

THE DEFENSE READINESS REPORTING SYSTEM (DRRS)

Handbook for Conducting Mission Assessments in DRRS



Version 5.0
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PREFACE

DOD Directive 7730.65 establishes a new Defense Readiness Reporting System (DRRS) significantly different from previous readiness reporting mechanisms. It directs the expansion of the number of reporting entities in the former Global Status of Resources and Training Systems (GSORTS) in a new Enhanced Status of Resources and Training System (ESORTS). Most importantly, it stipulates that the basis of readiness assessment and reporting be centered on the ability to accomplish assigned missions, as described through the construct of Mission Essential Tasks (METs).¹

This new ESORTS focuses on output-oriented information on force capabilities, as well as encompassing appropriate outcome and process measures. It records each commander's assessment of his or her organization's ability to conduct assigned mission(s) and the essential tasks associated with those missions in accordance with established standards and conditions.² Commanders will continue, however, to consider the resource information available that may influence the conduct of these missions and tasks, and their own experience when making assessments.

This document serves as a guide for commanders and their staffs to conduct assessments in ESORTS.³ The first section provides a brief description of the MET construct as it applies to readiness reporting. It describes both the policy and guidelines for MET assessments. Section two discusses mission assessment procedures and techniques, with specific examples demonstrating how to apply the guidelines described in the previous section.

¹ DOD Directive 7730.65, dated June 3, 2002.

² An **organization** refers to any entity that has a mission and reports in the DRRS. The term **commander** is used to describe the operational leader of each reporting entity. A **mission**, according to the DoD Dictionary, is a task or series of tasks with a purpose. A **mission essential task** is one that is absolutely necessary, indispensable, or critical to mission success. **Standards** and **Conditions** are defined and explained in CJCSM 3500.04A, dtd 1 Sep 03. **Mission Essential tasks** and their associated **Conditions and Standards** make up a **METL**.

³ This handbook does not supercede the procedures found in the the DRRS Users' Guide, Draft Version 1.3.5, dtd 22 Nov 04. Rather it is intended to supplement that guide.

1. Background: The MET Construct

DoD has been using, to various degrees, the Mission Essential Task (MET) construct to guide training for years. Conducting a task to an established standard under specified conditions is one of the most effective mechanisms for articulating capability at all echelons of command. For this reason, the use of METs in readiness reporting is a logical expansion beyond just training.

This section begins with a brief description of the current DRRS policy on METLs. It follows with an overview of MET construction and use.⁴

1.1. DRRS Policy on the Construction and Management of METLs

The DRRS policy regarding the construction and management of METLs is that the COCOMs, Services and Agencies have the responsibility to manage their METLs in accordance with the following guidelines:

COCOMS determine and develop their METLs based on strategic guidance and documents assigning them missions—such as the Contingency Planning Guidance (CPG), the National Military Strategy (NMS), the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP) and its resultant operational plans (OPLANS), and other SECDEF assigned missions, such as operations orders (OPORDs) for specific operational requirements.

Services support COCOM missions and derive METLs based on those missions. They also develop METLs based on their core tasks—those tasks that Service units are designed to organize, equip and train to perform. The Services have the prerogative to decide whether to allow individual organizational commanders to draft their own METLs, or whether they will be created and managed by another process. Some services prefer to centrally-manage their METLs to ensure consistency across like units.

Agencies develop their METL through several venues. First, their organizational directives often provide the ‘core tasks’ that they are required to provide. Second, COCOM and Service METLs may provide command-linked tasks for particular agencies in their supporting roles to COCOM organizations and Service units. Third, agencies may have

⁴ This policy is derived from the instructions found in the DoD Directive cited above; see pp 1-2 and p 5. The overview that follows is in no way intended to supercede the guidance outlined in CJCS Instructions or Manuals, nor in supporting Service’s publications. Indeed, this overview is consistent with those instructions and publications, as well as the Training Transformation (T2) Strategic Plan, dtd. Mar 1, 2002, and the T2 Implementation Plan, dtd. Jun 9, 2004. For more information on how to create and use METs and METLs, refer to CJCSM 3500.03A, dtd 1 Sep 02, or to the TURBOMET application available in DRRS.

missions or tasks assigned in plans or orders in which they are the supported organization.

Close coordination between COCOMs, Services and Agencies is clearly necessary. This coordination should occur through planning conferences—either through the JOPES process, or through intermittent conferences to discuss relationships between METLs, and through frequent, less formal contacts. The goal is to both ensure the linkage between organizational METL development and reporting, and to minimize the reporting burden of DRRS entities.

1.2. The Anatomy of METs

Generally speaking, the MET construct needs little change in order to be effective as the primary means of expressing mission capability. Organizations at every level have a mission to conduct. This mission may be their “core” mission, assigned operational plans, named operations, or any combination of the above.⁵

Each organization has specific tasks that must be executed in order to achieve their mission(s). These *mission essential* tasks (METs) represent tasks that are integral to mission performance. These tasks will be associated with certain conditions and standards to establish a METL as described below.

