

**SUPREME HEADQUARTERS ALLIED POWERS EUROPE**

**BELGIUM**

# **An Introduction to Operations Planning at the Operational Level**



**A summary of the**

**ALLIED COMMAND OPERATIONS**

**COMPREHENSIVE OPERATIONS PLANNING DIRECTIVE**

**(COPD) INTERIM V2.0 dated 4 Oct 13**

Intentionally Blank

## Introduction

1. **Aim.** To provide planning staff at the operational level with a summary of the COPD to assist them in the Operations Planning Process (OPP) as articulated in Chapter 4 (operational level) of the COPD; this also serves as an overview of the OPP for staff at OF-5/A-5 level and above.
2. **Scope.** This summary concentrates on the OPP at the operational level, mirroring the process at the military strategic level, the NATO Crisis Management Process (NCMP). The six-phase process (Figure 1) covers the full spectrum of a crisis from identification of a potential crisis through to successful resolution; the NCMP should be seen as providing the Alliance's overarching procedural architecture against which both military and non-military crisis response planning processes should be designed<sup>1</sup>. This summary does not cover Phase 5 or Phase 6.

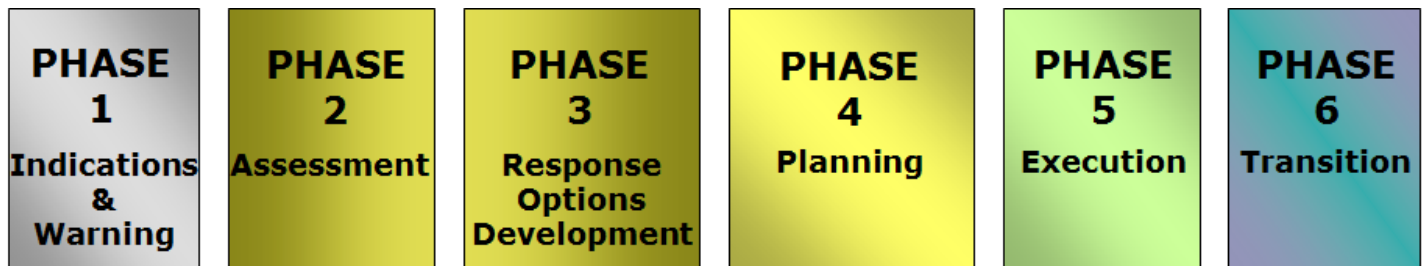


Figure 1: The NCMP

3. **Layout.** The first section is a general overview of the NCMP at the strategic level and the planning products for which SHAPE is responsible. Thereafter, activities during phases 1 to 4 of the NCMP are laid out across two pages. The left hand page shows the activities conducted in that phase, input and output with reference to the respective paragraph in the COPD (black text in a circle). On the right is a description of the purpose of the phase and the desired outcome, supplemented by other useful information such as required collaboration, tools and techniques. A list of the abbreviations and acronyms used in this summary is at Annex D.
4. **Using the NCMP.** The NCMP articulates a step-by-step process that should be used for all operations planning, whether for Advance Plans or a plan in response to a crisis. However, it may be necessary for reasons of expediency to shorten or combine phases. For example, the NAC may request SACEUR to provide both an assessment and Military Response Options (MRO) at the same time. Similarly, having approved an option, the NAC may direct SACEUR to move straight to production of an OPLAN. In the event of a potential Article 5 situation, and when a CONPLAN is in place, the NAC may invoke the Fast Track Decision-Making (FTDM) process (see Annex A).
5. **Other Useful Documentation.**
  - a. **COPD.** The COPD contains detailed direction and guidance on the OPP at the Strategic and Operational levels; sections are referenced in this summary.
  - b. **NATO Crisis Response System Manual (NCRSM).** The NCRSM contains NATO policy and high-level procedures required for Preventive Options, Crisis Response Measures (CRM), Counter-Surprise, Counter-Aggression and NATO Security Alert States.
  - c. **Bi-SC Conceptual Framework for Alliance Operations (CFAO).** Direction and guidance on command, control, structure and employment on operations; NATO Command Structure (NCS), NATO Force Structure (NFS) and NATO Deployable Forces (NDF) concepts.
  - d. **MC 133/4 (Operations Planning Process).** Overarching Military Committee (MC) policy and direction on NATO Operations Planning, including planning authorisation and the layout of formal NATO HQ documentation.

<sup>1</sup> NATO Crisis Response System Manual (NCRSM) 2014, dated 19 September 2014, Section 3.

6. **SHAPE Point of Contact.** Comments and suggestions on this summary should be forward to SHAPE J5 PLS.

### Overview of the Operations Planning Process

7. **NATO Crisis Response System (NCRS).** The NCRS provides for required preparedness and support for crisis and conflict prevention and for crisis management across the range of Article 5 and Non-Article 5 operations.

8. **NCMP.** The NCMP is the six-phase consultation and decision-making process that can be adapted to any crisis situation. The NCMP allows the international staff and NATO Committees to coordinate their work and to submit comprehensive timely advice to the NAC. This facilitates grand strategic political decision-making by capitals, through the NAC, early in an emerging crisis, as well as throughout its life-cycle. It also provides a procedural structure that allows SACEUR to undertake some prudent preparatory planning activities in light of a developing or actual crisis in a reasonable time frame and, subsequently, to provide strategic assessments and advice. ACO's use of the NCMP is mandated through MC 133/4 and the CFAO in order to synchronize activities between NATO HQ, SHAPE and the operational level.

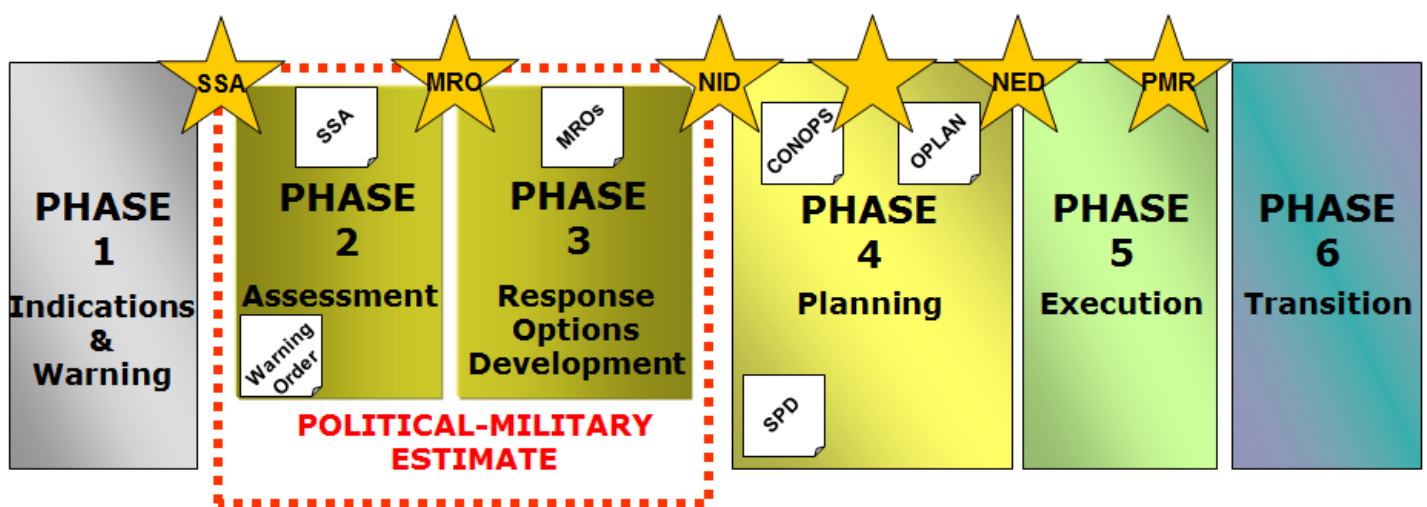
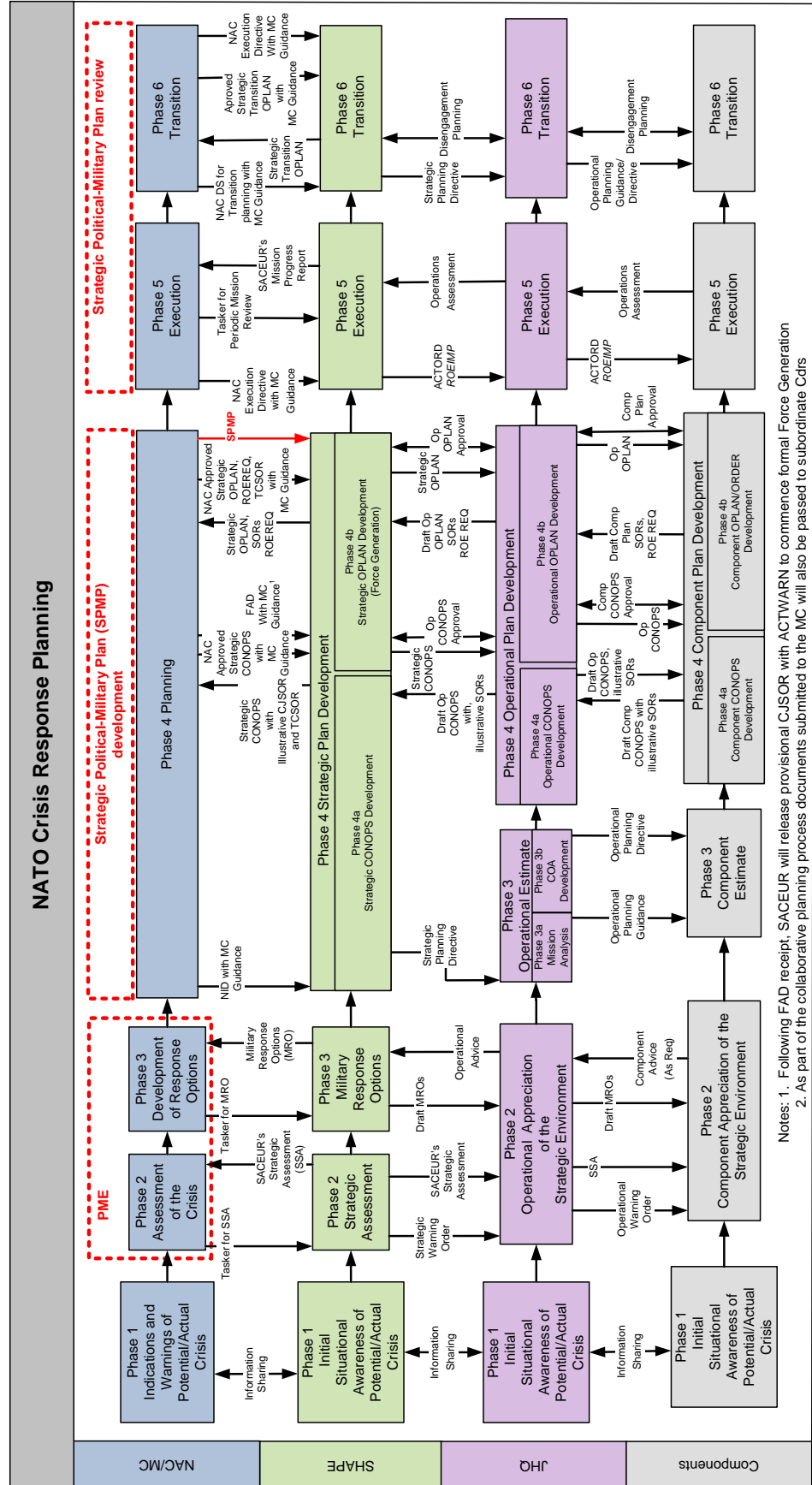


Figure 2: The NCMP Decision Points and products

9. **Decision Making.** The decision to move between the phases of the NCMP is made by the NAC, thereby maintaining political control of the military planning process. The stars in Figure 2 illustrate those decision points, noting that there is an additional decision point in Phase 4 where SACEUR's CONOPS is approved by the NAC. Once products are approved by the NAC, SACEUR may approve subordinate products. The next section covers the phases of the NCMP in more detail.

