international terrorism or even confront U.S. military forces operating in the region. Failed or failing states are fragmented in such a way that a rule of law is absent; their instability is a threat to their neighbors and the core states.

Countries can move from one category to another, as conditions change. Sometimes countries join together in multinational alliances and coalitions. Together, they have more strength and can become a power to be reckoned with.

Non-State Actors

Non-state actors are those that do not represent the forces of a particular nation-state. Such non-state elements include rogue actors as well as third party actors.

Like rogue states, rogue actors are hostile to other actors; however, they may be present in one country or extend across several countries. Examples include insurgents, guerrillas, mercenaries,

and transnational or subnational political movements. Particular sources of danger are terrorists and drug-trafficking or criminal organizations, since they may have the best technology, equipment, and weapons available, simply because they have the money to buy them. These non-state rogue actors may use terror tactics and militarily unconventional methods to achieve their goals.

Third party actors may not be hostile to other actors. However, their presence, activities, and interests can affect the ability of military forces to accomplish their mission when operating in a foreign country. These third party actors can be refugees, internally displaced persons, and other civilians on the battlefield, including international humanitarian relief agencies, transnational corporations, and the news media. These individuals and groups bring multiple sources of motivation, ideology, interests, beliefs, or political affiliations into consideration. They may be sources of civil unrest. Their presence may require military forces to consider the potential impacts of traffic congestion, demonstrations, sabotage, and information manipulation.

Real-World and Training Considerations

When U.S. forces become involved in a particular country or region, they must take into account the presence and influence of these various types of threats and other actors. In a training environment, an OPFOR can represent a composite of those nation-state or non-state actors that constitute military and/or paramilitary forces that could present a threat to the United States, its friends, or its allies. Other, non-state actors that fall in the category of nonmilitary forces or elements are not part of the OPFOR, but could be part of the COE used in the training environment.

Contemporary OPFOR

This manual introduces the baseline operational doctrine of a flexible, thinking, adaptive, contemporary OPFOR that applies its doctrine with considerable initiative. (See the definition of contemporary OPFOR above.) It is applicable to the entire training community, including the OPFORs at all of the combat training centers (CTCs), the TRADOC schools, and units in the field. It providesÂ an OPFOR that believes that, through adaptive use of all available forces and capabilities, it can create opportunities that, properly leveraged, can allow it to fight and win, even against a technologically superior opponent such as the United States.

Baseline

As a baseline for developing specific OPFORs for specific training environments, this manual describes an OPFOR that is representative of the forces of contemporary nation-states. This composite of the characteristics of real-world military and paramilitary forces provides a framework for the realistic and relevant portrayal of capabilities and actions that U.S. armed forces might face in the COE.

The State

For this composite of real-world threats, the manual refers to the country in question as â the State.â [6]Â It describes this artificial country in terms of the eleven critical variables of the COE. As the baseline for the contemporary OPFOR that is representative of real-world forces, the State is not a peer competitor of the United States. However, it is a dominant power in its region of the world and is capable of challenging U.S. interests there. The general characteristics of the State could fit a number of different types of potential adversaries in a number of different scenarios.

Like most countries in the world, the State does not design its forces just to fight the United States or its allies. It designs them principally to deal with regional threats and to take advantage of regional opportunities. Therefore, the Stateâ s national security strategy (including its

doctrine, force design, and investment strategy) focuses primarily on maintaining and expanding its position as a regional power. It develops its military forces in a way that ensures conventional power superiority over any of its regional neighbors. These forces, together with the Stateâ s other instruments of power, make it a dominant force in its region.

At the same time, the State is aware that aggressive pursuit of its regional goals might lead to intervention by a major power, such as the United States, from outside the region. To the extent possible, therefore, it invests in technologies and capabilities that have utility against both regional and extraregional opponents. The basic force structure of the OPFOR is the same for either type of threat. The State must go to warÂ¾or continue the war after extraregional interventionâ with whatever it had going into the war.