Figure 1 (Example of Organizational METs)

	Core Task	Named Operation	Plan A	Plan B
ST 1.6 Control Dominate Strategically Significant Area(s)	X		X	X
ST 1.2 Manage Theater Strategic Intelligence Activities	X	X	X	X
ST 3.1 Process Theater Strategic Targets	X		X	X
ST 4.2 Coordinate Support for Forces in Theater	X		X	X
ST 6.1 Provide Theater-Wide Information Operations		X		

The entire collection of METs for each organization may be, as mentioned above, a combination of core tasks, tasks associated with a named operation (i.e., an

⁵ Core tasks refer to those tasks that the organization is designed to accomplish. Named operations refer to emergent crises that a unit is either currently conducting or has been mobilized for. Numbered plans are, for the time being, restricted to the level IV plans described in the SECDEF's Contingency Planning Guidance (CPG) and the CJCS' JSCP.

operational mission assigned to a unit for which it is about to deploy) or tasks in a deliberate plan. Consider the METs shown above as an example in figure 1.

In this example, these unit METs consist of 5 tasks that are essential to the successful execution of its various assigned missions (shown on the top row). This organization trains and equips for its core mission, is currently assigned to some named operation, and is apportioned to two major plans. Each mission is described in terms of tasks, but not every task is associated with every mission.

Tasks are customized to describe each organization's required capability in the context of a specific mission through the use of conditions, standards, and linked tasks. The sections that follow provide brief explanation.

1.2.1. Conditions

Conditions specify the type of environment that the organization will likely face as it executes each task for each assigned mission. Depending on the task and mission, conditions will specify the potential physical environment (e.g., sea state, terrain, or weather), military environment (e.g., forces assigned, threat, command relationships), and civil environment (e.g., political, cultural, and economic factors). Some conditions help describe the theater of operations (e.g., host-nation support); others describe the immediate operational area (e.g., maritime superiority); while still others describe the battlefield conditions (e.g., littoral composition). When linked to tasks, conditions help frame the differences or similarities between assigned missions.

1.2.2. Standards

Standards describe what it means for the unit to successfully execute the task under specified conditions. Each standard consists of a performance measure and a criterion. For example, an Air Wing assigned a mission that requires a mission essential task *Maintain Air Superiority* may have conditions that are a 5,000 square kilometer area, all weather, and mountainous terrain. The command ascertains that to accomplish this task successfully it must, as a minimum, attain the standards described in the two performance measures with their associated criteria shown below in figure 2.

Figure 2 (An Example of a Task with its Standards and Associated Conditions)

Air Wing Task:
Task: Maintain Air Superiority
Conditions: 5,000 square kilometer area, all weather, mountainous terrain
Standards:

Measure 1. Percentage of all friendly air missions can operate without threat from enemy aircraft or antiaircraft systems within 24 hours of engagement
Criterion: **90** percent

Measure 2. Percentage of all friendly air missions can operate without threat from enemy aircraft or antiaircraft systems within 72 hours of engagement.
Criterion: **100** percent

In the past, our readiness assessments and reporting have depended mainly upon specific resources to accomplish certain requirements. In DRRS, the MET describes what needs to be done and specifies the standards that are necessary to accomplish the task. In this framework, a capability is the ability to conduct a task to a prescribed standard under specified conditions. Thus, organizations can now align their training and resource requirements by capability and assignment.

1.2.3. Supporting and Command-Linked Tasks

The concepts of supporting (subordinate units and staffs within an organization establishing its command METL) and command-linked tasks (tasks that are required for successful accomplishment of a command METL but reside in organizations outside of that command) are valuable applications for readiness reporting when used effectively and judiciously.

In many situations, the successful completion of an organization's task is dependent on the successful execution of a subordinate task. That task may be assigned to a staff organization (like a staff element or directorate), a subordinate organization (like a subordinate command), or an organization outside of a command chain (a command-linked, operational or supporting command).

Such tasks should only be used if they are truly essential to the accomplishment of a task. As a guideline, these tasks should be used sparingly. Too many "outside" tasks significantly complicate assessments, and therefore, impacts adversely on the ability of a command to make its assessments and report them in a timely fashion.