Notes:



10. **Phase 1 (Strategic Level).** Dedicated Task Forces in the Comprehensive Crisis and Operations Management Centre (CCOMC) observe SACEUR's strategic space and report regularly. Information is shared with the NAC and subordinates. The work of the teams is monitored through the Crisis Identification Group (CIG); the CIG informs the Command Group (CG) and the Crisis Operations Panel (COP). Issues of interest or potential crises are catalogued in the Priority Crisis Update List (PCUL) and elevated in terms of priority or reduced as deemed appropriate. Should an issue look like it may escalate into a crisis with implications for NATO, the COP may form a Crisis Action Team<sup>2</sup> (CAT) to conduct an initial estimate of the situation to inform the CG. In effect, Phase 1 strategic activities continue throughout all phases of the NCMP in addition to observing SACEUR's other areas of interest. Throughout Phase 1, certain measures may be authorised by the NAC in an attempt to de-escalate the crisis:

- a. **Preventive Options.** Options that can be considered by NATO HQ in coordination with nations include diplomatic efforts, economic sanctions, force readiness and warnings.
- b. **CRMs.** The NAC has a broad range of measures covering all functional areas that are predominantly related to preparedness. SACEUR has 46 pre-authorised CRMs that can be declared once Phase 2 of the NCMP has been initiated; authority must be requested from the NAC to declare additional CRMs.
- c. **Counter-Surprise.** Counter-Surprise measures could be declared when CRMs are in the process of being implemented. Measures are designed to protect forces and capabilities, civil and military bodies and critical infrastructure. Once declared, Counter-Surprise measures can only be sustained for a short time and should be based on firm indications of an imminent attack; it is likely that the NAC would expect to declare Counter-Aggression soon after Counter-Surprise is declared.

10. **Phase 1 (Operational Level).** The JHQ develops the comprehensive preparation of the operational environment (CPOE) covering all PMESII domains, including associated potential threats and risks, in support of planning and the conduct of a campaign or operation.

11. **Phase 2 (Strategic level).** Should the NAC decide that the crisis may have implications for NATO involvement, it requests advice from the NATO Military Authorities (NMA) and SACEUR will be tasked to produce SACEUR's Strategic Assessment, which will form part of the basis of the MC's strategic military advice. This is the start of the Political Military Estimate (PME) and Phase 2 of the NCMP. A Strategic Planning Group (SPG) is stood-up within the CAT with SMEs from all functional areas. Initial selection of SMEs will depend on the nature of the crisis; however, as a minimum, a Civil-Military Integration (CMI) SME should be incorporated in order to identify non-military actors who may have an interest in the crisis. The output is SACEUR's Strategic Assessment (SSA), which is submitted to the NAC. A Warning Order is sent to the selected Joint Headquarters (JHQ) and will include direction to implement CRMs and preventive measures (see NCRS manual). SHAPE SMEs may recommend pre-authorised CRMs to the NCRS SME in the SPG and may recommend additional CRMs. SHAPE SMEs continue to monitor implementation of CRMs throughout the crisis and will recommend their cancellation in due course. The key question addressed in the SSA is whether a military response is appropriate in addressing the crisis.

12. **Step 1 of Phase 2 at Operational Level.** After reception of the warning order the JHQ will form a Joint Operational Planning Group (JOPG). No specific contribution is requested from Operational level for SSA production. The Operational level will appreciate the SSA and should use it to better understand strategic thinking.

---

<sup>2</sup> SHAPE's CCOM Process Handbook

**NATO UNCLASSIFIED**

13. **Phase 3 (Strategic level).** Having considered the SSA, the NAC may request the NMA to propose options; in turn the IMS directs SACEUR to develop Military Response Options (MROs), formally initiating Phase 3. The Command Group and NATO HQ will engage in dialogue and the SPG seeks military advice from the appropriate subordinate command(s). SACEUR presents the MROs to the MC, making recommendations. The MC then advise the NAC.
14. **Step 2 of phase 2 at Operational Level.** The Operational level (in coordination with the tactical level) provides operational advice to the draft MROs.
15. **Phase 4A (Strategic level).** Phase 4 is divided into two parts, both requiring NAC approval. In this first part of the phase, the NAC will authorise the development of CONOPS by issuing a NAC Initiating Directive (NID) containing further direction and guidance on the selected MRO. As the SPG develops SACEUR's CONOPS, it will issue a Strategic Planning Directive (SPD) to the JHQ at the earliest opportunity, thus initiating planning at the Operational Level; finalising SACEUR's CONOPS will wait until the operational commander has developed the operational CONOPS, ensuring that it remains within the boundaries approved within the NID. Once the strategic CONOPS has been approved by the NAC, the operational CONOPS may be approved by SACEUR.
16. **Phase 3 at Operational Level.** On receipt of the SPD, the JOPG will:
- a. Sub-Phase 3a: Analyse the Mission. After the Mission Analysis Brief (MAB) the Commander provides direction for the development of courses of action (COA).
  - b. Sub-Phase 3b: Develop COAs, including opposing COAs. The COAs are war-gamed, further refined and the Commander selects a COA.
17. **Phase 4a at Operational Level.** The operational commander will have selected a COA and the development of the operational level CONOPS starts in parallel with the development of the Strategic CONOPS, informing SHAPE at each stage. During this sub-phase the JOPG develops:
- a. A provisional statement of required resources (Combined Joint Statement of Requirement (CJSOR) and Theatre Capability Statement of Requirement (TCSOR)). These will start as 'provisional' in order for DSACEUR, on behalf of SACEUR, to start engaging with nations, giving an early indication of the type and scale of forces required.
  - b. A draft request for Rules of Engagement (ROEREQ) specific to the mission that will need to be approved by the NAC.
18. **Phase 4B (Strategic Level).** Whilst the SPG develops the OPLAN, and following the reception of the illustrative CJSOR/TCSOR from the operational level the NAC Force Activation Directive (FAD) triggers the Force Generation process. The provisional CJSOR and TCSOR is approved by DSACEUR and is released to nations with the Activation Warning (ACTWARN) message containing essential information about force capability requirements and coordination. Nations acknowledge receipt of the ACTWARN and Provisional CJSOR and respond with informal offers leading to a Force Generation Conference and subsequent Force Balancing activities if time permits. The Draft CJSOR is developed from the Provisional CJSOR as it is populated with the informal force offers. SACEUR transmits the draft CJSOR with the Activation Request (ACTREQ) message. Nations formally confirm their force contributions with FORCEPREP messages following receipt of the ACTREQ. Nationally committed forces are entered into the CJSOR; with spatial and temporal information the Allied Force List (AFL) is developed with any requisite force balancing for shortfalls. Further detail on coordination and synchronisation is added in order to submit a full

executable SACEUR OPLAN to the NAC for approval. Once the OPLAN has been approved by the NAC, SACEUR may subsequently approve the JHQ OPLAN.

**19. Phase 4B (Operational Level).** The Operational level OPLAN is developed in full collaboration with the SPG. The JHQ then leads the development of the Allied Disposition List (ADL) which establishes the time-phased flow of the individual forces that comprise the force package into the theatre and their final destinations, including air and sea ports of debarkation as well as the transfer of command authority to the gaining NATO force commanders. ROE are further developed into the draft ROEREQ and forwarded through SHAPE to the NAC for approval.

**20. Phase 5.** Should the NAC decide to implement the plan, a NAC Execution Directive (or NED) is issued, authorising SACEUR to issue an Activation Order (ACTORD) message to all participating nations and commands. In turn, this initiates the deployment of NATO forces and the release of NATO common funding. Transfer of Authority (TOA) of national forces to SACEUR normally takes place once forces arrive in the theatre of operations. As the mission progresses, the NAC will request Periodic Mission Reviews (PMR); the parameters for the review would normally be based on the desired effects approved with the NID and developed as the Operations Assessment annex in the OPLAN. When the conditions permit, the decision will be made to move into Phase 6.