When an extraregional power intervenes with sufficient force to overmatch the Stateâ s, the State has to adapt its patterns of operation. It realizes that the forces and technology that allow it to dominate its neighbors may not be a match for the modern, high-technology forces of a wealthy extraregional power like the United Statesâ at least not in a head-to-head conventional confrontation. However, it can use those means in creative and adaptive ways. To the maximum extent possible, the State plans and trains for adaptive operations and how it will make the transition to them. It is the combination of the Stateâ s capabilities and its adaptive strategy, operations, and tactics that make it believe it can take on such an extraregional force and win.

Broadened Context

At the strategic level, the Stateâ s ability to challenge U.S. interests includes not only the military and paramilitary forces of the State, but also the Stateâ s diplomatic-political, informational, and economic instruments of power. Rarely would any country engage the United States or a U.S.-led coalition with purely military means. It is also possible that the State could be part of an alliance or coalition, in which case the OPFOR could include allied forces. These nation-state forces may also operate in conjunction with non-state actors such as insurgents, terrorists, and drug or criminal organizations.

The FM 7-100 series, as a whole, covers not only the military and paramilitary forces of the State, but also other, non-state paramilitary and nonmilitary organizations present in the Stateâ s region of the world. An extraregional power becoming involved in that region may have to deal with any or all of these types of military, paramilitary, and nonmilitary elements. It might encounter these elements individually or, more likely, in combination with other such elements. Whether these elements operate in concert or independently, they are an important part of the COE.

Trainers need to consider the total OE and all instruments of power at the disposal of the State and the OPFORâ not just the military element, but also diplomatic-political, informational, and economic means. For a nation-state, these are instruments of national power. For non-state actors whose forces are paramilitary in nature, the other three instruments of power are generally present to one degree or another. Together, these instruments represent the power that actors can bring to bear against the United States.

Terminology

Since OPFOR baseline doctrine is a composite of how various forces worldwide might operate, it uses some terminology that is in common with that of other countries, including the United States. Whenever possible, OPFOR doctrine uses established U.S. military termsâ with the same meaning as defined in FM 1-02 (formerly FM 101-5-1) and/or JP 1-02. However, the FM 7-100 series also includes some concepts for things the OPFOR does differently from how the U.S. military does them. Even if various real-world foreign countries might use the same concept, or something very close to it, different countries might give it different names. In those cases, the OPFOR manuals either use a term commonly accepted by one or more other countries or create

a new, â compositeâ term that makes sense and is clearly understandable. In any case where an operational or tactical term is not further specifically defined in the FM 7-100 series, it is used in the same sense as in the U.S. definition.

Flexibility

As a training tool, the OPFOR must be a challenging, uncooperative sparring partner, capable of stressing any or all battlefield operating systems of the U.S. force. However, it also must be tailored to meet training requirements.

In the OPFOR baseline presented in this manual, the FM authors often say that the State or the OPFOR â mayâ be able to do something or â mightâ orâ couldâ do something. They often use the progressive forms of verbs to say that the State has a â growingâ economy or â developingâ a capability or â is continually modernizing.â

The State participates in the global market, which can allow it to acquire things it cannot produce domestically. Such descriptions give scenario writers considerable flexibility in determining what the State or the OPFOR actually has at a given point in time or a given place on the battlefieldâ in a particular scenario.

The composite example of this baseline may meet the OPFOR requirements for many U.S. Army training environments. For cases that require an OPFOR based on a type of nation-state with characteristics different from those of the State described in this manual, this baseline provides a framework from which trainers can develop an OPFOR appropriate for their particular training requirements.

The OPFOR must be flexible enough to fit various training requirements. It must be scalable and tunable. Depending on the training requirement, the OPFOR may be a large, medium, or small force. Its technology may be state-of-the-art, relatively modern, obsolescent, obsolete, or an uneven combination of those categories. Its ability to sustain operations may be limited or robust.

Thinking

This manual describes how the OPFOR thinks, especially how it thinks about fighting its regional neighbors and/or the United States. This thinking determines basic OPFOR operationsâ as well as strategy and tactics, which are the subjects of other manuals in this series. It drives OPFOR organizational structures and equipment acquisition or adaptation. It also determines how the nation-state OPFOR that represents the armed forces of the State would interact with other, non-state actors that may be present in the COE.