Supporting and command-linked tasks actually become missions to subordinate elements and supporting organizations. As such, these organizations shall incorporate, following their own mission analysis, a series of METS, with conditions and standards, in their organizational METLs.⁶

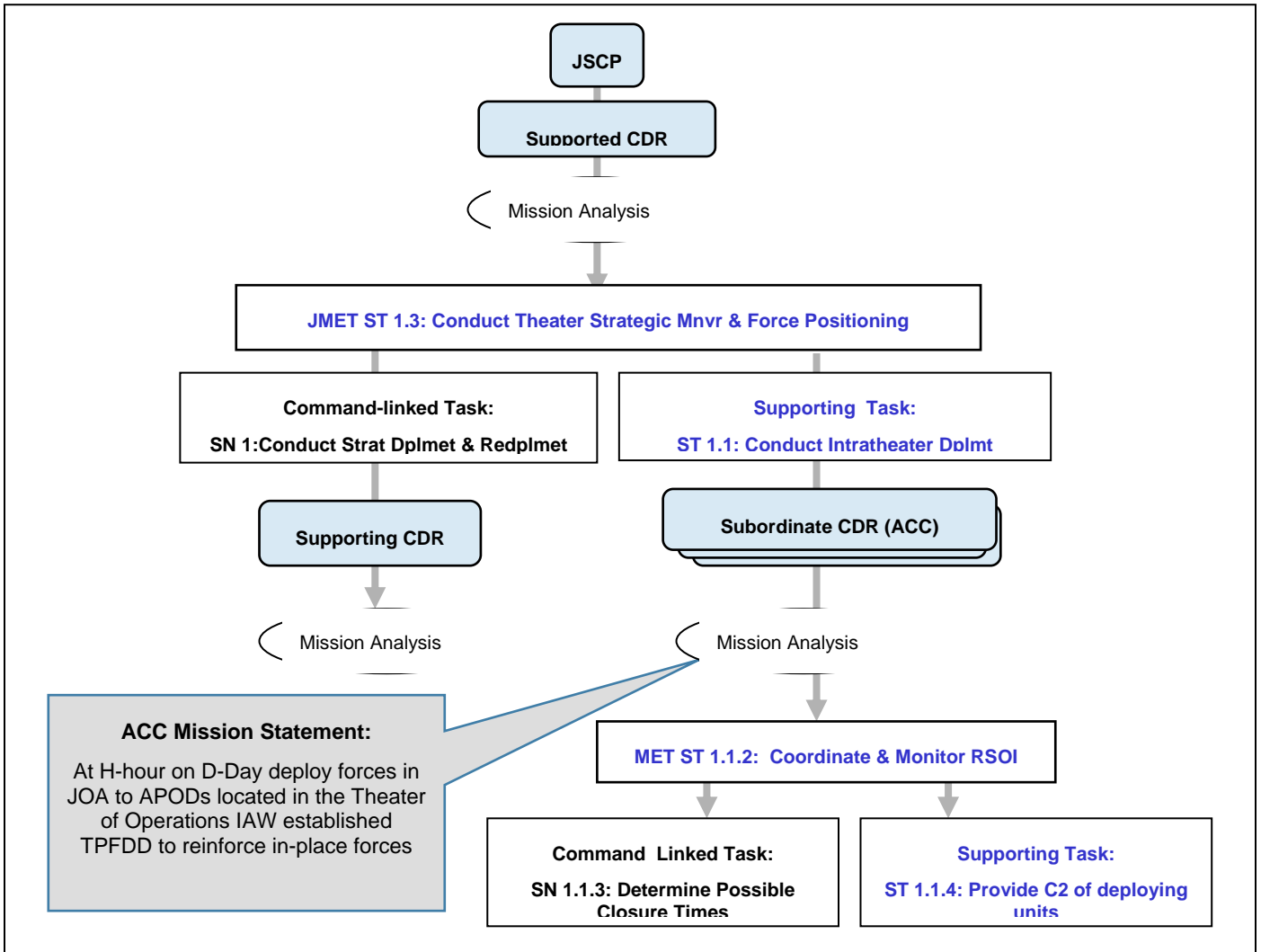
As an example, refer to Figure 3 below. In this case a COCOM has been assigned a mission for some particular deliberate plan directed in the JSCP, and has determined its JMETL for this mission; one of which is ST 1.3. It has also identified and assigned a supporting task to a subordinate unit for that JMET. In this example, the supporting task is ST 1.1 and it is assigned to the Air Component Command. There is also a command-linked task identified – SN 1. By the operational and training doctrine cited in the above paragraph, the ACC will conduct its own mission analysis, keeping in mind the higher command's intent and concept of operations. The lower command then derives its own METL. In this example ST 1.1.2 is one of its METs, and the other tasks shown

⁶ *Linkages between higher headquarters missions and tasks are explained in Jt Pub 3.0, p.B-1 and Jt Pub 5.0, pp. III-4 through 8. Furthermore, CJCSM 3500.03A, p. C-19, explicitly states, "Higher headquarter's tasks, when assigned to a subordinate command, become the subordinate commander's mission; therefore, the subordinate command's METL do not duplicate the higher headquarter's tasks, but reflects those METs the subordinate command believes must be performed to accomplish the higher headquarters' JMETS."*

are the command- linked and supporting tasks associated with the lower command, i.e., ACC. One can see, through this example, that there is a definite linkage then between higher and lower command METLs, and that linkage continues through each echelon from the COCOM down to the tactical units that will be executing their own missions and associated METL.

