



# **ADP 1-02**

## **OPERATIONAL TERMS AND MILITARY SYMBOLS**

**AUGUST 2012**

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**HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**

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## **Operational Terms and Military Symbols**

1. This change replaces the cover to align with Doctrine 2015 standards.
2. ADP 1-02, 31 August 2012, is changed as follows:

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By order of the Secretary of the Army:

**RAYMOND T. ODIERNO**  
*General, United States Army*  
*Chief of Staff*

Official:



**JOYCE E. MORROW**  
*Administrative Assistant to the*  
*Secretary of the Army*  
1226301

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# Operational Terms and Military Symbols

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## Preface

Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 1-02 provides foundational doctrine for establishing and using Army terms, acronyms, and symbols. It discusses how a common language is essential to the effective conduct of military operations. It describes how doctrinal terms and symbols enhance communication among military professionals and ensure a common understanding of doctrinal principles. ADP 1-02 addresses why terms and symbols are important.

ADP 1-02 establishes the basis for Army doctrinal terms, acronyms, and symbols in Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 1-02, *Operational Terms and Military Symbols*. ADP 1-02 and ADRP 1-02 are part of the Doctrine 2015 Initiative, which also includes a terminology database that will contain all doctrinal terms established in Army doctrinal publications.

The principal audience for ADP 1-02 is all members of the profession of arms. Commanders and staffs of Army headquarters serving as joint task force or multinational headquarters should also refer to applicable joint or multinational doctrine concerning the range of military operations and joint or multinational forces. Trainers and educators throughout the Army will also use this manual.

Commanders, staffs, and subordinates ensure their decisions and actions comply with applicable U.S., international, and, in some cases, host-nation laws and regulations. Commanders at all levels ensure their Soldiers operate in accordance with the law of war and the rules of engagement. (See Field Manual [FM] 27-10.)

ADP 1-02 uses joint terms where applicable. Selected joint and Army terms and definitions appear in both the glossary and the text. For definitions shown in the text, the term is italicized and the number of the proponent publication follows the definition. ADP 1-02 is not the proponent for any Army terms.

ADP 1-02 applies to the Active Army, Army National Guard/Army National Guard of the United States, and United States Army Reserve unless otherwise stated.

References to the Marine Corps in this publication acknowledge the common terminology shared by the land services and contained in ADRP 1-02 but do not imply that ADP 1-02 is a Marine Corps publication.

The proponent of ADP 1-02 is the United States Army Combined Arms Center. The preparing agency is the Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate, United States Army Combined Arms Center. Send comments and recommendations on a DA Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms) to Commander, U.S. Army

Combined Arms Center and Fort Leavenworth, ATTN: ATZL-MCK-D (ADP 1-02), 300 McPherson Avenue, Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-2337; by e-mail to [usarmy.leavenworth.mccoe.mbx.cadd-org-mailbox@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.leavenworth.mccoe.mbx.cadd-org-mailbox@mail.mil); or submit an electronic DA Form 2028.

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This publication begins by discussing the professional language of land warfare. It then discusses terminology, followed by acronyms and abbreviations. It concludes by discussing the role of symbology in relation to doctrine. This is tied together by their importance in conducting military operations.

## **THE PROFESSIONAL LANGUAGE OF LAND WARFARE**

1. A common set of doctrinal terms and military symbols is one of the most important elements in a military force's ability to communicate when conducting operations—the force cannot function effectively without it. Terms and symbols can communicate a great deal of information with a simple word, phrase, or image. Each time a term or symbol is used, it helps eliminate the need for a lengthy explanation of a complex idea. For example, when a unit leader tells Soldiers to conduct a zone reconnaissance, they know exactly what they must accomplish.

### **PRINCIPLE OF SIMPLICITY**

2. Plain, concise, and understandable language allows for shorter and clearer orders that convey their information with greater speed and less risk of misunderstanding. This embodies the principle of war of simplicity: increase the probability that plans and operations will be executed as intended by preparing clear, uncomplicated plans and concise orders. An operation order must communicate the commander's intended meaning without ambiguity to all staff and subordinates. It must be shared with and readily understood by adjacent units to avoid a lack of synchronization that could lead to disaster and defeat.