**21. Phase 5 at the Operational level.** During execution, results of operations assessments or a sudden change in the operational situation may require a commander to either re-visit the original operational estimate or commence a new one; if a new operational estimate is required, a commander will decide whether it be deliberate (full) or rapid. In the event that a rapid operational estimate is appropriate, the commander can either provide guidance to the staff on what to concentrate on in their rapid conduct of an operational estimate, or may personally conduct it with selected key staff (tailored). Should changes be required to SACEUR's direction, such as objectives or restraints *et al*, the OPLAN may be amended for SACEUR's approval. However, should amendment be required to the political strategic direction, SACEUR's OPLAN may require amendment and, as such, will require NAC approval. Other elements for planning consideration:

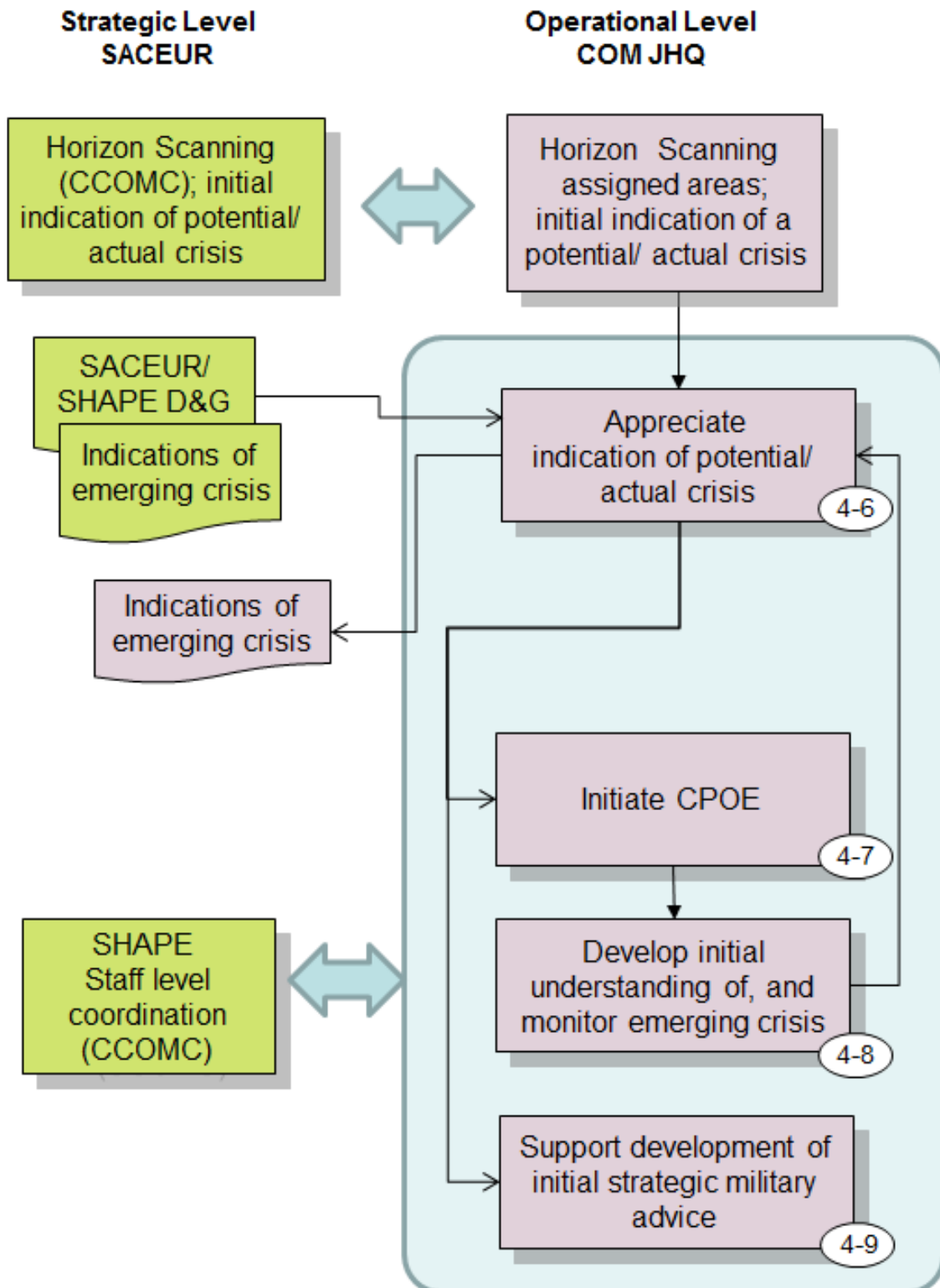
- a. **Branch Plans.** Branch Plans are developed in response to an anticipated opportunity or reversal along a line of operation to provide the Commander with the flexibility to retain the initiative and ultimately achieve the objective. As such, they will have been identified by the JOPG in relation to a decision point within the Operational Design and accommodated within the OPLAN. However, additional planning activity may be required dependent upon the situation.
- b. **Sequels.** Sequel plans are developed for subsequent phases of an operation.

**22. Phase 6.** In effect, the planning process will start again with assessments, options and detailed plans to drawdown and eventually extract the forces. Before the end of this phase both at Strategic and Operational levels the planning groups will restart at Phase 2 of the planning process in order to initiate preparation of the plan for hand-over and re-deployment. Once a NID is issued, planning at Phase 4 officially starts for the re-deployment OPLAN.



Notes:

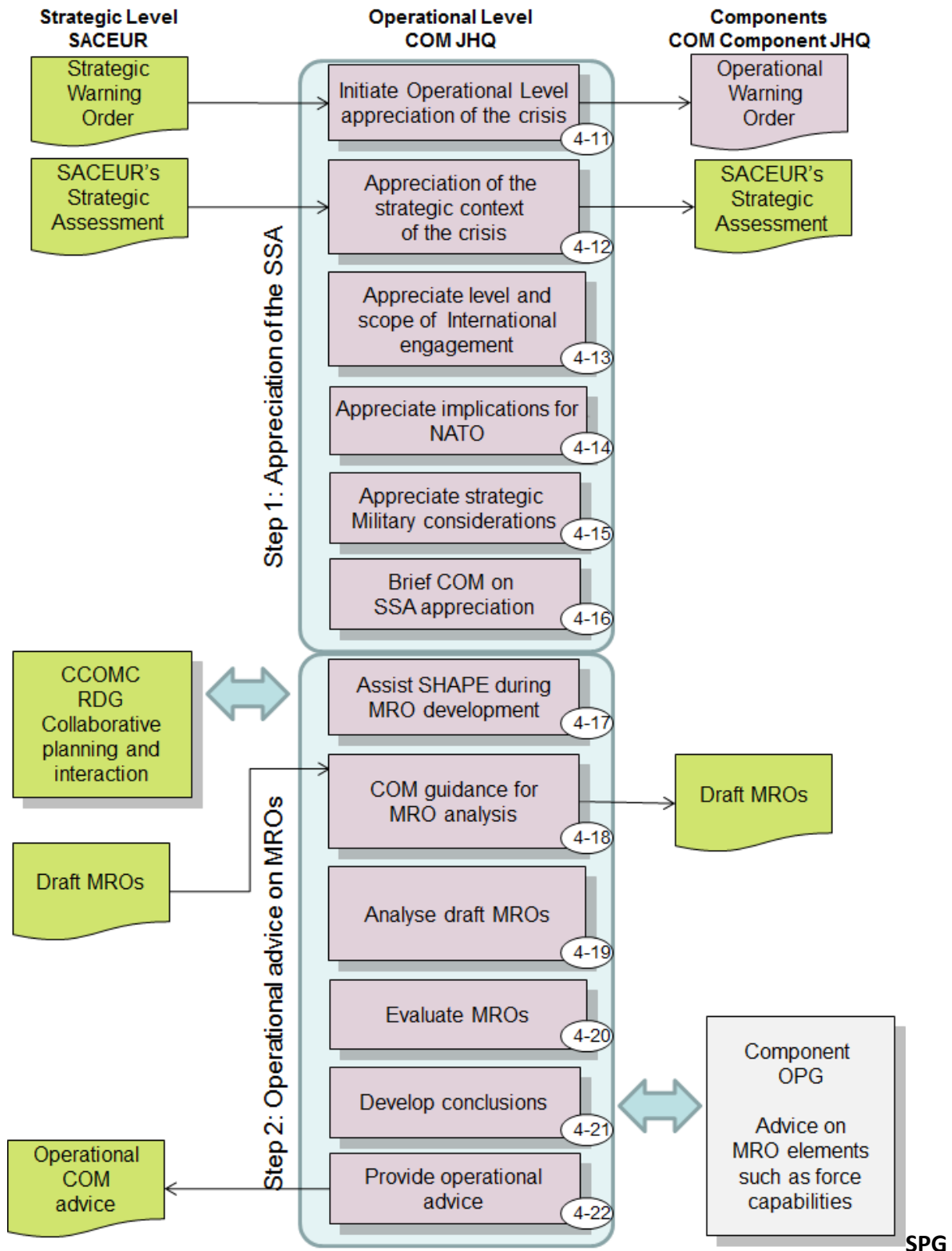
## Phase 1 – Situational Awareness



### Phase 1 - Initial Situational Awareness of a Potential/Actual Crisis

1. **Purpose.** To develop a comprehensive preparation of the operational environment (CPOE) covering all PMESII domains, including associated potential threats and risks, in support of planning and the conduct of a campaign or operation.
2. **Overview.** Either through scanning their area of interest or as directed by the Commander, the intelligence staff will gather, collate, organize and analyse existing information, intelligence and knowledge on the emerging crisis. They will advise the Commander on critical information that may be required and develop detailed Priority Intelligence Requirements (PIRs), initiating requests for intelligence through SHAPE. The Commander may decide to form the JOPG to develop initial operational considerations to support SHAPE staff efforts.
3. **Outcome.** The desired outcomes of Phase 1 are:
  - a. Appropriate indications and warnings and initial appreciation of relevant emerging crises are provided to the Commander and, if appropriate, SACEUR in a timely fashion.
  - b. An initial estimate of the emerging crisis in support of SHAPE.
  - c. An appreciation of the nature of the problem, the actors involved, a view of the systems involved and possible implications for NATO.
4. **Roles.** The core of the JOPG should interact with intelligence staff to identify information and knowledge requirements for development of the CPOE. They also may conduct activities, guided by the Commander, to support initial military advice development by SHAPE staff. Early consideration should be given to including J9 Civil Military Integration (CMI) in order to identify all relevant non-military actors who may have an interest in the emerging crisis.
5. **External Coordination.** See COPD par 4-5 g.