Thus, supporting and command-linked METs are of fundamental importance to each command that establishes these tasks. In sum, the overall readiness assessment in the new DRRS for a particular command is linked to its supporting and command-linked task assessments.

Figure 3: Task Relationships



CONDUCTING MET ASSESSMENTS: POLICY AND PROCEDURES

This section provides guidance on assessing individual tasks and missions in ESORTS. There are no algorithms or rigid rule sets underlying ESORTS assessments—they are professional judgments made by the organizational commander (for mission assessments) or his designates (in the case of task assessments). However, as DRRS prescribes, assessments must be soundly grounded on an analytical process based on identified conditions that may be encountered, and fairly objective standards that determine an organization's ability to accomplish its mission requirements.⁷ Assessments will be reviewed as commanders from higher in the command structure gather the information they will need to conduct their own assessments.

Assessments, moreover, are much more than the assignment of a grade for a single event for a single MET. Indeed, a readiness assessment is not a 'grade' to judge a commander or an organization in its performance or state of readiness. Rather, an assessment needs to encompass a host of considerations for positive follow on actions or operational considerations in an evaluation of an organization's METL.

For example, a single training event may provide a benchmark of where and when an organization stands in its ability to accomplish a MET or series of METs at any given time or circumstance. Follow-on training or the allocation of additional resources, based on this evaluation and lessons learned, may add significant value to that organization's ability to accomplish one or more of its METs evaluated in any particular training event or operation that it has participated in.

Furthermore, an assessment that encompasses the full breadth of an organization's capability may demonstrate that organization's strengths or shortcomings for a particular deployment and employment, and, therefore, should show what may be available or needed for its immediate mission or mission rehearsal in a crisis or pre-deployment situation.

2.1. Mission Categories in ESORTS

Missions are classified in one of three categories in ESORTS.

Core tasks. Core tasks refer to the basic capabilities or tasks that the organization was designed, equipped and trained to provide. Units below the Joint level will base their assessments on the capabilities that the organization trains for in the absence of a specific operational tasking.

⁷ See *The Joint Training Manual, CJCSM 3500.03A, dtd 1 Sep 02, Enclosure F, pp.F-1 through F-3, for a discussion on assessments. In that document, an assessment is described as an 'analytical process used by commanders to determine an organization's proficiency to accomplish [its] capability requirements....'. The DRRS assessment policy described herein is consistent with this doctrinal CJCS document.*

COCOMs and CSAs will base their assessments on those JMETs that support their everyday mission, e.g. Theater Security Cooperation Plans.

Major war plans. These are the most detailed (level IV) plans as described in the Contingency Planning Guidance. Any unit assigned or apportioned to level IV plans will assess their ability to conduct the tasks and missions given them in the plan. Units not assigned or apportioned to a major war plan will not report against one.

Current operations. An organization designated for, or involved in, a current operation other than a level IV plan will assess their ability to conduct their role in those operations.

2.2. Organizations Required to Conduct MET and Mission Assessments

Reporting entities include various echelons of Combatant Commands, Sub-unified Commands, Combat Support Agencies (CSA) and the Military Services.

Combatant Commands. All Combatant Commands will report on their ability to conduct assigned missions and the individual tasks that comprise them.

Sub-unified Commands. All Sub-unified Commands will report on their ability to conduct assigned missions and the individual tasks that comprise them.

Combat Support Agencies. Agencies will report at least at the Director level. Any operational or support organization(s) within a given agency that play significant and distinct roles in the execution of that agency's assigned mission(s) may also report in ESORTS.

Military Services. Military Services will report at several levels of operational command—from Service Component Headquarters, down to deployable entities. A deployable entity is defined as a unit/detachment/element that would be deployed in support of a Combatant Commander request for capability.⁸ The deployable entity, or their Service designated representative, will perform the assessment and maintain accurate readiness information. The Military Services will also include installations with direct mission or war fighter support responsibilities as ESORTS reporting organizations. Examples include training ranges, key transportation facilities, and depots.

⁸ For example, the Air Force identifies Unit Type Code (UTC) elements that can be deployed separately or as part of a capability package to support a designated operation. The Army utilizes derivative Unit Identification Codes (DUICs) to build task-organized capabilities.

2.3. Personnel Authorized to Report Assessments

Organizational commanders are ultimately responsible for the accuracy and timeliness of both individual task and mission assessments. Commanders are the only ones authorized to conduct mission assessments in ESORTS. Commanders may designate offices of primary responsibility (OPRs) to conduct individual task assessments. Once designated, only these personnel will be able to assess those tasks.

