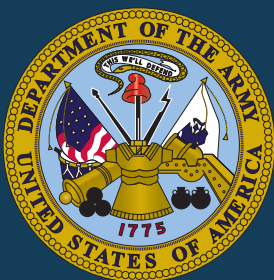


Joint Publication 3-0



Joint Campaigns and Operations



18 June 2022



(4) **Balance and Simultaneity**

(a) Commanders strive to apply the many dimensions of military power simultaneously throughout the OA. The challenge of balance and simultaneity affects all operations involving combat, particularly within campaigns, due to their scope. Consequently, JFCs often concentrate in some areas or on specific functions and require economy of force in others. However, plans for campaigns and major operations will normally exhibit a balance between offense, defense, and stabilization activities in various phases. Planning for stabilization activities should begin when joint planning begins.

(b) If the focus of the CCMD's ongoing campaign is on prevention and preparation, any stabilization activities in the JFC's proposed OA might continue, and offense and defense activities may be limited or absent. Defensive activities might be limited to providing an increased level of security. A similar balance applies to deterrence activities, whether conducted as part of the CCP or on initiation of an operation plan (OPLAN) since the intent is to limit escalation in the OA. A JFC might begin to limit stabilization activities if an enemy's or adversary's potential hostile actions are imminent. While conducting primarily offense or defense activities, the focus is destroying the enemy, while stabilization activities may diminish or increase in more secure areas of the OA. As the joint force achieves objectives and hostile acts abate, the focus shifts to actions to stabilize the OA and enable civil authority or establish a temporary military government if required. Stabilization activities increase or resume in proportion to the decrease in the enemy's hostile intent.

(c) Planning for the transition from sustained combat operations to assumption of responsibility by civil authority should begin during plan development and continue throughout a joint operation. An unnecessarily narrow focus on planning offensive and defensive operations may threaten stabilization and enabling civil authority efforts, thus negatively affecting joint operation momentum. Even during sustained combat operations, the joint force should establish or restore security and control and provide humanitarian relief as areas are occupied, bypassed, or returned to civilian control. Planning for FHA should be coordinated through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (if it has mission presence) and shared with the senior development advisor to the CDR to avoid duplication of effort in the HN.

9. Organizing Operational Areas

a. **General.** While the UCP assigns AORs, CDRs and other JFCs designate smaller OAs (e.g., JOA and AO) temporarily. OAs have physical dimensions composed of some combination of air, land, and maritime domains. While domains are useful constructs for visualizing and characterizing the physical environment in which operations unfold (the OA), the use of the term "domain" does not imply or mandate exclusivity, primacy, or C2 of any domain. The appropriate JFC specifies authorities and responsibilities within an OA. JFCs define these areas with geographical boundaries, which help commanders and staffs coordinate, integrate, and deconflict joint operations among joint force components and supporting commands. The size of an OA and types of forces employed depend on the scope and nature of the mission. Every type of OA has an associated area of interest

(AOI) and area(s) of influence. Understanding the relationship between the AOI, area of influence, and the assigned OA helps commanders and staffs order their thoughts during both planning and execution.

(1) An **AOI** includes the area of influence and adjacent areas and extends into hostile territory to the objectives of current or planned operations. An AOI focuses intelligence support for monitoring activities pertinent to the OA that may affect operations. The commander may describe the AOI graphically, but the resulting graphic does not represent a boundary or other control measure.

(2) An **area of influence** is a geographic area wherein a commander is directly capable of influencing operations by maneuver or fire support systems normally under the commander's command or control. The area of influence normally surrounds and includes the assigned OA. The extent of a subordinate command's area of influence is one factor the higher commander considers when defining the subordinate's OA. Understanding the command's area of influence helps the commander and staff plan branches to the current operation that could require the force to employ capabilities outside the assigned OA. The commander can describe the area of influence graphically, but the resulting graphic does not represent a boundary or other control measure for maneuver or fire support.

b. **CCMD-Level Areas.** When warranted, the President, SecDef, or CCDRs may designate a theater of war and/or theater of operations for each operation (see Figure IV-2). CCDRs can elect to control operations directly in these OAs or may establish subordinate joint forces for that purpose while remaining focused on the broader AOR. Operations that span CCMD boundaries may expose gaps in C2. DOD uses a mix of formal and informal processes to synchronize actions between AORs.

