

Appendix N offers specific planning considerations for humanitarian assistance/disaster response operations and due to the nature of such an operation, time is of the essence. Any time spent conducting contingency planning for humanitarian assistance/disaster response before the event occurs will pay dividends as the crisis unfolds. Once again, the GCC's existing contingency plans on humanitarian assistance/disaster response should be reviewed by maritime forces in the region, and certainly those that are forward positioned. The planning team and the commander should also be familiar with appendix M to ascertain ways to complete the planning in time-sensitive circumstances.

A.2.3 Maritime Security

There is a range of Navy doctrine that addresses the many facets of maritime security. While each maritime security activity is unique and requires a close examination by staff estimates (see appendix K) before initiating planning, there are some common denominators the planning team will discover in most maritime security planning events—partners and legal considerations.

Most maritime security operations will entail a requirement for cooperation with or subordination to a multinational partner or civil law enforcement body. These arrangements may necessitate some minor accommodations to the NPP to ensure the process is compatible with the expectations of the partners. Coordination may be easily accomplished by using liaisons from the partner country/organization as members of the planning team or by the maritime command's liaison representing the command's planning efforts as part of the partner country/organization's planning. It is imperative that the maritime command avoid planning in a vacuum.

The importance of staff estimates has already been mentioned, however, the legal estimate is especially critical to a maritime security operation. The planners shall have a sharp view of the legal authorities of the operation. This will drive the concept development as well as rules of engagement or rules for use of force.

A.3 NAVAL CORE CAPABILITIES AND THE OBJECTIVES OF NAVAL WARFARE

The principal objective of war at sea is to establish sea control that enables joint force power projection. The NPP is well suited to support all aspects of sea control and power projection, however, in order to appreciate the risks and opportunities of sea control planning, there is a requirement for the OPT to have a thorough understanding of sea control and sea denial. The doctrinal definitions of maritime superiority/supremacy and sea control operations are inadequate for the nonmaritime planner to understand combat employment of U.S. maritime forces. For naval planners it is critical to understand that sea control is rarely complete, permanent, and absolute. It is always relative and hence various degrees of sea control exist in terms of the factors of space, time, and force. Sea control is, in fact, only one portion of the lexicon that a naval planner should understand when considering the objectives of naval warfare. Other objectives are sea denial, choke point control/denial, basing/deployment area control/denial, and destruction of the adversary's and preservation of United States'/friendly military-economic potential at sea.³ The following paragraphs provide the reader with a range of considerations for each of the maritime objectives.

A.3.1 Sea Control

Sea control refers to one's ability to use a given part of the sea/ocean and associated airspace for both military and nonmilitary purposes in time of open hostilities. Sea control is not an aspect of peacetime power projection—a frequent misconception. Sea control is obtained only through combat. Hence, the United States Navy's forward presence in itself is not sea control. The United States forward presence is conducted with full respect for international treaties and conventions and without violating territorial waters of other countries. In peacetime, any navy, regardless of its size or combat strength, has almost unlimited access to any sea or ocean area. Forward deployment of United States naval forces only creates favorable conditions to obtain and then maintain sea control quickly after the start of hostilities.

³ For a deeper examination of warfare at sea, see: Till, Geoffrey. *Seapower: A guide for the Twenty-First Century*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2009, and Vego, Milan. *Operational Warfare at Sea: Theory and Practice*. New York: Routledge, 2009.

Sea control in the littorals is highly dependent on the Navy's ability not only to obtain and maintain sufficient degree of control of the surface and subsurface but also control of the air. Land or carrier-based aircraft play an extraordinary role in obtaining sea control in the littorals. Without air superiority, sea control in the littorals simply cannot be obtained/maintained and exercised.

Sea control can undergo drastic changes over time. It could be a case in which, when one side has sea control, the weaker side can make that control increasingly difficult and ultimately obtain control for itself. Even in the areas where a stronger side possesses substantial degree of control of surface and subsurface, the weaker side can still operate under certain conditions provided that it enjoys a certain level of sea control through air superiority.⁴

Sea control can be strategic, operational, and tactical in scale. Strategic sea control pertains to the entire maritime theater, while control of a major part of a maritime theater represents operational sea control. Tactical sea control pertains to control of a naval/maritime combat sector (or zone) but sometimes can encompass a maritime area of operations.

