Unity of Effort Framework
Quick Reference Pamphlet

This pamphlet is a quick reference guide for the Unity of Effort Framework. It provides a short description of the four stages of the Framework.

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The *Unity of Effort Framework Solution Guide* is located at:

Intelink

https://intelshare.intelink.gov/sites/uoef/def.aspx

APAN

https://community.apan.org/bp-psf/default.aspx

NOTE

Data depicted in this pamphlet does not necessarily represent the standard operating procedures and policies of the project participating stakeholders and mission partners. The data depicted is notional for experimentation purposes only. It does not in any way reflect official policies of any U.S. Government department or agency and therefore is not to be interpreted as authoritative.

Unity of Effort Framework Quick Reference Pamphlet

Purpose. The purpose of the Unity of Effort Framework (the "Framework") is to improve unity of effort for steady-state planning at the theater/regional level. It helps to identify opportunities amongst U.S. government (USG) organizations for improved coordination and synchronization, thereby focusing similar efforts toward achieving national goals and objectives.

The Framework is a planning aid designed to facilitate, inform, and improve unity of effort for the Joint Force. This includes unity of effort within a department, such as DOD, as well as across other USG interagency organizations.

The Framework provides a way to visualize components of complex interagency missions and promotes improved understanding of interagency interrelationships for a given operating area based on roles, responsibilities, and authorities.

The Framework is a logical, flexible, and repeatable construct used to convey information and highlight opportunities for decision makers to improve the application of scarce interagency resources with maximum positive effect.

Background. U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) originally proposed a synchronization framework to help improve unity of effort in steady-state planning. That initial planning synchronization framework later developed into the Unity of Effort Framework and is the foundation for the *Unity of Effort Framework Solution Guide*. At the time of initial development, no single approved USG framework existed which could be referenced during the development of USNORTHCOM's Theater Campaign Plans (TCPs), i.e., there was no centralized repository containing the type of information the Framework can reveal.

Problem Description. The DOD has had intermittent success in collaborative planning with other USG interagency and multinational partners to achieve or improve unity of effort in dealing with security issues and disaster response operations.

Unity of Effort **Definition.** *Unity of Effort* is a cooperative concept which refers to coordination and communication amongst USG agencies toward the same common goals for success; in order to achieve unity of effort, it is not necessary for all agencies to be controlled under the same command structure (as with unity of command), but it is necessary for each agency's efforts to be in harmony with the short- and long-term goals of the mission. Unity of effort is based on four principles:

- Common understanding of the situation
- Common vision, goals and objectives for the mission
- Coordination of efforts to ensure continued coherency
- Common measures of progress and ability to change course if necessary

The Framework occurs in three stages plus an optional follow-on fourth stage as depicted in figure 1. The stages are conducted in sequential order. The time required to complete each stage depends on the complexity of the mission or problem set and participation of interagency stakeholders and mission partners.