Just because the U.S. force knows something about how the OPFOR has fought in the past does not mean that the OPFOR will always continue to fight that way. A thinking OPFOR will learn from its own successes and failures, as well as those of its potential enemies. It will adapt its thinking, its makeup, and its way of fighting to accommodate these lessons learned. It will continuously look for innovative ways to deal with the United States and its armed forces.

Adaptability

Like all military forces, the OPFOR has a basic, conventional design for dealing with forces with capabilities equal to or inferior to its own. Prior to a U.S. force becoming involved, therefore, the OPFOR can use the application or threat of application of that conventional design to dominate or influence its regional neighbors. The OPFOR plans these operations well in advance and tries to execute them as rapidly as possible, in order to preclude regional alliances or outside intervention.

The OPFOR has developed its doctrine, force structure, and capabilities with an eye toward

employing them against both regional and extraregional opponents, if necessary. It has thought about and trained for how to adapt once an extraregional force becomes engaged. It has included this adaptability in its doctrine in the form of general principles, based on its perceptions of the United States and other threats to its goals and aspirations. It will seek to avoid types of operations and environments for which U.S. forces are optimized. During the course of conflict, it will make further adaptations, based on experience and opportunity.

When a U.S. force or a U.S.-led coalition first begins to deploy into theater, the OPFOR will seek to disrupt the deployment and thus create opportunity. In such cases, the conventional design the OPFOR used in regionally-focused operations may still provide the framework for military operations against an advanced extraregional force. The OPFOR will not shy away from the use of military means against such an opponent, so long as the risk is commensurate with potential gains. As a U.S. or coalition force builds up power in the region, the OPFOR must rely on adaptive applications of its basic design in order to mitigate its disadvantages and exploit its advantages compared to this new opponent.

In general, the contemporary OPFOR will be less predictable than OPFORs in the past. It will be difficult to template as it adapts and attempts to create opportunity. Its patterns of operation will change as it achieves success or experiences failure. OPFOR doctrine might not change, but its way of operating will.

Initiative

Like U.S. Army doctrine, OPFOR doctrine must allow sufficient freedom for bold, creative initiative in any situation. OPFOR doctrine is descriptive, but not prescriptive; authoritative, but not authoritarian; definitive, but not dogmatic. The OPFOR that U.S. units encounter in various training venues will not apply this doctrine blindly or unthinkingly, but will use its experience and assessments to interpolate from this baseline in light of specific situations. Thus, U.S. units can no longer say that the OPFOR has to do certain things and cannot do anything that is not expressly prescribed in established OPFOR doctrine. Doctrine guides OPFOR actions in support of the Stateâ s objectives; OPFOR leaders apply it with judgment and initiative.

Keeping the COE and the OPFOR Contemporary

The COE is extremely fluid, with rapidly changing regional and global relationships. New actorsâ both nations and non-state actorsâ are constantly appearing and disappearing from the scene. The OPFOR operational doctrine provided in this manual should meet most of the U.S. Armyâ s training needs for the foreseeable future. During the period covered by the COE, almost anyone who fights the United States would probably have to use the same kinds of adaptive action as outlined in this doctrine. As the geopolitical situation, forces, or capabilities change over time, OPFOR doctrine and its applications will evolve along with them, to continue to provide the Army a â contemporaryâ OPFOR. Thus, the OPFOR will remain capable of presenting a challenge that is appropriate to meet evolving training requirements at any given point in time.

Chapter 1: Strategic Framework

Main article: Chapter 1: Strategic Framework

This chapter describes the Stateâ s national security strategy and how the State designs campaigns and operations to achieve strategic goals outlined in that strategy. This provides the general framework within which the OPFOR plans and executes military actions at the operational level, which are the focus of the remainder of this manual. The nature of the State and its national security strategy are explained in greater detail in FM 7-100.

Chapter 2: Command and Control

Main article: Chapter 2: Command and Control (FM 7-100.1)

This chapter examines the OPFOR system and process of command and control (C2). It explains how the OPFOR expects to direct the forces and actions described in other chapters of this manual. It provides insights into the OPFOR theory and practice of controlling combined arms, joint, interagency, and multinational forces in war. Most important, it shows how OPFOR commanders and staffs think and work.

