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MAGTF AVIATION PLANNING

1. For administrative purposes, FMFM 5-70 is reidentified as MCWP 5-11.1.

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Headquarters United States Marine Corps
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FOREWORD

1. PURPOSE

Fleet Marine Force Manual (FMFM) 5-70, *MAGTF Aviation Planning*, provides Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF) planners with a foundation for aviation planning. Part I addresses planning relationships and responsibilities for a MAGTF operating autonomously, within the structure of a naval expeditionary force, or in a joint environment. Part II provides specific planning considerations for the separate functions of Marine aviation. The appendices include briefing formats, employment planning checklists, and aircraft and equipment capability charts.

2. SCOPE

FMFM 5-70 provides the MAGTF-level planner and the aviation combat element (ACE)-level planner with an authoritative reference for aviation planning. FMFRP 5-71, *MAGTF Aviation Planning Documents*, (which is currently under development) will provide samples of aviation planning documents.

3. SUPERSESION

None.

4. CHANGES

Recommendations for improvements to this manual are invited from commands as well as directly from individuals. Forward suggestions using the User Suggestion Form format to—

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5. CERTIFICATION

Reviewed and approved this date.

BY DIRECTION OF THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS



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MAGTF Aviation Planning

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Part I

The Planning Environment

The Marine Corps' mission is to provide combat-ready Marine air-ground task forces (MAGTFs) that can operate autonomously, as part of a naval expeditionary force, or as part of a joint force. MAGTFs employ combined arms to present the enemy with a dilemma—a no win situation. In order to counteract the firepower or mobility of one arm, the enemy becomes more vulnerable to the firepower or mobility of another arm.

The MAGTF commander is the warfighter. As the MAGTF commander plans and executes seamless operations through the employment of his combined arms, he maintains an operational outlook. He sets the stage for the tactical actions of his subordinate commanders by clearly transmitting his intent, concept of operations, and mission-type orders.

The ground combat element (GCE) and aviation combat element (ACE) are the two combat arms of the MAGTF. They conduct tactical actions, which may have operational significance, to support the MAGTF commander's plan. Both the GCE and the ACE can be used as a maneuver force or a source of fires in the MAGTF commander's application of combined arms. In addition, the GCE or the ACE may be designated as the main effort. The MAGTF commander might choose the ACE as his main effort to shape the battlespace prior to contact between friendly and enemy ground forces.

The combat service support element (CSSE) commander plans and executes operations that provide essential logistics functions, activities, and tasks to support and permit force sustainment to all elements of the MAGTF. Although the CSSE is not a combat arm, it may also be designated the main effort.

Effective use of MAGTF aviation requires planning and coordination among all of the MAGTF elements. It is the responsibility of the ACE commander, with the MAGTF commander's guidance, to ensure coordination and interoperability of MAGTF aviation operations with naval operations, joint/combined operations, and their control agencies.

Part I provides a broad introductory discussion of aviation doctrine and planning fundamentals, and it gives the reader an overall view of aviation planning—a macro look at MAGTF, naval, and joint/combined planning environments. A detailed discussion of the MAGTF air tasking process concludes Part I.

Chapter 1

Aviation Planning Within the MAGTF

Proper planning must be accomplished if a MAGTF is to successfully integrate its operations within a naval expeditionary force (NEF) or a joint force. Chapter 1 addresses the critical issue of aviation planning at the MAGTF level. Aviation planning within the MAGTF is cyclical and consists of a series of analyses and judgments based on the current situation, previous actions, and future requirements. It is a deliberate and continuous process marked by concurrent, parallel, and detailed planning.

Deliberate Planning

A MAGTF conducting maneuver warfare is a machine with many moving and potentially conflicting parts that operate at great speed. It continually adjusts itself to seize the fleeting opportunities presented in the modern battlespace. Aviation planning must be careful and deliberate to orchestrate these moving parts. The need to accomplish deliberate planning within a time limit has led to the use of three different planning frameworks: concurrent, parallel, and detailed. These frameworks complement each other to produce a timely planning cycle.

Concurrent Planning

Concurrent planning is planning accomplished simultaneously by two or more echelons of the same command or by corresponding echelons of different commands. The skillful use of concurrent planning helps to compensate for the time spent on detailed planning by successive echelons. The detailed planning process can become stalled at any echelon due to lack of information. Subordinate commanders can begin concurrent planning prior to the issuance of written planning documents by using information announced at planning conferences and briefings. Planning memorandums, warning orders, and outline plans provide additional means to disseminate fragmentary planning information. Concurrent planning

is kept on track by a common understanding of the commander's intent.

Parallel Planning

Parallel planning results from close and continuous coordination between corresponding units. Coordination requirements, the interrelationship of assigned tasks, and complex support requirements make parallel planning essential. Basic decisions made by individual commanders are based on a common understanding of objectives and procedures obtained from the free exchange of information between units. Mission-type orders, clear commander's intent, and continuous liaison between units provide an atmosphere conducive to parallel planning.

Detailed Planning

Detailed planning is required at all levels, although its extent is situation-dependent. What is adequately detailed for one operation may not suffice for another. The necessity for economy of means and careful allocation of scarce assets may limit a commander's options. To the maximum extent possible, detailed planning should promote, rather than inhibit, flexibility. Detailed planning allows planners to foresee likely possibilities and develop plans that can respond to changing conditions.