2.4. Required Periodicity

Assessments for individual tasks (METs) and missions will be within 24 hours of a significant change of readiness but not less than once a month. A significant change in readiness means a change in value (yes, qualified yes or no) for either an individual task or the mission as a whole.⁹ All deployable entities, or their Service designated representative, will provide MET/METL readiness assessments when deployed and when not deployed.

2.5. Assessment Values

In simple terms, to assess a task or a mission, commanders in the DRRS must judge and answer whether they can perform a particular task as either a “Yes” or “No”. The overall assessment for the mission those tasks comprise is also essentially a “Yes” or “No” assessment. These assessments will enable decision makers to quickly address the status of organizations for use in a variety of operational environments, and assist them in making choices on those units that can be deployed/employed quickly, or those that need immediate training or resources for follow on mission requirements.

2.5.1. Yes: My organization can perform this task or mission

Assessors should use the value “Yes” in cases where the organization can accomplish the task to prescribed standards and conditions. That assessment should be clearly supported by observed and evaluated values for the standards, resource and training status, and other information provided in the form of comments. The “Yes” assessment should reflect demonstrated performance in training or operations.

In those cases where the data may not readily support a “Yes”, but the assessor believes that he or she can perform the task to standard, they can report a “Qualified yes”. The assessor must support their position in the comment fields. A “Qualified yes” is still a “yes”—it sends force managers the signal the

⁹ *In other words, commanders must ensure that at least every month, all assessments (and the comments and data that support them) are updated. Emergent circumstances may warrant a change in any task or mission’s value at any time. In these cases, commanders need only ensure that the relevant task(s) or mission(s) are updated.*

organization is expected to accomplish the task to standard, under most conditions, but this performance has not been observed or demonstrated in training or operations. This assessment also entails certain risks that should be identified in the comment field.

As an example of a “Qualified yes” consider the following. A commander may have assessed a “Yes” for the unit’s ability to conduct a deliberate attack in urban terrain under the standards prescribed. But that task was conducted during daylight. The higher command wants to know what that unit’s capability is to conduct that task at night. The command has conducted a deliberate attack at night to standard but not in urban terrain. The commander assesses that the unit can perform the attack at night in urban terrain based on his judgment that the organization has conducted night operations to standard (a deliberate attack) and has conducted a deliberate attack in urban terrain to standard, but not under night conditions. He therefore assigns a “Qualified Yes” to the unit’s ability to conduct a deliberate attack in urban terrain at night, with the appropriate comments reflecting what is numerated above.

Assessments from the Perspective of a Higher Headquarters

Consider the following circumstances. A JTF Commander has received a warning order to conduct offensive operations on several terrorist training camps in mountainous terrain. The operation will commence under night conditions, but will continue thereafter, without interruption for a period of approximately 30 days. Of the forces available to the Commander, several have recently assessed that they are fully capable of conducting such a mission at night and in mountainous terrain because they have recently trained under those conditions, performed to standard, and have the resources necessary to accomplish this mission. The JFC, given this assessment, chooses to employ these units in the initial stages of the operation.

However, he realizes that further forces will be necessary to conduct sustained follow on operations for the mission assigned. The JTF Commander, therefore, alerts other units to conduct mission rehearsals immediately to get them up to standard under the prescribed conditions for this mission. If this is indeed either a new mission, or one for which these additional units had not yet prepared for, we would expect their initial assessment of their ability to conduct this mission to be a ‘No’. As resource problems are addressed and training opportunities yield satisfactory performance, we would expect to see these assessments improve.

2.5.2. No: My organization cannot perform this task or mission

Assessors should report “No” for tasks that the organization is unable to accomplish to prescribed standards and conditions at this time. An assessment of “No” could be based on the commander’s observed and evaluated performance, resource or training status, or on any combination of the above. Supporting explanations are mandatory.

2.6. The Anatomy of an Assessment

We will walk through the assessment process using the example depicted in figure 4 below. Figure 4 shows the 51st Operations Group’s METs for a notional level IV war plan 55204. The explicit responsibilities that the 51st has for this plan are articulated in the three METs listed in the left hand column: OP 3.2, OP 3.2.5

and OP 3.2.6. The designated person(s) authorized to assess these tasks are listed in the second column (ORG/OPR). The third column indicates whether there are remarks (yes or no), and the final column shows the assessed value (Yes, Qualified yes, or No).