In modern war, victory is likely to go to the side that acts most quickly. The overriding need for speedy decisions to seize fleeting opportunities drastically reduces the time available for decision making and for issuing and implementing orders. The need to seize opportunities on the battlefield, coupled with dispersion to avoid the threat of precision weapons, dictates the replacement of concentration in terms of space by concentration in terms of time and effects. Moreover, the operational and tactical situation is subject to sudden and radical changes, and the results of combat are more likely to be decisive than in the past. OPFOR C2 participants, processes, and systems are designed to operate effectively and efficiently in this new environment. The successful execution of an information warfare (IW) plan is critical to victory.

Although dealing briefly with strategic control of forces, this chapter focuses on operational command and control. All OPFOR levels of command share a common decision-making and planning process. They also share a parallel staff organization and command post (CP) structure, tailored to match the differences in scope and span of control.

Chapter 3: Offensive Operations

Main article: Chapter 3: Offensive Operations

The OPFOR sees the offensive as the decisive form of operations and the ultimate means of imposing its will on the enemy. While conditions at a particular time or place may require the OPFOR to defend, defeating an enemy force ultimately requires shifting to offensive operations. Even within the context of defense, victory normally requires some sort of offensive action. Therefore, OPFOR commanders at all levels seek to create and exploit opportunities to take offensive action, whenever possible.

In the context of the theater strategic or operational level of war, offensive operations are often â conventionalâ in nature. Conventional operations are not, however, the only form of offensive operations. Accordingly, this chapter includes discussions of operational-level offensive actions that do not rely only on large formations of mechanized or motorized units. Offensive operations may include operations done by paramilitary or irregular forces. The OPFOR recognizes the traditional forms of maneuver: envelopment, turning movement, infiltration, penetration, and frontal attack.

Chapter 4: Defensive Operations

Main article: Chapter 4: Defensive Operations

While the OPFOR sees the offense as the decisive form of military action, it recognizes defense as the stronger form of military action, particularly when faced with a superior, extraregional foe. Defensive operations can lead to strategic victory if the extraregional enemy abandons his mission. It may be sufficient for the OPFOR simply not to lose. Even when an operational-level commandâ such as a field group (FG) or operational-strategic command (OSC)â as a whole is conducting an offensive operation, it is likely that one or more subordinate units may be executing defensive missions to preserve offensive combat power in other areas, to protect an important formation or resource, or to deny access to key facilities or geographic areas.

OPFOR defenses can be characterized as a â shield of blows.â Each force and zone of the defense plays an important role in the attack of the enemyâ s combat system. An operational-

level defense is structured around the concept that destroying the synergy of the enemyâ s combat system will make enemy forces vulnerable to attack and destruction.

Commanders and staffs do not approach the defense with preconceived templates. The operational situation may cause the commander to vary his defensive methods and techniques. Nevertheless, there are basic characteristics of defensive operations (purposes and types of action) that have applications in all situations.

Chapter 5: Information Warfare

Main article: Chapter 5: Information Warfare

Modern information technologies (ITs) have created conditions for the confrontation of states, combatants, and non-state actors in a fundamentally new arenaâ the information sphere. Information, information processing, and communications networks are at the core of every military activity. The concepts of time, space, force, navigation, speed, precision, and lethality have changed because of the capabilities of information-age technology and the availability of information. These changes have a tremendous effect on how military forces conduct activities. The OPFOR addresses this issue through continued refinement of its information warfare (IW) doctrine.

The OPFOR defines information warfare as the specifically planned and integrated actions taken to achieve an information advantage at critical points and times. The ultimate goal of IW is to influence decision makers. The OPFOR conducts IW at all levels of warfareâ strategic, operational, and tacticalâ but without regard to strict definitional boundaries among these levels. Opponents of the State are subject to IW regardless of the level and degree of engagement in other types of operations. The Stateâ leadership integratesÂ allÂ instrumentsÂ of powerâ diplomatic, political, economic, military, informationalâ to implement an information strategy. One element of power may have primacy over the others at a given time, but all work together.

In the OPFORâ s view, skillful application of IW can facilitate the defeat of a technologically superior enemy. It can challenge or counter an enemyâ s goal of information dominance. The OPFOR can target key components (such as technology providing situational awareness, and advanced computing and communications technologies) that provide such dominance, thus shaking the opponentâ s confidence.

