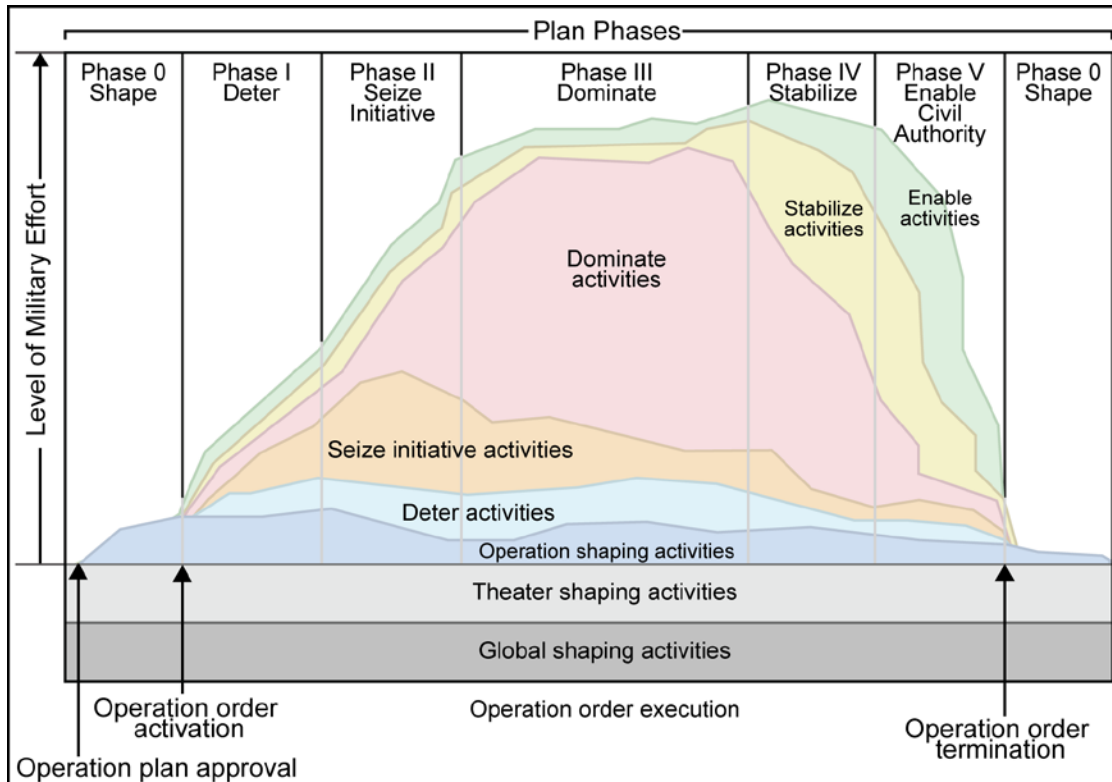


## Chapter 7

# Information Operations Across Strategic Roles

### ARMY STRATEGIC ROLES

7-1. Army IO supports joint IO across the range of military operations and across all operational phases. In planning, a *phase* is a definitive stage of a campaign or operation during which a large portion of the forces and capabilities are involved in similar or mutually supporting activities for a common purpose (JP 5-0). Phasing integrates and synchronizes related activities, thereby enhancing flexibility and unity of effort during execution. Figure 7-1 graphically depicts six phases (0 through 5) in relation to the level of military effort involved (JP 5-0 no longer assigns pre-determined names to each phase) (see FM 3-13 for an overview of IO across the range of military operations).



**Figure 7-1. Sample phasing model**

7-2. The Army recognizes that today's operational environment encompasses the physical areas of the air, land, maritime, space, and cyberspace domains, as well as the information environment (which includes cyberspace) and the electromagnetic spectrum. Thus, the Army now uses a multi-domain approach to operations, integrating joint and Army capabilities and synchronizing actions across all domains to fulfill its strategic roles of shape, prevent, win, and consolidate gains. Figure 7-2 on page 7-2 shows the strategic roles.