3. All professions have a professional language—the specific vocabulary used to facilitate clear communication among members of the profession. This vocabulary establishes terms and definitions for organizations, equipment, and activities when common English definitions do not sufficiently meet the profession's needs. These terms and definitions and the conventions chosen for communicating them form the language of the profession.

### **IMPORTANCE OF CLEAR COMMUNICATION**

4. The importance of this language is that it provides (or should provide) a set of terms that convey specific meanings peculiar to the profession, facilitating clarity in speech and writing. Not having to go through a lengthy discussion of the meaning within the military context each time the term is used allows a great deal of information to be conveyed with a simple word or phrase. For, example, when unit leaders tell Soldiers to conduct a zone reconnaissance, the term conveys a number of specific tasks that have to be accomplished, without having to be restated at length. To be effective, this language is

used in doctrinal publications, taught in military schools, and used in operations and exercises so that Soldiers and Marines can accomplish their mission using clear, precise, and detailed information in the shortest word or phrase possible.

## **IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING THE LANGUAGE**

5. Nowhere is the teaching and understanding of a common professional language more important than in the profession of arms. The 2006 Israel-Hezbollah War illustrates the impact of doctrinal language. Before the conflict, the Israeli Army had introduced new doctrine to its force. However, the doctrine and terminology were not yet well understood among the force. As a result of the confusion this caused, Hezbollah was able to take advantage of this problem. Had the Israeli Army known and better understood the new doctrine and its terminology, operations might have been more effective, possibly reducing friendly casualties and increasing successes.

## **TERMINOLOGY**

6. The Army community develops a common language of terminology and symbology through standardized doctrine development processes. The language of the profession of arms becomes a part of *doctrine*—fundamental principles by which the military forces or elements thereof guide their actions in support of national objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgment in application (JP 1-02)—through its introduction in Army doctrine publications (ADPs), Army doctrine reference publications (ADRsPs), field manuals (FMs), and Army techniques publications (ATPs).

## **TERMINOLOGY DEVELOPMENT**

7. A doctrine development process might be unnecessary if there were unlimited time for discussion before operations. Then a commander giving orders to subordinates probably could explain the intent of those orders when no common doctrine or its terminology existed. However, in reality, this is impractical because time available is always limited. As subordinate commanders tried to convey orders further down the chain of command, time would be consumed exponentially. This would leave little or no preparation time for the mission. To preclude this, the Army has common doctrine with its common terminology and common symbology.

8. After Operation Desert Storm, the military community began a comprehensive evaluation of the lessons learned from military operations against the Iraqi Army. One of those lessons learned was the need to coordinate the delivery of air, land, and maritime assets in time and space against targets to enhance their effectiveness. From this came the development of the term “fires.” There was no common English language word to describe this coordinated action, and the use of the term “fire” was limited to the discharge of a gun. To achieve a common understanding of this new doctrinal idea, the military term “fires” was created. For military usage, the definition of *fires* would become—the use of weapon systems to create specific lethal or nonlethal effects on a target (JP 3-09). With this definition, the doctrinal idea behind joint fires could now be conveyed to the force. When fires were coordinated and synchronized in time and in

space, the force could achieve a greater effect. Subsequently, “joint fires” could be defined and the concept introduced into doctrine. *Joint fires* is fires delivered during the employment of forces from two or more components in coordinated action to produce desired effects in support of a common objective (JP 3-09).