(1) **AOR.** An AOR is a geographical area established by the UCP within which a CCDR has the authority to plan for and conduct operations. CCDRs may operate forces wherever required to accomplish approved missions. CCDRs must coordinate cross-AOR operations among the affected CCMDs.

(2) **Theater of War.** The President, SecDef, or CCDR establishes a theater of war, which is a geographic area for campaigns and major operations involving combat. The United States establishes a theater of war when there is a formal declaration of war or it is necessary to encompass more than one theater of operations (or a JOA and a separate theater of operations) within a single boundary for C2, sustainment, protection, or mutual support. A theater of war may not encompass a CCDR's entire AOR but may cross the boundaries of two or more AORs.

(3) **Theater of Operations.** A theater of operations is an OA defined by the CCDR for the conduct or support of specific military operations. A theater of operations is established primarily when the scope and scale of the operation or campaign exceeds what a JOA can normally accommodate. More than one joint force HQ can exist in a theater of operations. A CCDR may establish one or more theaters of operations. Different

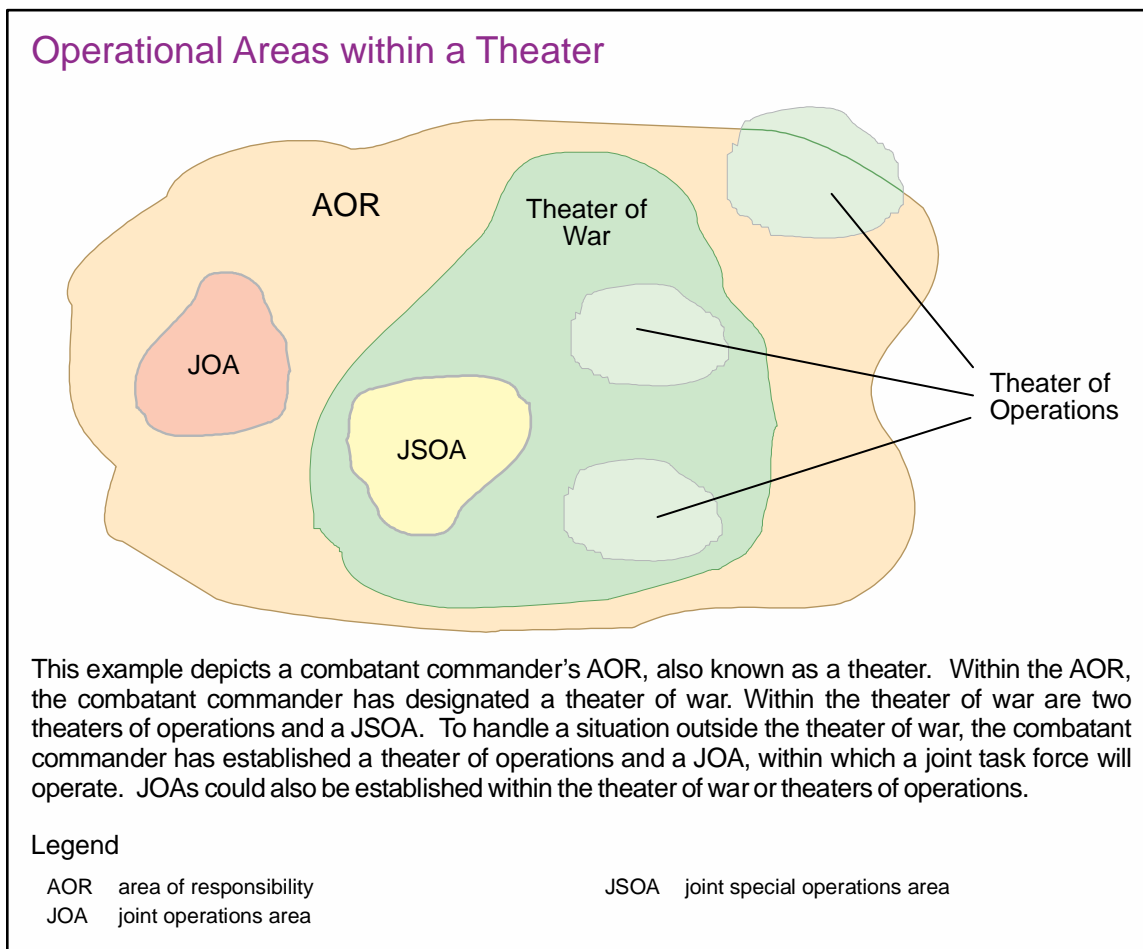


Figure IV-2. Operational Areas within a Theater

theaters will normally focus on different missions. A theater of operations typically is smaller than a theater of war but is large enough to allow for operations in-depth and over extended periods. Theaters of operations are normally associated with campaigns and major operations and may cross the boundary of two or more AORs.

c. For operations somewhat limited in scope and duration, or for specialized activities, the commander can establish the following OAs.

