

# CHAPTER 1

## Supporting the AirLand Battle

### 1-1. Introduction

This chapter covers what AirLand Battle (ALB) doctrine means, how it affects the business of warfare, the impact it has on the Signal Corps, and the impact the Signal Corps has on the ALB concept.

### 1-2. ALB Doctrine

The term AirLand combines two fields of combat and suggests the vastness and dynamic activity of the anticipated combat environment. FM 100-5 details the four tenets of ALB: initiative, agility, depth, and synchronization. Synchronization depends on reliable and flexible communications (Figure 1-1). The Signal Corps' mission is to provide the field commander with quality communications. This allows him to exercise command and control (C<sup>2</sup>) over the forces needed to seize and retain the initiative which leads to defeating Threat forces.

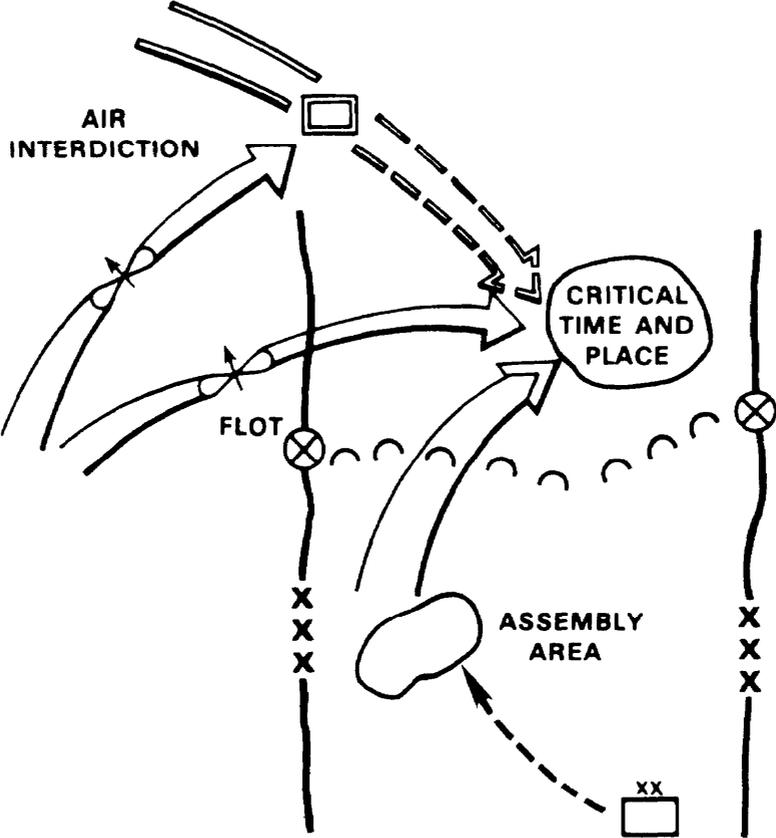


Figure 1-1. Synchronization.

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### 1-3. Battlefield Dimensions

a. ALB involves close, deep, and rear operations (Figure 1-2). What relationship exists among these three arenas and what is their combined impact on the course of battle?

(1) Close operations comprise those current activities of major committed combat units and their immediate combat support (CS) and combat service support (CSS) elements that support the current fight. At any echelon, close operations include the close, deep, and rear operations of subordinate elements. Deep and rear operations impact on close operations which bear the ultimate burden of victory or defeat.

(2) Deep operations are activities directed against enemy forces not in contact designed to influence the conditions in which future close operations will be conducted. They must be focused against those enemy capabilities which most directly threaten the success of projected friendly operations. Successful tactical deep operations shape the battlefield to create the conditions for future victory.

(3) Rear operations are activities behind elements in contact designed to ensure freedom of maneuver and continuity of combat and sustainment operations and C<sup>2</sup>. While they may have little immediate impact on close ground operations, they are critical to future operations, assuring the commander the agility to take advantage of any opportunity without delay.