Figure 4: Assessment Table for 51st Operations Group

51st Operations Group - Active Assessment					
Core Tasks		Major Plans	Named Ops	Overall	
VIEW		EDIT			
Mission Info		Unit Mission Info		Mission Assessment	
Major Plan: 55204		Employment Duration: N/A		Mission Assessment: Q Edit	
Plan End Date: June 2005		Mission Statement		Last Approved: 01-May-2004	
Operational Command: USFK		Current Location: Osan AFB		Status: Approve	
		Operational Parent: 51st Wing		View All Remarks	
Mission Essential Tasks		ORG/OPR	Remarks	Last Reviewed	Rating
▶ OP 3.2	Attack Operational Targets.	OG	Y	15-May-2004	Q
▶ OP 3.2.5	Conduct Special Operations Interdiction of Operational Forces/Targets.	DOW	Y	01-Jan-2004	Y
▶ OP 3.2.6	Provide Firepower in Support of Operational Maneuver.	DOW	Y	28-May-2004	Q

Let's consider the assessment of task *OP 3.2 Attack Operational Targets*. To make this assessment, the designated assessor (OG in this case) will consider three categories of information:

- Current performance of the unit (the 51st Operations Group in this example) relative to conditions and standards assigned to that task;
- Assessments of supporting tasks (staff, subordinate) and command-linked tasks;
- The quantity and quality of available resources (such as personnel and equipment)

Begin by clicking on the arrow to the left of the task number (OP 3.2) to view the task conditions, standards, and any relevant supporting and command-linked tasks (see figure 4 below for the display you will receive). We see that task *OP 3.2 Attack Operational Targets* from the above figure 4 is composed of 2 standards, 3 supporting tasks (2 staff and 1 subordinate unit) and 1 command-linked task (shown in figure 5).

Figure 5 (Assessment Table for the 51st Operations Group)

51st Operations Group - Active Assessment							
Core Tasks		Major Plans		Named Ops		Overall	
VIEW		EDIT					
Mission Info		Unit Mission Info			Mission Assessment		
Major Plan: 55204		Employment Duration: 1 year			Mission Assessment: Q Approve		
Plan End Date: June 2005		Mission Statement			Last Approved: 01-May-2004		
Operational Command: USFK		Current Location: Osan AFB			Status: In Staffing		
		Operational Parent: 51st Wing			View All Remarks		
Mission Essential Tasks				ORG/DPR	Remarks	Last Reviewed	Rating
AFT 4.2.1.2 Conduct Close Air Support (CAS).				OG	Y	15-May-2004	Q
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Standard Edit							
Measure	Unit of Measure	Criterion	Assessed	Observed Value	Observed Date	Under Task Conditions?	Date of Anticipated Change
Of desired tactical effects acheived.	Percent	>=95	90	92	15-Jan-2004	Y	13-Jun-2004 Worse
To provide close air support operations at the request of friendly surface forces.	Hours	>=12	13	14	13-Feb-2004	N	20-Aug-2004 Better
Staff Tasks							
<input type="checkbox"/> AFT 4.2.2 Educate and Train Counterland Forces.				DOW	Y	15-May-2004	N
<input type="checkbox"/> AFT 4.2.4 Plan Counterland Functions.				MPC	Y	15-May-2004	Q
Subordinate Unit Tasks							
<input type="checkbox"/> AFT 4.2.1 Perform Strategic Attack.				36SQ/DO	Y	15-May-2004	Q
Command Linked Tasks							
<input type="checkbox"/> AFT 2.1.3 Equip Forces with Lethal Precision Engagement Capabilities.				TRANSCOM/J2	Y	15-May-2004	Y
<input type="checkbox"/> OP 3.2.5 Conduct Special Operations Interdiction of Operational Forces/Targets.				OG	Y	01-Jan-2004	Y
<input type="checkbox"/> OP 3.2.6 Provide Firepower in Support of Operational Maneuver.				OG	Y	28-May-2004	Q

2.6.1. Reporting Performance Relative to Standards

Commanders or their designates are responsible for maintaining current records of their units performance relative to each task. These records of observed performance are among the most important pieces of information the unit has in assessing whether it can accomplish an individual task or the mission as a whole.

What follows is a brief description of the information available in this field. This section concludes with guidance on how to consider this information in the course of a task assessment.

In this example, for the 51st Operations Group table (figure 5) shown above, consider the second measure (providing close air support operations at the request of friendly surface forces). This is measured in terms of hours of support provided.

2.6.1.1. Criteria Describe Minimum Acceptable Levels of Performance

Column three lists the criterion or minimum target value for each measure. In this case, the unit must achieve at least 12 hours of close air support, as estimated

by the commander and his staff to achieve the task as part of accomplishing the mission.¹⁰

2.6.1.2. Observed Values Record Actual Performance

Assessors will use columns 5 (observed value), 6 (date) and 7 (under task conditions?) to describe when and if they actually observed unit performance of each measure under the task conditions. If, through the course of training or operations, the 51st Operations Group provides close air support operations, the assessor will log how well they performed (in this case the amount of hours that the unit was capable of providing support) and the date of the observation. The assessor will also indicate whether the unit performed the measure under the prescribed conditions.