(1) **JOA.** A JOA is an area of land, sea, airspace, and cyberspace defined by a CDR or subordinate unified commander, in which a JFC (normally a commander, joint task force [CJTF]) conducts military operations to accomplish a specific mission. JOAs are particularly useful when operations have a limited scope and geographic area or when operations cross the boundaries of AORs or cover geography between two theaters (see Figure IV-3).

(2) **Joint Special Operations Area (JSOA).** A JSOA is an area of land, sea, and airspace assigned by a JFC to the commander of SOF to conduct special operations activities. It may be limited in size to accommodate a discreet DA mission or may be

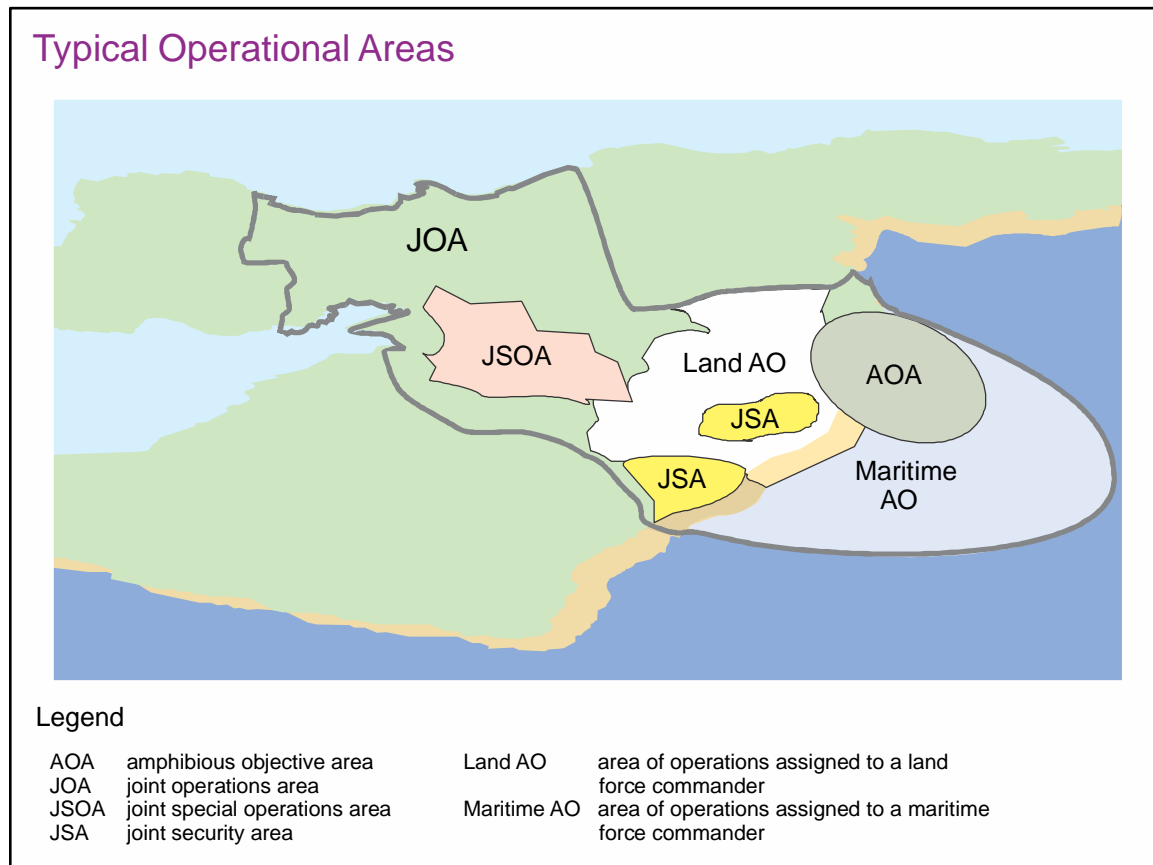


Figure IV-3. Typical Operational Areas

extensive enough to allow a continuing broad range of UW operations. JFCs may use a JSOA to delineate and facilitate simultaneous conventional and special operations. The JFSOCC is the supported commander within the JSOA.