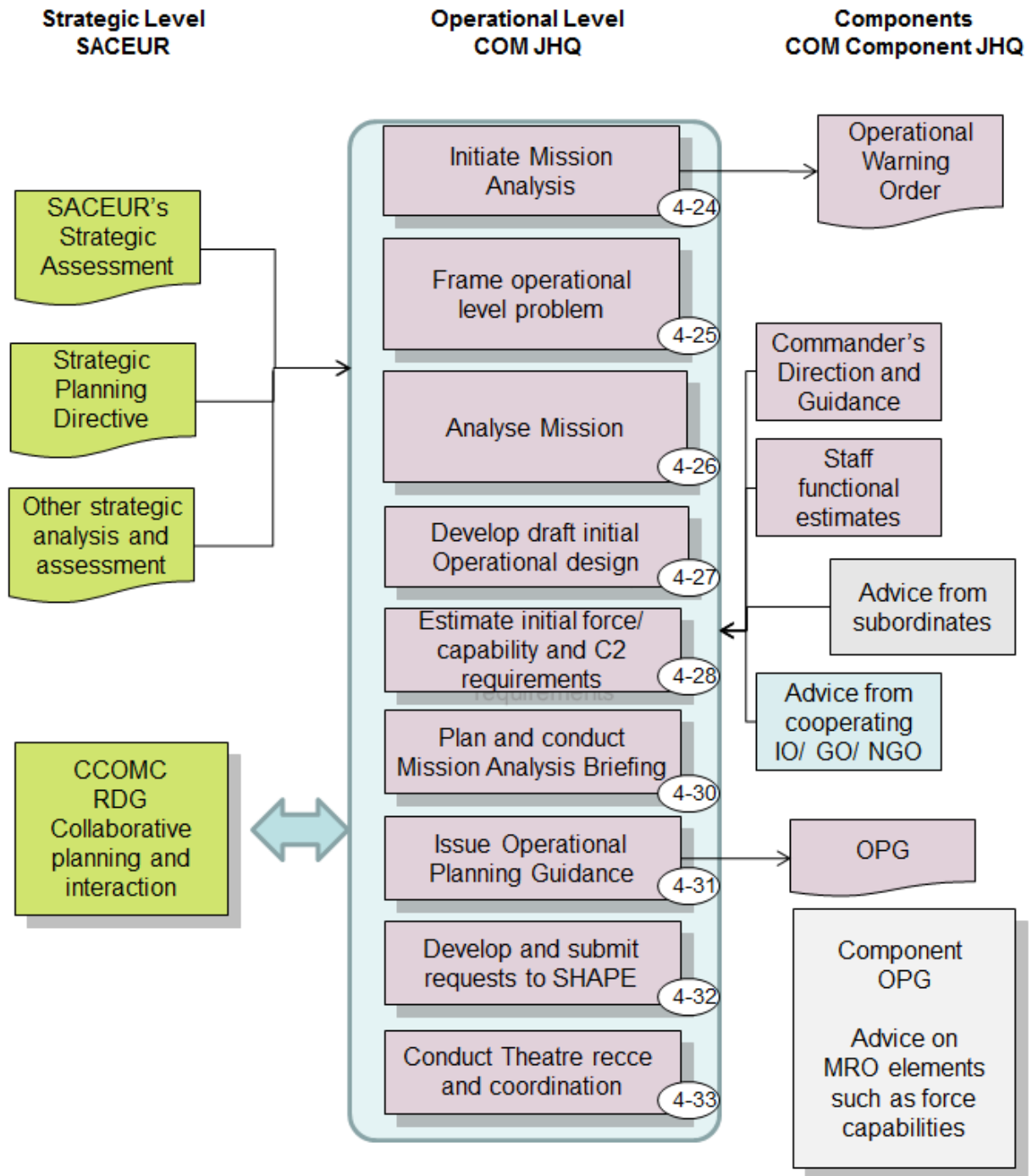
## Phase 2 – Operational Appreciation of the Strategic Environment



## Phase 2 – Operational Appreciation of the Strategic Environment

1. **Purpose.** To understand the strategic situation, the nature of the problem, NATO's desired end state, and NATO strategic objectives, military strategic objectives (MSOs); to provide operational advice to SACEUR on the draft MROs.
2. **Overview.** SACEUR is tasked by the MC following a formal decision by the NAC to provide a strategic assessment. A SPG is formed to develop and coordinate the SSA for submission to the NAC; the operational level Joint HQ (JHQ) nominated in the Strategic Warning Order (SWO) provides an Operational Planning and Liaison Element (OPLE) to work with the SPG. The NAC requests SACEUR to provide MROs; as the MROs are developed, the JHQ Commander is formally invited to provide comment prior to submission. If a CONPLAN is in place, SACEUR may recommend invoking the Fast Track Decision-Making (FTDM) process.
3. **Outcomes.**
  - a. An operational warning order.
  - b. The appreciation of the SSA:
    - (1) The nature of the crisis.
    - (2) Implications for NATO, including potential strategic risks and threats.
    - (3) Potential strategic ends, ways and means.
    - (4) Applicability of the use of the NATO military instrument of power.
    - (5) International interests.
    - (6) Non-NATO Interaction Requirements.
    - (7) Potential additional CRMs and preventive options.
  - c. Operational advice, answering the following questions:
    - (1) Will achieving the MSOs establish the conditions to attain the end state?
    - (2) What military actions are required to create the effects required to achieve MSOs?
    - (3) What capabilities are required to do the actions?
    - (4) Are the MSOs achievable with likely means available and acceptable to political authorities?
    - (5) Are the strategic conditions in place to ensure operational success?
    - (6) What are the operational risks and their mitigation?
  - b. Provide Commander's initial guidance to the JOPG.
4. **External Coordination.**
  - a. **Liaison and support.** The OPLE will assist the SPG in analysis, provide clarity to the JOPG and coordinate of the operational input. They will also provide the link to the Operational Liaison and Reconnaissance Team (OLRT) if deployed.
  - b. **Comprehensive Approach.** Authorisation from the NAC should be sought through the SPG for interaction/ liaison with significant non-NATO actors.

## Phase 3A – Operational Estimate

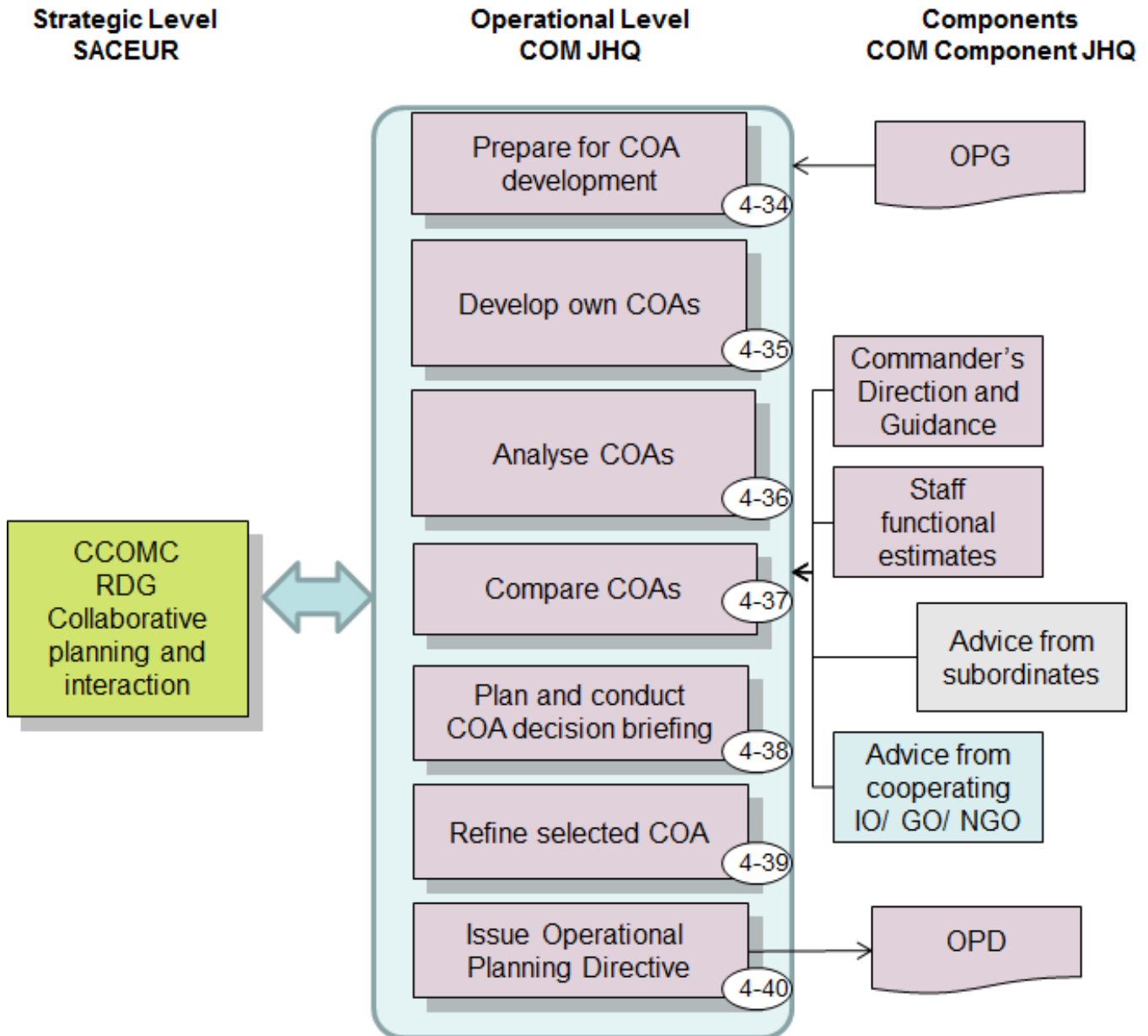


### Phase 3A – Operational Estimate – Mission analysis

1. **Purpose.** To initiate planning: understand the problem, the operational environment and the mission.
2. **Overview.** On receipt of SACEUR's Strategic Planning Directive (SPD) following release of a NAC Initiating Directive (NID), the JOPG will: analyse the crisis situation to determine the operational problem that must be solved and the operational conditions that must be established; identifies the key operational factors and any limitations on the Commander's freedom of action for the development of an overall operational framework (see Annex B).
3. **Outcome.**
  - a. The operational problem is clearly defined in the context of the strategic situation together with the sustainable conditions that must be created to solve the problem bounded by NATO's desired end state and MSOs.
  - b. Operational objectives are understood; develop criteria for success.
  - c. The analysis of key factors has led to deductions and conclusions regarding operational requirements for further analysis and planning.
  - d. The analysis has determined centres of gravity for the main actors, as well as critical capabilities, requirements and vulnerabilities.
  - e. Effects, lines of operations and decisive conditions have been developed as a basis for developing courses of action (COAs).
  - f. Initial Commander's Critical Information Requirements (CCIRs) have been determined.
  - g. The Commander's planning guidance, to provide his/ her initial intent and direction for developing COAs, has been issued.
  - h. The Operational Planning Directive to subordinate commanders has been issued.
  - i. Requests for information for SHAPE to elaborate on the SPD such as rules of engagement requirements, additional CRMs.
  - j. An appreciation of the Theatre of Operations (TOO) and Joint Operations Area (JOA), fully justifying requests for change. Note: the TOO and JOA are "provisional" within the SPD.
4. **Tools/ Techniques.** Suggested Commander's Planning Guidance:
  - a. Specify opposing actions to be considered.
  - b. COAs to be developed.
  - c. Establish criteria for COA development and selection. Describe in broad terms the COAs to be developed.
  - d. Should the urgency and nature of the situation dictate, the Commander may direct the JOPG to focus its efforts on developing a single COA.