## TERMINOLOGY STANDARDS

9. To enable Soldiers and Marines to communicate effectively and efficiently, terms must follow basic rules as established by the joint community and further enunciated by the Army. Army terms can reflect the uniqueness of land operations, but they should not conflict with joint or North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) terminology. To be truly effective, a definition must be precise and not descriptive. It must have only one proponent publication. To be easily understood, definitions should not use acronyms and abbreviations. Terms and definitions must be unclassified. United States Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) establishes Army policy for developing doctrinal terms. For more information, see the appropriate TRADOC regulation.
10. The Army develops doctrinal terms and definitions to facilitate the understanding and application of essential doctrinal ideas. For the most part, the Army conducts operations using words as defined in the common English language dictionary. However, when a common English word or phrase does not adequately convey doctrinal intent, the Army and Marine Corps create their own terminology to convey understanding of that doctrinal intent. These terms and definitions are established only to facilitate the understanding of current doctrine and to be used in a specific context.

## EFFECTIVE TERMINOLOGY USAGE

11. Communication is an exchange of meaning that is only complete when the intended meaning is understood precisely by the intended audience. All Soldiers must take care to choose words precisely and in context. During military operations, using the wrong term can have disastrous consequences and so must be avoided. For example, when asking someone to repeat what he or she previously said, the request is “say again.” The word “repeat” is reserved for firing at the same target with the same ammunition for artillery and mortar fire. Any Soldier communicating a message must determine the exact meaning to be expressed, choose the words that capture it precisely and clearly for the intended audience, and ensure the message is clearly understood. Doctrine facilitates this. Another example learned from recent operations is that while U.S. forces still have friends and enemies, there are people or organizations in an operational area that fall into neither category. These may be a type of *adversary*—a party acknowledged as potentially hostile to a friendly party and against which the use of force may be envisaged (JP 3-0). This definition provides a precise meaning that allows Army forces to categorize people or organizations as potential enemies and choose appropriate behavior toward them. The rules of engagement toward adversaries versus enemies are very different. Army forces are not openly hostile toward adversaries. Rather, Army forces approach and monitor adversaries with caution and restraint unless or until they become enemy combatants. An *enemy combatant* is, in general, a person engaged in hostilities against the United States or its coalition partners during an armed

conflict (DODD 2310.01E). In addition, context for clear communication also must include considerations for coordinating with other Services and unified action partners.

12. The Army professional community encourages any Soldier to propose the creation, modification, or elimination of any doctrinal term. A Soldier may contact a proponent for a given subject area, using the contact information provided in the preface of the proponent publication, or the Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate (see the preface of this publication). The proponent will consider the Soldier's proposal.

## **ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

13. Acronyms and abbreviations are created to allow Soldiers and Marines to use shorter versions of doctrinal and military terms for ease of discussion in speaking and writing. Acronyms and abbreviations are an important part of the Army's professional language. As with terminology, they are part of the Army's doctrinal publications.

### **ACRONYM FORMATION**

14. Acronyms usually are formed from the initial letters of a name or parts of a series of words. Some examples of common doctrinal acronyms are NCO for noncommissioned officer; HMMWV for high mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicle; FSCL for fire support coordination line; or CBRN for chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear. Sometimes there are two acronyms for the same thing, but in different order, such as OAKOC for observation and fields of fire, avenues of approach, key terrain, obstacles, and cover and concealment (in Army doctrine), or KOCOA for key terrain, observation and fields of fire, cover and concealment, obstacles, and avenues of approach (in Marine Corps doctrine). These can serve as a mnemonic device or a memory aid. One of the best known is radar (radio detection and ranging), which has become a word in its own right.

### **ACRONYM DEVELOPMENT**

15. Not every concept, unit, organization, piece of equipment, or system needs a corresponding acronym or abbreviation. It is not necessary to create a shortened form simply because two or more words appear to be related to each other in a particular phrase in a particular context. There are many unnecessary acronyms and abbreviations in use. In some cases, the same acronyms and abbreviations represent different elements, such as AA for assembly area or for avenue of approach, and PM for preventive maintenance, project manager, or provost marshal. This can lead to confusion. In addition, removing obsolete acronyms from operational usage can take many years. For example, the acronym NBC represented the phrase nuclear, biological, and chemical. NBC was changed to CBRN for many good reasons. It has been many years since the change, and the Army is only just now changing NBC reports to CBRN reports as publications are revised.