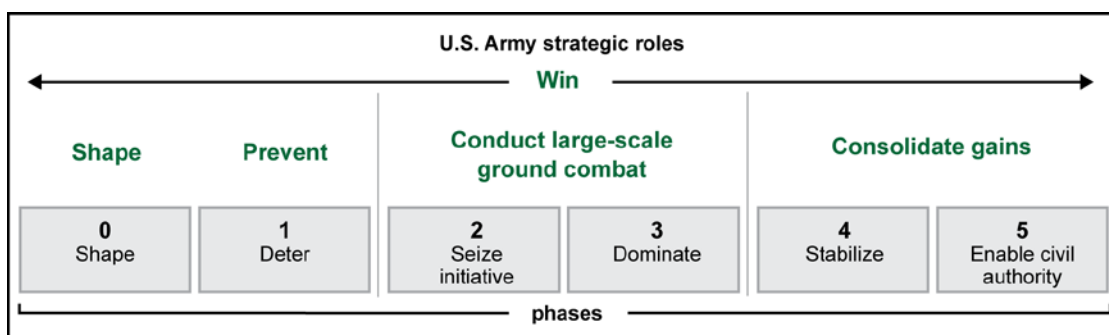


Figure 7-2. Army strategic roles and phases

7-3. IO has three weighted efforts that align with the tasks of decisive action: offense, defense, and stability. The corresponding IO weighted effort for each is attack, defend, and stabilize. IO employs all three weighted efforts in every type of operation (see FM 3-13 for a detailed discussion of the weighted effort). Just because Army forces are executing an offensive operation does not mean they are exclusively weighting IO towards attack. Similarly, when they are conducting defensive operations, they will weight IO to attack, defend, and stabilize simultaneously. The level of each may vary by the type of operation being undertaken, but all three are employed to varying degrees all the time. The same holds true across phases (see figure 7-3). During Phase 1, for example, attack-weighted IO efforts may be conducted alongside defend- and stabilize-weighted efforts. During Phase III, although attack-weighted efforts may be more numerous in comparison to defend and stabilize efforts, all three will be employed.