A.3.1.1 Degrees of Sea Control

The degree of sea control enjoyed by one's Navy in a given ocean/sea area can considerably vary depending on the factors of space, time, and force.

In terms of the factor of space, sea control can be general (complete) or local. General sea control means that the weaker side is incapable of offering any effective and sustained resistance to the stronger side at sea. The side that obtains sea control can carry out its main tasks. General sea control on the open ocean usually means that one side in a war has control of sea lines of communications. Normally, because of the vast size of the ocean area, the boundaries of the stronger side's control and the extent to which that control is disputed by the weaker side cannot be precisely determined. In contrast, control of a typical narrow sea or its major parts can be obtained because of the much smaller physical space. Both the stronger and weaker fleets usually maintain control of the ocean or sea areas near their coasts. The scope of that control would depend on the Navy's ability to neutralize the threat posed by adversary submarines, surface combatants, land-based aircraft, mines, and coastal artillery/antiship missile systems.

Local sea control exists when one side possesses superiority in the part of the sea or ocean area that is operationally significant for executing a specific task. Sometimes local control of such an area must be obtained to carry out an amphibious landing or to strike the adversary's coastal installations/facilities. Drastic changes of the situation are common and local control is often only temporary. Sometimes local control by a weaker force might inhibit the stronger force from conducting offensive actions, not only in the same theater, but also in adjacent waters outside the theater. In the archipelago type of coast, local sea control can be obtained by seizing a series of important island positions. However, control of a stretch of the mainland coast is almost invariably necessary to control the adjacent sea and offshore islands for any length of time.

The degree of overall control of a given sea/ocean area depends on the degree of control of surface, subsurface, and airspace. Normally, in a conflict between two strong opponents at sea, it is not possible to obtain or maintain control of all three physical mediums to the same degree or for an extended time.

In terms of the factor of time, sea control can be permanent or temporary. Permanent sea control exists when the stronger side completely dominates a given maritime theater, either because the other side does not have any means to deny that control or because its naval force has been completely destroyed. In practice, it is more common that the weaker side still has some means at its disposal to challenge the stronger side's control. Permanent sea control does not mean that the opponent can do nothing but rather that he cannot interfere with one's shipping or amphibious landings in such a way as to seriously affect the course of the war. Permanent sea control means that one's adversary cannot use shipping or carry out maritime expeditions except at an unacceptably high risk.

⁴ Poeschel, "Ueber die Seeherrschaft (I)," p. 42.

Temporary sea control often results from the inability of either side to obtain a decision. The weaker side at sea then usually falls back on the defensive and keeps a major part of its fleet in bases, avoiding any decisive action at sea. If a weaker opponent succeeds in obtaining superiority in the air, this in itself could be sufficient for using the sea for a specific purpose and for a limited time.

In terms of the factor of force, sea control can range from absolute to contested. It can also mean the free use of particular types of ships but not others. Absolute sea control means, in practice, that one's naval force operates with little threat while the adversary fleet cannot operate at all. It aims in general to obtain sea control of the entire theater, or the major part of the theater, so that one can employ one's fleet whenever and wherever required without threat from the adversary. The weaker side then cannot employ its submarines, aircraft, or mines. In practice, control of large sea/ocean areas cannot be absolute in terms of either space or time in the presence of an undefeated and strong opponent. The only exception is when one side possesses a fleet and the other does not and has no other means to dispute control.

In theory, absolute but temporary sea control exists when one side, for only a short duration, enjoys superiority over its opponent in the entire theater. However, this objective could be accomplished only in absence of a peer competitor on the open ocean. However, in a typical narrow sea and facing a weak opponent, the United States Navy can possibly obtain almost absolute and permanent control of the sea surface and airspace, and possibly control the subsurface as well.

Limited sea control is usually the result of the drastic shift in the operational or strategic situation when the initiative passes from one side to the other. Then one side in the conflict has a high degree of freedom to act while the other operates at high risk. The side that has lost the initiative, however, still may be strong enough to inflict significant losses upon the stronger side. Limited sea control is inherently transitory and, hence, unstable. Limited sea control exists when only one type of ship can operate without undue risks, while other types of ships operate at high or unacceptable risks.