### **EFFECTIVE ACRONYM USAGE**

16. When specific acronyms and abbreviations are used appropriately and precisely, they can facilitate understanding. The use of too many acronyms and abbreviations is

counterproductive. The Army (and joint community) is overwhelmed with acronyms in doctrinal publications. Instead of facilitating understanding, they cause confusion as the reader tries to remember what they all mean. Acronyms and abbreviations should not become a secret language that prevents understanding between branches and functional areas.

## SYMOLOGY

17. The Army and the entire joint community share a common military symbology, contained in MIL-STD-2525C. Standard symbology helps commanders communicate orders visually and helps subordinates understand them quickly. It helps staff and subordinates understand the mission and the commander's intent.

## SYMOLOGY INTEGRATION WITH DOCTRINE AND TERMINOLOGY

18. If there were no military symbols, Soldiers and Marines would create them. Military forces cannot conduct operations effectively without them. They are an integral part of doctrine and terminology.

19. Normally, the first thing that a Soldier or Marine does when receiving an operation order is to go to the map or the common operational picture and see where the mission is to be carried out and over what terrain features. The commander enhances his or her ability to understand by overlaying the military symbols relevant to the mission. It conveys the ideas behind the operation order presenting them so the commander better understands his or her mission.

20. A military symbol is a graphic representation of a unit, equipment, installation, activity, control measure, or tactical task relevant to military operations that is used for planning or to represent the common operational picture on a map, display, or overlay. It is an instantly recognizable "picture" of a doctrinally based piece of information. Military symbols represent doctrinal ideas. A *common operational picture* is a single display of relevant information within a commander's area of interest tailored to the user's requirements and based on common data and information shared by more than one command (ADRP 6-0).

21. If anyone walks into an operations center or command post, anywhere in the world, that person will find a display of a common operational picture. That common operational picture is displayed on a map or another geographical form representing the area of operations and which has been overlaid with military symbols. At a minimum, it includes friendly and enemy units or ships, boundaries, control measures, or other elements that the commander deems necessary for understanding the common operational picture and the operation. It provides any observer a basic understanding of the situation.

22. Military symbols are living proof of the old adage that a picture is worth a thousand words. No matter what language a Soldier or Marine speaks, when the symbol of an infantry company is shown on a display or map, the central, doctrinal idea is readily apparent. The doctrinal meaning of what is being portrayed is clear. Normally, the first thing that a Soldier or Marine does when receiving an operation order is to go to the map

or common operational picture and see where the mission is to be carried out and over what terrain features. The commander's ability to understand the common operational picture is enhanced by overlaying the military symbols relevant to the mission. Symbols convey the ideas behind the operation order concretely.

## **SYMBOLS STANDARDS AND DEVELOPMENT**

23. Military symbols fall into two categories: framed and unframed. Framed military symbols include unit, equipment, installation, and activity symbols. Unframed military symbols include control measure and tactical task mission symbols. The frame of a symbol provides a distinctive and clear representation of its standard identity (hostile, suspect, friendly, assumed friend, neutral, unknown, and pending).

24. ADRP 1-02 explains in detail how to build symbols using the basic components of military symbology. ADRP 1-02 only includes operational military symbols used Army-wide with the common operational picture and operation orders. A database of all Army and Marine Corps symbols, to include branch- and function-specific as well as air, sea, space, and meteorological symbols is being developed. The database will be located on an official Army and Marine Corps terminology and symbology Web site, expected to be operational in 2013. This official database will include all symbols from MIL-STD-2525C and STANAG 2019 (ED. 6)/APP-6(C).

25. To enable Soldiers and Marines to communicate effectively and efficiently, all symbols must follow standards established by the joint community. New symbols should not duplicate existing symbols, and they should be designed so they can be hand drawn.