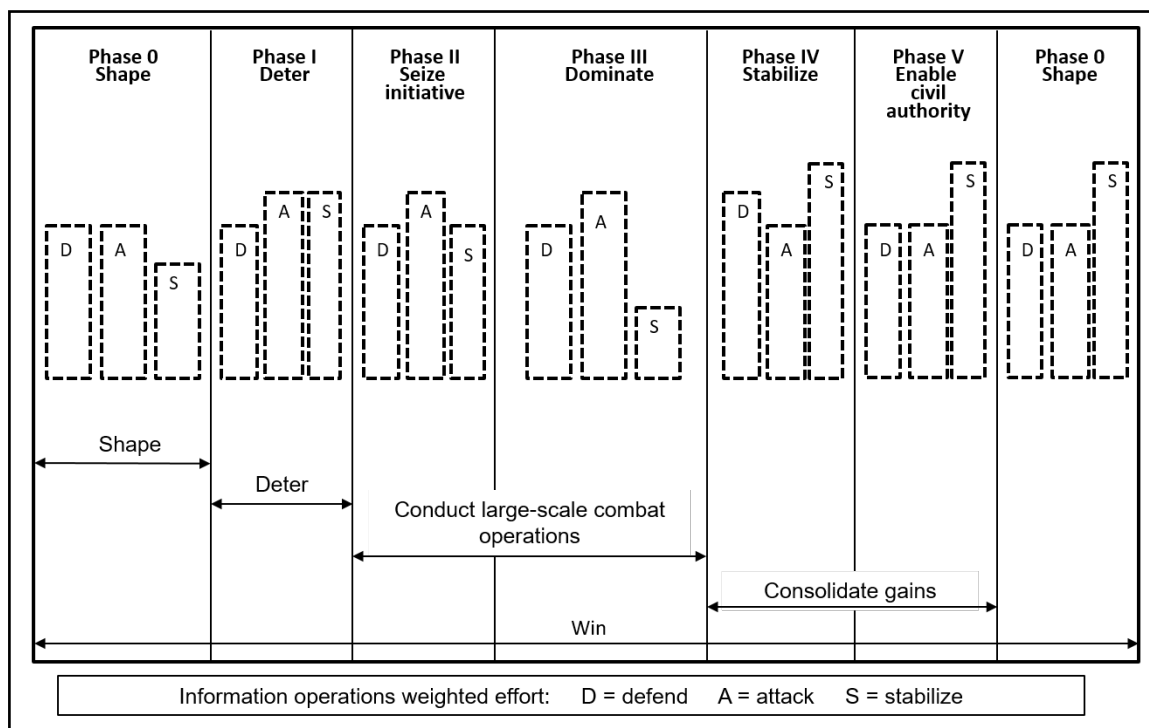


Figure 7-3. IO weighted efforts across phases

## SHAPE

7-4. Army operations to shape bring together all the activities intended to promote regional stability and to set conditions for a favorable outcome in the event of a military confrontation. Army operations to shape dissuade adversary activities to achieve regional goals short of military conflict. Shaping activities include enhancing security cooperation and forward presence to promote U.S. interests; developing allied and friendly military capabilities for self-defense and multinational operations; and providing U.S. forces with peacetime and contingency access to a host nation. Regionally aligned and engaged Army forces are essential to achieving objectives that strengthen the global network of multinational partners and prevent conflict. These military operations and activities specifically shape perceptions and influence behaviors of all relevant audiences as necessary to meet U.S. strategic objectives. As such, IO has a significant role in shaping operational environments and may be the decisive line of effort in Phase 0.

7-5. Although shaping operations are ongoing, they are specific to each theater and operational area in which they occur (although effects in one theater may well create effects or achieve objectives in another). The balance of defend, attack, and stabilize IO efforts varies based on the specific operational area, the mission, and the actors or audiences involved. IO considerations or actions during shaping operations may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Understanding IO implications in the theater campaign plan.
- Embedding IO training and cooperation as part of day-to-day security cooperation.
- Military support to public diplomacy.
- Leveraging available and requested IRCs to achieve cooperative and persuasive influence in the information environment that promotes stability, cooperation, and partnership among allies and potential allies, as well as fosters legitimacy of U.S. and coalition efforts.
- Integrating and synchronizing IRCs to achieve persuasive influence in the information environment that dissuades adversaries or potential adversaries from gaining a malign or disruptive advantage or informs and inoculates the local populace against enemy or adversary propaganda.
- Reviewing contingency plans to ensure requisite IRCs are available in theater and, if not, taking appropriate action to assign or pre-position them or coordinate their proper placement in the time-phased force and deployment data flow.

## PREVENT

7-6. Army operations to prevent include all activities to deter an adversary's undesirable actions. These operations are an extension of operations to shape designed to deny the adversary any opportunities to further exploit positions of relative advantage. Army operations to prevent accomplish this by raising the potential costs to adversaries of continuing activities that threaten U.S. interests. Prevent activities are generally weighted toward actions to protect friendly forces, assets, and partners, and to indicate U.S. intent to execute subsequent phases of a planned operation.

7-7. IO considerations during the prevent or deter phase include Phase 0 activities and additionally include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Initiating IO aspects of the theater campaign plan.
- Conducting Soldier and leader engagement with key leaders and influencers specifically to apply persuasive and cooperative influence, and to enhance the legitimacy of U.S. or coalition operations.
- Working in close coordination with unified action partners and host nation IO and IRC forces or units to ensure unity of effort.
- Developing and controlling the narrative and countering the adversary's narrative.
- Military support to public diplomacy.
- Immediately addressing concerns of vulnerable populations to inoculate them against adversary messaging.
- Timely delivery of multiple, complementary messages across numerous platforms that are tied to psychological actions for maximum effect.