Figure 1

Figure 1
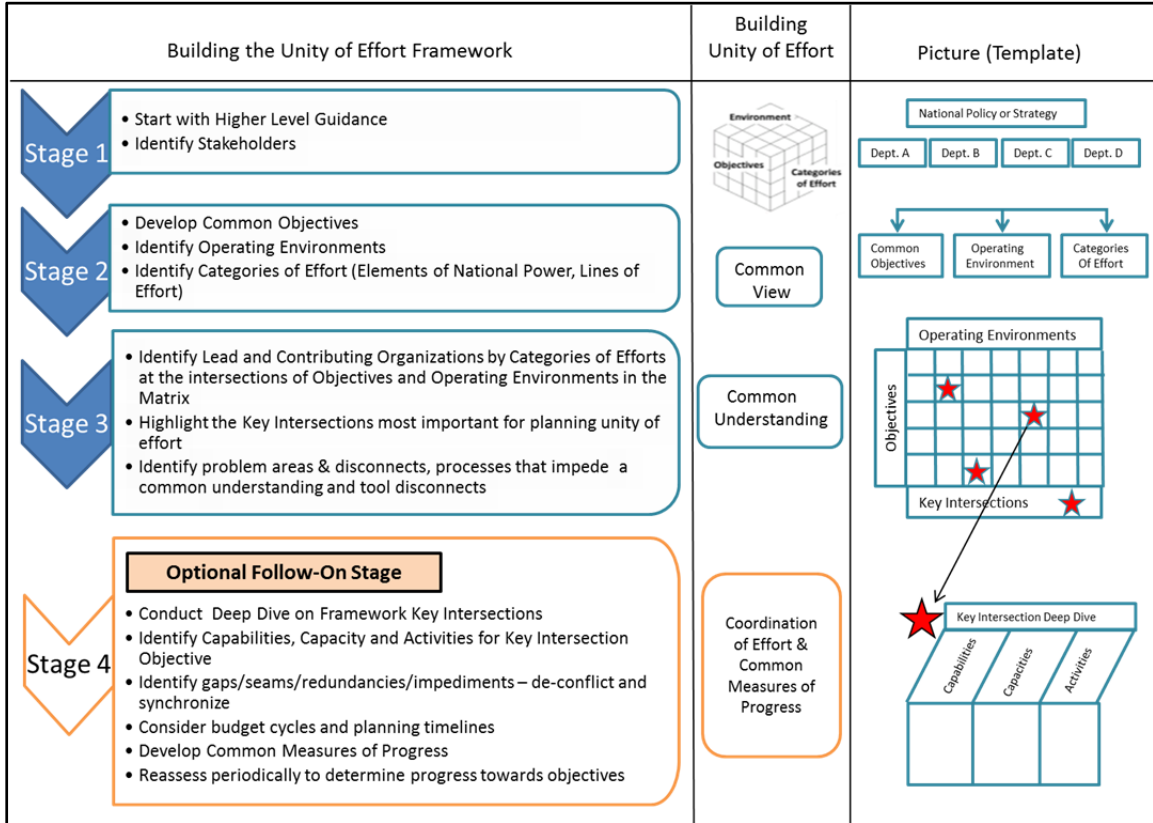
Stage 1: Initiation

Guidance. The necessity for executing the Framework arises through normal planning or is initiated by higher-level guidance. The Framework may vary in complexity and scope. It may be a routine review of national-level guidance documents that require an update, a new national-level strategy that needs to be addressed and consequently coordinated across the USG, or it may be an assessment of world events that requires interagency efforts. Examples include security missions, stability operations, and humanitarian assistance/disaster relief (HA/DR).

Stakeholder and Mission Partner Identification. Stakeholders and mission partners are organizations, persons, or groups that have an investment, share, interest, or play an important part in the design and outcome of a stated issue, mission, or problem set. Their identification is determined by a review of higher-level policy, guidance, or strategy documentation. Send a formal request for participation to potential interagency stakeholders and mission partners. Include read-ahead material to allow them to understand the mission or problem set. Ideally, the request will come from higher department level and go to the secretariat level of other departments and agencies.

> **Stage 1 Outcome.** Identification of applicable national strategic guidance or other pertinent guidance, strategy, or policy documents; appointment of a coordination/facilitation group; identification of stakeholders and mission partners (establish a contact list); appropriately scoped mission or problem set; and formal requests sent to stakeholders and mission partners.