NATO UNCLASSIFIED

## Phase 3B – COA Development

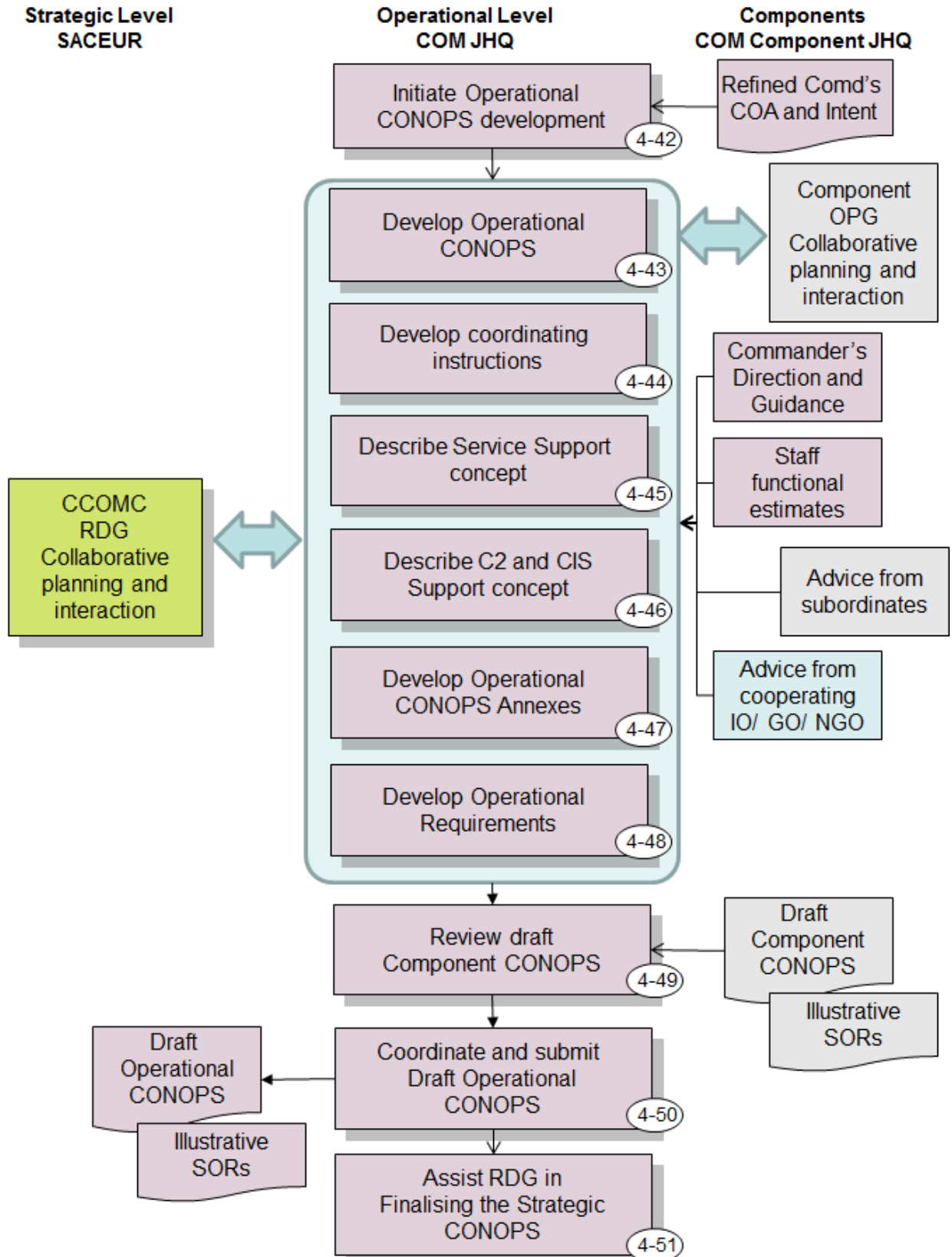




## Phase 3B – Operational estimate - COA Development

1. **Purpose.** To develop COAs, from which one will be selected.
2. **Overview.** The JOPG develops possible COAs to achieve the mission. Several may be chosen and further developed, analysed and compared against each other and the opposing COAs. The operational design for the selected COA is refined and provides the basis for the development of a CONOPS in Phase 4. An Operational Planning Directive (OPD) is released to formally trigger COA development at the component level.
3. **Outcome.**
  - a. An outline CONOPS describing:
    - (1) The logical sequence and main purpose of operations to be achieved in clearly defined phases.
    - (2) When, where and in what sequence operations will be carried out to create desired operational effects and establish DCs.
    - (3) The main and supporting efforts.
    - (4) Operational effects to support DCs and operational actions to support creation of those effects.
    - (5) Operational reserve.
    - (6) Strategic communication themes.
    - (7) Required non-military actions
  - b. Provisional missions, including objectives, for subordinate commands.
  - c. Task organisation - force/capability requirements two levels down.
  - d. Operational design graphic (see Annex B).
  - e. Operational timeline depicting the sequencing of operational actions, effects and DCs for each phase of the operation, including other key events and opposing actions.
  - f. Decision points reflecting events in time or space on which the Commander is expected to have to make a decision.
4. **Tools/ Techniques.**
  - a. **Operational Design.** See Annex B.
  - b. **Wargaming.** Wargaming has the following functions:
    - (1) Explains the sequence of a planned operation's steps in time and space.
    - (2) Shows the required amount of coordination between forces and/or sub-phases.
    - (3) Contributes to synchronizing the elements of an operation.
    - (4) Contributes to determining the necessary friendly capability profile and the strength of forces.
    - (5) Identifies critical phases and portions of the battlespace.
    - (6) Identifies the major elements of the concept of operations.

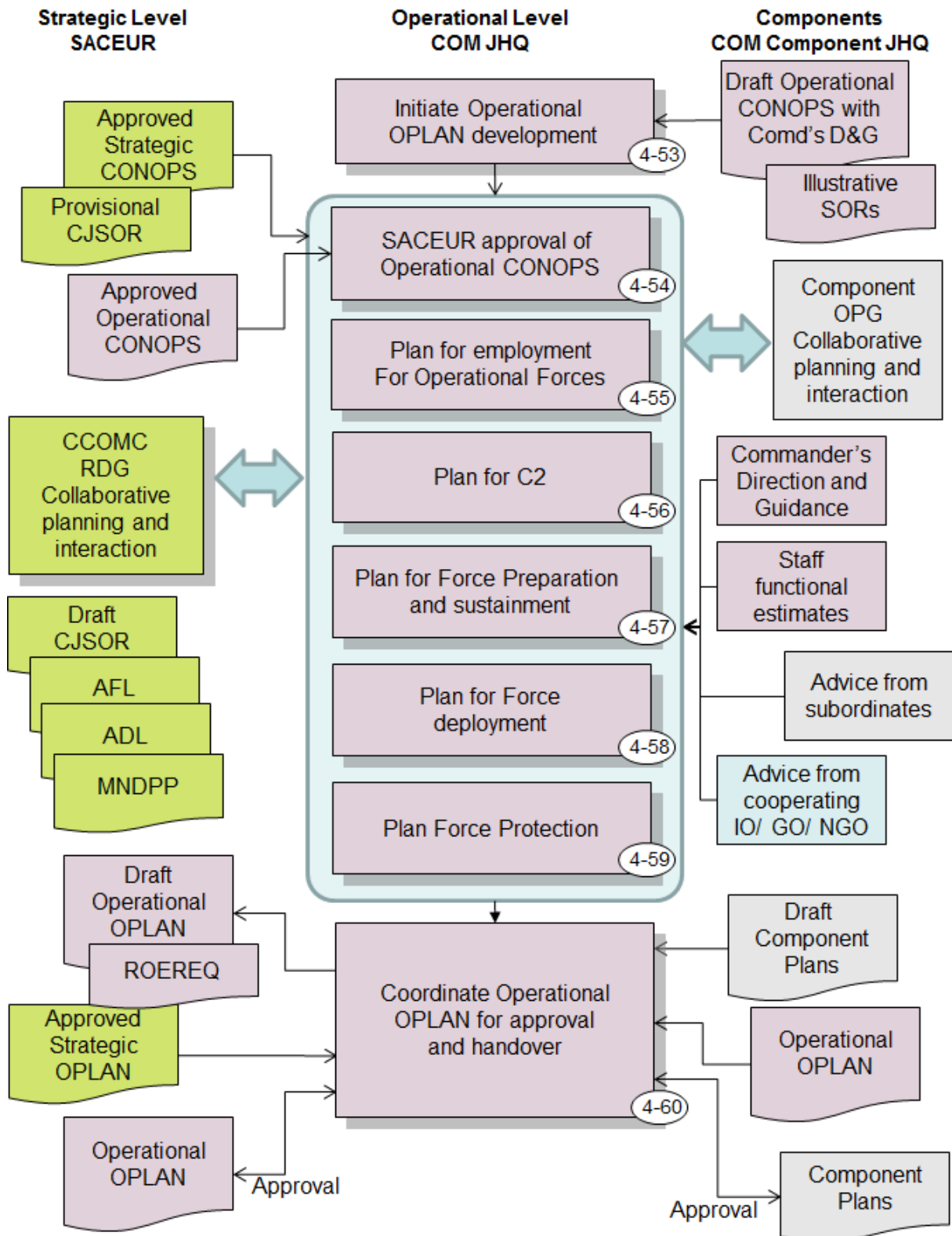
## Phase 4A – Operational Level CONOPS Development



## Phase 4A – Operational Level CONOPS Development

1. **Purpose.** To detail COM JHQ's concept for the conduct of a NATO-led military campaign or operation, in concert with other non-military and non-NATO efforts, to achieve the NATO military operational objectives and establish conditions required to assist in the achievement of the strategic objectives and the desired NATO end state.
2. **Overview.** The operational CONOPS, developed in collaboration with the strategic and component levels, is the formal expression of the Commander's intent for the conduct of the campaign or operation, including the deployment, employment, and sustainment of forces; submitted with it are a number of 'provisional' statements of requirements that outline the necessary operational requirements needed to realize the Commander's vision. It is developed in conjunction with the strategic and tactical levels for submission to SACEUR for approval. Once the strategic CONOPS is approved by the NAC, SACEUR may approve the operational level CONOPS.
3. **Outcome.**
  - a. The Joint actions are synchronised in time and space and harmonised with cooperating relevant national and international actors to create operational effects that set decisive conditions. The sequence of operations along clearly defined lines of operations set decisive points/decisive conditions that retain freedom of action and lead to accomplishment of operational objectives.
  - b. Requirements are articulated using four main 'provisional' products: the CJSOR, the TCSOR, manpower SOR (a request for peace or crisis establishment reinforcement) and a ROEREQ.
  - c. Operational aspects of time, space, forces/actors and information are balanced sufficiently within acceptable risks.
  - d. Annexes are developed to support the CONOPS; at this stage, some are mandatory (see Annex C).
4. **Tools/ Techniques.**
  - a. **CJSOR.** The CJSOR contains the generic force requirement and includes:
    - (1) Required force/capability.
    - (2) Echelon that indicates size.
    - (3) Commander's required date for the force to be available for employment.
    - (4) Required destination.
    - (5) Priority of arrival.
    - (6) Command authority to be transferred to the gaining NATO commander.
  - b. **TCSOR.** The TCSOR identifies capabilities required to support the entire theatre and which could be, in principle, eligible for common funding.
  - c. **ROEREQ.** The draft ROEREQ outlines those ROE considered necessary to support the Commander's vision for the conduct of the operation; it is developed by the JOPG operations staff supported by the LEGAD, in collaboration with strategic and component functional experts.