For additional guidance on JSOAs, refer to JP 3-05, Joint Doctrine for Special Operations.

(3) **Amphibious Objective Area (AOA).** An AOA is normally established by the JFC or JFMCC for amphibious operations. The AOA is an area specifically for amphibious force operations. This area should be of adequate size to accomplish the amphibious force's mission and must provide enough area for conducting necessary maritime, air, and land operations.

For additional guidance on AOAs, refer to JP 3-02, Amphibious Operations.

(4) **AO.** JFCs may define AOs for land and maritime forces. AOs do not typically encompass their entire OA but should be large enough for component commanders to accomplish their missions (to include a designated amount of airspace) and protect their forces. Component commanders with AOs typically designate subordinate AOs within which their subordinate forces operate. These commanders employ the full range of joint and Service control measures and graphics as coordinated with other

component commanders and their representatives to delineate responsibilities, deconflict operations, and achieve unity of effort.

d. Contiguous and Noncontiguous OAs

(1) OAs may be contiguous or noncontiguous (see Figure IV-4). When they are contiguous, a boundary separates them. When OAs are noncontiguous, subordinate commands do not share a boundary. The higher HQ retains responsibility for the unassigned portion of its OA.

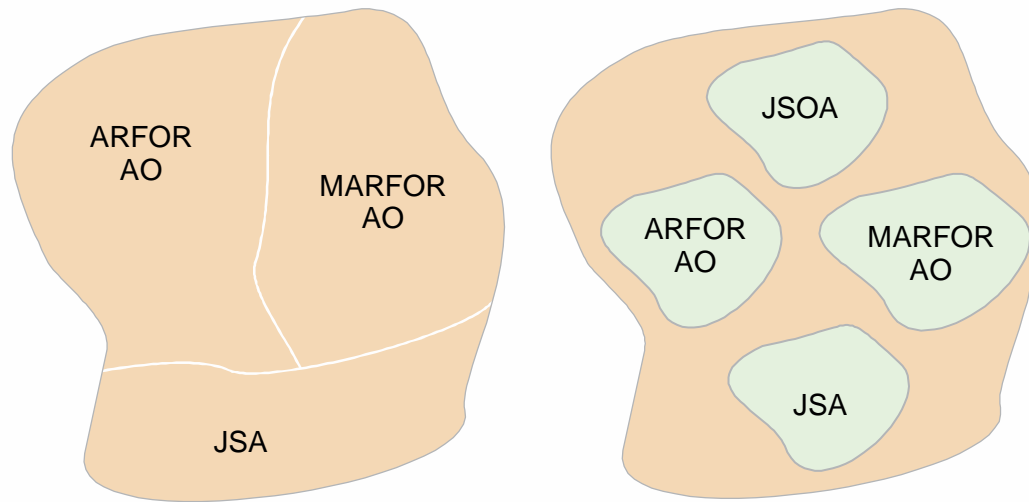
(2) In some operations, a Service or functional component (typically the land component) could have such a large OA that the component's subordinate units operate in a noncontiguous manner, widely distributed and beyond mutually supporting range of each other. In these cases, the JFC should consider options whereby joint capabilities are allocated at the level and placed under the control of units that can employ them most effectively.

e. Considerations When Assuming Responsibility for an OA. The establishing commander should activate an assigned OA at a specified date and time based on mission and situation considerations addressed during COA analysis and wargaming. Common considerations include C2, the IE, intelligence requirements, communications support, protection, security, LOCs, terrain management, movement control, airspace control, surveillance, reconnaissance, air and missile defense, PR, targeting and fires, interorganizational coordination, and environmental issues.

10. Linear and Nonlinear Operations

a. In linear operations, each commander directs and sustains combat power toward enemy forces in concert with adjacent units. In linear operations, emphasis is on maintaining the position of friendly forces in relation to other friendly forces. From this relative positioning of forces, security is enhanced and the massing of forces can be facilitated. Also inherent in linear operations is the security of rear areas, especially LOCs between sustaining bases and fighting forces. Protected LOCs, in turn, increase the endurance of joint forces and ensure freedom of action for extended periods. A linear OA organization may be best for some operations. Conditions that favor linear operations include those where US forces lack the information needed to conduct nonlinear operations or adequate forces. Linear operations are also appropriate against a deeply arrayed, echeloned enemy force or when the threat to LOCs reduces friendly force freedom of action. In these circumstances, linear operations enable commanders to concentrate and synchronize combat power more efficiently.