Stage 2: Build a Common View

Building a common view is achieved through collective identification and consensus of common objectives, a common operating environment, and common categories of effort by stakeholders and mission partners. They meet or provide information concerning their perspectives and interpretation of the mission area goals and objectives that will be analyzed and consolidated by the coordination/facilitation group into the Framework three-dimensional view. Throughout stage 2, each stakeholder provides input for consideration. Once analyzed and agreed upon, the common objectives, a common operating environment, and common categories of effort are inserted into a three-dimensional view (see figure 3). Further, a common lexicon is established to ensure clear communication amongst stakeholders and mission partners.
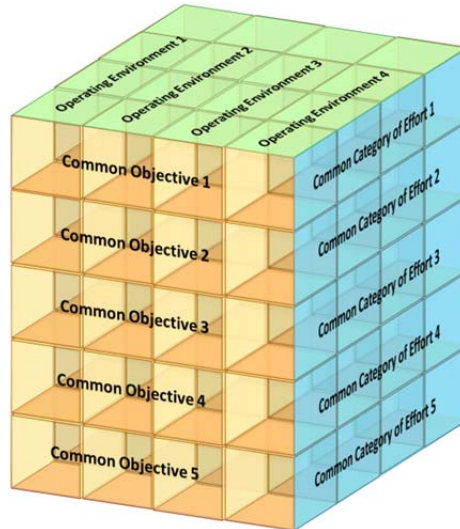
The Three-Dimensional View. A three-dimensional view may provide an effective way to visualize the interrelationship of common objectives, a common operating environment, and common categories of effort. This allows each stakeholder and mission partner to visualize the mission or problem set in a common way and may provide a means to communicate the scope of the problem or mission to senior leadership.

Identify Common Objectives. Common objectives are clearly defined, decisive and attainable goals toward which the operation is directed. They are developed within the context of existing U.S. national security and foreign policies, and are derived from higher-level guidance. While stakeholders may have different organizational perspectives, the Framework serves as a mechanism to reach an understanding of common objectives. Each stakeholder should review and conduct their own analysis to determine how they support the national level strategy, to include a review of national level goals and objectives as they relate to the identified problem set or mission area. Stakeholders and mission partners may also want to consider their agency or department internal goals (where applicable) as they relate to the problem set or mission area. The focus during this stage should be on the desired end states and reaching consensus on a common list of objectives that fit within the higher-level guidance documents.

Identify the Common Operating Environment. The common operating environment is a combination of conditions, surroundings, circumstances, and landscapes. The common operating environment can be interpreted in many ways: geographic region, sector, domain, critical terrain, key border crossings between nations, mountainous area, or land route. When identifying the operating environment, each stakeholder should consider their organization's perspectives. However, it is important to reach consensus on the description of a common operating environment for the Framework.

Identify Common Categories of Effort. Common categories of effort are elements of national power or lines of effort. Elements of national power are ways the USG is able to use the political, economic, and military strengths of the U.S. in order to influence other states and non-state actors. They include development, diplomacy, economic, governance, information, intelligence, law enforcement, and military. For common categories of effort, stakeholders and mission partners may want to consider and review current international actions, Executive Orders, directives, and organizational abilities which influence, inform, or shape the intended end state. Various government departments, agencies, and individual stakeholder organizations may interpret the categories of effort differently, making it important to capture agreed

> **Stage 2 Outcome.** Stakeholder and mission partner consensus on a three-dimensional view of common objectives, common categories of effort, a common operating environment, and associated terms (a common lexicon).

Stage 3: Building a Common Understanding

The completed three-dimensional view built during stage 2 is flattened into a matrix (spreadsheet format) that incorporates all of the elements of earlier stages. The use of widely available software like Microsoft Excel or Access is encouraged, which allows ease of use amongst stakeholders and mission partners. The matrix consists of common objectives (on the left side), common operating environment (across the top), and common categories of effort (entered into the body of the matrix) at the intersections of common objectives and the common operating environment (see figure 4). The matrix allows stakeholders and mission partners to select multiple common categories of effort as needed for stage 3. As depicted in figure 5, the coordination/facilitation group will create the initial matrix (a spreadsheet template) and distribute it to stakeholders and mission partners so they may fill in the spreadsheet as part of the stage 3 process.

Figure 4

Figure 5

Consolidated Input. Completing the matrix requires stakeholders and mission partners to choose a common objective, then reference each common operating environment and identify (in the light blue sections of the body of the matrix) which common categories of effort that are applied at the appropriate row and column intersection of common objectives and common operating environment. Stakeholders and mission partners should identify whether their organization has a Lead (L) or Contributing (C) role for each category of effort. Note that the term "Lead" may be eliminated in the Framework if it is not important to identify who is in charge or has coordinating authority for the mission or problem set. In these cases, all responses should be listed as "Contributing" for that category of effort.