When absolute control cannot be obtained, one's naval force should try to secure temporary control of limited sea or ocean areas for conducting operations necessary to the successful progress of the war. Such control can be exercised to the extent in space and time that one's contemplated operations may be planned and executed without fear of interference from the weaker force. The weaker side would carry out mostly minor actions but at considerable risk.

In terms of risks for one's forces, a distinction is made between maritime superiority and maritime supremacy. Maritime superiority is a degree of sea control of a given sea/ocean area and associated airspace that allows one's forces and commercial shipping/aircraft to operate at a low and moderate risk. Maritime supremacy is a degree of control of a given sea/ocean area and associated airspace that allows one's force and commercial shipping/aircraft to operate at very low or no risk at all.

A.3.1.2 Struggle for Sea Control

Struggle for sea control consists of three interrelated phases: obtaining, maintaining, and exercising sea control. Obtaining sea control is aimed to accomplish operational/strategic objectives. Once sea control is obtained, one's naval force and friendly navies must maintain a desired degree of control in order to consolidate strategic or operational success. Exploitation of that success is achieved by exercising sea control. In practice, there is no sharp delineation between obtaining, maintaining, and exercising sea control; they all overlap in terms of both time and space.

The main methods in obtaining sea control are destruction of the adversary's naval forces at sea or at their bases, destruction of the adversary's land-based aircraft in the littoral area, neutralization of the adversary's naval forces through blockade, weakening the adversary forces over time (attrition), and capturing the adversary's naval basing area. In the initial phase of a war at sea, the main methods of combat employment of United States maritime forces aimed to obtain sea control should be major naval/joint operations. In the littorals, such major operations are often conducted in a joint environment with air, and in some cases ground, force participation.

After a certain degree of sea control is obtained, the maritime force, supported by the other Services, has to maintain it. This will be accomplished by destroying/neutralizing the remaining adversary's strength at sea and in the air. Tactical actions conducted by the Navy and other Services will be mostly conducted in this phase of struggle for sea control.

Exercising or exploiting sea control is the final phase of the struggle for sea control. In operational terms, it pertains to exploiting operational or strategic success. The ultimate purpose of obtaining sea control is to project power on the adversary's shore. For a blue-water navy, power projection is one of the principal tasks in case of a high-intensity conventional war. In many cases, actions that are predominantly conducted in the phase of exercising control are conducted as soon as the sufficient degree of sea control is obtained. In exercising sea control, one's maritime force conducts diverse tasks ranging from posing a threat to the adversary critical positions, containing the adversary's forces, landing on the unopposed or opposed shore, destroying adversary forces in the coastal area and facilities/installations ashore, conducting commercial blockade, and providing support to friendly ground forces in their offensive or defensive operations on the coast.

A.3.1.3 Sea Denial

Sea denial pertains to one's ability to deny partially or completely the adversary's use of the sea and associated airspace for military and commercial purposes. It is the principal objective of a weaker side at sea. It is also possible that the United States Navy might, in some cases, be forced to have sea denial as its principal strategic or operational objective. However, as soon as the ratio of forces is changed to its advantage, the United States Navy and its partners should obtain sea control in a given part of a maritime theater. Winning the war at sea cannot be achieved by being on the defensive.

Denying the use of the sea to an opponent has often been regarded as the opposite of sea control but this is an oversimplification. If a weaker side denies control of the sea to a stronger opponent, this does not mean that it necessarily obtains control itself.⁵ Sea control and sea denial are often complementary objectives. Sea denial may be used to help secure one's use of the sea, in either the same geographical area or elsewhere.

A.3.1.4 Disputed Sea Control

Disputed sea control occurs when the opposing sides possess roughly equal capabilities and opportunities to obtain sea control in a theater as a whole (or in one of its parts) and there is no significant change in the ratio of forces, nor change of the initiative to either side. Disputed sea control often occurs in the initial phase of a war. It is characterized by an almost continuous struggle for control of certain sea or ocean areas. However, once control is obtained, it is usually not maintained for a long time and may be lost from time to time and then regained. In coastal or offshore waters, sea control by a stronger fleet can be disputed even if the major part of a weaker fleet is destroyed.