26. If a Soldier identifies a requirement to create, modify, or delete a symbol, the point of contact for recommendations is the Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate, e-mail <[usarmy.leavenworth.mccoe.mbx.cadd-org-mailbox@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.leavenworth.mccoe.mbx.cadd-org-mailbox@mail.mil)>.

## **CONCLUSION**

27. To conduct operations effectively, the profession of arms must have a standard set of terms and symbols to represent essential doctrinal ideas. The terms and symbols must be limited to those necessary for conducting operations, and they must be clear and concise. To be effective, the Army must teach Soldiers how to use them.

# Glossary

The glossary lists acronyms and terms with Army or joint definitions. Where Army and joint definitions differ, (Army) precedes the definition. ADP 1-02 is not the proponent for any terms.

## SECTION I – ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AAP</b>	allied administrative publication
<b>ADP</b>	Army doctrine publication
<b>ADRP</b>	Army doctrine reference publications
<b>APP</b>	allied procedural publication
<b>DODD</b>	Department of Defense directive
<b>FM</b>	field manual
<b>JP</b>	joint publication
<b>MIL-STD</b>	military standard
<b>NATO</b>	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
<b>STANAG</b>	standardization agreement
<b>TRADOC</b>	United States Army Training and Doctrine Command

## SECTION II – TERMS

<b>adversary</b>	A party acknowledged as potentially hostile to a friendly party and against which the use of force may be envisaged. (JP 3-0)
<b>common operational picture</b>	(Army) A single display of relevant information within a commander's area of interest tailored to the user's requirements and based on common data and information shared by more than one command. (ADRP 6-0)
<b>doctrine</b>	Fundamental principles by which the military forces or elements thereof guide their actions in support of national objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgment in application. (JP 1-02)
<b>enemy combatant</b>	In general, a person engaged in hostilities against the United States or its coalition partners during an armed conflict. (DODD 2310.01E)
<b>fires</b>	The use of weapon systems to create specific lethal or nonlethal effects on a target. (JP 3-09)

**joint fires**      Fires delivered during the employment of forces from two or more components in coordinated action to produce desired effects in support of a common objective.  
(JP 3-09)

# **References**

## **REQUIRED PUBLICATIONS**

These documents must be available to users of this publication.

JP 1-02. *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*. 8 November 2010.

MIL-STD-2525C. *Common Warfighting Symbology*. 17 November 2008.

## **RELATED PUBLICATIONS**

These documents contain relevant supplemental information.

### **DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE PUBLICATIONS**

Most Department of Defense and joint publications are available online at <<http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/index.html>>.

DODD 2310.01E. *The Department of Defense Detainee Program*. 5 September 2006.

### **JOINT PUBLICATIONS**

JP 3-0. *Joint Operations*. 11 August 2011.

JP 3-09. *Joint Fire Support*. 30 June 2010.

### **INTERNATIONAL STANDARDIZATION DOCUMENTS**

Most standardization documents are available online at <<http://nsa.nato.int/nsa/nsdd/listpromulg.html>>.

AAP-15(2012). *NATO Glossary of Abbreviations Used in NATO Documents and Publications (English and French)*. 19 January 2012.

STANAG 2019 (ED. 6)/APP-6(C). *NATO Joint Military Symbology*. 24 May 2011.

STANAG 3680 (ED. 5)/AAP-06(2012). *NATO Glossary of Terms and Definitions (English and French)*. 17 April 2012.

### **DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY PUBLICATIONS**

Most Army publications are available online at <<http://www.apd.army.mil>>.

ADRP 1-02. *Operational Terms and Military Symbols*. 31 August 2012.

ADRP 6-0. *Mission Command*. 17 May 2012.

FM 27-10. *The Law of Land Warfare*. 18 July 1956.

## **PRESCRIBED FORMS**

None.

## **REFERENCED FORMS**

DA Form 2028. *Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms.*

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**31 August 2012**

By order of the Secretary of the Army:

**RAYMOND T. ODIERNO**  
*General, United States Army*  
*Chief of Staff*

Official:



**JOYCE E. MORROW**  
*Administrative Assistant to the  
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