Chapter 6: Reconnaissance

Main article: Chapter 6: Reconnaissance

The OPFORÂ considers reconnaissanceÂ the mostÂ important elementÂ of combat support. All commanders and staffs organize reconnaissance to acquire information about the enemyâ s reconnaissance, intelligence, surveillance, and target acquisition (RISTA) assets, precision weapons, force disposition, intentions, and terrain and weather in the area of responsibility (AOR). This information is crucial to the planning process in OPFOR command and control (C2). Reconnaissance can decisively influence the outcome of an operation or even the strategic campaign.

Chapter 7: Fire Support

Main article: Chapter 7: Fire Support

The integration of air, artillery, and missile assets into a unified fire support plan is a major task for the combined arms commander. Integration is a decisive element, fundamental to the success of any operation on the modern battlefield. The OPFOR does not consider itself to be an â artillery-centricâ army. Rather, it views itself as using various forms of fire support to

achieve success during offensive and defensive operations. In the offense, fire support is important to the success of any attack. It can destroy key systems; disrupt, immobilize, or destroy enemy groupings; and repel counterattacks. Fire support is also the cornerstone of any defense, blunting attacks at the crucial point in the battle. It disrupts enemy preparations for the attack, causes attrition as he approaches, and repels forces.

Chapter 8: Aviation

Main article: Chapter 8: Aviation

Aviation operations are an integral part of all OPFOR operations. Most fixed-wing assets belong to the Air Force, while most of the rotary-wing aircraft belong to the Army. The Air Force is the largest, best equipped, and best trained in the geographic region. The capabilities of the OPFORâ fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft far exceed those of its neighbors, allowing for regional air superiority. However, the Air Force is not strong enough to defeat the air force of a modern power from outside this region. Realizing this limitation, the OPFOR will modify its use of aviation assets to ensure effective use against high-payoff targets. The air doctrine of the OPFOR represents a blend of principles growing out of past experience and doctrine adapted from foreign advisors.

Chapter 9: Air Defense Support

Main article: Chapter 9: Air Defense Support

The OPFOR system of air defense includes assets and actions at the strategic (national), operational, and tactical levels. The focus in this chapter is on air defense of maneuver forces at the operational level. However, operational-level air defense does not exist in isolation from the overall system of OPFOR air defense. For more information on tactical-level air defense, see FM 7-100.2.

Chapter 10: Engineer Support

Main article: Chapter 10: Engineer Support

The OPFOR believes success in battle requires extensive engineer support at every level. Engineer plans at the operational level support the various strategic-level courses of action involved in the Stateâ strategic campaign. Engineers facilitate the mobility and high rate of movement of combined arms forces while enhancing the survivability of forces. Although the OPFOR generally conducts engineer countermobility activities at the tactical level, it also maximizes activities conducted at the operational level to disaggregate, disrupt, delay, block, or canalize enemy forces. See FM 7-100.2 for more information on tactical-level engineer actions.

Chapter 11: NBC and Smoke Operations

Main article: Chapter 11: NBC and Smoke Operations

The use of nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) weapons can have an enormous impact on all battlefield operations. Not only does the sheer killing and destructive power of these weapons affect the battlefield, but the strategic, operational, psychological, environmental, economic, and political consequences of their use affect strategic campaign plans and operational design.

In response to foreign developments, the OPFOR maintains a capability to conduct chemical, nuclear, and possibly biological warfare. However, it would prefer to avoid the use of NBC weapons by either sideâ especially nuclear and biological weapons. Both nuclear and biological weapons characteristically have lethal effects over much larger areas than do chemical weapons. The effects of biological weapons can be difficult to localize and to employ in operations without affecting friendly forces; their effects on the enemy can be difficult to predict.

Unlike nuclear or biological weapons, chemical agents can be used to affect limited areas of the battlefield. The consequences of chemical weapons use are more predictable and thus more readily integrated into operation plans.

Because chemical employment is more likely than nuclear or biological, this chapter begins by focusing on OPFOR chemical capabilities. Because the OPFOR may also have some nuclear and biological capabilities, these also deserve discussion, despite of the lower probability of their employment. The chapter concludes with discussions of NBC protection and employment of smoke.