In our example, the assessor logged the value of 14 hours of close air support on the 13th of February. However, the unit did not perform under the prescribed conditions.

2.6.1.3. Assessed Values Offer Commanders the Ability Express Potential Performance

Often a unit is not able to maintain current observations of performance under certain task conditions. When the commander or his designated assessor believe that the observed value is not indicative of how well the unit can actually perform this standard under prescribed conditions, he or she may extrapolate from the last observation and enter how well he or she believes their unit might perform. The assessed value could be higher or lower than the observed value.

A Cautionary Note on Assessing Performance

Assessed values are *extrapolations* of actual, observed, recent performance. They are not a license to fabricate capabilities. Commanders using this option are required to support the viability of these assessments using the comment fields. Higher commands or commands that otherwise depend on your performance will use these comment fields to gain a thorough understanding of your unit's assessment.

Assessed values indicating performance better or equal to the observed values should not be reported if there has been significant personnel turnover since the observation date or if that observation date exceeds doctrinal expiration periods.

For example, consider the unit that recently conducted close air support operations, but they were not under the appropriate conditions in the example shown in figure 5. The assessor should factor in his or her knowledge of the unit's current demonstrated capabilities and assess how well it might do under the prescribed conditions. In our example, the assessors believed that the unit could achieve 13 hours of close air support if it was operating

¹⁰ To learn more about how criteria are selected refer to CJCSM 3500.04C (UJTL) and respective Service Task Lists (available from your DRRS homepage) or to the TurboMET application in the DRRS lab.

under the prescribed conditions.

2.6.1.4. Using Information in the Standard Field for Task Assessments

To review, this field contains several pieces of information relevant to a current assessment:

The criteria that defines minimum acceptable performance

Values of observed performance including dates and an indicator of whether the observation was under the appropriate conditions

Assessed values provide commanders the ability to ability to express what they believe their organizations can do

The most important information contained in this field is the observed values. Organizational commanders should consult relevant training doctrine to determine how long an observed value should be considered valid.

If the last observed performance is too old to be considered relevant, or the assessed or observed performance does not meet the criteria, then the individual assessing that task should not report a “Yes” for that task’s assessment. The individual should only report a “Qualified Yes” if there is a compelling argument for it. That argument will be clearly described in the comment field.

2.6.1.5. Date of Anticipated Change

Senior Commanders will be interested in anticipated changes in assessments. Often assessors have some indication of a change in capability. They may know, for example, that the unit will visit a range, or that key personnel will soon rotate in or out. To the extent that assessors can anticipate changes in performance, they should indicate so in this field. Again, supporting comments are required.

2.6.2. Considering the Impact of other Organization’s Performance

As mentioned in the first section, consideration of supporting and command-linked tasks is fundamental to the overall assessment process. These tasks will have their own conditions and standards associated with them. Some of those may be very similar to the command METL that they support or are linked to. Some may be different but related, due to the mission analysis of that supporting organization and command.

From the example we are pursuing in this section, Figure 5 shows that there are two supporting tasks (one staff – AFT 4.2.4 – and one subordinate unit – AFT 4.2.1) that are assigned a rating of a “Qualified yes.” There is one supporting task (staff task AFT 4.2.2) given a rating of “No.” There is also a command-linked task (AFT 2.1.3) that has a rating of “Yes.” In all cases there are comments provided on these ratings. The commanders responsible for these supporting and

command-linked tasks are responsible for reporting these assessments with comments to their higher commander.

There are no set algorithms or weighting factors assigned in the DRRS assessment process. As far as the DRRS assessment is concerned, higher commanders are given the flexibility to make a subjective overall assessment based on their own judgment as to the importance of each of these tasks to the accomplishment of the command METL. However, they should consider closely the evaluation of standards and comments made by the supporting and command linked organizations. In the case of this example (command METL AFT 4.2.1.2) the Commander of the 51st Operations Group has assessed that the overall rating is a “Qualified yes.” That commander is required, moreover, as stated above, to provide his own comments as to this judged rating as shown in figure 5.

The organizational commander has the flexibility to determine the impact of his supporting organizations on his ability to conduct a task, or ultimately, a mission. For this example, the Commander of the 51st Operations Group, after considering his own unit’s performance, considered the performance of his staff, subordinate and command-linked organizations. In this case, one of his staff tasks has an assessed value of “No”, yet his overall assessment for the task is a “Qualified Yes”. He may have been able to support the argument that the lack of capability for this supporting task does not mean that the organization as a whole could not “conduct close air support” to standard.

Evaluating the Impact of Linked Assessments

There are no set algorithms or weighting factors assigned in the DRRS assessment process. As far as the DRRS assessment is concerned, higher commanders are given the flexibility to make a subjective overall assessment based on their own judgment as to the importance of each of these tasks to the accomplishment of the command METL. However, they should consider closely the evaluation of standards and comments made by the supporting and command linked organizations.