When control is in dispute on the open ocean, both sides operate at high risk, because their strength is approximately in balance. One side usually controls one or more parts of a given maritime theater, while its opponent controls the remaining part. Each side's control of a specific sea area is usually limited in time. In the littorals, however, disputing or contesting sea control differs from that in the open ocean in that the task is primarily carried out by one's submarines, small surface combatants, coastal artillery/missile batteries, land-based aircraft, and mines. In a war on the open ocean, major parts of a theater might not be controlled by either side.

The main methods for a force to dispute sea control are through attrition of an adversary's naval forces and land-based air strength, strategic diversion, posing a threat to the adversary's critical positions, avoiding a decisive encounter with the adversary's forces (fleet-in-being),⁶ naval and commercial counter-blockade, and providing support to friendly forces in their operations on the coast.

⁵ B. Mitchell Simpson III, *The Development of Naval Thought: Essays by Herbert Rosinski*, (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1977), p. xix.

⁶ Fleet-in-being is a broad term that encompasses a number of related naval options to conduct sea denial using an inferior naval force (in terms of number or quality), with no hope of gaining sea control by normal methods. Fleet-in-being options seek to preserve one's naval power and avoid risking a decisive engagement with a stronger force. See Till, *Seapower*, for a detailed discussion on the topic.

A.3.1.5 Information Superiority

Information superiority is the operational advantage derived from the ability to collect, process, and disseminate an uninterrupted flow of information while exploiting or denying an adversary's ability to do the same. Two of the commander's priorities are to gain information superiority at the appropriate times to support operations, and to control the information environment. These can be critical, sometimes decisive, factors in campaigns and major operations.

Commanders and their staffs need to make information a priority and expect their units to capitalize on the synergy between information and other lines of operation. It is not always practical to maintain continuous information superiority, so specific focus shall be applied at those times when it is necessary to support operations.

A.3.1.6 Choke-Point Control/Denial

Sea control is hardly possible without establishing not only control on the open ocean but also direct or indirect control of several critical straits/narrows of vital importance to the world's maritime trade or by obtaining control of a given enclosed or semi-enclosed sea theater—denying choke-point control. The objective for a weaker side is just the opposite: choke-point control denial. In either case, this objective would normally require the highest degree of cooperation among naval forces and other Services.

The military importance of choke points varies depending on their geographic location and position. About 200 straits worldwide have some international importance. Such straits are both the hubs and the most vulnerable segments of sea communications linking enclosed or semi-enclosed seas with other sea or open ocean areas. They also can be used to effectively block the exit or entry of hostile naval forces or the transit of an adversary's merchant ships. Control of one shore, or preferably both shores, of a strait/narrows in peacetime considerably enhances one's ability to obtain control of the adjacent sea or ocean areas shortly after the outbreak of hostilities. Control of an important strait or narrows is usually critical for the movement or transit of one's forces for either offensive or defensive operations.

A.3.1.7 Basing/Deployment Area Control/Denial

One of the principal and most important tasks of any navy is obtaining and maintaining and then expanding control of its own basing and deployment areas (seaports of embarkation and debarkation). Without securing control of one's basing and deployment area it is difficult, if not impossible, to prepare and execute major naval/joint operations. This objective is especially critical for a navy operating in the littorals.

Basing/deployment area control is an integral part of a broader task, operational protection within a maritime theater. Control of a navy's basing and deployment area is an operational objective in a time of open hostilities. The objective will be to ensure the safety of one's naval and other forces at their bases and deployment areas from adversary attacks on the sea, the air, and the ground. This is accomplished principally through the series of related and diverse tactical actions conducted during the open hostilities. Defensive tactical actions include reconnaissance and patrolling or surveillance in one's coastal waters; air defense; defense against adversary submarines, defense against adversary combat craft, combat swimmers, and commandos; offensive/defensive mining, and mine countermeasures (MCM), and defense against weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Offensive actions encompass strikes or attacks against forces threatening one's bases and ports, naval and air bases and ports, and other installations and facilities on the coast. Protection of one's basing and deployment areas is significantly enhanced by conducting diverse passive and active measures—specifically, electronic warfare, countering adversary reconnaissance or surveillance, and conducting cover, concealment, and deception.

A.3.1.8 Destruction/Preservation of Military-Economic Potential at Sea

Destruction of the adversary's and preservation of the United States and friendly military-economic potential at sea is generically called maritime trade warfare. It is conducted throughout the entire duration of war. In the broader context, one's attack on adversary maritime trade and defense/protection of friendly maritime trade is an integral part of the strategic objective to weaken the adversary's military-economic potential.