Contiguous and Noncontiguous Operational Areas



Contiguous

Adjacent, subordinate command's operational areas share boundaries. In this case, the higher headquarters has assigned all of its operational area to subordinate commands.

Noncontiguous

Subordinate commands are assigned operational areas that do not share boundaries. The higher headquarters retains responsibility for the portion of its operational area not assigned to subordinate commands.

Legend

AO area of operations
ARFOR Army forces
JSA joint security area

JSOA joint special operations area
MARFOR Marine Corps forces

Figure IV-4. Contiguous and Noncontiguous Operational Areas

b. **In nonlinear operations**, forces orient on objectives without geographic reference to adjacent forces. Nonlinear operations typically focus on creating specific effects on multiple decisive points. Nonlinear operations emphasize operations along multiple LOOs from selected bases (ashore or afloat). In nonlinear operations, sustaining functions may depend on sustainment assets moving with forces or aerial delivery. Noncombatants, civilians, and the fluidity of nonlinear operations require careful judgment in clearing fires, both direct and indirect. Situational awareness, coupled with precision fires, frees commanders to act against multiple objectives. Swift maneuver against several decisive points supported by precise, concentrated fire can induce paralysis and shock among enemy forces and commanders. The joint forces orient more on their assigned objectives (e.g., destroying an enemy force or seizing and controlling critical terrain or population centers) and less on their geographic relationship to other friendly forces. For protection, individual forces rely more on situational awareness, mobility advantages, and freedom of action than on mass. Nonlinear operations place a premium on the communications, intelligence, mobility, and innovative means for sustainment.

(1) During **nonlinear offensive operations**, attacking forces must focus offensive actions against decisive points, while allocating the minimum-essential combat power to defensive operations. Reserves must have a high degree of mobility to respond where needed. JFCs may dedicate combat forces to provide for LOC and base defense. Vulnerability increases as operations extend, and attacking forces operate over a larger OA. Linkup operations, particularly those involving vertical envelopments, require extensive planning and preparation. The potential for friendly fire incidents increases with the fluid nature of the nonlinear OA and the changing disposition of attacking and defending forces.

(2) During **nonlinear defensive operations**, defenders focus on destroying enemy forces, even if it means losing physical contact with other friendly units. Successful nonlinear defenses require all friendly commanders to understand the JFCs intent and maintain a COP. Noncontiguous defenses are generally mobile defenses; however, some subordinates may conduct area defenses. Nonlinear defenses place a premium on reconnaissance and surveillance to maintain contact with the enemy, produce relevant information, and develop and maintain a COP. The defending force focuses almost exclusively on defeating the enemy force rather than retaining large areas. Although less challenging than in offensive operations, LOC and sustainment security will still be a test. Securing sustainment operations and infrastructure may require the allocation of combat forces to protect LOCs and other high-risk functions or bases. The JFC must establish clear command relationships to properly account for the added challenges to base, base cluster, and LOC security.

c. AOs and Linear/Nonlinear Operations

(1) **General.** JFCs consider incorporating combinations of contiguous and noncontiguous AOs with linear and nonlinear operations as they conduct operational design. They choose the combination that fits the OE and the purpose of the operation. Association of contiguous and noncontiguous AOs with linear and nonlinear operations creates the four combinations in Figure IV-5.

(2) **Linear Operations in Contiguous AOs.** Linear operations in contiguous AOs (upper left-hand pane in Figure IV-5) typify sustained offensive and defensive operations against powerful, echeloned, and symmetrically organized forces. The contiguous areas and continuous forward line of own troops focus on combat power and protect sustainment functions.

(3) **Linear Operations in Noncontiguous AOs.** The upper right-hand pane of Figure IV-5 depicts a JFC's OA with subordinate component commanders conducting linear operations in noncontiguous AOs. In this case, the JFC retains responsibility for that portion of the OA outside the subordinate commanders' AOs.

(4) **Nonlinear Operations in Contiguous AOs.** The lower left-hand pane in Figure IV-5 illustrates the JFC's entire assigned OA divided into subordinate AOs. Subordinate component commanders are conducting nonlinear operations within their AOs. This combination is typically associated with stabilization activities and DSCA.