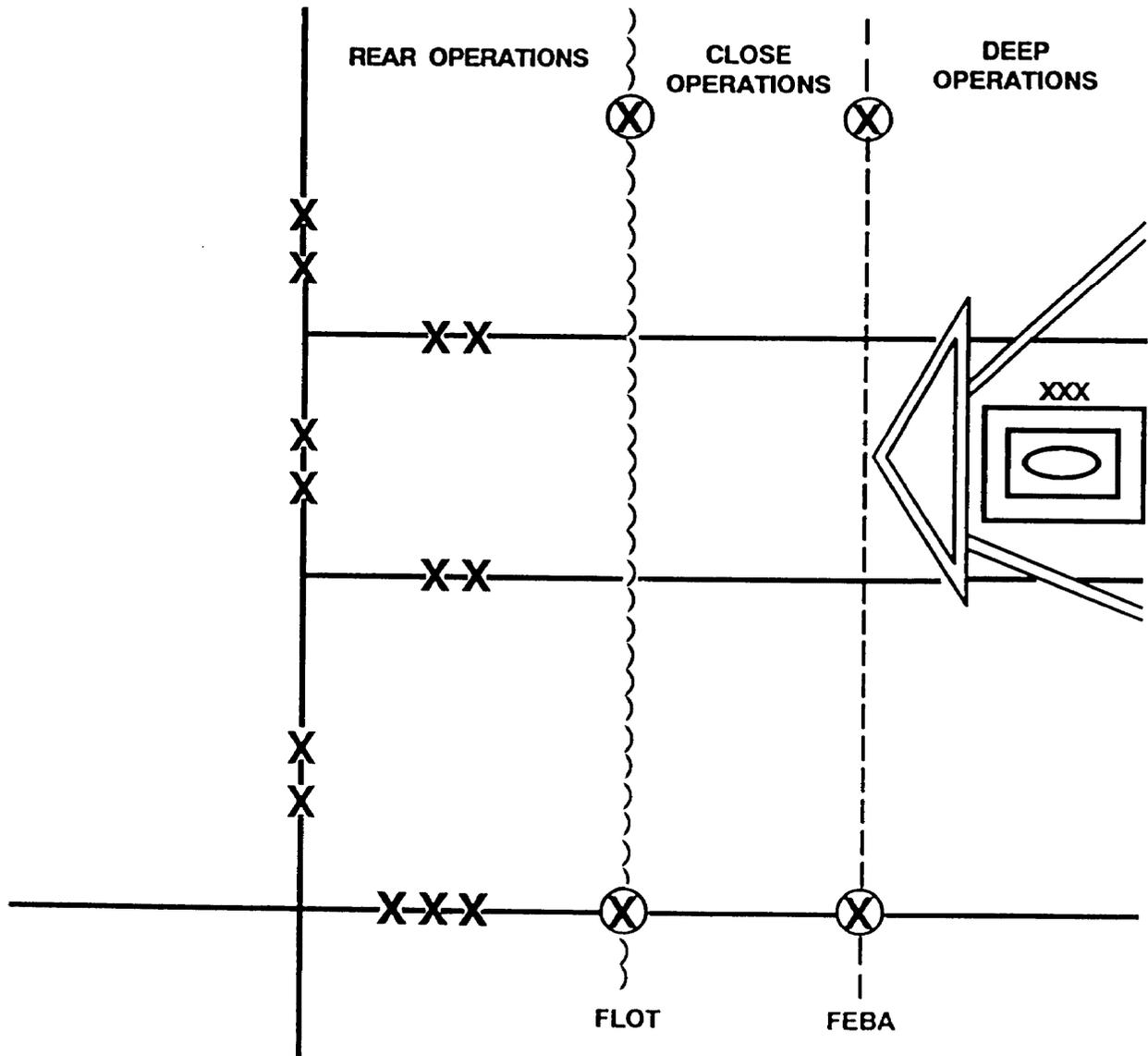


Figure 1-2. ALB operations.

b. The Signal Corps' challenge is to provide communications that gives the commander the capability to exercise effective C<sup>2</sup> across the length and breadth of the battlefield.

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### 1-4. Meeting the Challenge for Victory

a. Success on the AirLand Battlefield depends on the Army's ability to fight in accordance with four basic tenets: initiative, agility, depth, and synchronization. Superior performance in combat depends on three essential components. First, superb soldiers and leaders with character and determination who will win because they simply will not accept losing. Second, it depends on sound, well-understood doctrine for fighting. Third, it depends on weapons and supporting equipment sufficient for the task at hand. In the final analysis, and once the force is engaged, superior combat power derives from the courage and competence of soldiers, the excellence of their training, the capability of their equipment, the soundness of their combined arms doctrine, and above all the quality of their leadership.

b. The special contribution of the Signal Corps to victory on the AirLand Battlefield depends on four basic considerations:

- The commander's ability to convey his intent to subordinate commanders/leaders.
- Flexible and reliable communications.
- Automation of planning and operations processes.
- The leader's technical and tactical proficiency.

c. The commander has the basic responsibility of painting the common battle picture for his subordinate commanders/leaders. This ensures a complete understanding of his intent and ensures initiative, continuity, and coordination of the effort. This battle picture may best be sent out through the area communications system. The area communications system must be reliable and provide quality transmission media from anywhere on the AirLand Battlefield. The activity level in this environment will be intense. The amount of transmitted intelligence/data makes automation desirable particularly in the areas of planning and operations. These conditions also dictate the need for all signal leaders to have a higher level of tactical proficiency. In most cases, the users of the communications assemblages provide their own site security. This situation requires an increased knowledge of tactics and common tasks. This knowledge ensures survivability of equipment and personnel and sustains the Area Common-User System (ACUS).

### 1-5. Conclusion

When we consider the implications in a communications dependent ALB environment, it is obvious that our role as signal leaders is great. We must know and understand the commander's intent in order to adapt existing communications systems to support the current operation and to ensure mission success. Extending communications over the battlefield to support the maneuver commander's main effort is the challenge we face.