## Phase 4B - Operational OPLAN Development



## Phase 4B – Operational OPLAN Development

1. **Purpose.** To develop the arrangements and further specify the required activities to implement the operational CONOPS and to specify the conduct of operations, principally the deployment, employment and sustainment of forces.
2. **Overview.** Operational OPLAN development is an iterative, collaborative process that focuses on synchronising and coordinating the deployment, employment, protection, support and sustainment of the operational force during different phases of the operation within a single operational level plan. NAC approval of the strategic CONOPS results in the issue of the FAD, triggering the Force Generation Process. National commitments are coordinated to eventually produce the Multinational Detailed Deployment Plan (MNDDP). It is developed in conjunction with the strategic and tactical levels for submission to SACEUR for approval. Once the strategic OPLAN is approved by the NAC, SACEUR may approve the operational level OPLAN.
3. **Outcome.** The Operational OPLAN further coordinates the arrangements required to implement the operational CONOPS and permit subordinate commanders to prepare supporting plans. Annexes are further developed (see Annex C). Of particular note:
  - a. The legal framework, including mandate, SOFAs and technical agreements such as with host nations and nations allowing transit.
  - b. The flow of forces into the theatre supports the scheme of manoeuvre.
  - c. C2 arrangements, including liaison and coordination with NATO and non-NATO actors, as well as CIS. This includes the establishment of mechanisms to share information with relevant non-NATO actors while preserving operations security.
  - d. Refined ROE in the ROEREQ for NAC approval.
  - e. Theatre support and sustainment.
  - f. Contingency planning requirements identified and prioritised to cover identified risks.
  - g. Civil Military Interaction.
  - h. Operations assessment criteria, methodologies and reporting requirements; determine which other relevant non-NATO actors have operations assessment capabilities or sources of data that may be of benefit.
4. **Force Generation and Deployment.** The process, in outline is:
  - a. Release of the Activation Warning (ACTWARN) with the Provisional CJSOR.
  - b. The Force Generation Conference aims at filling of the provisional CJSOR.
  - c. A 'draft' CJSOR is released showing with national commitments. If FTDM is in place, NRF components will be entered into the draft CJSOR, although these still require National commitment.
  - d. Release of the Activation Request (ACTREQ) requesting national confirmation of commitment.
  - e. Receipt of Nations' Force Preparation (FORCEPREP) messages identifying commitment.
  - f. Development of the Allied Force List (AFL) reflecting risk assessment and force balancing.
  - g. The AFL is further developed into the Allied Disposition List (ADL) confirming timing and sequence of arrival, movement priorities and points of entry.
  - h. Nations and deploying NCS HQ/entities provide their deployment intentions in the National Detailed Deployment Plans (DDPs) to the Allied Movement Coordination Centre at SHAPE.
  - i. The Final Movement Planning Conference provides a co-ordinated and de-conflicted Multi-National Detailed Deployment Plan (MNDDP) forming the basis of all further movement planning in support of the plan.

## Fast Track Decision-Making

Authority: this annex is based on the direction given in the NCRSM 2014 and MC 133/4 (NATO's Operations Planning).

### General

1. The Fast Track Decision-Making (FTDM) process may be invoked by the NAC in exceptional circumstances, enabling accelerated decision-making by the NAC, in the event that a Contingency Plan (CONPLAN<sup>3</sup>) is to be further developed into an OPLAN. As such, it enables the rapid deployment of forces such as the NRF.

### Preparatory Planning Activities

2. The decision to develop a CONPLAN rests with the MC. The planning groups at each level will follow the NATO Crisis Management Process (NCMP) through to Phase 4A (CONOPS). The MC approves all products and authorises progression to the next phase. SACEUR's Strategic Assessment (NCMP Phase 2) is based upon planning factors identified in the Military Committee General Intelligence Estimate<sup>4</sup> and otherwise assumed. Military Response Options (NCMP Phase 3) are developed for MC consideration. The CONPLAN is developed (NCMP Phase 4a) with as much detail as possible, including an estimate of resources needed (a Representational Force List (RFL)) and deployment options, as a basis for subsequent planning.<sup>5</sup>

### Implementation

3. In the event that indications and warnings point to a potential Article 5 situation, the NAC will initiate combined Phases 2 and 3 of the NCMP, requesting SACEUR to provide his strategic assessment (the SSA) with options. Should a CONPLAN be in place, SACEUR may recommend that the MC advise the NAC to adopt the FTDM process. At this stage SACEUR may declare pre-authorised CRMs and request authority to declare other specific CRMs, especially those that will increase readiness or prepare forces for deployment. SHAPE and the IMS will collaborate to provide the main military input in developing a draft NID for consideration by the NAC. The NID, reflecting the NAC decision to employ the FTDM process, tasks SACEUR to urgently provide an MC endorsed draft OPLAN. The NID will be issued simultaneously with a Force Activation Directive (FAD), thus initiating Force Generation.

4. In conjunction with the Operational level Commander, SHAPE develops the strategic OPLAN based on the CONPLAN including a 'draft' Combined Joint Statement of Requirements (CJSOR) updated with the current NRF list and other informal offers, and a Draft rules of engagement (ROE) request (ROEREQ) for submission to the NAC. Once approved, the NAC may issue the NAC Execution Directive (NED). However, it should be noted that where there is an urgent requirement to establish a robust NATO presence in-theatre, the NAC could authorize ACTORD release, for pre-deployment of the entire force, prior to issuing the NED. The process is illustrated at figure A1.

5. As Nations commit forces, the draft CJSOR is developed into the Allied Force List (AFL), which in turn becomes the Allied Distribution List (ADL). The ADL establishes the time-phased flow of the force into the theatre and to the final destination, including APODs and SPODs as well as the transfer of command authority (TOA) to the NATO force Commander. Once Nations and deploying NCS HQs/entities submit their detailed deployment plans

---

<sup>3</sup> The abbreviation 'CONPLAN' is used in the NCRSM and the acronym 'COP' is used in MC 133/4

<sup>4</sup> MC 161

<sup>5</sup> AAP-06

# NATO UNCLASSIFIED

(DDPs), the Allied Movements Coordination Centre (AMCC) combines and de-conflicts the deployments to produce the multinational detailed deployment plan (MNDDP).<sup>6</sup>

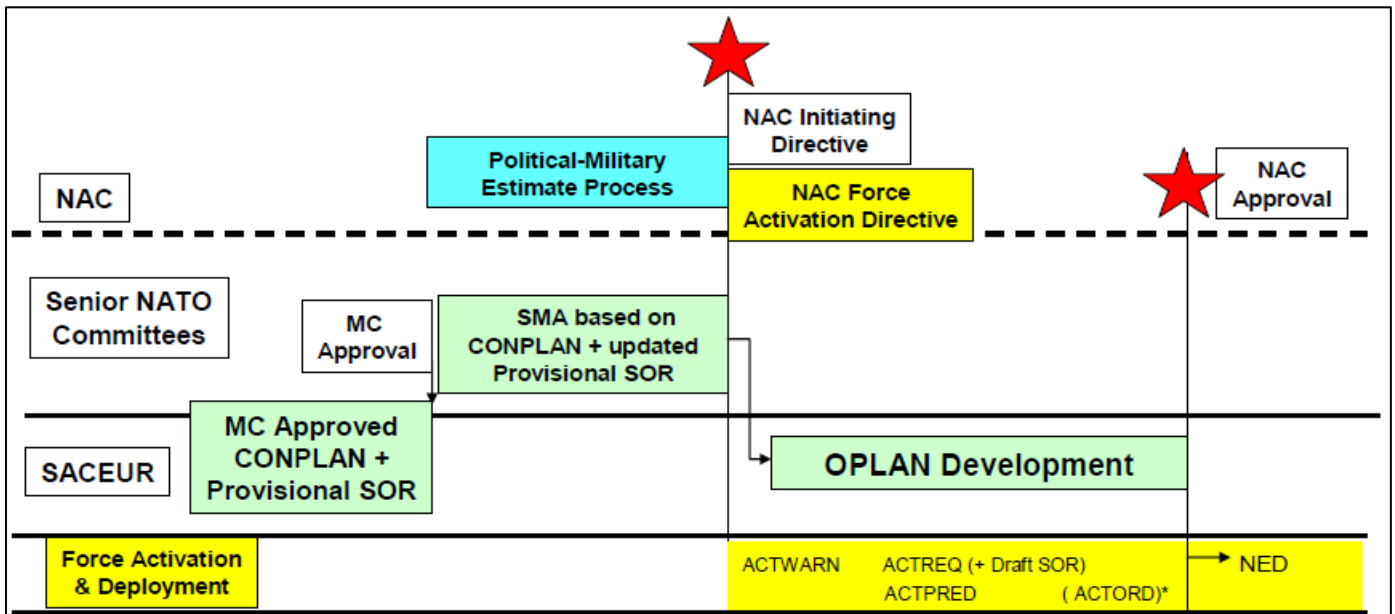


Figure A1: Fast Track Decision-Making Process

## Review

6. SACEUR has the authority and obligation to generate, review and revise CONPLANS, keeping the MC informed. These are based on changes in the strategic security environment.

<sup>6</sup> Note that the FTDM force generation process will compress the normal force generation process (Draft CJSOR to AFL to ADL to DDPs to MNDDP); likely with some 'shortfalls' continuing throughout the process as the availability and readiness of the forces requested/offered.

