

INTRODUCTION

The world geopolitical environment will continue to impact directly on United States (US) military strategy. In support of US military strategy, the Army projects force to deter aggression worldwide. Should deterrence fail, Army forces are prepared to defeat the enemy across the full range of military operations. In the future, force-projection operations will be the norm as forward-deployed divisions return to the continental United States.

The Army classifies its activities as war and operations other than war (those activities that occur during peace and conflict). US Army operations are varied, ranging from aid and assistance to a foreign government to full combat operations against a well-armed hostile force. Conflict challenges can range from an emergent superpower or a hostile regional power to a less sophisticated, but no less determined, insurgent force.

US Army divisions respond to these challenges by deploying versatile combined arms forces. Although divisions task-organize combat, combat support (CS), and combat service support (CSS) forces to accomplish assigned missions in both war and operations other than war, they focus on force projection and combat operations. Division training requirements are based on assigned operation plans (OPLANs) and directives. Missions and tasks not associated with OPLANs and authorized directives can be accomplished as functions of versatility—commanders rapidly shifting their focus, and their units quickly adapting to new missions and tasks. Versatile soldiers, leaders, and units make up our Army divisions.

Synchronization of division assets is vital to all division operations. Divisions employ armored or mechanized forces, light forces, or a combination of both with appropriate support units. Armored and mechanized divisions are characterized by highly mobile and protected weapon systems from which our soldiers fight. Light forces (airborne, air assault, and light divisions) are characterized by lighter, predominantly hand-held small arms, and light crew-served weapon systems. Personnel in these units primarily use dismounted movement techniques to close with and destroy the enemy.

Divisions contribute to the joint battle. They normally operate as part of a corps (with joint support), a joint task force (JTF), or a multinational force. Divisions usually engage in tactical-level warfare; that is, they fight battles and engagements within the context of operational-level campaign plans. Division-level tactics involve the movement and positioning of maneuver forces on the battlefield in relation to the enemy, massing of combat power, and providing of logistic support for division forces prior to, during, and following engagements. Commanders within divisions are principally concerned with accomplishing their near-term objectives.

US Army division operations are based on the Army tenets of initiative, agility, depth, synchronization, and versatility. Initiative sets or changes the terms of battle by action. It is the effort to force the enemy to conform to our operational tempo and purpose, while retaining our freedom of action. This requires commanders to understand the intent of their commanders two levels above—centralized planning, but decentralized execution.

Agility is the ability to act faster than the enemy—a prerequisite for seizing and holding the initiative. Agility permits the rapid concentration of combat power against the enemy's vulnerabilities. It requires the commander to constantly read the battlefield, anticipate, make quick decisions, and act without hesitation. This may require committing forces quickly without complete information when situations are time-sensitive. Agility requires both mental and physical flexibility—seeing and reacting rapidly to changing situations.

Depth is the extension of operations in time, space, resources, and purpose. Commanders use these factors in thinking in depth to forecast, anticipate likely events, and expand their freedom

of action. They then apply them to arrange all available resources to set the conditions in attacking the enemy simultaneously and sequentially throughout the depth of the battlefield.

Synchronization is the focus of resources and activities in time and space to mass at the decisive point. Although activities such as intelligence, logistics, and fires and maneuver may occur at different times and places, they are synchronized when their combined consequences are felt at the decisive time and place. Effective synchronization uses every resource where it will make the greatest contribution to success.

Versatility is the ability to shift focus, to tailor forces, and to move from one mission to another rapidly and efficiently. It implies a capacity to be multifunctional, to operate across regions throughout the full range of military operations.

Army divisions exploit advances in technology to include space-based platforms. They maximize the increased range, lethality, and accuracy of new systems, conducting simultaneous operations throughout the depth of the battlefield to overwhelm any adversary.

Divisions create combat power throughout the commander's area of operations by combining maneuver, firepower, protection, and leadership. Division commanders seek to apply overwhelming combat power, bringing all these elements quickly and violently to bear and giving the enemy no opportunity to respond with an effective opposition.

The military doctrine presented in this manual describes fundamental principles that guide the employment of US Army divisions. Although this doctrine is authoritative, it requires judgment in application. It provides the distilled insights and wisdom gained from the Army's collective experience with warfare in recent times. This doctrine, however, cannot replace clear thinking. It does not negate the obligation of commanders to determine proper courses of action under prevailing circumstances, to make good decisions, or to control their units' actions.