Combinations of Areas of Operations and Linear/Nonlinear Operations

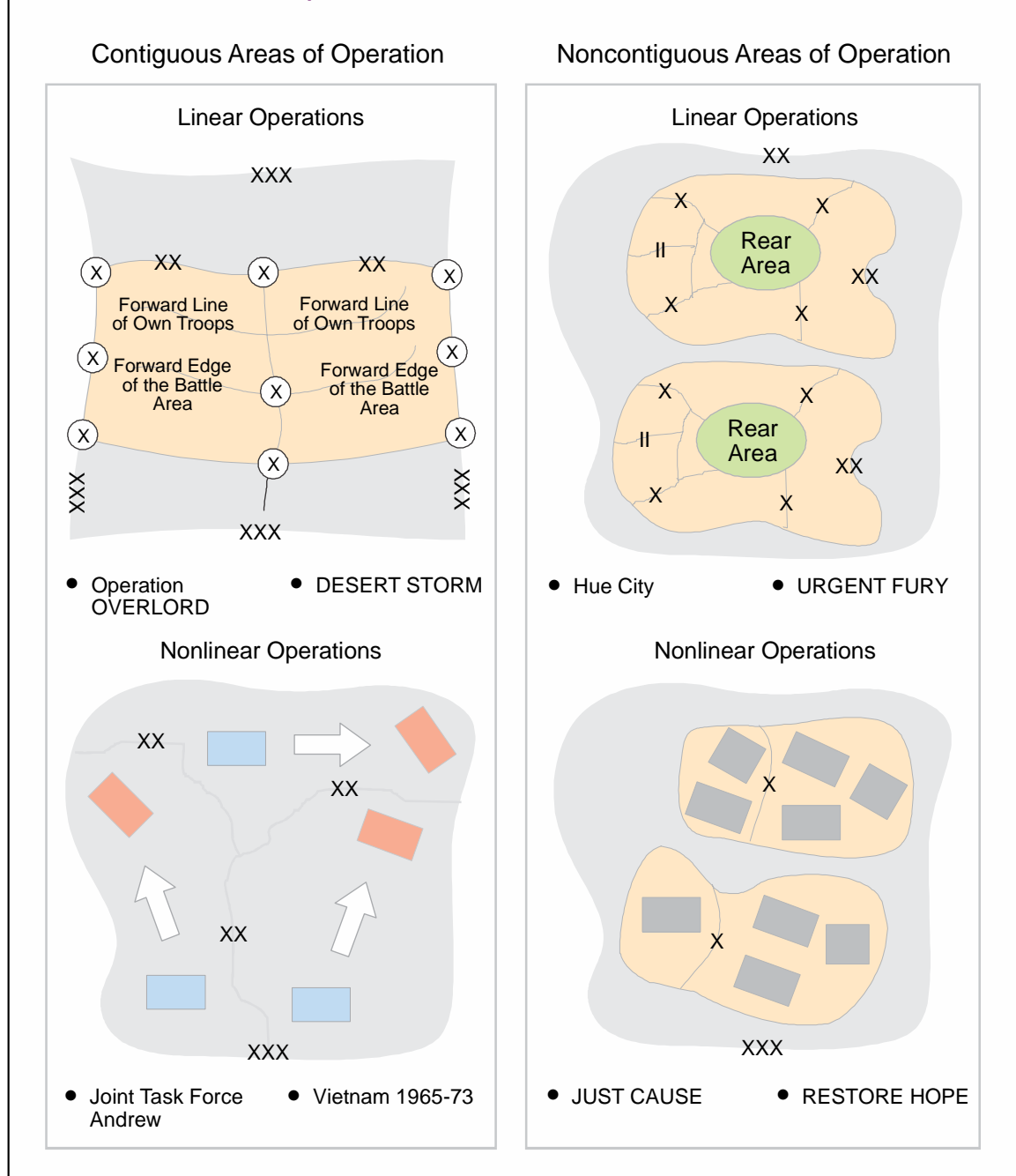


Figure IV-5. Combinations of Areas of Operations and Linear/Nonlinear Operations

(5) **Nonlinear Operations in Noncontiguous AOs.** The lower right-hand pane of Figure IV-5 depicts a JFC's OA with subordinate component commanders conducting nonlinear operations in noncontiguous AOs. In this case, the JFC retains responsibility for that portion of the OA outside the subordinate commanders' AOs.