Lead (L): A Lead stakeholder or mission partner has responsibility to plan, conduct operations, coordinate and lead the integrated USG effort involving those departments and agencies possessing capabilities and resources relevant to the mission or problem set. The lead organization may be determined by law (Title 50, Title 10), by directive (executive agent or lead federal agency designation), or by precedent in terms of established mission roles, responsibilities, and authorities. There can be multiple Leads identified in the Framework for multiple categories of effort.

Contributing (C): A stakeholder or mission partner that is executing, supporting, sharing, or otherwise involved and a part of the mission or problem set.

Ranking of Objectives and Environment. The ranking of objectives and the environment helps to identify major areas of effort or emphasis. Ranking can be based on an organization's established priorities, or it can be based on the volume of resources, programs, risk, or activities. Organizations may also prefer to highlight the intersections to indicate major areas of emphasis or effort.

Key Intersections. Key Intersections are those intersections that stakeholders and mission partners agree are the most important for planning and improving unity of effort. Selecting Key Intersections is best achieved through a face-to-face collaborative session with all stakeholders and mission partners participating. This type of session allows each organization to present their matrix input and perspectives for shared understanding. Key Intersections are denoted by placing a star in the selected cells (see figure 6).

Figure 6

Key Term

Key Intersections: Those intersections that stakeholders and mission partners agree are the most important for planning and to improve unity of effort.

Examples of Key Intersection criteria:

- Cells where stakeholders and mission partners believe that more in-depth information sharing in an optional stage 4 (Deep Dive) analysis would be useful to improve unity of effort

- Cells where a large amount of activity is occurring

- Cells that the stakeholders and mission partners agree are most important to accomplishing the objective based on priorities, opportunities, or return of investment

- Cells that are high priority

- Cells that the stakeholders and mission partners agree are most important to accomplishing the objective based on most pressing or emerging threats

- Total number of agencies contributing in a cell across the operational environment

- Total number of agencies that identified a cell as a major area of contribution through ranking

- Cells that reflect upcoming planning requirements

Stage 3 Outcome. Stakeholder and mission partners reach consensus on a consolidated matrix and identify Key Intersections for in-depth analysis in stage 4 (Deep Dive) (optional follow-on stage).

NOTE

For some missions or problem sets, the Framework may end at stage 3. Stage 4 in the Framework is useful only if additional work is desired or needed after stage 3 to identify capability/capacity gaps, coordinate activities, and/or develop specific recommendations to address inhibitors or impediments to unity of effort.

Stage 4: Coordination of Effort (The Deep Dive) Optional Follow-On Stage

Deep Dive. Stage 4 is useful only if additional work is desired or needed after stage 3 to identify capability/capacity gaps, coordinate activities, and/or develop specific recommendations to address inhibitors or impediments to unity of effort. This stage works best using a combined approach of online and face-to-face meetings between participating stakeholders and mission partners. The Deep Dive consists of an in-depth examination of selected Key Intersections and focused information sharing to set the conditions for coordination and coherency. It is focused on capabilities ("what and why"), capacity ("where, when, and how often"), and activities ("how capabilities are being accomplished"). During the Deep Dive, stakeholders and mission partners will share information regarding their capabilities, capacities, and activities for the Key Intersections selected during stage 3. Figure 7 is a Deep Dive template for a selected Key Intersection.

Figure 7

Deep Dive Activities. At this stage, similarities and differences in approach and timing will start to emerge. Stakeholders and mission partners should discuss the frequency and duration of activities in terms of quantity and quality. When combined, information starts to emerge for planners to identify activities to coordinate where there are opportunities for strong interagency partnerships, redundancies or overlaps, gaps in support requirements, seams in the operating environments that are not being covered, and shortfalls in resources. Another important aspect of improving unity of effort is the ability to identify common measures of progress and to change course as necessary. Where appropriate, common measures of progress may be identified for each common objective or for each selected Key Intersection as a projection of a desired end state. Common measures of progress represent high-level milestones or operating environment changes (good or bad) that could initiate another evaluation of USG goals and objectives. This should not be confused with measures of effectiveness or measures of performance.