2.6.3. Considering Resource Information

Also, as mentioned in Section 1, resource factors may very well have an impact on the assessment, both from a command METL perspective and from supporting organization and command-linked perspectives. Assessors will need to refer to the resource tabs in ESORTS to gain insights as to what resources may have influenced the ratings shown in the assessment table shown in figure 5. The comment fields should reflect what resource implications have influenced or impacted the assessments.

As the above example demonstrated, personnel resource factors such as pilot or mechanic turnover or shortages will certainly have an impact on task performance, as will such things as engine repairs, parts availability, etc.

2.7. Conducting Mission Assessments

As mentioned already, DRRS requires assessments of both tasks and missions. In figure 5, for example, there are assessments for three command tasks, two staff tasks, one subordinate unit task and one command linked task. There is also an overall mission assessment at the top right of the chart. The overall mission assessment is the commander's judgment based on the task assessments shown in the chart, coupled with the comments provided with those assessments. Once again, there is no set of algorithms assigned to come up with that overall assessment.

3. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

The following are anticipated FAQs that are intended to clarify certain assessment policies, guidelines, procedures and techniques described above.

FAQ: How frequently must the observed value field be updated?

As often as the capability is actually exercised. Observed performance is dependent on the ability to actually exercise these capabilities. These opportunities are often constrained by factors such as range availability, equipment availability, or the presence of real or notional opposing forces.

FAQ: My unit can't get regular access to the training range, will we be penalized for old observed values?

No. Older observed values should be interpreted throughout the system as a signal that organizations aren't given the opportunities to keep these values current. Accurate reporting is extremely important. It provides current and detailed information on what units can do, and when these reports are dated, provides detailed guidance to help shape training programs.

FAQ: My unit hasn't actually demonstrated this capability for an assessment in the last year, is it still appropriate to extrapolate from our performance a year ago?

Probably not. The assessments are intended to be an extrapolation from, not a substitute for actual performance. The assessor should consult his organization's training policies for skill expiration guidelines. The assessor should also consider the degree of personnel turnover. If, for example, a large percentage of the relevant personnel have turned over since the last observation, the assessor can not defend extrapolating an assessment from that event. Remember that outside organizations will have access to the observed and assessed values as well as any supporting comments and may depend on the capabilities reflected therein. If there is not information to support an assessed value, the unit should not provide one.

FAQ: My unit has recently experienced some degradations in resources, should we degrade our assessed values?

The answer to that depends on whether the commander (or his designated assessor) believes the resource degradation had a significant impact on the performance associated with each standard. The assessment reflects how well the assessor believes the unit can perform a task. If the unit can find other ways (i.e. a substitute resource), or means (i.e. an alternative process or procedure) to perform the task, then the assessment may reflect that. If there are no other

ways or means, but the degradation did not specifically affect a given capability, then the assessment should reflect that as well. Again, the purpose of these fields is to accurately convey what a unit can do now.

Here again is an example where a unit may be doing itself harm by over assessing its ability to perform a task. For instance, if the Commander of the 51st Wing reported a “Qualified yes” based on an anticipated turnover rate, and that rate was to be very significant, than perhaps a “No” would be more useful to both that command and its higher headquarters in that it may lead to turnover changes or replacement emphasis that would fix the readiness problems associated with that turnover – particularly if the wing was due to deploy on an operation or in a crisis.

On the other hand, a “Qualified yes” may be the right assessment in that it says to the higher command that in immediate circumstances the unit can perform the task, but in the longer term may not be able to sustain that performance for that task.

4. ASSESSING THE TASK AND MISSION: SUMMARY

ESORTS, in addition to asking whether you have “enough” resources or training is asking the commanders to make an assessment of what that means in the context of a specific task or mission. DRRS is asking for a clear “Yes” or “No” answer (giving the option of a “Qualified yes” which, again, amounts to a yes). Each answer must be supported by comments/explanations. This additional information is above and beyond what the current system provides.

The mission assessment module, therefore, is very different from both the resource module and GSORTS, and goes to the heart of addressing capability. It pointedly asks whether each organization can perform a) specific tasks to a prescribed standard under set conditions and b) their assigned missions. Resource status, recent performance, and operational judgment are all important factors for the commander to weigh as he/she elects an answer. The answers are framed as a:

“Yes”: Used in cases where the organization can support its ability to do the task/mission to conditions and standards prescribed;

“Qualified yes”: Used in cases where a Commander believes he can accomplish the task to standard, under most conditions, but this performance has not been observed or demonstrated in training or operations. A “Qualified yes” is like a “Yes” in that it sends the message that the organization is prepared to conduct the task/mission under the prescribed conditions and standards;

“No”: Used in cases where the organization cannot do the task/mission to the standards and conditions prescribed.