Chapter 12: Logistics

Main article: Chapter 12: Logistics

Operational logistics links strategic-level logistics resources with the tactical level of logistics, thus creating the conditions for effective sustainment of a combat force. It covers the support activities required to sustain campaigns and major operations. A dependable logistics system helps commanders seize and maintain the initiative. Operational maneuver and the exploitation of operational or tactical success often hinge on the adequacy of logistics and the ability of the force to safeguard its critical lines of communication (LOCs), materiel, and infrastructure.

Operational logistics normally supports campaigns and provides theater-wide logistics support, generally over a period of months. Operational logisticians coordinate the allocation and distribution of resources within the area of responsibility (AOR). They interface with tactical-level logisticians in order to determine shortfalls and communicate these shortfalls back to the strategic logistics complex to support operational priorities. Operational logisticians coordinate the flow of strategic capabilities within the theater based on the commanderâ priorities.

Chapter 13: Airborne, Special-Purpose Forces, and Amphibious Operations

Main article: Chapter 13: Airborne, Special-Purpose Forces, and Amphibious Operations

The OPFOR views airborne and special-purpose forces (SPF) as means to carry the battle into the enemyâ depth. The General Staff uses these highly mobile forces against strategic objectives or for regional power projection. It may also allocate such forces down to the operational and tactical levels. It has the capability to conduct amphibious operations, which sometimes occur in conjunction with airborne or SPF operations in a coastal area. Insertion of any or all these forces into enemy rear areas can disrupt the stability and cohesion of his defense.

Glossary

Main article: Glossary: FM 7-100.1 Opposing Force OperationsThe glossary lists acronyms and terms with joint definitions, and other selected terms. Terms with specific OPFOR-related definitions for which FM 7-100.1 is the proponent manual (the authority) are marked with an asterisk (*) and followed by the number of the paragraph or page where they are defined. For other terms, refer to the document listed.

References

1. Complexterrain is a topographical area consisting of an urban center larger than a village and/or of two or more types of restrictive terrain or environmental conditions occupying the same space. (Restrictive terrain or environmental conditions include but are not limited to slope, high altitude, forestation, severe weather, and urbanization.) Complex terrain, due to its unique combination of restrictive terrain and environmental conditions, imposes significant limitations on observation, maneuver, fires, and intelligence collection
2. Thesame type of COE conditions can be created to support some combat development

activities that do not require simulation of a specific real-world potential adversary. However, some combat development activities may require portrayal of an OE that extends further into the future than is typical for the COE.

3. This definition of enemy is from the U.S. point of view. After this Introduction, the chapters of this manual address their topics from the OPFOR point of view. So, friendly refers to the OPFOR and its allies, and enemy refers to the enemy of the OPFOR, which may be an opponent within its own country or region or an extraregional opponent (normally the United States or a U.S.-led coalition).
4. Although the OPFOR is primarily a training tool, it may be used for other purposes. For example, some combat development activities that do not require simulation of a specific real-world potential adversary may use an OPFOR to portray the â threatâ orâ enemy.â
5. 5 From the OPFOR point of view, its leadership plans and develops forces and methods to deal with one or more threats to its own interests, goals, or survival.
6. In specific U.S. Army training environments, the generic name of the State may give way to other (fictitious) country names such as Atlantis, Upper Flambokia, or Westland.

Bibliography

The bibliography lists field manuals by new number followed by old number.

Documents Needed

These documents must be available to the intended users of this publication.

JP 1-02 Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms. Available online: http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/doddict/

FM 1-02 (101-5-1). Operational Terms and Graphics. 30 September 1997.

Readings Recommended

These sources contain relevant supplemental information.

Army Publications

Most Army doctrinal publications are available online: http://www.us.army.mil and http://www.adtdl.army.mil

FM 7-100. Opposing Force Doctrinal Framework and Strategy. 1 May 2003.

FM 7-100.2. Opposing Force Tactics. TBP.

FM 7-100.3. Opposing Force: Paramilitary and Nonmilitary Organizations and Tactics. TPB.

FM 7-100.4. Opposing Force Organization Guide. TBP.

FM 7-100.5. Opposing Force: Worldwide Equipment Guide. TBP.