Template Completion. The data for the stage 3 matrix selected Key Intersections is reviewed. Stakeholders are asked to complete the Deep Dive template for each category of effort where they are listed as Lead and/or Contributing. Using the template, each stakeholder enters the name of the Key Intersection and the information on capabilities, capacities, and activities across the row. Stakeholders and mission partners can add as many rows as needed, submitting their completed template to the coordination/facilitation group,

which will examine the information and build a consolidated template composed of input from all stakeholders and mission partners. This template is presented during a collaborative meeting (figure 8).

Figure 8 (Data is notional)

> **Stage 4 Outcome.** Recommendations based on opportunities for strong interagency partnerships, redundancies or overlaps, gaps in support requirements, seams in the operating environment, and shortfalls in resources discovered during the Deep Dive. Common measures of progress are determined as desired end states.

Conclusion

"Planning is strengthened by the inclusion of perspectives from other agencies with resulting plans reflecting a unity of U.S. government effort" (*3D Planning Guide*). This concept has been expressed frequently as a lesson learned from every conflict and disaster relief operation the USG has led or contributed to within the last decade. The Framework is designed to increase collaborative planning and synchronization within the DOD as well as between interagency and potentially multinational partners to address security issues, disaster response and other complex operations.

Utilization of the Framework by various USG stakeholders can help address complex challenges and improve unity of effort by revealing key intersections between stakeholders and mission partners in order to assist synchronizing their planning efforts. These intersections can highlight opportunities, threats, issues, as well as respective stakeholder's and mission partner's priorities.

Unity of effort requires an understanding of each organization's unique contributions. As the Framework is applied, partnerships and relationships are formed that need to be nurtured and formalized over time. Stakeholders and mission partners begin to see how they and others can plan and operate together toward common objectives. The Framework's biggest contribution to unity of effort is bringing people together and forming lasting professional relationships.

The *Unity of Effort Framework Solution Guide* is located at:

Intelink: https://intelshare.intelink.gov/sites/uoef/def.aspx

APAN: https://community.apan.org/bp-psf/default.aspx

Unity of Effort Framework JKO Course: J3OP-US1214

The Unity of Effort Framework Joint Knowledge Online (JKO) course introduces the Unity of Effort Framework. This Framework introduction includes how a Joint Force must partner with U.S. Government departments and agencies to achieve strategic goals and missions. This course provides detailed instruction on the concept of the Framework, the Framework's four stages, and elements of a successful Framework. This course also identifies the process of improving for unity of effort with interagency partners utilizing the Framework's definitions, templates, and instructions as well as the inherent challenges stemming from planning complex interagency missions.

First-time JKO Student with a Common Access Card (CAC). Go to https://jkolmsip.jten.mil and click "OK" on the DOD Warning Banner. Under Login Options, click "Login with CAC (Internet Explorer only)" and select your current CAC certificate in the "Select Certificate" pop up box and click "OK." Non-CAC users follow instructions provided on the login page to submit an account request to the JKO Help Desk.

First-time students are automatically directed to the "My Profile" page to establish a JKO account profile. Complete all required fields (marked by *) on the "My Profile" page, noting specific guidance below regarding your user name, organization and email.

JKO Student without a CAC. Click on the link "No-DoD CAC." This link will open an email to the JKO Help Desk that asks for the student's information. Fill out the information and submit. An account will be set up for the student and an email confirmation sent. This link enables anyone with a .com address, including multinational partners, to set up an account and take the Unity of Effort Framework JKO course.

If a student has a .com email, they will need to have a .gov/.mil sponsor to register on JKO Direct.

Take the Unity of Effort Framework Course.   Click on the "Course Catalog" tab and enter the course number "J3OP-US1214" in the first box. Click on the "Search" button. In the search results menu, click on the "Enroll" button. Go to your "My Training" tab and then click on "Launch" to begin taking the course. Follow the instructions for completing the course.