## Principles of the Operational Design

1. **Overview.** An operational design is an expression of the Commander's vision for the transformation of the unacceptable operational situation at the start of the operation into a series of acceptable operational conditions at its end. The design is coherent with the strategic framework provided by the NAC Initiating Directive (NID) and further expanded in the Strategic Planning Directive (SPD). This transformation is done through establishing decisive conditions (DC) along different lines of operation (LoO), leading to the achievement of operational objectives (OO), while contributing to the achievement of military strategic objectives (MSO). MSOs in turn must contribute to achieving strategic objectives and the NATO end state.
2. **Design Elements.**
  - a. **Decisive Conditions (DC).** A decisive condition is defined as 'a combination of circumstances, effects, or a specific key event, critical factor, or function that when achieved allows commanders to gain a marked advantage over an opponent or contribute materially to achieving an operational objective.'<sup>7</sup>
  - b. **Operational Effects.** Operational effects are the changes in systems/systems elements to establish the operational conditions necessary to establish DCs and thus achieve the operational objectives, using primarily military means. It is important when writing effects to ensure that their description is written in a manner that can be measured.
  - c. **Lines of Operation (LoO).** LoOs link effects and DCs to an operational objective, with normally one LoO per objective. The determination of LoOs will shape the development of the plan as well as the conduct of operations, by arranging operations in time, space and purpose thus giving an indication of sequencing and phasing.
  - d. **Lines of Engagement (LoE).** A LoE is logical line that connects military, political, economic and civil actions in time and purpose through strategic effects to strategic objective(s) and the end state. The SPD<sup>8</sup> will also provide non-military complementary objectives that will provide focus for engagement at the strategic political level within a comprehensive approach. The JOPG will require an understanding of the efforts of non-military actors and the host nation(s) in order to identify those decisive conditions that are complimentary and to ensure that effects or actions do not adversely impact upon non-military efforts.
  - e. **Operational Actions.** The JOPG will identify the operational actions required to create the operational effects. As the design is refined, these actions will define Joint Actions, the CJSOR/ TCSOR and ROE.
  - f. **Decision Points (DP).** A DP is a point in space and time, identified during the planning process, where it is anticipated that the commander must make a decision concerning a specific course of action. Decisions are likely to be related to potential opposing force action or when to progress to the next phase.
3. **Operational Framework.** The first step is the operational framework, developed as a staff product, which is normally presented as a schematic as illustrated in Figure B1, supported by text as required. It provides a conceptual overview of the entire operation based on direction given in the SPD. Of particular

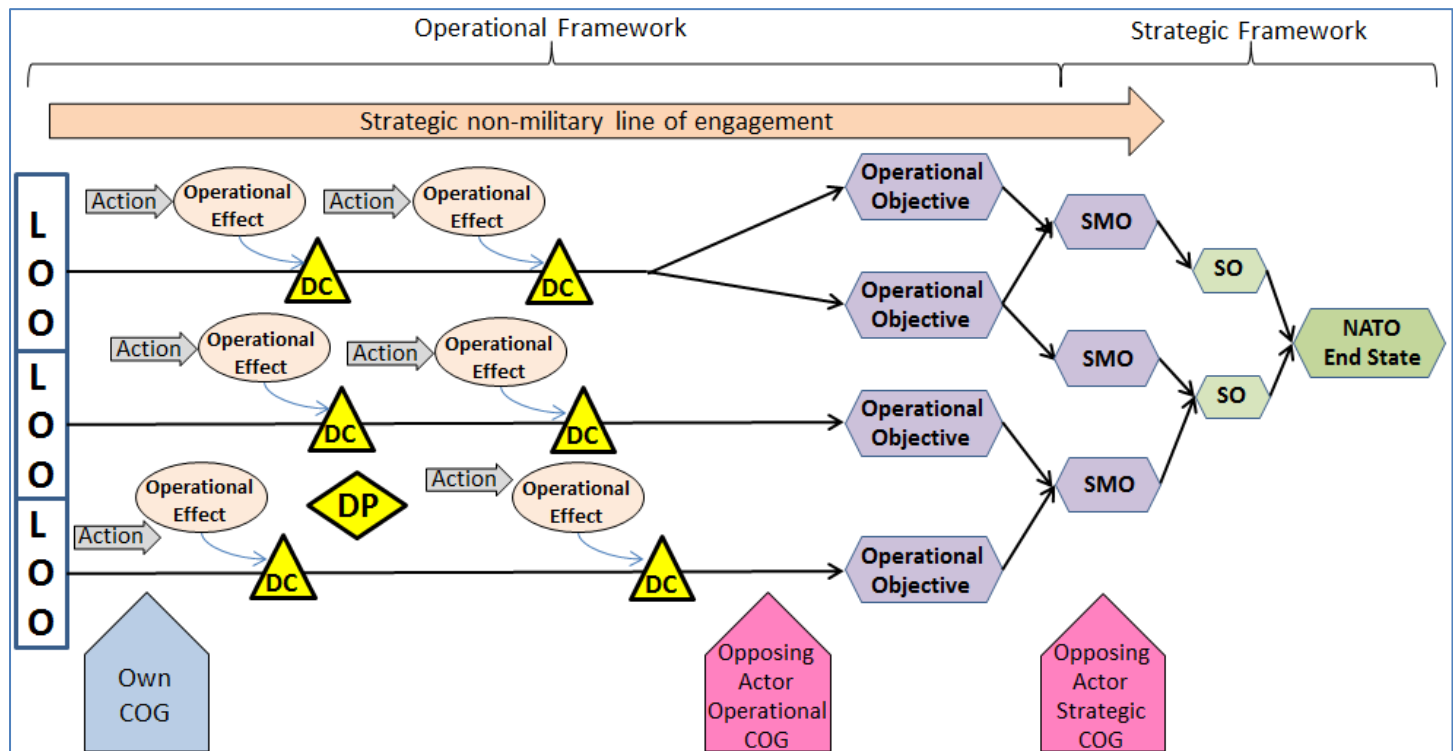
---

<sup>7</sup> AJP-01(D)

<sup>8</sup> Taken from the NID



note is the NATO end state, strategic objectives, MSOs, constraints and restraints. This will guide the development of courses of action.



## B1: Illustrative Operational Framework

4. **Operational Design.** COAs are further developed to incorporate all elements listed at paragraph 2 above. The design is normally presented as a graphic supplemented by text (Appendix 2 to OPLAN Annex A). However, all of the salient information such as the relationships between DCs, effects and actions are contained in tabular form in Appendix 1 to OPLAN Annex C. In addition, DCs will be annotated in the synchronisation matrix (Appendix 1 to OPLAN Annex A). Given the depth of information required, it is not possible to present all information on the graphic and it should be used in conjunction with Annexes A and C. The example at Figure B2 illustrates the general principles below:

- Decisive Conditions.** DCs on a LoO will have fully developed effects that may be achieved by joint actions.
- Decision Points.** DPs will be fully supported by CCIRs; alternative decisions (decision branch) will apply on a LoO when one or more DCs may be unachievable. The decision branch represents a Branch Plan that should be developed within the OPLAN with the aim of returning to the LoO. It should be noted that a DP may not necessarily occur at a specific time along the LoO continuum; additionally, the factors influencing the DP could impact upon multiple LoOs. In such instances, the DP could be represented as a “floating DP” with related DCs that aim to enable the progress of LoOs.
- Linkage with Lines of Engagement.** Engagement with non-military entities contributing to the comprehensive approach will provide the JOPG with an understanding of those entities objectives and conditions that they regard as decisive. Linkages between the operational and LoE DCs where constraints or restraints apply, or where there is mutual support or benefit should be depicted in order to support Civil-Military Integration (CMI).

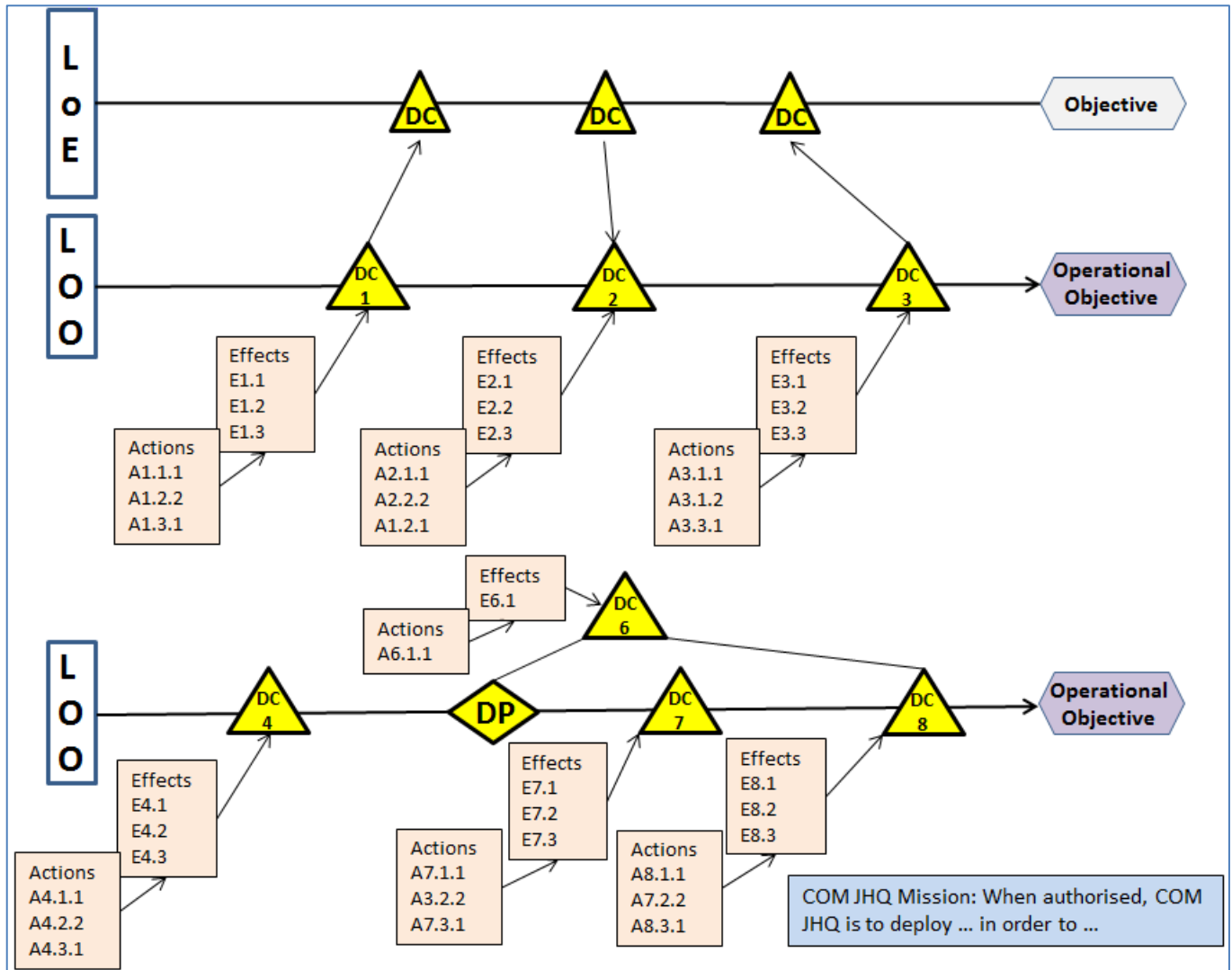


Figure B2: Example Operational Design Graphic

**CONOPS/ OPLAN Annexes and Appendices**

Note: shaded 'annexes' are mandated<sup>9</sup> for inclusion with a strategic CONOPS/OPLAN for NAC approval; however, while the appendices<sup>10</sup> give an indication of what a particular annex should cover, they themselves are not mandated *per se*.