Maritime trade warfare is one of the most important objectives for the United States Navy in case of a high-intensity conventional war at sea and consists of two related components: attack on the adversary's trade and defense and protection of friendly maritime trade. Planning teams should consider the second and third order impacts of maritime trade interdiction when planning and executing maritime trade warfare.⁷

The ultimate objective of the attack on maritime trade is to destroy or significantly reduce the adversary's maritime trade in a given theater and thereby weaken its ability to prosecute the war. Attack on the adversary's maritime trade should be conducted methodically over a relatively large area and against selected elements of the adversary's maritime transportation system. Specifically, this objective is accomplished by destroying adversary merchant ships at sea and in ports, escort forces, commercial ports/anchorages, cargo loading and off loading facilities, rail/road junctions in the coastal area, shipyards and ship repair facilities, and shipping-related industries. In enclosed seas, attacks on the adversary and to protect one's own maritime trade will normally be conducted with the full participation of not only by maritime forces but also air and ground Services.

An attack on an adversary's maritime trade is inherently attritional, because maritime trade is conducted almost continuously from the beginning to the end of the hostilities at sea. The principal methods of combat force employment in attacking adversary maritime trade in the littorals are tactical actions. Major naval/joint operations planned to interrupt or cut off adversary maritime trade will be conducted only occasionally.

The United States and its allies and friends are highly dependent on the uninterrupted flow of goods, especially oil/gas and minerals, in time of peace. This requirement for the flow of goods over sea lines of communications (SLOCs) will be more challenging and difficult in case of a war in areas of the world's oceans that are vital for the functioning of international maritime trade.

Maritime trade is made secure by organizing the defense and protection of not only commercial shipping at sea but also all other elements of trade: port terminals, cargo storage depots, shipbuilding and ship repair facilities, railway/road junctions, and railway/road traffic in the littoral area. In the littorals, these tasks cannot be successful without the closest cooperation between the Navy, other Services, maritime partners, and in some cases, merchant marine organizations.

Destruction or neutralization of the adversary forces that pose a threat to one's maritime trade can best be achieved through a combination of offensive and defensive actions. Optimally, the adversary surface ships and aircraft should be destroyed at their bases or during transit to their respective operating areas. These objectives can best be accomplished by mounting a series of offensive major naval/joint operations at the very outset of hostilities. Subsequently, offensive tactical actions and, occasionally, major naval operations will be conducted when the operational situation in the theater is favorable.

A.4 APPLICATION OF THE NAVY PLANNING PROCESS

By using the NPP, a commander can effectively plan for and execute operations, ensure that the employment of forces is linked to objectives, and seamlessly integrate operations with the activities of the entire joint force. Appreciation for and use of precise vocabulary, such as discussed above, and adherence to doctrine, are critical to ensuring Navy planning and execution activities are understood and compatible with those of the other Services.

The planning process allows the commander and staff to plan for and execute operations effectively, to ensure that the employment of forces is linked to objectives, and to integrate naval operations seamlessly with the actions of a joint force. Understanding the six core capabilities and how they are supported by and integrated into the NPP will assist commanders and their staffs in analyzing operational environment effects and distilling a multitude of planning necessary to develop a coherent framework to support decisions. The process is thorough and applies clarity, sound judgment, logic, and professional expertise.

⁷ See appendix G for a review of the relationship between effects, objectives, and end states.

NWP 5-01

Success in naval warfare is founded on properly applying sound doctrine and understanding the principles of war. With a foundation established and reinforced through continuing education and training program, along with an understanding of naval core capabilities, the Navy is better able to plan operations and readily adapt when situations change.

Navy training and education are based on doctrine. Within this common framework of understanding, the Navy maintains readiness for war by tasking forces with day-to-day missions and exercising tactics, techniques, procedures, and planning.

The implementation framework of the maritime strategy provides guidance to inform the development of other documents such as supporting plans, doctrine, and concepts. The Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard conduct many missions but six capabilities are the core of United States naval power: forward presence, deterrence, sea control, power projection, maritime security, and FHA. It is through these six capabilities that the maritime strategy provides a framework for doctrine to articulate how the Navy fights and operates.