- Countering adversarial use of propaganda, misinformation, and disinformation (fake news).
- Increasing frequency and size of exercises and training activities.
- Ensuring that visual information forces (such as combat camera) are embedded in forward troop movements, exercises, and training activities.
- Demonstrating freedom of movement.

## CONDUCT LARGE-SCALE GROUND COMBAT

7-8. During large-scale combat operations, Army forces focus on the defeat and destruction of enemy ground forces as part of the joint team. Army forces close with and destroy enemy forces in any terrain, exploit success, and break their opponent's will to resist. Army forces attack, defend, conduct stability tasks, and consolidate gains to attain national objectives. Divisions and corps, which are organized, trained, and equipped to enable subordinate organizations, are the formations central to large-scale combat operations. The ability to prevail in ground combat is a decisive factor in breaking an enemy's will to continue a conflict.

7-9. IO considerations during *seize the initiative* and *dominate* phases include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Employ military deception to mislead the enemy as to the main effort or to otherwise make faulty, poorly timed, or ill-advised decisions that favor Army, joint, or coalition forces.
- Develop messaging that counters the enemy's narrative and neutralizes any bases of support.
- Employ COMCAM and other means to document enemy atrocities or violations of international law, treaties, or norms.
- Employ technical IRCs (such as electronic warfare and offensive cyberspace operations) to attack, disrupt, or degrade enemy command and control.
- Employ technical IRCs (such as electronic warfare and defensive cyberspace operations), information assurance, and OPSEC to protect mission command systems and data.
- Embed media, as appropriate, to provide factual, relevant coverage of Army, joint, or coalition operations.
- Conduct special technical operations against appropriate targets.
- Implement, as appropriate, contingency IO plans and other consequence management activities to respond to incidents or crises.
- Augment multinational arms operations with all available IRCs to ratchet up the intensity of coercive influence applied against the enemy.

## CONSOLIDATE GAINS

7-10. Army operations to consolidate gains include activities that promote the permanence of any temporary operational success and set the conditions for a sustainable environment, allowing for a transition of control to legitimate civil authorities. Consolidating gains is an integral and continuous part of armed conflict, and it is necessary for achieving success across the range of military operations. Army forces deliberately plan to consolidate gains during all phases of an operation. Early and effective consolidation activities are a form of an exploitation conducted while other operations are ongoing, and they enable achieving lasting favorable outcomes in the shortest time span. Army forces conduct these activities with unified action partners.

7-11. IO considerations during operations to consolidate gains include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Assisting the legitimate civil authority in shaping themes and messages that increase transparency and bolster legitimacy.
- Addressing or thwarting misinformation or disinformation immediately.
- Providing military support to public diplomacy.
- Explaining continued U.S. or coalition presence and activities.
- Strengthening information capabilities of local partners through training and advisement.
- Employing technical IRCs to support unfettered access to the Internet and other platforms where vital messaging can occur.
- Analyzing the ongoing need for specific IRCs and ensuring they are included in rotation plans.

## **WIN**

7-12. Winning requires commanders to optimize the information element of combat power by conducting IO across all strategic roles and phases. The Army wins when it effectively shapes an operational environment for combatant commanders and when it responds rapidly during crisis with enough combat power to prevent war through deterrence. When required to fight, the Army's ability to prevail in ground combat at any scale becomes a decisive factor in breaking the enemy's will to continue fighting. The Army wins when it defeats an enemy so it can no longer effectively resist, and it agrees to cease hostilities on U.S. terms. In other words, the Army wins when it breaks the enemy's will. To ensure that the military results of combat endure, the Army follows through with its unique scope and scale of capabilities—including those that create effects in the information environment—to consolidate gains and win longstanding outcomes favorable to U.S. interests.