ANNEX	TITLE	APPENDIX
A	Concept of Operations <sup>11</sup>	A-1: Synchronisation Matrix A-2 : Operational Design Graphic
B	Task Organisation and Command Relationships	B-1: Task Organisation B-2: Command and Control Structure B-3: Transfer of Authority B-4: Liaison B-5: Coordination Matrix
C	Forces and Effects	C-1: Decisive Condition-Effect List C-2: Combined Joint Statement of Requirements (CJSOR) <sup>12</sup> C-3: Allied Force List (AFL) C-3: Allied Disposition List (ADL) C-4: Reserves
D	Intelligence	D-1: Areas of Intelligence Responsibility and Interest D-2: Threat Assessment D-3: Security and Counter Intelligence D-4: Collection, Co-ordination and Intelligence Requirements Management (CCIRM) D-5: Intelligence Support, Architecture D-6: Human Intelligence (HUMINT) D-7: Imagery Intelligence (IMINT) D-8: Signal Intelligence (SIGINT) D-9: Intelligence Support to Targeting

<sup>9</sup> MC133/4 Annex B.

<sup>10</sup> It should be noted that some of the appendices as written are appropriate for the Operational level operations plans only, i.e. Appendix A-2 Operational Design Graphic.

<sup>11</sup> The NATO CONOPS is a formal document, with the same format as the OPLAN; as such, the majority of the detail of the 'concept of operations' is already contained in the main body of both the CONOPS and the OPLAN. If the Commander produces a concept of operations synopsis, from which the CONOPS is based, it could be captured in this Annex. Alternatively, some of the detail of the 'concept' could be placed here instead of the main body to keep the main body succinct, for example a detailed description of the phases. Finally, it could be used only to introduce the attached appendices.

<sup>12</sup> The CJSOR is submitted as an Annex to the strategic OPLAN; an 'illustrative' CJSOR is submitted 'with' the strategic CONOPS, but not as an Annex for 'approval'.

<b>ANNEX</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>APPENDIX</b>
E	Rules of Engagement	E-1: ROE Planning Profiles E-2: ROE for Land Operations E-3: ROE for Air Operations E-4: ROE for Maritime Operations E-5: ROE for Open Sources E-6: ROE Release Authority Matrix E-7: ROE Implementation Request Template
F	Maritime Operations	F-1: Maritime Air Operations F-2: Anti-Submarine Operations (ASW) F-3: Anti-Air Warfare (AAW) F-4: Anti-Surface Warfare (ASUW) F-5: Mine Warfare F-6: Submarine Operations F-7: Naval Cooperation and Guidance to Shipping F-8: Land Based Air Support of Maritime Operations F-9: Allied World-wide Navigation Information System (AWNIS)
G	Land Operations	G-1: Key Points and Rear Area Security G-2: Cover and Deception G-3: Area Damage Control G-4: Aviation Support for Ground Ops
H	Air Operations	H-1: Counter Air Operations H-2: Strategic Air Operations H-3: Air Power Contribution to Land and/or Maritime Operations H-4: Supporting Air Operations H-5: Air Space Control H-6: Air Bed down H-7: Data Link Coordination
I	Amphibious Operations	
J	Force Protection	J-1: Active Defence J-2: Passive Defence J-3: Protective Security J-4: Recuperation
K	Special Operations	
L	SPARE	
M	Arms Control	
N	Nuclear Operations	

<b>ANNEX</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>APPENDIX</b>
O	SPARE	
P	Electronic Warfare	P-1: EW Reports
Q	Communications and Information Systems	Q-1: Strategic Communications Architecture Q-2: Maritime Communications Q-3: Land Communications Q-4: Air Communications Q-5: VTC Q-6: Formal Message Traffic Q-7: Information Assurance Q-8: Spectrum Management
R	Logistics	R-1: Multinational Logistics Arrangements R-2: Personnel Administration R-3: Maintenance, Repair and Recovery R-4: Supply R-5: Service Support R-6: Real Estate Management R-7: Host Nation Support R-8: Mission Essential Equipment R-9: Logistic Reporting and Visibility R-10: Redeployment and Recovery
S	Movements	S-1: M&T C2 Structure S-2: Reception, Staging and Onward Movement (RSOM) S-3: Designated APOD Data S-4: Designated SPOD Data S-5: Road, Waterway and Rail Network S-6: Movement Visibility and Reporting
T	Environmental Support	T-1: Geospatial T-2: Meteorological and Oceanography
U	Operations in a CBRN Environment	U-1: Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear Defence U-2: Bases and Facilities
V	Search, Rescue and Recovery	V-1: Search and Rescue V-2: Combat Search and Rescue V-3: Evasion and Escape V-4: Recovery
W	Civil-Military Cooperation	W-1: Civil Assessment W-2: CIMIC Structure W-3: Key Civil Organisations W-4: CIMIC Sites of Significance

<b>ANNEX</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>APPENDIX</b>
X	SPARE	
Y	Conflict Termination and De-escalation (Transition Strategy)	
Z	SPARE	
AA	Legal	AA-1: Guidance on Law and Order
BB	Training and Mission Rehearsals	BB-1: Augmentation Training BB-2: Pre-deployment Training BB-3: In-Theatre Training
CC	Command Information Management	CC-1: Command Information Management CC-2: Records CC-3: Information Exchange Requirements (IER) CC-4: Historian Support CC-5: Visual Information and Combat Documentation
DD	Space Operations	DD-1: Space Surveillance and Reconnaissance DD-2: Navigation Aids
EE	Military Engineering	EE-1: Military Engineer Task Organisation EE-2: Military Engineering Support to Infrastructure EE-3: Military Engineering Support to Environmental Protection EE-4: Mobility and Counter-Mobility EE-5: Military Engineering Support to Explosive Ordnance Disposal EE-6: Military Engineer Capabilities Analysis
FF	Financial Support	FF-1: Funding Support FF-2: Contracting Support
GG	Non-NATO Force Procedures	
HH	Rear Area Operations	
II	Joint Targeting	II-1: Detailed Joint Fires Concept II-2: Targeting Guidance II-3: Joint Targeting Process II-4: Fire Support Coordination Measures
JJ	NATO Crisis Response System (NCRS)	NATO Crisis Response Measures (CRM)
KK	Operational Analytical Support	

<b>ANNEX</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>APPENDIX</b>
LL	Lessons Learned	
MM	Guidance on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings	
NN	Knowledge Development	NN-1: KD Responsibility and Interest NN-2: System analysis NN-3: Information acquisition, Co-ordination of KD Requirements Management. NN-4: Knowledge Support, Architecture NN-5: Support to KD.
OO	Operations Assessment	
PP	Military Police	PP-1: Mobility Support PP-2: Security Function PP-3: Detention Function PP-4: Police Function PP-5: Stability Function
QQ	Medical	
RR	Gender Perspective <sup>13</sup>	RR-1: Sexual and Gender Based Violence RR-2: Monitoring and Reporting RR-3: NATO Standards of Behaviour
SS	Strategic Communications <sup>14</sup>	SS-1: Introduction, Aim, Objectives SS-2: Themes – match to suggested audiences SS-3: Co-ordination with information disciplines

<sup>13</sup> See Bi-SC Directive 40-1 (Rev 1) – Integrating UNSCR 1325 and Gender Perspective into the NATO Command Structure, especially for development of Appendix RR-3.

<sup>14</sup> Although Annex SS is not mandated for inclusion with a strategic CONOPS/OPLAN by MC133/4 it shall be included; the use of Annex SS in an operational CONOPS and OPLAN is not mandated.

ANNEX	TITLE	APPENDIX
TT	Public Affairs	<p>X-1: Background and public environment analysis</p> <p>X-2: PA organization</p> <p>X-3: PA approach, goals and associated objectives by phase, audience identification, master messages</p> <p>X-4: Guidelines for release of information, media registration and ground rules, imagery support and casualty reporting</p> <p>X-5: Appendices to include: news releases, media advisories and other products as appropriate (fact sheets, backgrounders,) talking points, Qs and As, templates (news releases, media advisories, Response to Query)</p> <p>X-6: Organization of the NATO Media Information Centre (NMIC)</p>
UU	Information Operations	<p>UU-1: Information Operations Objectives, Themes and Messages</p> <p>UU-2: Information Operations Synchronisation Matrix</p>
VV	Psychological Operations	<p>VV-1: PSYOPS Task Organisation</p> <p>VV-2: PSYOPS Themes and Objectives</p> <p>VV-3: PSYOPS Approval Process</p> <p>VV-4: PSYOPS Support Requests</p> <p>VV-5: PSYOPS Information Coordination</p>
WW	SPARE	
XX	Record of Change	
YY	Miscellaneous	<p>YY-1: Definitions and Abbreviations</p> <p>YY-2: Bibliography and References</p>
ZZ	Distribution	



**Common Abbreviations and Acronyms used in this Summary**

ACTORD	Activation Order
ACTREQ	Activation Request
ACTWARN	Activation Warning
ADL	Allied Distribution List
AFL	Allied Force List
AMCC	Allied Movements Coordination Centre
CAT	Crisis Action Team
CCIR	Commander's Critical Information Requirements
CCOMC	Comprehensive Crisis and Operations Management Centre
CFAO	Conceptual Framework for Alliance Operations
CG	Command Group
CIG	Crisis Identification Group
CJSOR	Combined Joint Statement of Requirement
CMI	Civil-Military Integration
COA	Courses of Action
CONPLAN	Contingency Plan
COP	Crisis Operations Panel
COPD	Comprehensive Operations Planning Directive
CPOE	Comprehensive Preparation Of The Operational Environment
CRM	Crisis Response Measures
DC	Decisive Condition
DDP	Detailed Deployment Plan
DP	Decision Point
FAD	Force Activation Directive
FORCEPREP	Force Preparation
FTDM	Fast Track Decision-Making
IMS	International Military Staff
JHQ	Joint Headquarters
JOA	Joint Operations Area
JOPG	Joint Operational Planning Group
LOE	Lines of Engagement
LOO	Lines of Operation
MNDDP	Multinational Detailed Deployment Plan
MRO	Military Response Options
MSO	Military Strategic Objectives
NCMP	NATO Crisis Management Process
NCRS	NATO Crisis Response System
NCRSM	NATO Crisis Response System Manual

NATO UNCLASSIFIED

NDDP	National Detailed Deployment Plans
NED	NAC Execution Directive
NID	NAC Initiating Directive
NMA	NATO Military Authorities
OLRT	Operational Liaison and Reconnaissance Team
OPD	Operational Planning Directive
OPP	Operations Planning Process
PCUL	Priority Crisis Update List
PIR	Priority Information Requirements
PME	Political Military Estimate
PMR	Periodic Mission Review
RFL	Representational Force List
ROE	Rules of Engagement
ROEREQ	Rules of Engagement Request
SME	Subject Matter Expert
SPD	Strategic Planning Directive
SPG	Strategic Planning Group
SSA	SACEUR's Strategic Assessment
TCSOR	Theatre Capability Statement of Requirement
TOA	Transfer of Authority
TOO	Theatre of Operations